

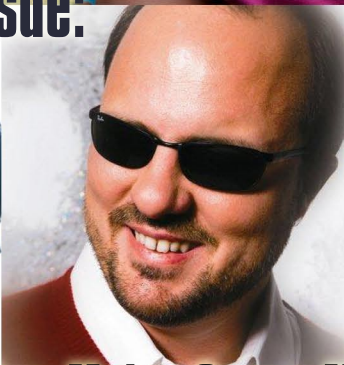
December 2012

sgn Scoops digital



Annie Moses Band

Also In This Issue:



Soul'd Out, Gordon Mote, Cross Music Group and Randy & Sherri Miller

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OUR MISSION

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

Publisher- Rob Patz

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PUBLISHER'S POINT

by Rob Patz



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December 2012

Letter From The Editor

“Goodbye 2012, Hello 2013!”

By Rhonda Frye



It is hard to believe 2012 is winding down. It was such a great year at SGNScoops! I have to say, I'm pleased with our accomplishments this year. Our staff brought you stories on Ernie Haase & Signature Sound, the Gaithers, Wes Hampton, Jim & Melissa Brady, The Isaacs, The Martins, Charlotte Ritchie, Libbi Perry, Larry Ford, Legacy Five, Brian Free and Assurance, The LeFevres, Doug Anderson, Wilburn and Wilburn, Beyond the Ashes, The Easters, Michael English and so many more wonderful artists. We've shared book reviews, concert stories, and new music too. We explored behind the scenes with articles on Dusty Wells, Sue C. Smith and Rhonda Thompson- just to name a few! Each month, we aimed to cheer your hearts with articles of inspiration, memories and encouragement. We tried our best to give you front row seats to a few major events as well. We covered the Dove Awards, the GMA Hall of Fame Induction, the 42nd Annual Seminole Sing, the Lari Goss Celebration, Karen Peck's "Joyful Noise" Movie Preview, Crabb Family Front Porch Tour, the National Quartet Convention, Lou Hildreth's 75 Years in Gospel Music, Write About Jesus Songwriter's Conference, Creekside Gospel Music Convention and numerous concerts! To those who think Gospel music is fading, I say... "COME TO WORK WITH ME!"

I don't believe Gospel Music is declining, fading or on the way out. I believe it's changing! I believe with all of my heart that gospel music is a tool God uses for spiritual reconciliation. I believe that God- the Author and Finisher of our faith will perfect the work He has started! It has been refreshing to watch God's activity in the last year. I'm especially excited to see

how He is using individuals in our industry to minister to people around the world! We have folks touring in foreign countries sharing the love of Jesus and Gospel Music. It warms my heart to know our "best of the best" songwriters have journeyed into foreign lands equipping saints to write new worship music for their own culture! It also encourages my heart to see our very own venture into Hollywood shining for Jesus!


I believe we are involved in Gospel Music at a VERY exciting time. I see God raising up a new generation of artists HUNGRY to change the world. There are people in our industry taking notes of current events and recognizing the warning signals of a soon returning Christ. These folks have agreed to put aside differences and are willing to do whatever it takes to reach people- and that includes taking off masks, rolling up sleeves and meeting people where they are!

While working through a songwriting exercise last week, the Lord spoke to my heart. The random word for the exercise was "Rain Cloud." I had exactly 90 seconds to write my thoughts. In the minute and a half, God reminded me... There is absolutely NOTHING - no genius, no world power figure nor no wealth that can thwart the mission of a rain cloud. NOTHING. If world leaders got together with the world geniuses and planned a barbeque at 2:00 on a Saturday afternoon and if God sent a rain cloud for the same time- they would pack up and move inside! They couldn't even pay someone to rid them of the inconvenience. Yep... the people that create and fund missile interceptors can't intercept a rain cloud. Why? The Bible says rain demonstrates God's faithfulness.

God started the good work of Gospel Music, He will perfect it and finish it- it's just up to us to get on board with HIS activity! We have to be willing to go where He says, say what He tells us to say and do what He says to do however He says how! It's that simple. There are seven billion on the earth, it is past time we get out of our boxes of tradition and ride the clouds of change! In 2012 Gospel Music is alive and well and still changing hearts and lives! In 2013, if we all truly seek His face, we will be part of amazing things!

Our goal is to be in tune to God's activity promoting the gospel by unveiling what is intriguing and real about Gospel music. With integrity, we will continue to strengthen Christians, highlight people who are fulfilling a call to minister and will emphasize the music that inspires audiences and glorifies God... AND whatever else He leads us to do! It is His magazine to use for the building of His Kingdom!

Merry Christmas... and let's have an AWESOME New Year reaching people for Christ!



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Creative Vision Entertainment is a booking, management and publishing company with a passion to expand music to new areas and levels with a cutting edge, out-side-of-the-box, marketing approach. April Potter Holleman founder/president has worked in the music industry for 16 years. She owned her own booking agency, April Potter Agency from 2002-2006 and has worked eight years as an agent with the Harper Agency. Along with booking, April has worked in management, consulting, radio promotions and most recently publishing. CVE has a wide range of artists with unique musical styles creating 'a little something for everyone.' For more information on booking any of the CVE artists, call the office at 615-479-0954 or email at april@creativevisionentertainment.com. Please check out bios, sound clips and news at www.creativevisionentertainment.com.

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LIFE LOVE & LEGENDS

“Wrapping a Blessed Year”

BY LOU WILLS HILDRETH



We are coming to the close of a momentous year, and thanks be to God for blessings beyond anything we could imagine! A “once-in-a-lifetime” thrill took place, just a few weeks ago, at the Creekside Gospel Music Convention, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. The event was part of a glorious three days of gospel music and fellowship, including the Diamond Awards, all produced by SGNScoops Publisher Rob Patz and Editor-in-Chief Rhonda Frye. I can never thank them enough for honoring me on the Monday night with a “Celebration Of 75 Years In Gospel Music” and for the first “PUBLISHER’S CHOICE AWARD” on Tuesday at the Diamond Awards.

The “Celebration” was an incredible production. What a blessing to have our son David, daughter Kathryn, my sister and brother-in-law Betty & Walt Stephens, Traci & Vic Jungkurth, Tammy & Jeff Smith, and Bill Wills Jr. share the excitement with us. A “shout out” to JP Miller, my TV co-host, for assembling a stunning program of artists and friends who have been a part of my gospel music world. I will forever be grateful to Tim Lovelace, Channing Eleton, David Sutton, Clayton Inman, Jeff Stice, Phil Cross, Chris & Kim White, RW & Donna Blackwood, Craig Hodges, Brad Smith, Jonathan Kunkle, Tana Lonan, Ava Kasich, Rick Francis, Jeff Chapman, Jim & Ellen Moss, Ann Downing, John Lanier, Donnie & Lisa and the Williamsons, Jim & Katie Hefner & all the Southmen Quartet, Buddy Burton, Larry Beck, Roy Bray, Larry Parker, Johnny Washburn. Their songs and spoken tributes were

both delightful and humbling. Video greetings came from Larry Gatlin and Larry Ford. Mark Lowry, Judy Nelson, Ed Harper, Rudy Gatlin, Randy Wills, and a host of others, sent congratulations. Oak Ridge Boys sent red roses. California friends sent yellow roses. Many of my longtime friends, and some precious new ones, shared the celebration, Darrell Bledsoe, Earl Eleton, Matt & Christy Dudney, Bill Dykes, Tank Tackett, Bill Traylor, John Mathis, Jeff & Sheri Easter, Evie Hawkins, Ally Frye, Willie & Sandi Wynn, Ken & Jean Grady, Bev McCann, Ray Cooper, and LaDonna Busler. A special thanks to Faith Pearcey for helping set up the booths with treasured memorabilia, and to Dale Burress, “Southern Style Praise,” for taping interviews. I will forever be thankful to my longtime friend Pat Mathis, Atlanta’s Channel 57, and her crew for taping the event for television. For the grand “Celebration” finale, singers, friends, and family filled the stage as a DVD was shown on the big screen of Bill Gaither singing to Howard and me “Tho Autumn’s Coming On.” We were touched by the sentiment of this song and the thoughtfulness of our friends, Bill & Gloria Gaither. My wonderful husband and I know we are in the final years of an incredibly blessed life. As we close the year 2012, our desire is to spend the coming days according to Philippians 3:14 “pressing on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” We pray that you HAVE A BLESSED CHRISTMAS SEASON!!!!

Photo ID: Lou Hildreth's "Celebration of 75 Years
In Gospel Music" at Creekside Gospel Music
Convention: Rob Patz, Lou, JP Miller

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A promotional poster for "In His Grip Promotions". The background is a red brick wall. The text "In His Grip" is in large, bold, black letters at the top, with "PROMOTIONS" in smaller letters below it. Underneath, it says "National Radio Release" and provides the Facebook link "www.facebook.com/inhisprippromo". At the bottom, it says "Contact Jason Brown" and the phone number "(606) 335 - 0214". A small photo of a man (Jason Brown) is on the right side, and the email "inhisprippromo@yahoo.com" is at the bottom right.

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Write About Jesus 2012

By Rhonda Frye



In a nut-shell, the Write About Jesus Songwriter's Workshop is a three day conference designed to equip writers with the necessary skills to become better songwriters. Eager registrants gathered from all over the country and beyond in St. Charles, Missouri on October 11-13, 2012. I was one of many students with an open mind and a teachable spirit gleaned wisdom and experience from the top Christians Songwriters of our day. It was truly an amazing experience for many reasons on many levels. I can honestly say, I came home a better writer with a spiritually renewed spirit. And- I came home with many connections to many new friends and potential co-writers. I found Write About Jesus to be a life-changing experience and a place where I found *My People!*

Write About Jesus was founded by John and Sue C. Smith in 2000. Sue is a five-time Dove award winning songwriter who has had cuts by Avalon, Jason Crabb, The Oak Ridge Boys, The Crabb Family, Sandi Patty, Guy Penrod, Travis Cottrell, Mark Harris, Larnelle Harris, The Martins, Janet Paschal, Pure NRG, Triumphant Quartet, Ernie Haase and Signature Sound, Karen Peck and New River, Brian Free and Assurance, The Hoppers, and many more. She won the Dove Award for Inspirational Recorded Song of the Year in 2004. Sue has written seven #1 songs, including AGM's award for this year's song of the year for "On The Banks of the Promised Land." Sue has written over 50 musicals for Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing.

Sue and her husband John, a motivational speaker and respected family and career counselor, work diligently to put together an all-star line-up of conference staff and instructors. This year's clinicians included: Lee Black, Gina Boe, Carl Cartee, Dennis Dearing, Stephen Duncan, Michael Farren, Simon Hawkins, Allie Lapointe, Joel Lindsey, Phil Mehrens, Jennie Lee Riddle, Rick Shelton, Belinda Smith,

Allison Speer, Benton Stokes, James Tealy, Kenna West, Tony Wood, Guy Zabka, Holly Zabka.

Class Sessions on a variety of topics taught by the clinicians as well as private critiques were available throughout the weekend. Topics Included: Publishing, Co-Writing, Creativity, Pitching, Song Painting, Re-writing, Mentoring, Knowing Genres, Writing a Great Lyric, Writing a Great Melody, Demos, Great Ideas, Writing Across Cultures, Writing for Southern Gospel, Praise and Worship, CCM, Musicals, Pop, Country, Print, Kids and more! Honestly, there wasn't a subject involving the art, craft or business of songwriting un-touched!

The students had the opportunity to participate in the songwriter's contest. Applicants were divided into genres and were critiqued and judged accordingly. Although the critiques can be uncomfortable for the nervous songwriter, the criticism is necessary, constructive and beneficial. This year's grand prize winner was Allison Gilliam for "I Will Rest."

Each day, everyone gathered for a great time of spiritual encouragement, led by John Smith and for a time of worship led by different worship leaders each session. Wow! There are so many wonderful things to say about Write About Jesus- but the spirit of Christian love and community is almost indescribable. During the times of worship, the sweetest spirit filled the room as tears fell and hands lifted.

Perhaps the most wonderful time during the whole weekend was the "Writers In the Round" Concert. It was truly an amazing time of worship as clinicians performed in most cases, their latest composition. Again- it was a time of hands lifted, tears falling- and people rising to their feet with applause. Also during the concert, Sue shared a video to update the registrants regarding a WAJ mission trip to India and announced the possibility of a WAJ mission trip

to Japan. The participants were then given the opportunity to support this cause.

Sue shares: "Five of us went to India for 10 days. We did 3 different workshops in northeast India for about 300 songwriters. In the first and largest workshop, we taught people who came from many different people groups. Some of these do not have the whole Bible translated into their language. They don't have songs to worship God that come from their own culture, so they borrow songs from other religions and rewrite the words or they try to translate Western worship songs. Part of what we wanted to do was to help them write for their own churches songs



that grow from their tradition and culture... something in the "heart language" of their people. Twenty-eight songs were written while we were there. One of the "tribes" are a people who work on the tea plantations near the Chinese border. Their lives are very hard, but it was amazing to see their joy in the Lord! The pastor we worked with was raised in a Hindu home. He learned about Jesus through a lady who was one of the first Y-WAM volunteers. What a blessing that that lady had recently returned to India and came to the workshop!

The money to finance the workshop came in the form of a love offering we took at our 2011 Write About Jesus workshop. None of this offering money went to pay our travel expenses

It was an amazing opportunity. If God allows us to go to Japan, I would be so excited and grateful. Meanwhile, the offering received will allow us to send about \$1500 back to India to further the work that is going on there."



I am very grateful for the opportunity of participating in the 2012 Write About Jesus Conference and I'm looking forward to next year's conference. I'm pleased to say, I have *Found My People*! I don't want you to take just MY word for how meaningful this conference is, listen to what others have to say....

"There isn't a better opportunity for aspiring songwriters to develop their talent than WAJ. From the practical nuts and bolts of the business to the creative, Sue covers it all, bringing in the industry's best to serve as clinicians. It's an amazing time of inspiration, education, and mentoring in an atmosphere of fellowship and community." ~ Kenna Turner West

"I've been attending WAJ since 2004 and when I think back to that first year until now, I have grown alot as a writer. It's amazing how much WAJ has impacted my career and development. The classes are relevant and at the same time compelling. Not only do I learn, but God moves in my heart in a new and fresh way every year. I am very proud to be the 2006 Grand Prize winner of WAJ (with my co-writer Karen Gillespie) and am forever thankful to Sue and John Smith for their vision and concern for writers everywhere.



I am absolutely convinced that I would not be where I am today without WAJ!!" ~ Helga Kaefer

"I love the whole Write About Jesus experience. The instruction is top notch. I go to help facilitate classes but always learn so much. But more than that, there is such a family feel to the whole weekend. When you go, you definitely *find your people*." Lee Black

"Write About Jesus is, by far, the most comprehensive



seminar available for anyone wanting to pursue writing Christian music on any level. The classes are taught by songwriters who are currently industry leaders and who are creating the music heard on the radio, in your choir lofts and on the cds you listen to daily. Write About Jesus exists solely to give new writers the tools they need to further their ministries on whatever level they choose. With a deliberate accent on songwriting as a ministry, the classes are designed to equip writers with the best tools of communication available. Sue Smith was an English teacher

for many years before she became a full time songwriter. Write about Jesus couples her passion as a teacher with her passion as a songwriter to provide a staff and a curriculum that is the highest level of quality available. As someone who has been on staff at Write About Jesus every year since its inception, I can tell you that Sue Smith recruits clinicians who are not only passionate about writing songs, but also are passionate about building foundations for songwriters that will serve them well in their craft." ~ Joel Lindsey

"For years, my friend Andrea Parker told me about Write About Jesus. When I was finally able to attend, I found out why she was always so enthusiastic about it: WAJ is like going home! Whether you're a clinician, alumni, or first-timer, it's like a family reunion each fall. I especially love the "aha moment" when a new writer is taught/encouraged and "gets it" - I'm that writer, every year! Another huge thing about WAJ: each leader is a student of the Word, and a student of songs. Write About Jesus. Oct 10-12, 2013. Get there!" ~ Eva Wilson

"The Write About Jesus Workshop has singularly served to instruct and inspire me more in songwriting than every other similar event combined. I attribute the "song cuts" I have had to skills I have learned, friends I have met, and doors that have opened as a direct result of WAJ. The clinicians are accessible and genuine in their desire to teach and stretch the students in the craft of songwriting. The atmosphere of the workshop is supportive and encouraging and, unlike many similar events, performance or competition is not emphasized. Instead, you will find the emphasis strongly placed on helping songwriters of all levels to simply travel further on their journey toward good songwriting. I come every year and I am always refreshed and encouraged by the "family reunion" environment . . . as we often can be heard saying, *I have found my people*. Ed Stivers

Mark your calendar for October 10-12 2013 and visit the Write About Jesus website at: <http://www.writeaboutjesus.com/> for more news and information.

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Pilgrims & Prodigals: Perspectives on Roaming, Redemption, and the Next Generation from the Annie Moses Band

By Scott Rhoades



As the blazing sun cast its blistering glow across the dry and dusty plantation fields of Texas, a young woman arched upwards to a kneeling position, rested on her knees, and lifted an arm to wipe away the beading drops of sweat streaming down her bronzed and tarnished face. The Great Depression was a difficult time for most and survival was the priority of the day. Work, when found, was cruel and ruthless. Life, if survived, was a tale of hardship and adversity. For Annie Moses, there was no exception. A hired field hand, she shaded her eyes with her arm and squinted as she stared across the vast cotton fields and watched as other workers moved wearily under the weight of the exhausting, afternoon heat. She bent her head down and coughed to clear her throat of the heavy, granular air, struggling to catch her next breath. Then she closed her eyes to rest. How could she go on like this? There was no progress. Life as a sharecropper was difficult and burdensome and the work nearly unbearable. But then her thoughts turned towards her children back in the old clapboard shack, especially her daughter Jane's musical gift, in

which she would sacrificially invest. Perhaps there was reason to go on. A flicker of hope kindled deep within her spirit and she opened her eyes, knelt over the next plant, and began to quietly hum the tune of a poor wayfaring pilgrim.

Decades later, on a black, rainy night in New York City, Annie Wolaver found herself sitting in a cab for the trip home. She wasn't paying attention to the bustling busyness along the avenues or the stream of traffic that could make the journey longer than it should. Her mind was in a million places and she had a real dilemma on her hands. The proposition was risky at best. Should she continue pursuing a solo career in classical music or would she squander the years of dedication, hard work, and the musical legacy left to her through her parents, her grandmother Jane, and her great-grandmother and namesake, Annie Moses for a chance at something she had viewed as a "sideline gig" or something she and her family did "just for fun"? Annie reminisced about her past; the long hours she and her

brothers and sisters had spent practicing and honing their skills and talents with their parents, at the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University, the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, and Juilliard. She thought about the times she and her family would perform together for family reunions or small events. Could they do something more? Could they successfully travel outside the boundaries of traditional classical music? Would it work? Could it work? Would they remain pilgrims or become prodigals?

Introducing The Annie Moses Band

In 2002, The Annie Moses Band embarked upon and initiated a musical renaissance unlike any other. Abandoning individual classical careers, Annie, along with her brothers and sisters, set out with their parents, noted songwriters and arrangers Bill and Robin Wolaver, for an exceptional journey with bold combinations of musical genres that remain unparalleled. Named in honor of their great-grandmother, Annie Moses, the band's philosophy and mission surround their family legacy and reclaim the arts by investing in the next generation of musicians to propagate the gospel of Christ.

Annie takes the lead on violin and performs most of the lead vocals. She is joined in this incredible fusion of musical styles and elements by brothers Alex (viola), Benjamin (cello), and Jeremiah (guitar), along with sisters Camille (harp and organ), and Gretchen (violin 2, and mandolin). While Annie's father Bill (piano and keyboards) and mother Robin (background vocals) have traditionally rounded out the group, the band has recently grown to include sister-in-law Berklee (Alex's wife and background vocalist) and musician Javier Santiago (drums.)

Pilgrims and Prodigals

Pilgrims and Prodigals is the latest project from the Annie Moses Band and in spite of their past success, Annie believes "this is really our first release because it represents a dream in the making and a new chapter in our lives." While the band has recorded numerous CDs and DVDs, *Pilgrims and Prodigals* represents the group's first self-produced, commercial release. "This project explores the timeless themes of roaming and redemption. Everyone is going somewhere," says Annie. "We are either finding our way back home or running away from it. The songs of this project tell one of those two stories."



While the *Pilgrims and Prodigals* project is available as a double disk, CD/DVD combination package, complete with an amazing mix of classical, jazz, folk, Celtic, and pop arrangements with studio and live performances, it also reflects references to timeless works of literature and poetry, painting a portrait of the narrow path of the pilgrim and the well-traveled path of the prodigal. The songs selected represent the works of talented writers and musicians from times past, including members of the Wolaver family, and provide a refreshing perspective for the road of life.

Poor Wayfaring Stranger tops the list on this project and according to Annie is "the quintessential song of the pilgrim." Described as a "slice of Americana, with a twist of Jazz," Annie credits her father with reinventing and infusing this traditional classic with a fresh new sound.

I've Got A Name brings back the familiar sounds of musician Jim Croce as the band receives a crash course in their parents' favorites and highlights the importance of identity. "Identity is central to the concept of the pilgrim. You have to know where you have been to know where you are going," says Annie.

Love's Legacy is perhaps the theme song for the Annie Moses Band and pays tribute to their great-grandmother, Annie Moses. According to Annie, "She had a hard life and the perspective of her life led from a cotton field to the grave, but the perspective of eternity is that she blazed a trail from the cotton field to the concert hall."



The pride of their heritage is evident, not only in name, but in their dedication to hard work and musical excellence. With eight musical CD and DVD projects (*Legacy*, *Always Morning Somewhere*, *Bethlehem - House of Bread*, *Christmas Bright and Beautiful*, *Eden*, *Christmas with the Annie Moses Band*, *This Glorious Christmas*, and *Through the Looking Glass*) and the song *Love's Legacy* - a tribute to Annie Moses, the band has enjoyed over a decade of growth and success, preparing them for the next chapter of an exciting adventure!

The Road Well Traveled (A Cautionary Tale), written by Alex Wolaver, is taken from the infamous Robert Frost poem *Road Not Taken* and invites the listener to once again take the road less traveled. The song features a vocal solo by Alex with a dynamic piano solo by Camille.



Blush is a call to traditional values, beauty and innocence. In addition to its performance on the CD/DVD project, the song is gaining additional exposure as the Annie Moses Band's first music video premieres for television and the internet.

Catcher in the Rye, *Progress*, *Read Between the Lies*, and *My Room*, take messages from great works of literature (*Catcher in the Rye*, and *Pilgrim's Progress*) and conveys the truth of hope in the midst of the pilgrim's search for belonging and home and is augmented by the invigorating instrumental performances of *Toss The Feather*, *Fiddlesticks*, *Moffat Jig*, *Girl of Constant Sorrow*, *Trail Mix*, *Shenandoah*, and *Blarney Pilgrim*.

Annie Moses Ministries

While the Annie Moses Band celebrates their latest project, moves to a new chapter in their lives, and performs in concerts across North America, their passion, like that of their great-grandmother Annie Moses, is to invest in the next generation of musicians. In 2010, the band formed Annie Moses Ministries, a ministry dedicated to promote the pursuits of young musicians by providing artistic experiences that will "enrich and equip the next generation to obey the Biblical mandate to 'make His praise glorious.'" Annie Moses Ministries includes The Fine Arts Summer Academy and the Annie Moses Conservatory.

The Fine Arts Summer Academy

The Fine Arts Summer Academy (FASA) is a two-week event held in Nashville, Tennessee for young artists, offering instruction in strings, brass, woodwinds, voice, dance, drama, guitar, piano, and percussion. Faculty include pedagogues and alumni from the Juilliard School, Cincinnati Conservatory, Berklee College of Music and other prestigious institutions. The

Academy culminates in two original Broadway-style shows, tailor written for attending students: the Younger Division Musical (ages 3-10) and the Upper Division Gala Show (age 10-college sophomores). The FASA Gala Show is held on an arena stage with professional lighting, videography, audio, and orchestral accompaniment. "It's Riverdance on steroids," says Annie.

Annie Moses Ministries impacts the lives of over 300 students a year, and over 1,500 since the FASA began in 2003. FASA students come from over 27 states and three countries, with Annie Moses Ministries awarding more than \$37,000 through FASA scholarship funds since 2010.

Applications for the 10th FASA are now available! This spectacular experience will take place at Lipscomb University July 13-27, 2013. Participants of the Academy will study and perform all styles of music and art, culminating in a Broadway-style extravaganza in the Allen Arena on July 27, 2013. This year, the Academy is proud to announce new tracks, including Composition, Creative Writing, Fine Arts, and Musical Theater for ages 10-13. For more information on the FASA, please visit: fineartssummeracademy.com

Annie Moses Conservatory

Annie Moses Conservatory, a mentor program for aspiring pre-college artists, specializes in solo instruction, commercial music theory, group performance, and artist development. Led by the musicians of the Annie Moses Band, the Conservatory nurtures the unique identity of each artist and prepares them for professional level involvement in the world of the arts.

Catch The Vision of Annie Moses

Annie Moses Ministries is a not-for-profit organization, and all donations are tax-deductible. By giving financially to Annie Moses Ministries, you could make a pivotal difference in the lives of young musicians. The students and families they serve are often isolated from excellent arts programs with a strong Christian emphasis. The work of Annie Moses Ministries brings these divergent lives together to form a community with a common vision and dedication to excellence. Each year, they receive testimonies from families and young musicians on the impact of the Fine Arts Summer Academy and Annie Moses Conservatory on their artistic horizons.

How can you help? Give (donations of any amount are needed and deeply appreciated). Donate (instruments or musical supplies). Volunteer (become a part of the FASA). Pray. Giving may be done online, by phone or by mail. For more information you can contact Annie Moses Ministries at:

Annie Moses Ministries
PO Box 2473
Brentwood, TN 37024

888.839.1055

For more information on the latest news and products from the Annie Moses Band, be sure to visit their website at: www.anniemosesband.com

Celebrating What Matters: Women of Faith 2012

By Jennifer Campbell



Faith. You can't see it. You can't even touch it. But I can tell you from experience, I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that it is there. God's Word says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Recently, I had the opportunity to exercise my own faith. En route to the 2012 Women of Faith Celebrate What Matters event in Orlando, I prayed fervently for my Grandma, as she was having surgery. Having taken her to the hospital early that morning, I worried whether or not I should proceed with my plans to head to Orlando. She urged me to go, so as I walked through the hospital doors, I felt as if I had stepped out on faith as I proceeded toward Orlando. *Faith* that she would be okay. *Faith* that I would have a safe journey to Orlando. *Faith* that everything would be alright.

This year, Women of Faith introduced a new stage design, as well as new performers including Ballet Magnificat, Mike Lewis, the Jesus Painter, and Pattie Mallette, Justin Bieber's mother. I especially loved watching as the Jesus Painter transformed the silhouette of a person on their knees into the image of Jesus Christ himself. Other highlights include the anointed lyrics of the songs sung by Gospel Music Hall of Fame inductee Sandi Patty, singer Amy Grant, American Idol finalist and Grammy nominee Mandisa, and the Women of

Faith worship team. There is something extra special that happens when more than 8,000 women raise their voices together in one accord, worshipping the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

One of the most touching moments to me personally was hearing the stories told by Brenda Warner. She told of the emotional ups and downs that she has encountered in life. Yet even through the difficult situations she has faced, she affirmed that God is faithful. She encouraged attendees to answer every call with unshakeable faith. Whether it is a devastating call or an uplifting one, we should always answer boldly and have faith that God will bring us through the storms and into the sunshine once again.

Motivational speaker Andy Andrews shared of his childhood desire to become a speaker. God has made this childhood dream a reality. Andy weaves a tale in such a way that will make you laugh, cry, and encourage you to listen to God's still voice and follow Him in every aspect of your walk with Christ. You will not only be left with a desire to be a better person, but to also live a better life.

Elisa Morgan spoke on the way that Mary did what she could. She asked the question, are we doing everything



we could? And she challenged everyone to make sure they do not let one opportunity slip past them to share the love of Jesus with someone else.

Marilyn Meberg and Patsy Clairmont, two Women of Faith veterans, transformed the scriptures into easy-to-understand messages filled with hope as they related the verses to life in 2012. Their practical advice and Word-filled wisdom are a breath of fresh air, allowing everyone to relate to their stories and personal struggles.

The entire event was concluded with a presentation aptly titled The Voice Worship Experience, a combination of music, worship, dance, and scripture from *The Voice*, a new translation of the Bible. This was a fitting way to end the event, as this year's event focused on bringing God's Word to light and keeping the Good News of Christ at the center of every word spoken and every song sung.

As I sat there listening to the songs, absorbing the messages, and enjoying the fellowship of women united together to praise the name of Jesus Christ, I was constantly reminded of the way that faith is always present. And I don't feel that it was a coincidence that I became a stronger woman of faith on my journey to Women of Faith. My faith in God is why the surgeon called and said my grandma was recovering well. My faith in God is why I arrived in Orlando safely. My faith in God is why I am sitting here next to my grandma, who is looking forward to cruising with my dad and I once again. I am so thankful for individuals who dedicate their lives to ministering to others. I am thankful for God's Word and the way it speaks to my heart in good times and bad. Most of all, I am thankful for God's faithfulness. Because of God's faithfulness, my family and I can continue to enjoy celebrating what matters!

For more information on a Women of Faith event near you, go to <http://www.womenoffaith.com>.



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Soul'd Out REALLY IS...sold out

By Lorraine Walker

Soul'd Out has been making great gospel music for twelve years, scooping up the 2010 Singing News Magazine Horizon Group of the Year Award in the process. The Ohio-based, Crossroads artist released *What The World Doesn't Know* in early 2012, with the singles, "Through The Blood", "All Things Are Possible" and "Go Out And Get Him" doing well on the gospel charts. However, what made Soul'd Out the talk of the town this year was the acquisition of two of gospel music's leading vocalists, Bryan Hutson and Ian Owens.

People laugh about the revolving door of gospel music groups, referring to the number of changes in personnel that are experienced by this genre. However, in comparison to the national statistics of people with average secular jobs, Southern Gospel really isn't much different from the norm. The Department of Labor statistics say that the median number of years that workers had been with their current employer was 4.6 in January 2012. ¹ Also, the average person held 11.3 jobs from age 18 to age 46.²

It is quite likely that persons born after 1964 will hold more jobs in their working careers than their parents did, decreasing that median number of years per job. So when gospel fans see personnel changes in their favorite groups every two or three years, it is really not surprising, considering the demands of road travel and financial considerations. Soul'd Out's previous members who departed this year were long-term veterans of the group, in

relation to the general statistics. Tanner Stahl, the group's previous baritone, left the group after a five-year tenure. Bass singer Matt Fouch departed after eight years. The length of stay for both of these gentlemen is a tribute to the type of group Soul'd Out is and the bonds between the members.

Bryan Hutson came to Soul'd Out from the Kingsmen, having been with the group for ten years total, in two separate stints. Ian Owens arrived from Ernie Haase and Signature Sound (EHSS), where he traveled with the group for two years. Prior to EHSS, Owens had been with The Imperials for over seven years. These two gentlemen are both still loyal to their previous groups and knew that when God said it was time to move on, they needed to obey.

"I joined Soul'd Out in December of 2011," says Hutson. "I recorded 2 CD's with them before I actually sang on stage with them. My first official concert was in January of 2012. I became friends with Matt Rankin in 2007 and The Kingsmen worked with them a few times and I began to get to know the other members of Soul'd Out. I was impressed with their talent but their desire to see souls won for the Kingdom of God inspired me. When the opportunity came to come on board with them, Yvonne and I contacted our spiritual mentors and our prayer wasn't, "God let this happen," but instead it was, "God if this is Your will, open the door; if it's not, close this door." He opened it and we couldn't be happier."

Dusty Barrett sings tenor with the group and is thrilled with the new additions. He agrees with Hutson that the quartet's main desire is to have people drawn closer to the Lord. "Without question, Soul'd Out is a *ministry-first* group," says Barrett. "Although we absolutely love Southern Gospel, the guys of Soul'd Out are focused on seeing souls saved through our music. We also take the opportunity of being out on the road to witness to people at restaurants, truck stops and anywhere else the bus stops during the week.

emcee, etc. I love that each one is excellent at what they do, yet so humble. God truly has blessed me to allow me to be able to do what we do with such quality people."

"The guys all have such a heart for ministry," agrees Hutson. "So many times, we use the term *heart for ministry* and don't really mean it. However, these guys live it." Hutson continues, "The best part for me is that we are all of the same mindset; we give God our best, honor our family,



I know that there are a lot of other groups like that, but as I watch the lives of the guys I sing with, I'm so proud to be singing and traveling with them. I know that in the shadows, when there is no way anyone would ever know if they slip up, these guys are strong men of integrity; they truly sing and minister with all their hearts. The guys I share the stage with are not only my coworkers, but they're my prayer partners, my accountability partners, and my brothers."

When Matt Rankin, Soul'd Out's manager and lead singer, was asked to comment upon the current line-up, he found it difficult to express everything in his heart. "You don't have enough time for me to tell you all about my guys," Rankin says. "I love them dearly. They are each unique, yet all on the same page. I love the closeness. I love that I can ask them to pray about something and they do it! I love that they push me to be a better singer, songwriter,

focus on ministry and make good quality music. Also, Soul'd Out's schedule allows me much more time to be with my family."

Soul'd Out is recognized in the industry as truly being sold out to their faith and their commitment to ministry. Greg Bentley, head of Publishing at Crossroads, respects these men greatly. "I appreciate that they are real," says Bentley. "Their focus is not on being the top quartet in the industry, it's on ministering to the people they sing to. I have known Matt Rankin since he was a teenager; I know where he is coming from and I admire that he has stuck with his beliefs as the group has grown. Would they like to be considered one of the top quartets? Sure they would, but that is not their focus."

One of the industry's favorite musicians, Dr. Jerry

Goff, shares, “I can best give you a quote by quoting a friend of mine, Dr. Rhodes of the First General Baptist of Jackson, MO, who talked to me after Soul’d Out visited his church. ‘Jerry,’ he said, ‘we had Soul’d Out last evening. They entertained us with their talents and they ministered to us with their commitment. Three people accepted Christ after their testimonies. They are the ultimate gospel quartet!’”

Another industry fan is Aaron Wilburn. “Soul’d Out Quartet is always a great group of guys to work with!” Wilburn continues, “They love what they do and there’s always support from them for other artists. Not only that, they know how to connect with the audience and bring smiles and joy to people! I’m anxious to hear the new sound with the addition of Ian Owens...what a great voice!! And he’s short!” laughs Wilburn, who can relate to Owen’s stature. “My one on one conversations with the group almost always end up with the topic of ministering, not entertaining. I truly believe their desire is to touch and change lives.”

Continuing the legacy of touching lives while working through personnel changes cannot be an easy task for any Christian group. Bryan Hutson talks about former bass singer, Matt Fouch, who departed from the group this past Spring. “I told someone that ‘Legacy Five hired a good singer, but they got a great man,’” says Hutson. “I respect Matt Fouch for his stance for living a godly life.” Hutson says he will miss Fouch’s quick wit. “It is difficult filling any position in any group, however, finding the right bass singer is a task. We heard some fine singers and made some lifelong friends through out the process, but we wanted God’s peace about who to hire. I told the guys that I’d rather see us go as a trio than to just hire someone.”

Matt Rankin talks about the seemingly long transition period. “Anytime a group is in transition it feels uncomfortable and abnormal, especially for us since we had been without a permanent bass singer for two-and-a-half months.” Rankin continues, “However, our friends, fans and supporters who have been a part of the Soul’d Out extended family, have really shown us a lot of grace during these uncertain times. They have encouraged us and prayed for us.”

Prayers and encouragement are so important in times of change, especially as the search for a new member can be a daunting task for a quartet. Hutson explained part of the process of finding that perfect fit. “I am friends with Butch Owens of the Blackwood Brothers, who is also Ian’s Dad. He called Matt Rankin after Ian announced he was leaving EHSS. We all discussed him going with us one weekend. We all prayed for a few weeks before he ever got on the bus.”

Rankin fills in some of the details. “From the time of the resignation of our previous bass singer, we decided that we would pray and seek God for wisdom in hiring the right person, even if it meant not filling the bass position at all. We auditioned several great guys. Most of them fit us in a few ways, but not in all. With absolutely nothing negative toward any of those people who tried out, we just didn’t feel like it was the right fit with any of them. The same night we decided we were finished with auditions and that Soul’d Out would remain a trio, I got a call from Ian’s dad asking if we had filled the position. Ian’s dad, known as Butch, drove the bus for us before. Ian and I got in contact after that and it felt like the right thing. I felt like God was in it.”



Hutson agrees that God was in this change and says, “Ian is a quick study and is a great singer, who just happens to sing low. Glen Payne told me years ago, ‘Bryan, if you can’t sing a note every night, don’t sing it.’ I have tried to live by that rule. A lot of bass singers try to sing outside their limitations. Ian has a great range and great solo voice. I’m excited about traveling with him.” Hutson continues, “He strives to protect his integrity. I really respect him for that. Plus, he gets my humor.” When asked about unique characteristics about the new singer, Hutson adds, “He is a comic book guy and I am too. Also, he loves eating at Japanese Steakhouses.”

At the time of this interview, Owens had not been with the group very long. Dusty Barrett talks about the challenge to get to know a new member in a short span of time. “To be honest, we’ve only had one weekend to be on the road with Ian,” says Barrett. “After we knew it was a possibility of him joining our team, all of the guys started to interact with him via text and Facebook, trying to get to know him as well as possible to get a feel for his personality. As our press release stated, we had decided to go trio before Ian contacted us. In order for him to fit and change our minds, he was really going to have to impress us, not only vocally but in all the other areas as well. From the minute he was on the bus, Ian seemed right at home, and he definitely brought it vocally. When we realized his heart for ministry and for people was right in line with ours, we all knew it was a perfect fit. I’m so excited to get to know him more and to share the stage with him every night.”

Matt Rankin is thrilled with the fit of Owens within the team of Soul’d Out. “Ian is no doubt a great singer and I am excited about his abilities to communicate a solo verse as well as sing a rich bass line; however, that’s not what I am excited about the most.” Rankin continues, “The week he went on the road with us, I noticed him connecting with the audience before the program. He was shaking hands, hugging necks and loving on the people. I noticed it, because that’s what I do! Our duty is not to just sing songs, but to communicate messages as well as live out what we are singing about. We truly want to reach the lost and encourage the broken and Ian falls right in line with that.”

Ian Owens himself is enjoying getting to know the other guys in the group and learning how he fits into this strong team. “I am so excited about my future with Soul’d Out Quartet!” says Owens. “In my short time with them it is so evident that the men of Soul’d Out Quartet are fervently seeking God’s face and are fighting to see souls won into the Kingdom. The five of us: Matt, Dusty, Michael, Bryan, and myself, are definitely equally yoked in our desires to evangelize, to spread the Good News, and to be flat out goofy!”

Bryan Hutson says the first few weeks after a major change is a time of adaptation. “It is really just getting to know the new member.” Hutson explains, “We all have our little quirks and we are all on our best behavior for the first few weeks, so getting to know the real side of the new person is interesting.” The group itself needs to allow the new member to find his own place within the quartet. Hutson says, “Through my many years of being in gospel music, you always want to get the new person his own identity. You need to record something with the new person as soon as possible. Fans will automatically compare the new guy to whoever was last in that position. So, getting the new person their own songs to sing makes it easier on the singer and group.”

As Ian Owens adapts to his position in Soul’d Out and the current members learn all about his personality and comic-book quirks, he still retains good ties with Ernie Haase and Signature Sound. “My wife, Megan and I are expecting our third child so I needed a little bit *milder* tour schedule. I will miss my EHSS brothers. They are fantastic men and the past two years have been an incredible and invaluable experience, but I know my time with Soul’d Out Quartet is sure to be amazing!”

Dusty Barrett comments on the factors that cause singers to move to different groups and how quartets like theirs respond to these times of adjustment. “To be honest, nobody likes change,” says Barrett. “And no matter how much you don’t want it to happen and no matter how hard you try to avoid it, it’s going to happen. I’ve been in full time ministry for 12 years and I’ve been blessed to only have been with two groups, Crystal River and Soul’d Out. But you realize that there are four other guys in the group who have families and lives away from the group. Sometimes those lives veer in another direction than where the group is headed. Sometimes God tells you to move, and you better move.”

“There are a million different reasons for change, but in this business, flexibility and adaptability are good qualities to have.” Barrett continues, “I think the key to making a good change is doing your homework on the front end before you hire someone and make sure it’s right. There are a lot of things that have to fit in order for it to work, and the voice is probably the least of those.”

Soul’d Out is privileged to have the voice and character of new bass singer Ian Owens, which rounds out the sound of a group that according to Arthur Rice of the Kingdom Heirs, have great potential for even bigger things ahead of them. “I’ve had the privilege to work with Soul’d Out for several years now,” says Rice. “I actually worked with Dusty when he was with Crystal River so I’ve known him a while. I appreciate the way Matt treats his guys and his commitment to staying true to a quartet sound. Bryan has a

signature vocal sound and stage presence and Michael is a great pianist. It's always difficult to replace a member who's been with a group for a while but I think Ian has already solidified his place with the group." Rice continues, "These guys are always a treat to work with in the studio. They know their chops and ability but are always eager to stretch themselves to become better singers. I'm excited at what the Lord has in store for Soul'd Out's future."

As Dusty Barrett looks at the future of the group and it's direction, he says, "Soul'd Out is going to keep on the path we're on. I think we've all developed a sort of tunnel vision, just trying to find ways to minister, find ways to encourage the child of God, and find ways to tell the lost about the saving grace of Jesus. Sure, we'd like to see blessings as far furthering our reach, i.e. radio, more promoters using us, etc. But we just want to be used. And whatever God's definition of that is, that's fine with us. I've never been around a group of more awesomely talented people who are so absolutely humble and not self-seeking. If people never know our individual names, or even the name of Soul'd Out, but find a personal relationship with Jesus because of something we've sung, said or done, we're tickled to death with that, and it was worth leaving our families for that week."

Jeff Collins of Crossroads says Soul'd Out is a great quartet to work with in the studio. "I mainly deal with Matt Rankin of Soul'd Out when it comes to the business end and I really appreciate Matt's sensible approach to decision making," says Collins. "He makes sure of costs involved before scheduling new releases and keeps his account current. That alone tells me a lot! I've known Matt for quite a while now and he's a good guy with a heart for God and the Gospel through music. All of the members of Soul'd Out are ministry-minded and have their priorities in order, seeking God's direction in what they are doing. They are a producer's dream in the studio, as they actually let me produce, and have confidence that the Crossroads team and I will produce a first class recording for them."

When asked about Soul'd Out's new bass singer, Collins says, "It's too early for me to comment on Ian yet, but I'm sure he will be an asset to the group as he is a fine bass singer. I'm sure it will take time for him to learn to blend with this group of singers, to discover what works best for Soul'd Out. I look forward to producing him in the studio and getting to know him."

Greg Bentley agrees with co-worker Collins. "The guys are a blast to work with. On their latest recording titled *What The World Doesn't Know*, I got to work with them from the photo shoot on through the finished CD. These guys love having fun and cutting up. They had the photographer bent over laughing at times and they are the same way anytime you are around them. You can tell they really enjoy what they do. At the same time, they have that serious side too, and we have had some deep conversations about songs, performances, and the personal side of ministering at each date they do. I guess if I tried to sum this up, it would be

they are the *Real Deal*. I would not question recommending them to any church or promoter that I know."

Bryan Hutson talks about Soul'd Out's latest recording. "*What The World Doesn't Know* was released in January 2012 and all songs were written by members of Soul'd Out. That's pretty awesome. My favorite song is 'Thank You Lord', not because it features me, but because we so many times get caught up in asking God for this and that, that we fail to thank Him for what He's already done." Hutson says the audience's favorite song from that recording is "Worthy The Lamb Is He". Hutson explains, "It is a song of praise to God and people are moved when we all are praising God."

Soul'd Out fans looking forward to some new recordings with the current members will be thrilled to know that there are some releases coming soon. "We are actually working on three new recordings," says Hutson. "One will be a collection of classic quartet songs and hymns entitled *Soulace 2*." *Soulace* was released in January of 2012. Hutson continues, "Then we are releasing two CD's that will feature 20 Soul'd Out Quartet favorites from previous albums. The new guys, Ian and myself, will be on these recordings." Fans can look for these new recordings in early 2013.

As Soul'd Out adjusts to the changes that have occurred this past year and move on into 2013 with a fresh sound, Matt Rankin says that some things just don't change. Soul'd Out will remain sold out to Christ. "Our main goal is to reach more people, win more souls, and keep lifting the name of our Savior as high as we can; to be better husbands and fathers, better church members and just better Christians." However, he says with a smile, "Our long term goals are classified."

Soul'd Out on the web:

<http://www.souldoutquartet.com/bryanhutson.cfm>

<http://www.facebook.com/SouldOutQuartet?fref=ts>

Bryan and Yvonne Hutson's blog: <http://journeywithbryanandy.wordpress.com/>

1. News Release of Tuesday, September 18, 2012. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/tenure.pdf>

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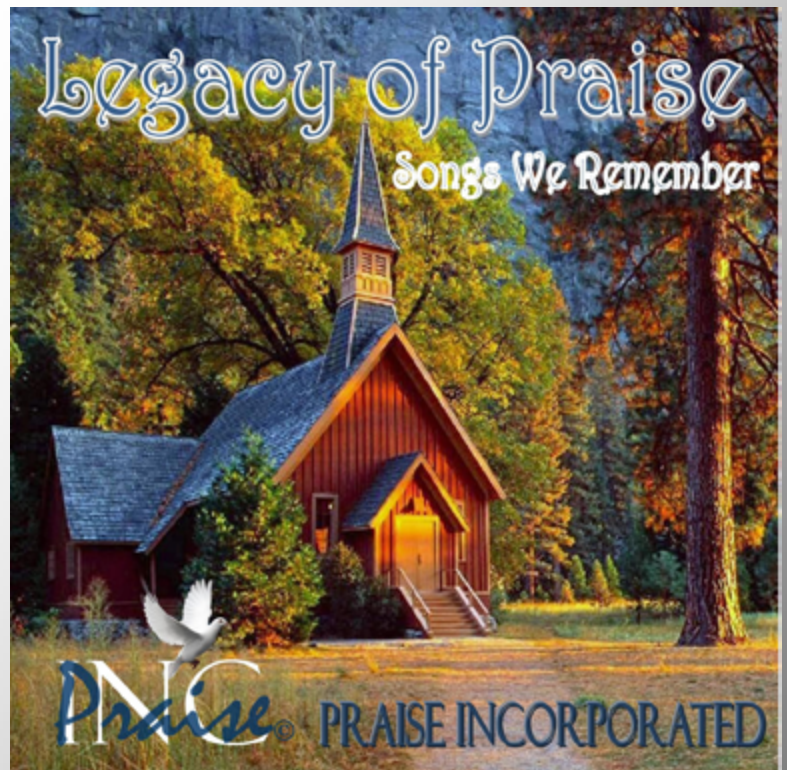
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“Would You Like To Know A Secret?”

By John Mathis Jr.

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It seems at the mere mention of the phrase, “I know a secret,” people react like the old EF Hutton commercial. For those of you younger than your 30’s, there was a commercial for a financial company that came to a point where they said “When EF Hutton speaks....”, then everyone in the commercial who had been conversing would suddenly freeze in their tracks and listen to what EF Hutton had to say. Secrets are usually like that, when someone says “Hey, I have a secret,” people tend to look around to see if anyone else can overhear them then they draw close to hear the secret.

A **SECRET**, by definition, *is something that is hidden or concealed*. Secrets come in many forms, there are secrets that individuals have about themselves, and there are secret recipes, secret documents, secret locations and secrets about processes or ways to do things.

I don’t know why I’ve never noticed this word in Philippians 4:12, but Paul used the word “SECRET” in this passage. He said “*I have learned the **SECRET** of being content in every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or living in want.*” I’ve read that scripture more times than I can count but one day I read it and the word “SECRET” jumped off the page and Paul had my full attention. It was as if I were looking around to see if anyone could overhear us and I drew in and read a little further to see what this secret was, because by all means I have been in those

places in life and I wanted to know this secret that Paul had discovered.

In the very next verse Paul says “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*”. Ah, so that’s the BIG SECRET to contentment! Perhaps this word “SECRET” gets bypassed by such a favorite scripture of Christians throughout the ages. This is Philippians 4:13 and is one many cite as a favorite verse; “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*.” But so often with scripture, we isolate one verse and do not connect it with its entire context; I think we often miss keys to the application of a scripture or its full ramifications to our lives because we underline, highlight or isolate that one scripture that sounds so great. And it is great! We CAN do all things through Christ! However, this verse became more alive to me when I realized “it’s a SECRET to life”!!! It’s more than just a great promise; it is a KEY to living through all situations and circumstances in this life and finding contentment and strength while in the midst of them!

But wait, there’s more to this SECRET of Paul’s! Secrets are discovered, they are found out, we usually come by them through some previous experience or circumstance and they become revealed to us through these situations.

A few years earlier, Paul had written a few letters to the church at Corinth, (1 & 2 Corinthians). In 2nd Corinthians the 12th chapter Paul shared how he had been struggling with

a physical infirmity. He didn't say what it was but it must have been pretty serious because Paul prayed to God three times for this circumstance or situation to be removed. Remember, this is Paul, he had already seen many miracles and manifestations of God's miraculous answer to his requests. Not this time, Paul received his SECRET here in this moment, something that would prove more valuable than any other miracle Paul had been a part of. In 2 Corinthians 12:9 the Lord replied to Paul's many prayers with, *"My grace is sufficient for your every need."*

In other words, the grace of God given to us through Jesus Christ is more than just a way to salvation, it is our strength. Paul went on to say that he would boast all the more gladly about his weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on him. That is why for Christ's sake, Paul said he would delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, and in difficulties. Paul said, *"For when I am weak, then I am strong."* The saving grace of God does more than save us from our sins, it can be our salvation in every situation of life!

You see, our own will power and our own strength will never be enough to produce contentment or strength in all our situations. No matter how strong we think we are or how much resolve we have to our own human will power. There are many times in our life where we have to apply the power of God's grace to our circumstance. We have to pray, *"God, I can't handle this situation in my own power, I need Your grace to be my strength today. I need you to give*

me Your grace in this moment to face what I'm facing."

THAT is the SECRET to doing all things through Christ and finding strength and contentment in ALL circumstances of life. Allowing the grace of God to be our strength! And guess what, I've tried this SECRET and it works! It works much better than my own willpower and strength have worked in the past to try to make the best of circumstances or speak positive because we are limited in our humanity but there are no limits to what God's grace can do! The power of Christ and the grace it brings is truly amazing!

Now, typically when you know a secret you guard it and only tell a few trusted friends. In this case, this is a SECRET that needs to be shared with the world! A SECRET that tells us how to live through the high's and low's, up's and down's, and twists and turns of life! What a great SECRET ... I'm glad Paul shared it with me! ;)

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"Music, Family, Life"

Gordon Mote

By Jennifer Campbell

Sitting on a piano bench at the young age of three years old, Gordon Mote began a journey that has literally taken him across the country and around the world. For even as a young boy, God began preparing Gordon for a journey far greater than he ever imagined possible. Now, he travels more than 150 dates per year and works on recording sessions for a wide array of Gospel and Country artists each week. He has become one of the most sought-after recording studio session players in Nashville, receiving the Academy of Country Music Award for Piano/Keyboard Player of the Year in 2009 and 2011. But through it all, Gordon keeps his eyes on the One who made it all possible: God. He gives God the glory for his music, his family, and his life.

"I'm sure it was a big influence in me even knowing [Gospel] music because I'm sure Mama and Daddy didn't listen to a whole lot of other at that time," Gordon said. "But I remember playing [piano] in church. My first memories of playing piano were mostly gospel songs. As I grew up, as a kid, I'd listen to all kinds of radio and I'd play

anything I heard, if it was a television commercial, or a country song, or a pop song, or a gospel song. But we grew up listening to Southern Gospel and as I got older, contemporary music."

While Gordon has ventured into several genres of music throughout his career, there is still a special place in his heart for the music that started it all. The timeless melodies and old familiar lyrics of the Gospel classics hold fond memories for Gordon.

"We had a radio station in our hometown, WGAD, in Gadsden," Gordon stated, "and they had a Sunday morning program called Songs of Inspiration. That's where we heard so many of the songs that my brother and I learned to sing. That's why the "Songs I Grew Up Singing" record I have out now is so important to me because it brings back a lot of great memories and it just proves that great lyrics and great songs can stand the test of time. You put a new face on it and it's like it's brand new again."

Gordon credits Bill Gaither for giving him the platform on which to begin his ministry. He said his six years traveling with the Gaither Homecoming tour was a memorable journey, one that he cherishes to this day. He still joins the tour on select dates whenever his schedule allows.

Speaking of the Gaither Homecoming Friends, Gordon said the best part of being at a taping for the Homecoming Video series is what people do not see on the videos. He says that the Homecoming Friends are like a big family. They share stories, tell jokes, and even argue a little bit. But at the end of the day, they care for each other and love each other like one big happy family.

Gordon is part of the younger generation of Gospel Music artists, so I asked him what it was like to follow in the footsteps of so many of the Gospel Music legends. His response was that it is "weird." He said people always come up to him at concerts, complimenting him and his ministry. And he said they say things about him like he would say of many of the legends. He humbly said that it seems odd at times that people will pay for a ticket just to come see him. But he said he enjoys talking to people and meeting new people, which is why he said his autograph line usually moves a bit slower than others nearby. Surely, this is a trait of someone who truly loves what they do and appreciates the people who come to hear him perform.

In addition to being a pianist, producer, songwriter, and serving in other facets of the music industry, Gordon is first and foremost a husband and father. He says, "Being a husband and father means everything to me." He and his wife Kimberly have been married 20 years now, and they have three children, Samantha, Parker, and Ashton. He says that he loves his wife more today than the day they were married. He says that Parker is his little athlete, while Samantha sings, plays the piano, and is a budding artist, and Ashton is his funny child, although Samantha can be a bit funny at times as well. He said Ashton will definitely be an entertainer when he grows up. Gordon said that he loves just being home and spending time with his family.

During the interview, I asked Gordon what he hoped his children would teach their children one day. He said they plan to spend Thanksgiving with their family, and he hopes they will want to come home to their house like he enjoys going to their

parents' homes. Above all, he hopes that his children will tell their children about Jesus.

Gordon is definitely a family man. When you speak to him, you can tell he beams with pride when he is talking about his family. He said, "The single greatest moment of my life was marrying my wife, as well as the day I got saved and the birth of my three children."

In life, we all face our share of challenges. But Gordon has had to face a daily challenge in his life since the day he was born: blindness. He said this has been the biggest challenge he has ever had to face. He said in school, there weren't always books on tape available, or braille books, so he had to make do with what materials were available. He said he was mainstreamed into public school when he was in third grade. He went on to graduate from high school with honors, and then he received a full scholarship to Jacksonville State University in Jacksonville, AL. Three years later, Gordon transferred to Belmont University in Nashville, TN. He graduated Cum Laude with a degree in music.

By the musical success he has garnered, it is evident that this music degree has definitely been worthwhile. Gordon has worked with renowned artists in Gospel Music and Country music as well, including Bill Gaither, Rascal Flatts, Steven Curtis Chapman, and Lee Greenwood. He was also named the Anthony Burger Instrumentalist of the Year at the 2012 Diamond Awards Show. He says, "I'm honored to receive this award, and I thank SGN Scoops for everything y'all are doing."

I asked Gordon what advice he would give to a young artist just starting out. He said that he would tell them to start by perfecting their craft, singing in their local area, and seeing where God leads. He said God may open a door for them to branch out, or He may have something for them to do right in their local area.

Gordon said in ten years, he hope to either be continuing to travel on the road if the Lord allows or staying close to home with his family. Either way, I know that Gordon will be following the road paved by God and God alone.

He said if he could talk to God face to face, he would probably not say anything. He said he would likely be rendered speechless, unable to

speak, in awe of God's awesome presence.

Even with his blindness and the other challenges he has encountered in life, Gordon says that he could sum up his life with one song: "Through It All." Through it all, he has learned to trust in Jesus. Through it all, he has learned to depend upon His word.

Gordon is excited about his new Christmas project titled "The Star Still Shines." This project combines Southern Gospel, inspirational, and country styles with a healthy mix of new and traditional Christmas songs and carols, including Michael W. Smith's "Emmanuel" and Steven Curtis Chapman's "Christmas Is All in the Heart. Visit www.gordonmote.com to order your copy today!

Follow Gordon on Twitter! @GordonMote



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New Music for December

by Sandi Duncan Clark

MERRY CHRISTMAS! “It’s the most wonderful time of the year...” When that song was written, the writer was alluding to the winter weather; all the wonderful commercial and relative things that contribute to this very special holiday. Along with all of these delightful things, we as Christians also know this as the precious holiday when we celebrate the birth of our Savior. During our childhood, at church we would have music and a play, most of which centered on the second chapter of the Gospel of Luke and the birth of Jesus Christ.

Growing up as “Preacher’s Kids,” we always took part in the music and all four of us kids had a part in the play. We decorated the church, shared in the Christmas Sunday school parties, caroling, and making certain that the entire shut-in population of our church was remembered with a fruit basket and a gift. Those are such precious memories and helped to make my siblings and me the individuals we are today. For us, growing up with those activities in our church family was what made this the most wonderful time of the year. In our current world, so many people; even Christian folks, get so caught up in the commercialism of Christmas, that we forget the real meaning of this Holy Holiday. Thank you, Heavenly Father, for that heritage!

While the music we are sharing this month is not Christmas music, we have chosen music from families who have made contributions to Southern Gospel music, and who exemplify the family’s role in the Christmas holidays. I hope you will seek out these recordings and enjoy the music shared by the Blackwood Brothers, the Hoppers, Jeff and Sheri Easter, the Hinshaw Family Trio and the Littles.

Again, Merry Christmas everyone, and may God provide a wonderful Holiday season for you and those you love.



SWEET SONGS ABOUT HEAVEN

The Blackwood Brothers
Producer: Billy Blackwood
Daywind Records

The Blackwood Brothers Quartet has been a major contributor to the world of Gospel music since 1934, and continues to provide us with superb four-part quartet music. Jimmy and Billy Blackwood, sons of original quartet member, renowned lead singer, James Blackwood, along with Wayne Little and Butch Owens present a wonderful recording of pure Southern Gospel music, four-part male quartet style. This is Jimmy Blackwood’s final recording with the group before announcing his retirement in September of this year.

The quartet has combined some new material written by some of the finest song writers in the business today, with some older traditional quartet songs for a phenomenal recording. I always enjoy learning who the song writers are and was pleased to see that the quartet and the record company listed the writers of these wonderful songs.

My favorite song is ‘Sweet Songs About Heaven,’

written by Dianne Wilkinson and Rebecca Peck. What an awesome quartet song! 'Goodbye Egypt' and 'Declaration of Dependence' co-written by Marty Funderburk, Jerry Kelso and Sue Smith, are two other songs that are impressive.

The Blackwood Brother resurrected 'Swing Low, Sweet Chariot/Swing Down Chariot' much to the delight of the listener, and this quartet's version of Stuart Hamblen's 'It Is No Secret' is notable. 'I've Heard About A City/Walk Dem Golden Stairs' is a happy, enjoyable combination while 'The Devil Can't Harm a Prayin' Man' rounds out an exciting, enjoyable Southern Gospel quartet experience.

Contact the Blackwood Brothers at www.blackwoodbrothers.com, or 1-800-476-7749 to learn how you can secure a copy of this recording.



SOMEDAY SOON
The Littles
Independent
Producer: John Darin Rowsey

We were introduced to the Little's ministry by Lorraine Walker in our November issue of SGNSCOOPS, and I was introduced to their inspiring music shortly after, with their new album. Family harmony is exciting, and you will hear some of the best from the Littles. Their song selection is very much suited to their style and vocal talent, while song arrangements are amazing and offer something for every Gospel music fan.

Jack, Jan and Rebecca all have strong voices and perform extremely well when they are individually featured on various songs. Rebecca's desire to be a true servant has caused her to work tirelessly on her delivery, and she does a wonderful job on one of my favorite songs, 'The First Day of Forever.' I'm sure we'll be hearing from this family for a long time to come.

'I Know,' the Littles' first song from the recording that was shipped to Gospel radio, has received a great deal of airplay, as fans respond to this talented family. It was quickly added to play lists at radio stations all across the country.

Other great songs on the recording are an exciting arrangement of an older song; 'Highway To Heaven,' along with 'I'm Gonna Make It' and 'Somebody Prays.' Contact the Littles at 704-221-0707 for your copy of the recording, or to have the Littles at your next Gospel music event.



EYES WIDE OPEN
Jeff and Sheri Easter
Spring Hill Music Group
Producers: Jeff & Sheri Easter, Greg Cole, Madison Easter

Excitement, talent and great music are always the blessing when Jeff and Sheri have a new recording! This family's love for the Lord and their family, as well as enjoyment in their music, is always evident. Speaking for myself, I always experience a 'change in attitude' after hearing this inspiring family.

EYES WIDE OPEN is just loaded with excitement, encouragement, joy, praise, happiness, and love! There is no way one can listen to Jeff and Sheri's new music and not rejoice. The theme on this recording is there's a reason for everything and there's an answer to all your questions and your needs. Praise the Lord!

The title for the album comes from a song written by Sheri Easter, titled, 'I Know How It Feels To Survive.' Sheri sings this song with conviction and emotion. This has become one of my very favorite songs.

James Goss wrote 'I Won't Have To Worry Anymore' and Jeff Easter brings back so many memories with this incredible old song. 'Love Is,' and 'Good Old

Gospel Song' are two more favorites and yet every song on this recording is a special blessing in various ways. It has been a joy to watch Madison and Morgan Easter grow up and follow in the heritage of their parents and grandparents. The example of Godly ancestors is a legacy for which these young people can be grateful.

Your personal copy of EYES WIDE OPEN can be obtained by phoning 706-359-1997.



COUNT ME IN
The Hoppers

Spring Hill Music Group

Producers: Michael Sykes, Michael Hopper, Kim Hopper

For more than fifty years The Hoppers have been a major force in Southern Gospel music. Their high morals and demand for quality in their music has set the standards for many in the industry. This album meets those standards plus!

COUNT ME IN is a blessing from beginning to end. The album begins with a song written by former Hoppers pianist, Shannon Childress, titled 'Mighty Is The Word.' The group does an excellent job on this song. From there it was a joy to relax and allow this family to minister to us.

Other choice songs on the recording are 'I Just Feel Like Something Good Is About To Happen,' featuring Dean, 'I Wish We'd Been Ready,' 'If I Can Help Somebody,' and 'I Am Whatever You Need.'

The title song, 'Count Me In,' is a great song written by Ronny Hinson, and also features Dean. It is currently playing on your local Gospel radio station and is a good ol' foot-stomping, hand clappin' traditional Southern Gospel song.

I'm sure you will want to add this recording to your Southern Gospel collection, and you may do so by contacting the Hoppers at www.thehoppers.com



HELD IN HIS ARMS

The Hinshaw Family Trio

Independent

Producers: Robin Hinshaw, Sandy Hinshaw, Debbie Hinshaw Farmer

There comes a time when even as a Christian, we seem to be overwhelmed with things in our lives that take our focus and thoughts away from God, and we begin to drift. The Hinshaw Family Trio, Robin, Sandy and Debbie, have selected ten songs with the theme of the faithfulness of God in a Christian's life. What a blessing this new recording is!

Beginning with a 'Calvary Medley' with 'I've Been To Calvary,' 'I Believe In A Hill Called Mt. Calvary,' 'The Old Rugged Cross Made The Difference' and 'At Calvary,' this medley establishes the fact that God gave His Son and that Jesus died on Calvary for our salvation.

Each vocal is strong, harmony is smooth and the blend is so enjoyable. I like the trio's version of 'No One Ever Cared For Me Like Jesus' and 'He Whispers Sweet Peace.' Their interpretation of several of Kyla Rowland's songs is a blessing. You will enjoy 'Prior To A Prayer,' 'He Will Hide Me,' and 'Did I Mention.'

Please contact The Hinshaw Family Trio for your copy of HELD IN HIS ARMS, call 919-765-5840.

Randy and Sherri Miller: Lyrics, Laughter and Love

By Lorraine Walker



Randy and Sherri Miller are accomplished Gospel artists who are singing, speaking and laughing their way across America. Randy is a Kingsmen alumni, a recipient of numerous Singing News and other Southern Gospel awards and a lifetime inductee of the Alabama Music Hall of Fame. Sherri sang with her family, The Kenny Parker Trio, before doing session and stage work with such artists as Dolly Parton, The Judds and Michael English. Today this couple has joined their accomplished vocals, love of life and ability to make others laugh as they share their music with audiences far and wide.

When Randy Miller left the Kingsmen, he began a solo

career and started Snippa Creek Studios. Sherri Parker Miller joins her husband in making music and laughter with their recently released *Randy Miller Comedy* album and the soon-to-be released *Where It All Comes From*. If something taps into your emotions, whether through humor or song, it will work its way into your heart; but it all comes from the Lord as far as the Millers are concerned.

The title track of *Where It All Comes From* is sung by Sherri and written by Kenna Turner West, one of Southern Gospel's most prolific songwriters. The song is currently on Sound Cloud and showcases the versatility of this talented couple. Kenna says, "Sherri is an amazing vocal talent and all who know her appreciate her sweet, joyful spirit."

Dusty Wells, head of sales and marketing at Word Entertainment, shares, "I love Sherri! I remember the first time I met Sherri was at the National Quartet Convention years ago while sitting with Dottie Rambo at The Rambo's booth. I knew of her because her Daddy, Kenny Parker, was The Rambo's long time pianist. So when this blonde curly haired little beauty of a girl came to the booth, Dottie just went on and on about her and how special she was. Our friendship grew over the years."

"What I love about Sherri is that not only is she a wonderful singer and communicator, but she is a lover of people," says Wells. "She is always consistent, always happy and always caring for others. I love her spirit and I love that God is using her. She is so special and I cherish her friendship!"

Another close friend of the couple is Johnathan Bond of Young Harmony. "I love Sherri and Randy because they practice what they preach, plus they are awesome to be around. Also, during a very dark period of my life, they offered a shoulder. They are Christians in action!"

Through the friendship of many in the Gospel music industry, Randy and Sherri have been able to make some of their dreams come true, such as their studios. “We recorded *Where It All Comes From* at Snippa Creek Studios,” says Randy. “We’ve got a location in Alabama and in Nashville, but most of it has been done in Alabama which is our larger studio of the two. We bring the Nashville guys down and track down there.” Studio players included Jeremy Metcalfe, Reggie Duncan, Danny Crawford and Scott Maynard.

“One of the songs that we recorded on *Where It All Comes From* is called ‘Make My Heart Your Home’ and was written by my Dad, Kenny Parker,” says Sherri. “It’s a song that Janet Paschal recorded 25 years ago, maybe longer, when she was with Jimmy Swaggart. We decided that we would re-do that for many reasons, but it was very emotional for me and then for Mom to hear it too.”

“As far as our background vocals, Sherri and I did pretty much everything because we’ve vocally schizophrenic,” jokes Randy. “We thought, ‘well it would be great to get so and so to sing on this project’; but it’s hard to get people together with our schedules. To wait would delay the album a tremendous amount. So we just do it ourselves because Sherri and I both do background sessions for tons of people.” Sherri laughs, “Plus, we’re cheap! No, just kidding!”

“There’s another song we’re doing on the project called ‘Bedtime Prayer’ and it was written by a good friend, Joe Stephens who writes for our publishing company,” says Randy. “It has just a drive about it,” Randy continues. “The message is about being strong and telling the truth. It seems recently that maybe the Message has been watered down a little bit. I think it just speaks directly to the Truth; that we need to stand up and declare God’s Truth and declare the Word.”

“I take from it, ‘don’t forget what you’re supposed to be doing and get out there and do it, and keep pushing on towards the prize’” says Sherri. “Don’t forget your bedtime prayers. There are several lines in the song that are strong to me but every time we sing it, it is just really powerful to me.

“Joe Stephens is a great writer from here in Murfreesboro and writes for us a good bit,” says Randy. “He’s a super writer, just a young kid, real goofy. He’s a short little redhead and I call him the *Lucky Charms* guy. Birds of a feather flock together and I surround myself with fun-loving jokers,” he laughs. “I think ‘Bedtime Prayers’ is probably going to be released at the first of the year.”

Randy and Sherri’s fans look forward to new mu-

sic, but their audience really enjoys anything this couple brings to the stage. “There’s a song that we do, it’s called ‘Faithful’; people really respond well to it,” says Randy. “It’s usually an outpouring of response because people go through trials and tribulations. I heard a fellow say once that we’ve either gone through a trial, we’re in a trial, or we’re about to go through one. But through it all we have to know that we have a Father Who is faithful through it all. It really hits home with a lot of people.”

The Miller’s music helps them connect with many people on the road and some who are privileged to call them *friends*. Brother Toby Hughes, Associate Pastor of New Zion Baptist Church in Covington, Louisiana, says, “Randy and Sherri Miller have blessed New Zion Baptist Church of Covington, L.A. over the past five years or more. Our church still marvels at the many God-given talents they have: multiple instruments and a range of styles, all presented in a humble, and at the same time, joyous and energetic way. They are God’s live action team! We look forward to having them back in 2013.”

Delmus Pinkard, Lay Minister of the House of Prayer Church of God in Oxford, Alabama says, “We had this couple at our church and they were a great blessing. They are truly anointed of God. We love their style of Southern Gospel music.”

Other friends of the couple, Bob and Connie Scott, also enjoy the Miller’s style of music. “Such a super talented couple that love God, they are what I would call just down-home friendly folks that I truly love to be around. I always look forward and anticipate seeing them; being with them and hearing them minister.”

Along with traveling and ministering in churches, The Millers are busy by the Snippa Creek Studios work. “I built Snippa Creek Studios several years ago, says Randy. “We have two locations, one around the Auburn, Alabama area in Beulah, and a studio right outside of Nashville in Christiana, Tennessee. We have Nashville guys that we use and they don’t mind traveling between the two places. These are guys that I’ve worked with throughout the years and throughout my music career. We’ll go to BBQ’s together and eat chicken and play frisbee and that kind of thing. We go back and forth; we keep the roads hot, between Tennessee and Alabama, working from one studio to the other.”

“At the studio in Alabama, we have an apartment that is built onto it and we use that for clients who travel,” Randy explains. “We’ve traveled all of our lives; we know that it takes money when you’re out doing an album, when you’re there for five days and you’re paying for

five nights in a hotel. We've taken that into consideration so clients can stay in the apartment while they're recording." Randy is accomplished in the studio as well and has worked with many of the major talents in Gospel music including the Kingsmen, Gold City, Cathedrals, Gaithers, and Squire Parsons.



Randy is also a songwriter, although lately he says he's been writing more comedy songs than serious gospel tunes. Sherri says, "He likes to write funny songs about me, so he's been writing songs about my cooking, my driving and anything he can find to pick on me about. People end up really liking me by the end of the concert and are mad at him, so it works out good," she laughs.

"You know there are a lot of married couples out there and my comedy just talks about life pretty much," says Randy. "Mostly I'm making fun of just myself or Sherri. I just talk about her not cooking, as I do all the cooking and I like it and she doesn't have to cook. But I talk about trying to teach her how to cook something..." Sherri interrupts, "Or drive the car". Randy explains, "We bought a van. It was on a Wednesday night, we signed the papers and by Thursday morning Sherri had already wrecked it. We got it back from the body shop and she ran into somebody else. Then, just a couple of weeks ago, she ran into one of those little poles beside the gas pumps and locked it in there." By this time, both are laughing and Randy says, "So I've got some places to get humor from!"

"You learn to laugh at yourself and that's where most of the comedy comes from," Randy continues. "You know, songs about losing your car and how you can't find your car in the parking lot, or one song talks about the extreme price of coffee. You've paid \$6.00 for a latte, and I'm sure most people out there have paid four or five

dollars for a cup of coffee. You sit there and say no I'm not going to do that, but you had to have the coffee, it's so delicious. You can find humor in life; you just have to keep your eyes open."

Sherri loves her husband's songwriting and laughs along with the audience. "My favorite one Randy wrote is called 'Gone to Church Again,'" says Sherri. "It talks about when he was a little boy and how when he would stay with his grandma, she'd load him up for church every time the doors were open. One time he protested and didn't want to go and he had a 'come to Jesus' meeting with his grandma in the yard. He ended up going to church. And he didn't forget about it!"

Everywhere the Millers sing, people want to hear Randy's stories, so he decided he had to make a recording. "I played everything on the Comedy Album and I did all of it just by myself," says Randy. "I told Sherri on a Monday, 'I'm going to do a comedy album,' and by Friday we had product. I think they've heard so much bad news and gloom and doom, they want to laugh 'Happy is the man whose God is the Lord.' And I'm always laughing."

Randy and Sherri are more thankful than ever for family who keep them grounded and surrounded with support. "It's hard to balance everything but we do it," says Randy. "Thank God for grandparents! That's all I can say. They help and a lot of times the kids go with us on the road."

One of the Miller grandparents, Ann Miller, is Randy's mother and one of the couple's biggest fans.



“I guess the number one reason I love them so much is because they are my family,” says Ann. “Another reason I love them is that they are so much fun to be around. Believe me, there is never a dull moment with these two. The third reason is that they are so talented. It is so amazing to watch them take the stage and minister in comedy, song and praise. They are a blessing to me!”



With their children growing up, the Millers are entering a new season of life. Sherri explains, “They’re getting a lot older now, they’re teenagers and driving and stuff like that. So they’ll go with us if they can. They’re really involved here at home in church and everything, so they sometimes have a lot going on and they’ll stay home. But they like to be right in the middle of all our antics so a lot of times they go with us.”

“They love music and aspire to do something in ministry involving music, singing and preaching and everything,” says Sherri. “So we’re proud of that, that God’s got His Hand on their lives, and leading them into being crazy people like we are I guess! We have three kids. Our two boys, Parker and Preston, are 17 and 16 and Kirsten is 13. So we need all your prayers! That’s all I can say—three teenagers...” Sherri laughs.

Randy says the teenagers are not really an official part of the traveling team. “Every once in a while they’ll help unload some speakers or something like that but typi-

cally no, they don’t do anything on stage.”

Sherri says, “We’re working them towards it though. The other night we had a couple of hours before one of our concerts and I found all of them in the back. They had some praise and worship songbooks and they were putting on their own little concert. Before it ended, the youth pastor and his kids and a bunch of other people were with them, just singing it up. So you never know, we might have the Miller Family Band traveling around, like the Partridge Family, or I don’t know, the Klautdt Indian Family!”

The Miller family likes to be as active in their home church, New Vision in Murfreesboro Tennessee. “We’re gone a lot though, so when we walk into the church we get visitors’ cards,” laughs Randy.

Sherri adds, “Our kids go constantly. But we’re in and out so much it’s hard to be plugged in all the time, but we do have a great support system.”

“We go on Wednesday nights and I play with the worship team for the youth,” says Randy. “There will probably be about 600 kids there that we’re ministering to on Wednesday nights. We just enjoy it, we love our church.”

For Randy and Sherri, remaining involved in their home church is only a part of their active spiritual life. They know that keeping their relationship fresh with the Lord through prayer and teaching as well, keeps their own relationship strong. “Sherri and I pray together and that’s imperative to a ministry; to keep in contact with the Father, the One that you’re working for, and to know His voice,” says Randy. “I don’t listen to a lot of music on the radio, I listen to pastors. One guy that I really love is Carl Gallops. He’s a pastor down in Milton Florida, really great friend of mine and I love to hear him speak. I love T.D. Jakes as well.”

“We’ll be almost asleep, flipping through TV channels and we’ll come across Swaggart Ministries,” says Sherri. “I love their music and worship, I just feel an anointing out of that a lot. I also really enjoy our pastor from New Vision, Pastor Brady Cooper. He’s an incredible speaker, gifted, and throws in a lot of humor. A lot of times when a pastor is speaking it’s hard to stay focused. Pastor Cooper keeps you really interested in what he has to say and with humor gets you to hear the meat of what he’s bringing in his message. We also hear a lot of great speakers in the local churches where we go and sing. I get so tickled because there are certain places I love to go back to sing, just to hear the pastor speak on Sunday mornings. That means a lot. It feeds us.”



Explaining the importance of a personal prayer life, Randy reveals, “Everything that I’ve learned to play has been because of prayer and fasting. You have to put legs on those prayers and work, but when I started out trying to learn how to play harmonica which was my first instrument, I just couldn’t get it. So I said, ‘I’m getting really serious.’ I got down on my face before God and said, ‘I’m going on a fast here God and I want You to help me learn to play this thing.’ I started missing those meals and praying every day and bugging everybody in the house trying to practice. Eventually it came, as well as all the other things I’ve learned to play.”

“I didn’t start singing until I was 19 and went from there to hearing parts and it was all because of prayer,” continues Randy. “Individually, you have to stay in constant contact with the Father because you know His Voice when you’re talking to Him all the time. It’s like I could call my buddy in Kansas once a year, and if he calls me maybe one time out of the year, when I pick up the phone if I don’t see his number pop up on the screen, chances are I don’t know who it is. But if I talk to him every day, when he’d call all he’d have to say is ‘Hey buddy’ and I would know his voice.”

“That’s the same thing with God. If we stay in constant contact with Him, we’re going to know His Voice; we’re going to know what He’s saying, how He’s leading us and guiding us.”

As Randy and Sherri continue to preach and pray and sing and laugh, the Millers are reaching many with

the Word of God. Randy says, “There’s still evangelism in us right now. He told us in His Word to go into the highways and hedges.” He pauses. “Gracious, I’ve been on the highways a long time! I told someone the other day, I’m ready to get in the hedges and be still for a little while.”

It doesn’t look like Randy and Sherri Miller are planning to slow down any time soon. As they continue to reach audiences with laughter, lyrics and love, the Millers are moving in the path God has laid out for them. “God is speaking to us that time is short; there’s a harvest out there and we need to continue to press on,” Randy continues. “We have just a narrow window to tell people about Christ’s love. They have a Savior that loves them and if they don’t know Him, they need to hear that today is the day of salvation for them and they can know Him.”

For more on Randy and Sherri Miller please visit:

<http://www.randyandsherrimiller.com/>

See them on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/randysherrimiller?fref=ts>

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7 EAT-SMART TIPS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

By Laurette Willis

*“When you sit down to eat with a ruler, consider carefully what is before you;
And put a knife to your throat if you are a man given to appetite.
Do not desire his delicacies, for they are deceptive food” (Proverbs 23:1-3 NKJV).*

What can one little holiday dinner do? A lot. The average woman who eats 2,000 calories on a normal day may find herself indulging in 4,500 calories and over 200 grams of fat—at one huge meal! According to *The New England Journal of Medicine*, many Americans gain as much as five pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year’s. Often that extra weight is likely to stay with us longer than it took to put it on.

Some nutritionists suggest starting around the beginning of December by cutting 100-300 calories per day so you can splurge a bit during the holidays and still fit into your clothes on January 1st! It can be as simple as not adding the extra cheese on a sandwich, or forgoing the afternoon coffee drink. Have an apple instead.

Seven Quick Eat-Smart Tips:

1. Decide you will not sample foods when cooking or wandering through the kitchen.
2. Don’t cook on an empty stomach. Instead, enjoy a good breakfast first to stave off hunger.
3. Take your vitamins with a big glass of water after breakfast. Taking your supplements early in the day ensures your body is getting the nutrition it needs. Your body will be less apt to crave empty calories, and you’ll have more energy, too.
4. Have water or seltzer water with flavored stevia handy as you start cooking. I like adding a few drops of vanilla flavored stevia sweetener to a glass of seltzer water. It tastes just like cream soda, but without the sugar, calories or chemicals.
5. During the day, pop some gum, a breath-freshener strip or brush your teeth to keep from snacking. One study showed that about 10% of the extra calories from holiday meals are consumed *before* the actual meal itself.
6. Peppermint oil helps curb your appetite. A recent study by Dr. Bryan Raudenbush at the Wheeling Jesuit University in West Virginia evaluated hunger levels and food intake of participants who inhaled peppermint oil and those who did not over a two-week period. Those who inhaled the peppermint oil consumed an average of 3,000 fewer calories per week (approximately 23% less than those who did not inhale the peppermint oil!). Those who used the oil indicated that their hunger levels were significantly lower,

too. You can get peppermint oil at most health food stores (and toothpaste can work in a pinch).

7. At parties, go for the brightly colored vegetable and salmon appetizers and steer clear from dips, creamy sauces and anything light brown (usually means it's fried).

It's best not to announce to everyone what you're doing if you want to "eat smart" during the Christmas and New Year's festivities. It only makes them uncomfortable, and they may try to force you to eat something you know you'd be smart not to eat. This doesn't mean don't enjoy some of the special foods you only get to see once a year. Just be smart about it. It's said the first bite is usually the best, so choose carefully—and hopefully we won't need to put the butter knife to our throat in Proverbs 23 fashion!

Christian Fitness Expert Laurette Willis is the Director of PraiseMoves Fitness Ministry (<http://PraiseMoves.com> and on Facebook <http://facebook.com/Praise-MovesFan>). Get your free fitness kit at <http://Christian-FitnessKit.com> and something brand new: www.MI-RAdance.com – MIRA! is Christian Fitness with a Latin Beat! Hallelujah!!! ©2012

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"Breakthrough" Cross Music Group

By Rhonda Frye



In the world of gospel music, the name "Phil Cross" has to be one of the most esteemed names around. Since Phil began songwriting, he has certainly blessed many with his gift. Unforgettable compositions such as "Champion of Love," "I am Redeemed" and "When I Get Carried Away" are just a few examples of songs that claimed the number one spot during his career. Respected by peers and loved by many, Phil has received numerous nominations and awards from Singing News, the GMA Dove Awards, Diamond Awards and the Southern Gospel Music Association.

In addition to songwriting, Phil has made significant contributions to the Gospel Music Industry and the church by singing, speaking, mentoring and producing. Phil tours as a soloist and with the group he founded, Poet Voices. It is safe to say, Phil lives out the mission statement of Cross Music Group and that is... "To use music to lead people to Christ and to encourage believers. Whether it is through touring or through our products it is our desire to share God as we proclaim Him and praise Him around the world."

While most of Phil's work has circled primarily in the southern gospel arena, God recently deposited a new desire into his heart. Obeying the Spirit of the Lord, Cross Music Group has created a new worship project entitled *BREAKTHROUGH*. This God- originated project has been written to minister to the church of today as well as to the heart of God.

"I've known for several months that I was supposed

to write a project for the church to use to worship musically," Phil shares, "So- I gathered some co-writers- Matthew Browder, Tim Lovelace and Lisa Young and started talking to them about this project and we started writing songs."

"I just knew as somebody that's been involved in Gospel music for years traveling a lot and going into churches, I see what's going on within the church and it's just heartbreaking," Phil explains. "The church is set up where you pick your style and go to church based on your favorite style of music. I don't think there is much we can do about that- it's just that this is where the present day church has moved. It's like going to Burger King, you can order your music style- you can have it your way- and if you're not getting your way, you can go to a church where they're doing it your way. It is heartbreaking to me that church has become 'have it *your* way' instead of 'have it *God's* way.' We should go to church and talk about God, worship God, sing about God and sing to God. For a writer that has been singing songs and writing songs about God, I thought it was time for me to just talk *to* God and thank Him for my life just like King David did in the Psalms. This {project} is just me talking to God with my friends who have joined this team. We are talking to God, doing music, not based on style, not based on trying to deliver that custom meal. We just threw that out the window and did this the way we feel we should do it naturally- that's what *BREAKTHROUGH* is about."

Phil continues, "We are hoping that churches who



have divided up their congregations by music style will come together at least for maybe one event and bring the whole church and that includes the young and old, the people who like hymns, and the people who like contemporary. People that have followed me over the years will think that I have jumped off a cliff or something, but that is not the case. This music came from my spirit and my heart. I love it! I think I've probably enjoyed this more than anything I've ever worked on."

The work on the project has been enjoyable to Phil because his dearest friends joined his efforts. "I love the team aspect," Phil says, "I could have done a *Phil Cross Sings Worship CD*, but I chose to involve the team of people and voices I love to work with here in this town and around. I have confidence in the work these people do and they are like family."

"Our team consists of three girls and three guys," Sheri Thrower Vice President of Marketing for CMG and vocalist shares. "We have Dan Callahan, from Poet Voices, Carrie Streets, another wonderful worship leader in Chattanooga, Lisa Young, formerly of Hillsong and Rob Alley, Worship Leader in Tennessee. The great thing is that we are all really good friends; we connect well that way and in the studio. Our voices naturally blend together, mine and Phil's has for years. I arrange for Cross Music Group, so I have worked with these people through the years. We have a bond. I think we all have the same heart for worship because we all are worship leaders."

Lisa Young agrees, "Considering the caliber in my mind- the fact we are all worship leaders- it is truly amazing to watch! There are no egos, no worship egos- we literally have a blast together and it just comes together naturally. It is really wonderful to watch, I love it."

"Out of all of us, Lisa is the one that has the most 'real-big-time' worship experience," Phil interjects. "Her background is amazing. She's lived in Australia, worked at Hillsong and was there when Darlene Zschech wrote 'Shout To The Lord.' She comes from that place where she has lived to worship, so she brought that musicality and lyric to the project." Phil continues, "She brought several songs she had partially written and had enough confidence in me to wrap them up. Typically, she does things I would not do. She plays chords that we have to google!"



"I'm the worst piano player in the world," Lisa laughs, "I'm probably the most non-musical person in theory out of the group- that's the ironic part. But, we do have to google the chords I play because I really don't know any theory. I've done the worship thing, and the secular industry as well- but for me, I always come back to worship. That's where my heart and passion is. It is definitely writing worship, it is my heart for the Lord."



Putting together this team was more than finding vocalists to sing the songs, but everyone shares the same vision for the project as Phil. "I think we all have the same heart for worship because we all are worship

leaders so we're not just reading notes or singing notes and lyrics off the page," Sheri says, "You have that experience behind you so that you really feel the heart for people and the need for this project and that is bringing people together and re-connecting generations."



"I think this project is going to be an eye-opener for a lot of people," Rob Alley adds. "People like to compartmentalize worship music like it's *either-or* stylistically, but that's not true. God doesn't listen to Southern Gospel and reject *modern* worship, nor does he do the opposite. If it's Spirit and Truth, it's worship to Him."

"It was an honor to participate in the upcoming release from Phil Cross and to see firsthand how his songwriting and production talents extend far beyond the



Southern Gospel roots he's known for," Carrie Streets shares. "His music is worshipful; while not abandoning his roots, on this project, he has written and compiled a group of songs that will reach all generations with their truth. I'm excited for praise teams and churches across the country to be able to lead their congregations in worship using these great songs that Phil has put together."

The title of the album is surely an attention grabber. Who doesn't need a breakthrough of some kind? "I think everybody looks for a breakthrough in some area of their life whether you are praying for a friend, or your own personal breakthrough," Sheri describes. "Every person that listens to this project is going to relate to it because we all need that. The good thing is, not only does God promise us the light and hope of a breakthrough, but He *is* Hope, He *is* Light and He *is* the breakthrough. I think people are going to get that when they listen to it."

"And," Sheri continues, "I think for the church as a whole, musically this project is a breakthrough. It is going to unite people. I think that is one thing we all at Cross Music Group have is a passion to see unity in the churches because we are all out there in it and we see the division and it is time for us to all come together. That's a big breakthrough. I really believe God has anointed Phil, Lisa and the other writers to write this project for this time for this purpose- to bring unity within the body of Christ because the truth is, we are divided."

"I think a great way to demonstrate that this project really connects is by the very fact that God used Phil-southern Gospel to the max and me- being from Hillsong together," Lisa says. "We are two opposite ends of the spectrum as far as style goes."

Phil Cross says there is something on this project for everyone and says the music is sing-able for congregations. "There are not a lot of elaborate additions to the music. In gospel, we tend to put a lot of elaborate arrangements together with key changes, big endings- that's just gospel music, and I love it, but for this, we don't have any modulations, I don't think there's a high ending or anything like that- it is for everybody to sing."

"There is something on this project that speaks to everyone in terms of their walk in life. And it comes about naturally, none of this was forced. These songs literally just flowed out of us," Lisa says.

The music promises to be top-notch for several reasons, but one is that Jeremy Medkiff is involved. "There is an unbelievable set of musicians on this project, some of the best I think I've ever seen," Dan shares. "They put their minds together and came out with things that are amazing. Jeremy has done an unbelievable job of going through every measure, every line, and every bar and just extracted the highest quality that was appropriate for each song."



“All of the songs are just all unbelievable,” Dan continues, “Of course, with Phil writing them, the lyrics are not going to be superficial – it’s going to be the deep gospel message straight from words of scripture and that in combination with just great music just gets ya going.”

“One song on the project is called, ‘I Love You,’” Sheri adds. “It’s a song *to* the Lord. We hear a lot of songs about God loving us and those are good, but this song just says, ‘I love you’. How often do we really say that? I think this song is going to teach people how to tell the Lord and say it more often.”

“Next To You” is another selection. “The central truth of ‘Next to You’ is that when we stay close to God and delight ourselves in Him, He gives us our hearts’ desires,” Rob explains. “Jesus said it best in Matthew 6:33--that if we seek His Kingdom first, there’s no need, situation, or enemy that can overtake us. It’s really and truly the cry of a worshiper—‘Lord, just let me be closer to You.’”

“It was on a Saturday night,” Phil recalls, “I called Lisa and said, ‘We need a song without the drums and guitars. We need a song with just a piano and cello—one that we can do at communion.’ Sunday morning, she sent me a chorus called ‘I Remember’ it was beautiful. We recorded it with the piano and cello. It stripped away all the loudness. It is simple but yet a reminder of what Christ did for us on the cross. I don’t know of a lot of songs you can sing at communion.”

Most of the team has worked with Phil before, but this project was a new experience for Rob Alley. He shares: “The fact that I just worked with *Phil Cross* on a project is CRAZY. When I was a kid, my dad played bass for the Singing Celestials and the Tennesseans, and there was always this name I heard floating around,

almost with reverence; Phil, to me, became kind of this legendary figure, even as a kid. So to be involved in this now is really surreal. The thing that I think I’ve been most amazed by during this recording is the amount of input Phil asks for from the team. Lord knows he doesn’t have to, but he’s very humble, and he’s genuinely interested in doing whatever is best to serve the songs.”

Phil Cross has a sincere desire in helping people worship the *subject* of the music and not the *style*. “When I consider ‘Fairest Lord Jesus’ for example and consider the grammar and description of the Lord Jesus Christ, I have to value that,” Phil explains. “And when I consider ‘Almighty God’ and look at that grammar, I have to cherish that. Why can’t we cherish the subject of the music rather than the style of the music? Honestly, shouldn’t we be in love with the subject of the music- the Lord Jesus Christ and our Father God and not just the style? We’ve made it about style. NEWSFLASH... Heaven is not going to be divided into the contemporary service and the traditional service. Heaven is going to be about worshiping a Subject – and that is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Light of Heaven. And so, that is why we need to breakthrough this problem that is in the body of Christ.”

When asked if there is anything he would like our readers at SGNscoops to know, Phil responded: “I don’t want to be misunderstood, as *Phil Cross*. I’m a gospel writer; I will be a gospel writer until I die! I love southern gospel music. I love my heritage there, I embrace it, I still love it and I will love it ‘til I die. I don’t want anyone to think that I am getting out of one box and jumping into another box. I still enjoy gospel and proclaiming the gospel through music. That’s done well in southern gospel. I’m a big fan of that and I’m going to keep working hard to make an impact with that kind of music. I am simply “broad” as an artist and I like today’s mainstream worship music too. I know God has led me to write and produce this project with my friends. Period. We do expect Him to bless it just like He always blesses things that honor Him. I just want everybody to understand that I’m not taking sides. If you have to take sides, that’s between you and God. My side is- if it honors God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, that’s the side I am on! I’m not creating a buffet. My life is not about creating a buffet of music where you can go to this line and gets this, or go through Phil’s line and get that. There are two purposes for music that I feel like I’m involved in: I have to describe God, or I have to talk to God. I have to do music to please God-not to please the preferences of the human race in this

year that we are living in. If we do music that pleases God, somebody out there is going to be drawn to that, we're going to lift up the Lord in that, He's going to draw people to himself through it, and that's really all this is.

Cross Music Group has high hopes for *BREAKTHROUGH* and plans to work hard to get the music into churches. Phil intends to share the project in concert and with worship music companies in Nashville as well as offer the music on his website. Sheri intends to share the music on tour in the US as well as in Ireland. Dan, Rob and Carrie are using the new music in their churches with great response. "We have this project," Phil explains, "Now what God does with it, we don't know, but we do know that we did the right thing. We'll continue to work hard and follow the Lord and the rest

is up to God."

BREAKTHROUGH is expected to release in January, 2013. For more information, visit: <http://philcross-music.com/>.

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FOCUS ON THE YOUNG

MICAH WATKINS

BY VICTORIA SHIREY

I recently met a very talented young man on a cruise we both sang on. He sings bass with his family's quartet, Royal City Quartet. His personality matches his talent, and I know the people that hear and meet him, will love him! Here's the scoop...

Victoria: Micah, how did the Royal City Quartet get started? How long have you guys been singing together?

Micah: Royal City actually started as a male trio back in 1996 with my dad and two other guys. After one of the guys stepped down, my mom joined the group and they traveled that way for about ten years. Then in 2006, two of my brothers and I stepped in and we've been a quartet ever since.

V: How old were you when you first started singing?

M: Well, I've been singing since I could speak! And before I could speak, I was told I

would hum different melodies I'd hear. But as singing bass goes, I've been singing since I was fourteen years-old.



V: Who is your biggest influence in Southern Gospel music?

M: Wow, there's far too many to only choose one influence! I'd say once I started learning to sing bass, my biggest influences were

the old, classic bass singers such as George Younce, Harold Gilley, JD Sumner, London Parris, Tim Riley, Mike Holcomb... The list could go on and on. I also really enjoy all the new guys too, but the old guys made me want to become a bass singer when I grow up!

V: Where do you see yourself ten years from now?

M: Ten years from now I see myself most likely riding down the road in some bus either headed to or coming from a concert singing Gospel music.

V: Tell us about your family. How many siblings do you have?

M: Oh wow! We're a big family, there's nine of us kids. There are six boys and three girls ranging from the age of twenty-five down to seven years-old.

V: What's the funniest thing that's ever happened to you while traveling?

M: The funniest thing that's happened to me while traveling has to be the night after getting all four of my wisdom teeth pulled. We had a concert that night and I was on some very strong pain medicine that was intended to knock me out. I don't remember much, but everyone else had a lot of laughs at my expense that night!

V: Where's your favorite place to eat out on the road?

M: I actually enjoy eating at all of the local, small town restaurants that we happen to come across while traveling. There's nothing like good home cookin' while being out on the road!

V: What's been your most rewarding moment while traveling?

M: My most rewarding moments while traveling would have to be every time someone receives Christ for salvation at one of our concerts. That's what motivates me to keep traveling even when it's not always convenient for me to go.

V: What would be your dream job?

M: My dream job has actually always been to be a singer. It's been so much fun being able to travel the country singing Southern Gospel music with my family, I can't think of anything else that I'd rather be doing!

V: How would people get in touch with you guys to find out where you're going to be singing and for booking information?

M: The best way to get in touch with us would be to check out our website at www.royalcityonline.com or "Like" us on Facebook. From there you will be able to see what's going on with the group and where we'll be singing at each week. For bookings you may call our booking agent at [615-489-6154](tel:615-489-6154).

Thanks for an awesome interview, Micah! If you see where Royal City Quartet will be in your area, please go see them! You will thoroughly enjoy them and be blessed! Check next month's article for the scoop on another of your favorite, young Southern Gospel artist!

INTRODUCING SCOOPS ON THE ROAD



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

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A close-up portrait of Kevin Mills, a man with dark hair and light eyes, wearing a black shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with green foliage and some dry branches.

Kevin Mills: Hurricane Sandy and Other Storms

By Lorraine Walker

Kevin Mills is a singer and songwriter based in Virginia Beach, Virginia. At the end of October this past year, he and his wife Amanda found themselves in the projected path of Hurricane Sandy, one of the largest and most dangerous storms to hit the New England coast in years. Kevin Mills has faced other storms in his life and as he faced Sandy, he knew that the Creator of the wind would protect him now as He had in times past.

Kevin Mills originally came from the Canadian west and has been in ministry for 15 years, although he began singing for his father at age eight. His parents were evangelists and Kevin himself was the associate pastor at the Prairie Community Church in Portage La Prairie, Manitoba for a time. He and his wife Amanda moved to Virginia Beach two years ago.

This young, versatile artist has experienced personal storms that temporarily halted his singing career. "My music ministry is just beginning again," explains Mills. "After a series of personal challenges, I put music aside beginning in 2008. My mother was terminally ill and it was just my father and I there to care for her. She passed away in the spring of 2010 and by then music had

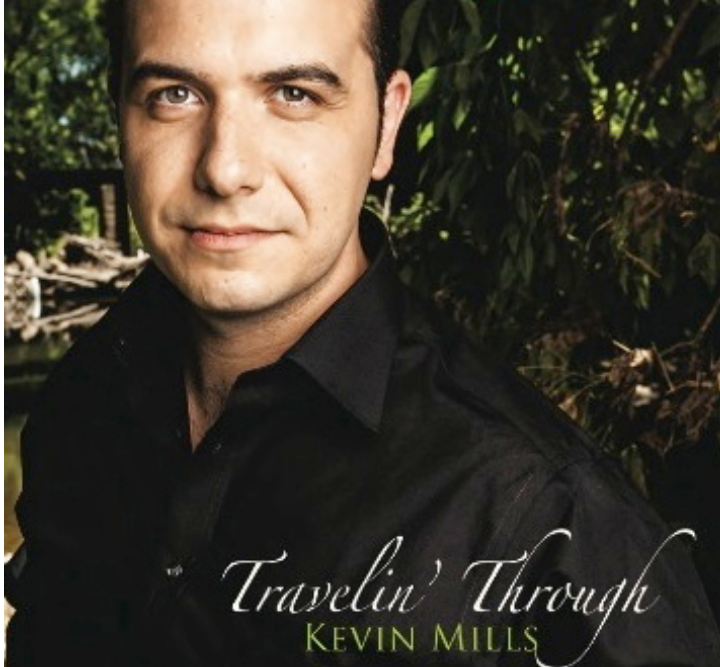
become a distant memory. Later in 2010, a dear friend in Maple Ridge, British Columbia, asked me to emcee an evening of Southern Gospel music in the spring of 2011. I readily agreed and ended up meeting David Staton of Song Garden there. He was then with the LeFevre Quartet. He asked me to contact him if I ever decided to do another CD. In May of 2011, both Amanda and I felt the Lord's blessing and favor to go forward with a new project."

David Staton of Song Garden Music Group, who also currently travels with The Palmetto State Quartet, produced Kevin Mills' latest recording, *Travelin' Through*. Staton says, "Kevin has a voice and approach to his music that connects with people who love gospel and country music. With deep rich tones and musical style similar to artists like Josh Turner, Trace Adkins and Johnny Cash, Kevin is sure to be around for a long time."

Kevin Mills had a very positive experience at Song Garden during the recording of this CD. "We had the best of the best musicians working on it. All the individuals working on the project were very modest, consequently I won't list names of who they work with, but it's safe to say that all of them work intimately with some of

the biggest names in Country and Gospel." Mills continues, "All the songs are very unique. One of my favorites is "Walk on the Water." It's a conversation that the devil is having with God. It's really a modern retelling of Job."

Mills, like many people, may have felt like



Job when he was experiencing deep personal storms. However, he now appears to be on the other side of those challenges and is experiencing a time of God's favor as he and his wife complete their schooling at Regent University. He is a sought-after voice-over artist as well. Kevin and Amanda do all this as well as performing at select Gospel music concerts throughout the region, bringing a Country music flavor to their Gospel songs.

"Currently I play banjo as my main instrument - people love it and it always brings a smile to everyone's face. Also, Amanda is beginning to sing with me more. Because we've just started again, we averaged about 12 concerts this year. But next year is already beginning to look busy."

The Mills' life sounds like a busy one, just as most people's lives were when Hurricane Sandy threatened the eastern seaboard of North America. Mills says that preparations included the collection of an emergency kit. "We bought lots of beans, Vienna sausages, and bottled water!"

Mills continues, "We've been through one major storm prior to Sandy. The biggest issue is to have non-perishable foods on hand and lots of water. It always pays to prepare, especially if the electricity goes out for extended periods. Buying a generator is definitely a must if a budget allows for it."

The Mills couple wasn't hit as badly as some others in the area. "We're about 20 minutes from the ocean, so the hurricane for us inland wasn't very bad at all," says Mills. "It felt more like a thunderstorm than anything. Our electricity only went out once for about two minutes. Businesses and houses along the coast had flooding and damage, but I think it's safe to say and assume that everyone here felt very, very fortunate that it wasn't any worse." Mills says they went out to see what the damage was like in their area, but it could have been a lot worse. "It was nothing even close to what New England has experienced."

"When we moved here we fully understood that hurricanes were just a part of life," Mills explains. "The biggest thing going for us is that we are far enough away to not be effected by storm-surges. Consequently it's just a matter of being prepared and then riding out the storm. Both Amanda and I feel very safe here and feel very fortunate and blessed to live in such a beautiful area."

In the aftermath of natural disasters, one common question people ask is, "Why would God allow this to happen?" Mills answers, "The opposite question is just as legitimate: why wouldn't He allow them? Many people asked me why God allowed my mother to pass away from such a horrible illness and at a young age. She was an incredible woman, a good woman. But sometimes it pays to look at it another way. God's wisdom and ways are infinitely higher than ours; the question is really whether I trust His wisdom when He allows bad things to happen, sometimes to good people."

Personal storms affect everyone and each one reacts differently depending on their own personal preparations and past experiences. Kevin Mills says that many people are looking for a response to the unending question of 'why'. "Unfortunately there is no overarching formula that can be applied equally to all of life's storms and struggles," says Mills. "If there were we probably wouldn't need God. God is a relational God and the best thing we can do is take the time to foster that relationship. In North America we have become blindingly busy and for many this has reduced their spiritual life to a series of formulas and actions, i.e. read this devotional, volunteer for this ministry, etc., rather than a relationship."



Kevin and Amanda Mills have survived the personal and physical Hurricane Sandys in their life, and want to bring their message of hope and comfort to others going through life's challenges. "Take time alone with God and foster this relationship equally in good times as in bad," says Kevin. Getting to know the Maker of the wind and rain personally will help each one successfully navigate the storms of life.

For more on Kevin and Amanda Mills:

<http://www.kevinmills.net/>

<http://www.facebook.com/kevinmillsVB?fref=ts>

For more information on Song Garden Music Group and David Staton:

<http://www.songgardenmusicgroup.com/david-staton.php>

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A Media Minute

Featuring: Patricia Mathis

by Rob Patz

What a pleasure it is to introduce my friend, Patricia Mathis. Patricia and her television crew did a fabulous job capturing the highlights at our recent Creekside Gospel Music Convention. It was a blessing to see her honored for her work in Christian Television at the Diamond Awards. Patricia was honored for her outstanding service to the Gospel Music Industry by receiving the Lou Hildreth Diamond Award. It is a delight to share Patricia's ministry at WATC, Channel 57 of Atlanta, Georgia with our readers.

Rob: Please give our readers some background about your past in southern gospel.

Patricia: My background in Southern Gospel Music began in May, 1976 when I answered an ad placed in the newspaper for an assistant in a publishing company. I was interviewed by a gentleman by the name of Bobby Howard. Bobby was working in the office for Dr. Jerry Goff at that time and called Jerry after our interview and stated to him that he wanted to hire me for the job. That was on Friday. Dr. Goff was supposed to be back in the office on Monday to make the final decision. I learned during the interview that Dr. Goff was a gospel music singer that owned the singing group, Jerry & The Singing Goffs and also owned Goff Publishing Company. I met Dr. Goff on that Monday and stayed working personally in the office for him for the next 12 years, booking him at churches and concerts, answering mail and mailing out orders, and always helping to further his career in Southern Gospel Music. I guess I have never really stopped working for him in some capacity since 1976. I have always been working or promoting Southern Gospel Music during and since my first day in 1976.

Rob: How did you get your start in TV?

Patricia: My start in television work began when my husband, Jim, was transferred with his company, AT&T, from Nashville, TN to Greenville, SC. I had met Dr. James H. and Mrs. Joanne Thompson in 1977 through working for Dr. Goff. Dr. and Mrs. Thompson owned a television station in Greenville, SC. After they found out that I was moving to



their city, Mrs. Thompson called me and asked me to work for them since we were being transferred there. I worked for the Thompsons at WGG5 TV 16 for the next 1 ½ years. Then my husband learned that he was being transferred to Atlanta, GA. After being in Atlanta for 12 years working for a society of engineers, Mrs. Thompson called me and stated that they were starting a television station in Atlanta and wanted me to help them with this station. That was 16 years ago. Today, after the passing of Dr. & Mrs. Thompson, at their previous request, I am now the Vice President of Community Television, Inc.

Rob: Tell us about the ministry of Channel 57

Patricia: Community Television, Inc. (WATC TV57) is a faith-based 501©3 non-profit organization whose purpose is to produce and broadcast positive television programming for all ages to educate and inspire. As a Christian organization, WATC upholds the principles established by the Word of God. WATC's vision extends beyond broadcasting and includes reaching out to help those in need of food and clothing through its First Works outreach (Mark 16:15).

Rob: Which do you enjoy more- in front of the camera or behind the camera and why?

Patricia: I enjoy both working in front and behind the camera. Working in the office and making decisions that will help make the station prosper in order to help others is rewarding. To be given the opportunity to become a producer and host of a television program was a reward that came a few years later after starting work at the station. Interviewing and presenting senior citizen guests on my show, "Seniors Today," that are continuing to make a difference in society in their later years is a special opportunity that is greatly rewarding. Seniors are a blessing for our younger audience, as well as our elderly, to see how God is helping them to continue to be productive citizens.

Rob: What would you say is the Highlight of your career?

Patricia: The highlight of my career is the opportunity to be able to continue to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a wide variety of audience through word and song at WATC. This is accomplished by having great programs that presents the gospel in word and by having great singing programs, such as Southern Gospel Music.

Rob: Can you share a funny story about something that has happened on the set?

Patricia: No funny story that happened on the set comes to mind right now. We interviewed a 104 year old man. He was pretty funny and his reason for staying alive for so long was to go somewhere every day. One day a week he went bowling. He had a driver that drove him anywhere

he wanted to go and that made him happy.

Rob: For young people reading this, what advice would you give them about getting into broadcasting?

Patricia: Advice that I would give young people that want to get into broadcasting is that technology is changing almost daily. They need to learn all areas of television production, such as computers, camera work , lighting, makeup in the age of HD, social media, video streaming, as well as learning to be the "on air" personality. You are no longer a television producer but a content provider.

Rob: As we come to the close of 2012, what are your goals for 2013?

Patricia: My biggest goal for 2013 is to transition our station to high definition (HD), which will make our productions and programming even better and be competitive in the digital age of television.

Rob: What is your motivation to keep pressing forward?

Patricia: My motivation to keep pressing forward is my belief that God is taking me in many directions that helps me to be able to show that everyone needs Him in their lives. Every time I think I cannot do any more, He always shows me in His own wonderful way that I need to continue with what I am doing and that is to present the Gospel in Song, as well as Word, through great programming at WATC.

Rob: What has the Lord been teaching you lately?

Patricia: The Lord has been teaching me lately the importance of Christian television and how much it is needed. We offer prayer at the station, as well as good programming, and it is a blessing to be a part of something that changes people's lives. I look forward to seeing how God will open new doors for spreading the Gospel through Christian television.

For more information, visit: <http://www.watc.tv/>.





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Artist Spotlight: CS & K

By Angela Griffin



This month's Artist Spotlight is shining on Georgia's very own C S & K. Their tight knit harmonies are second to none. C S & K is a multi-talented, very blended group who sings all styles of gospel music... from southern gospel to progressive gospel to praise and worship! This unique group ministers to all ages. C S & K was originally named by the initials of its original members. With a couple of personnel changes the group later changed the acronym, C S & K, to Christ Savior & King.

C S & K got their start in 2003 when the group placed second in the Crabbfest talent contest under the direction of Katie Barrett's late mother, Kay Barrett. Kay was the driving force behind C S & K and was loved by so many in the industry. In 2004, the group won first place in the Talley's talent search in Pigeon Forge, TN. This began their recording career with producer, Roger Talley of The Talley Trio. Since that day, C S & K has released 4 compilations and has been blessed with several chart topping songs in the last two years.

CS&K has had the privilege of taking center stage at several Abraham Production events... "Singing In The Sun" and "Gatlinburg Gathering" which draws thousands of gospel music fans from across the country. Group member, Katie Barrett shares: "We consider these opportunities to be big stepping stones for our ministry. It has opened so many doors for others to hear our music and has allowed us to minister at churches across the country. We are singing and ministering to God's people. That is the calling God has placed on

each of our lives. The scripture says to make disciples and that's what we're doing. We sing in a lot of churches and we are seeing souls saved, people encouraged, and many rededicating their life to Christ. For us, it is one hundred percent ministry. We all have jobs so therefore we sing mostly weekends. We're just having fun doing what God has called us to do. We have learned to be content in the state that we are in as Paul in the Bible has instructed us to be. We very much take the call that God has placed upon our lives very seriously. We try to be our best whether we are singing to a small congregation or thousands. We try to present the gospel in a spiritual manner and pray that many will come to know Christ through something we sing, say or do."

Katie Barrett original member of C S & K shares how she has been through some dark days in the past year, but has found God to be faithful and true. "My mother inspired me. She loved gospel music. She was the greatest fan of my life. I miss her and I know she is watching over me.

I have always loved my family, but I've learned the value of cherishing every moment we spend together." A brighter day is shining for Katie as she plans to wed the love of her life, Harold Reed of The LeFevre Quartet, in early June.

Jennifer Cagle is the group's prayer warrior. "That girl can pray! She is a God fearing woman and my absolute favorite female singer," shares Katie. She is also the group's vocal coach. Jennifer earned a degree in Chemistry and a minor in Music. She started her musi-

cal career at a very young age as well. In fact her mom says she used to hum herself to sleep before she could speak.

Another very talented member of C S & K is Tim Armour who sings the tenor or baritone part...whatever the occasion calls for. Tim is a tremendous pianist as well. He formerly traveled with The Chapeleer's, The Seekers and The Mull's. At age 9 he started taking piano lessons. At age 11 he became the organist at his home church and started singing around the age of 12. He was fortunate enough to study voice under the instruction of the late Leroy Abernathy for about 2 years in his early 20's. Katie shares, "Tim also has a degree

in Finance, but what people find most intriguing about Tim, is that he works at a funeral home!"

Jennifer's husband, Scott Cagle, is a vital part of our ministry as well. Scott helps with sound, drives, and is an asset to the group. "He was an added bonus that God blessed us with upon Jennifer joining the group" Katie concludes.

To contact C S & K please e-mail them at csktrio@yahoo.com.

You may also find all the latest happenings with C S & K by logging onto their website at www.csktrio.com.





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1. Unspoken Request - McKameys
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3. Way Past Ready - Mark Trammell Quartet
4. He Didn't When He Could Have Passed By - Greater Vision
5. Just Preach Jesus - Kingdom Heirs
6. Any Other Man - Ernie Haase & Signature Sound
7. The Best Is Yet To Be - Chuck Wagon Gang
8. Good Things Are Happening - Karen Peck & New River
9. Count Me In - Hoppers
10. All Is Well - Whisnants
11. Go Out And Get Them - Soul'd Out Quartet
12. I Got A Hold Of God This Morning - The Perrys
13. Waiting On The Water - Isaacs
14. Homesick Angel - Tribute Quartet
15. I Want To Be That Man - Brian Free & Assurance
16. Right In The Middle - Booth Brothers
17. Hold On - Canton Junction
18. Forever Changed - Skyline Boys
19. I Won't Have To Worry Anymore - Jeff & Sheri Easter
20. I Get Down - Gold City

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Pierce,
Darrell & Tojuana,
Brenda Whitlock,
Tim Ooten,
Steven Doan,
Tane' Miller,
Danny Jones,
Tank Tackett,
Davis Family,
Rhonda Mitchell Frye
Danny Norman,
Chariot,
Tammy Jones-Robinette,
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Bill Dykes,
I'll Fly Away Foundation,
Gloria Larson,
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A Christmas Feast.

Compiled by Lorraine Walker.

Christmas time for many is a time of being with family and friends, socializing, singing and enjoying treats we may have only once a year. We have gathered a sampling of favorite recipes from our SGN Scoops friends, fans and family. Special thanks to all who contributed their recipes and pictures, and to all of our readers who will enjoy making and eating these culinary concoctions. Have a Merry Christmas...and happy feasting!

>>APPETIZERS

Sandi Duncan-Clark

Features Editor, writer, SGN Scoops

<http://www.sgnscoops.com/>

My favorite Christmas Recipe is one that we enjoy from the first of November through the New Year Holidays. This delight is good as an appetizer with dip, and as a snack with eggnog and Hot Apple Cider. And it's great just to munch! I always make two batches in the beginning, since I know they will disappear quickly. Merry Christmas Everyone. May your Holiday be the best ever.

SANDI'S ZESTY CHEESE STRAWS

1/2 cup (1 stick) butter or margarine, at room temperature
2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese, at room

temperature

1 1/2 cups cups all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper (more or less, according to your taste preference).

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F.

In a food processor, add the butter, cheese, flour, salt and cayenne.

Process until a smooth dough is formed. Scoop it into your cookie press, fitted with a flat ridged tip. Pipe the dough in 2-inch strips onto a lightly greased cookie sheet.

(Alternatively, refrigerate the dough for 30 minutes and roll on a lightly floured surface into a 1/4 inch rectangle. Cut into smaller rectangles, about 2 by 3- inches, with a pizza wheel or sharp knife.) Bake for 10 to 15 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to racks to cool.

>>MAIN DISHES

Joan Walker

proof reader, SGN Scoops

<http://www.sgnscoops.com/>

JOAN'S WARM-YOU-UP CHRISTMAS CHILI

1 1/2 pound ground beef

2 cans beans

2 cups salsa

1 can tomato sauce
2 tbsp chili powder
1 chopped onion
1 cup frozen corn
1 cup shredded cheese
Brown meat and drain. Add meat and remaining ingredients in slow cooker, except cheese. Heat on LOW 5-6 hrs, or HIGH 3-4 hours, add shredded cheese before serving.
Add fresh green peppers for a festive look!

Channing Eleton
artist, musician
<http://channingeleton.com/>



My family started a tradition several years ago. After a month of turkey and dressing, sometimes you just want to do something different. One year, I suggested that we do a Mexican dinner for Christmas. Everyone loved it

and we've been doing it ever since.

The most popular dish of these Christmas get-togethers has been Christina's Chili Mexico. It's easy and quick to make and after one taste, you'll see why the Eleton family loves it. Christina's dish had become popular at Christmas-time; she was getting recipe requests and questions about what she called it. Up until that point, she didn't have a name for it. I kept encouraging her to give it a name. Neither she or I had any original ideas that we liked, so I turned to my little girl for wisdom. I asked, "Chanler, what would you call Mommy's dish that we love?"

Without hesitation, Chanler replies in her cute little five-year-old voice, "Chili Mexico".

We smiled...it stuck...and that's what we've called it ever since.

ELETON'S CHILI MEXICO

2 - 8 oz. packets cream cheese
1 1/2 cups salsa
2 cups chili
2 cups shredded cheese

In a baking dish, spread out cream cheese first. Next, comes the layer of salsa, spread evenly. The third layer will be 1 cup of the shredded cheese. Now, pour in all of chili and spread evenly. Lastly, top it with remaining cup of shredded cheese - spread evenly of course.

Bake at 350 F for 30 minutes. Enjoy with your choice of nacho chips!

Tammy Herring
songwriter
<http://www.facebook.com/TammieHerring>



You can prep this the day before – don't cook, cover with foil and refrigerate. Then cook regular time the next day. This makes it even better, I think.

TAMMY'S CHRISTMAS LASAGNA

2 lb lean ground beef
1 lg onion (finely chopped) (optional)
2 (32 oz.) Prego or Ragu Spaghetti sauce (traditional)
1 - 2 (32 oz) jars water
1 pkg dry spaghetti mix
1/4 cup sugar
1 box cream cheese
3/4 cup milk

1 box lasagna noodles
1 lb. shredded cheddar cheese
1 lb. shredded mozzarella cheese
Saute' ground beef. Drain meat in colander, then rinse with water. Place meat back in pot and add onions (optional), spaghetti sauce, 32 oz water, dry spaghetti mix and sugar. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer 1 hour. Add rest of water and cook another hour.

In a separate bowl, mix cream cheese and milk. Microwave until blended 2-3 min., stopping to whisk every minute. Spray 9 X 13 baking dish with non-stick baking spray. Spoon in a few spoonfuls of sauce just to lightly cover the bottom of dish.

Layer UNCOOKED noodles on bottom, covering pan. Cover with 1/2 of cooked spaghetti sauce, then drizzle a layer of 1/2 cream cheese mixture. Take fork and zig-zag mixture (marble in). Add layer of 8 oz cheddar cheese and 8 oz mozzarella cheese.

REPEAT layers one more time. (I usually use a little more cheese) Cover with aluminum foil and bake at 350 degrees – 45 minutes. (This keeps cheese from turning to brown.) Remove foil and continue baking another 15 minutes or until golden brown.

>>Side Dishes

Sonja Barber

artist, New Grace Trio

<http://www.newgracetrio.com/>

As long as I can remember everybody loves mother's dressing. She has cooked it for their church Thanksgiving Dinner for over 45 years every year. You will return for a second helping!

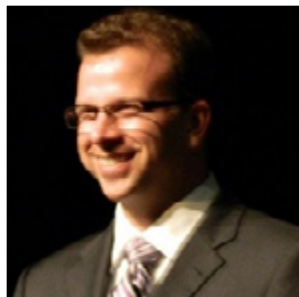
SONJA'S CORNBREAD DRESSING

1 hen boiled
1 bunch of celery
1 large onion
1/2 stick butter
1 can cream of chicken soup
6 eggs boiled and peeled
3 raw eggs
2 tsp. poultry seasoning
1/2 tsp. black pepper
1 cup canned milk
4 Corn Kits Yellow Cornbread packages. Follow directions on package. Bake.
6 slices white unbleached bread, take off the edges
Wash hen and remove parts inside hen. In a large pot add hen and water to cover the hen. The water should be well over the hen. Boil until tender, 2 hrs. or so Remove hen from pot to cool then remove bones from hen.
Using the broth in pot add poultry seasoning and stir, let set. Clean celery and onion chop into bite pieces add to 1/2 stick butter cover and cook over low heat until tender. In broth add 1 can chicken soup, white bread pieces, raw eggs mixed well, peel and chopped boiled eggs, can milk, celery and onions. Mix well then crumble cornbread into broth until thick stirring very well, add salt and pepper to taste. No liquid should be remaining on top. After you have de boned the hen place pieces of hen in a large baking pan pour the dressing over the hen. Bake at 325 until done light brown. The center will be set when a toothpick comes out clean. This uncooked mixture keeps and can be made the day before keep refrigerated. This recipe will feed 30. You can use this basic dressing recipe when cooking a turkey, or duck. Taste good with a ham also.

Michael Helwig

artist, The Blackwood Brothers

<http://www.blackwoodbrothers.com/>



Here is a favorite recipe of mine for the holidays:

MICHAEL'S LATKES (6 servings)

1 medium onion, grated
3 large yukon gold potatoes, grated
Kosher salt

6 finely chopped chives
3 T. plain matzo meal or breadcrumbs
2 large eggs, slightly beaten
Fresh pepper to taste
Oil for frying
Applesauce or sour cream
Combine first seven ingredients in bowl and gently mix. Pour enough oil in skillet to reach 1/4" depth; heat over medium-high heat. Form mixture into balls using about 1/4 cup for each. Place each ball into the hot oil, using a spatula to flatten into 3-4" round cakes. Fry, turning once, until golden brown and crisp (about 8 minutes). Transfer cakes to a paper towel lined plate to drain. Serve hot with applesauce or sour cream.

Stephanie Gober

artist, The Gobers

<http://www.thegobers.com/>



Well I am a vegetarian so I always get really excited about the side dishes. My Mama is a phenomenal cook. Her green beans are the best. But, if I had to choose a favorite holiday-only side dish it would have to be sweet potato soufflé, a skinny version of course, so I can eat more!

STEPHANIE'S TRADITIONAL SWEET POTATO CASSEROLE

2 1/2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
3/4 cup packed Splenda brown sugar
1/4 cup light butter, softened

1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 cup finely chopped pecans, divided
Cooking spray

Preheat oven to 375°.

Place the sweet potatoes in a Dutch oven, and cover with cold water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer for 15 minutes or until very tender. Drain; cool slightly.

Place potatoes in a large bowl. Add sugar and next 3 ingredients (through vanilla). Mash sweet potato mixture with a potato masher. Fold in 1/4 cup pecans.

Scrape potato mixture into an even layer in an 11 x 7-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray. Sprinkle with remaining 1/4 cup pecans; Bake at 375° for 25 minutes or until brown.

Randy Abel

executive producer,

America's Home Spun Gospel radio show

<http://www.homespungospel.net/>

RANDY'S BAKED MACARONI AND CHEESE

1/2lb shredded cheddar cheese
1/2lb shredded colby cheese
1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese
2 cups
6 eggs
2 Tbsp butter
2 cups elbow macaroni

In large sauce pan, full with 2 quarts water. Add a splash of vegetable, canola, or olive oil. Bring to a boil. Add macaroni noodles, stirring occasionally to prevent noodles from sticking together. While noodles are boiling, in a large mixing bowl, combine cheeses, eggs, and milk and stir thoroughly.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

When noodles are done cooking, drain and rinse with HOT water and drain off excess water. Add noodles to cheese mixture and mix well. Pour entire mixture into greased 9x12 glass baking dish. Place in oven and bake 30 - 45 minutes, until sides and top are turning golden. Remove from oven and let cool for a few minutes before serving.

Feeds a small army!

TIP for leftovers: Cut remaining mac & cheese into portion-size squares, wrap in wax paper, and freeze. To reheat a serving, remove wax paper while frozen, place in a microwave safe bowl and microwave for 1 minute, 30 seconds. Stir it up to loosen and microwave for another 60 seconds. Let cool for 2

minutes and enjoy!

Anthony Facello

artist, Beyond The Ashes

<http://www.beyondtheashesonline.com/>

ANTHONY'S YUMMY CRANBERRY SALAD

1 cup ground cranberries
1 cup sugar
1 4oz package raspberry jello
1 cup hot water
1 cup chopped celery
1/2 cup chopped walnuts

1 cup crushed pineapple, drained

Combine cranberries and sugar. Dissolve jello in hot water and add pineapple syrup. Chill until partially set. Add cranberry mixture, pineapple, nuts and celery. Pour into a bowl or mold and chill until firm.

Becky Miles

artist, The Shadrix Trio

<http://www.theshadrixtrio.com/>



BECKY'S JALAPENO CRANBERRY RELISH

24 oz fresh cranberries
1/2 cup fresh lime juice (about 3 limes, plus zest)
1/2 cup water
2 tablespoons shallots, finely chopped
1 teaspoon salt
1 bunch cilantro, chopped
1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped
1 tablespoon chopped garlic
2 1/2 cups sugar

Pulse the cranberries in a food processor until coarsely chopped. Be careful not to over process because you don't want the berries pureed.

Add all the ingredients, except the cilantro, to a medium pot with a heavy bottom. Simmer, uncovered, for about 20 minutes, until thickened. Mix in the cilantro. Cool before serving.

>>Deserts and Goodies

Rebekah Capps

artist, The Stanleys

<http://www.the-stanleys.com/>



BEKAH'S LUMPS OF COAL

One 16 oz package of Oreo Cookies

5 cups large marshmallows

4 tablespoons butter

Butter an 8X8 inch baking pan. Line the baking pan with parchment paper letting the paper extend up two sides of the pan and overhang slightly on both ends. Butter paper; set pan aside.

In the bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal blade, pulse Oreos until ground.

In a large, microwave safe bowl, melt butter and marshmallows in the microwave until puffed, about 1½ - 2 minutes. Stir in ground Oreo Cookies until combined. Transfer to prepared baking pan. Using a piece of wax paper, press mixture evenly into prepared pan.

Let set up for at least 10 minutes. Cut into bars and serve.

David Staton

artist, Palmetto State Quartet

<http://www.psqworld.com/>

Sights, sounds, smells and tastes can take you to a different time and place. No matter what time of year or the temperature outside, if I taste my wife's peanut butter fudge, it's Christmas! She's pretty as a picture and she cooks like my mom! Man, I did good!

DAVID'S PEANUT BUTTER FUDGE

3 cups sugar

1 stick butter

1 cup evaporated milk

Dash of salt

Stir & bring to a boil. Keep boiling for 8 minutes.

Take off heat and add:

1 cup of peanut butter

3 heaping tablespoons of marshmallow cream

1 1/2 Teaspoons Vanilla

Beat up and pour into buttered dish. Let sit at room temperature until solid.

Charlie Sexton

writer, SGN Scoops

<http://www.sgnscoops.com/>



Here's a very simple and easy recipe that I have started using every year. Little Jan Buckner-Goff always makes this for her annual Christmas Party, and she was gracious enough to share it with me! Dr. Jerry loves to have a slice of MDP with a large glass of milk. We've solved many of the world's problems, while enjoying this

wonderful, cool dessert!

CHARLIE'S MILLION DOLLAR PIE

1 can condensed milk

1/4 cup lemon juice

1 20 oz can crushed pineapple (drained)

1 13 oz container of Cool Whip Topping

1 cup pecans (chopped)

1 graham cracker crust

Directions:

Mix condensed milk and lemon juice. Fold in pineapple, whipped topping and the pecans. Pour mixture into the crust, and refrigerate. Wait four hours, then cut and serve.

Clayton Inman

artist, Triumphant Quartet

<http://www.triumphantquartet.com/>



One of my favorites at Christmas is no-bake cookies. The sad part is that they taste great all year but if I ate them all year then there would be a clothing problem. The truth is, these cookies just have a taste of Christmas!

CLAYTON'S CHRISTMAS DELIGHTS

2 cups sugar

4 tablespoons cocoa

1 stick butter

½ cup milk

1 cup peanut butter

1 tablespoon vanilla

3 cups oatmeal

Waxed Paper

In a heavy saucepan, bring to a boil sugar, cocoa, butter and milk.

Let boil for one minute, then add peanut butter, vanilla and oatmeal.

On a sheet of waxed paper, drop mixture by the teaspoonful.

Let stand until cool and hard.

Karen Harding

artist, soloist

<http://www.karenharding.com/home.html>

KAREN'S PEANUT BUTTER FUDGE

2 cups of sugar

3/4 cup milk

6 Tbsp. creamy peanut butter

1 Tsp. vanilla

1/8 Tsp. salt

Boil sugar and milk to soft stage (238 degrees).

Add all other ingredients. Beat by hand until it starts to set. Pour into a buttered pan and cut in squares! Delicious!!

Lorraine Walker

Features Editor, writer, SGN Scoops

<http://www.sgnscoops.com/>

Writer, SGM Radio

<http://www.sgmradio.com/>

CHOCOLATE YULE LOG

Cake Ingredients:

3 eggs

1 cup white sugar

1/3 cup water

1 tsp. vanilla

1 cup flour

1 tsp. baking powder

1/4 tsp. salt

A few teaspoons of icing sugar

Icing Ingredients:

4 cups icing sugar

1/2 cup cocoa

1/2 cup soft butter (not melted)

1/4 cup milk

Other:

Foil for lining your cookie sheet

Sugared jelly candy (or fruit roll-ups) in red and green

Cut foil 2 inches longer than cookie sheet. Fit on sheet and turn up ends and sides to make a collar around the pan. Pre-heat oven to 375F.

Beat eggs until thick. Add white sugar and beat again. Add water and vanilla and beat slowly. Put flour, baking powder and salt in a separate bowl and mix lightly with a fork. Add this to the egg mixture. Beat slowly until the batter is fairly smooth. Pour onto foil and spread evenly into the corners. Bake 12 minutes. While baking, spread a tea towel onto your counter and sprinkle with a few teaspoons of icing sugar the full size of the cookie pan. As soon as you remove cake from oven, lay cake upside down onto the towel and peel off the foil. Trim off any brown edges from the cake. While cake is still hot, roll up – with towel – and cool.

Make icing. Unroll cool cake and ice with half the icing spread onto the cake. Roll cake up. Cut off about a 1/2 inch of the roll from each end to use as 'stumps'. Place stumps on opposite sides of the roll, on either end. Spread remaining icing on the log and stumps. Use a fork to make icing look like bark.

Make holly leaves and holly berries from the candy.

For the holly leaves: If using the jellied candy, make sure it is sugar-coated (this is softer than a jujube).

Spread some white sugar onto your pie sheet and use a rolling pin to roll the candy flat. Use additional

sugar on surface to prevent it from sticking to the rolling pin. Once the green candy is flat, use a cookie cutter or a knife to cut into the shape of holly leaves.

Use red candy, cut into smaller pieces and, using extra sugar to prevent stickiness, roll into red holly berries.

Press 3 leaves lightly onto the top of the log near a stump and add the berries. You may also use fruit roll ups to make the holly leaves if this is easier for you. Holly berries could also be 'made' out of M&M's or other small round candy.

Frances Fulton

artist, New Grace Trio

<http://www.newgracetrio.com/>

This is one of the favorites at our family gathering. If you are a chocolate lover, this takes care of those chocolate craving taste buds! Merry Christmas everyone!

NEW GRACE CHOCOLATE MELTING CAKE

8 ounces of semisweet chocolate

1 cup (2 sticks) of butter

7 eggs, divided use

6 tablespoons of sugar

1/2 cup of flour

Preheat your oven to 375 degrees. Melt the chocolate

and butter and cool for 10 minutes. In a separate bowl, mix four eggs with sugar. Whisk. Then add flour and whisk. Add the remaining three eggs and add the egg mixture to the chocolate mixture. Pour this entire mixture into individual ramekins. Bake until just done, about 15-20 minutes (interior will be melting). Serve with vanilla ice cream.

Brenda Messaros

artist, Hearts Of Faith

<http://www.heartsofffaith.biz/>

My husband's family is Hungarian, so every year, his parents and some of his cousins gather at our house and we make cookies. Here's one of my favorites that we make. These take a lot of time to do, but they are worth the effort! Merry Christmas!

BRENDA'S HUNGARIAN WEDDING COOKIES

5 cups flour
1 cup sugar
1 lb. butter sticks, softened
4 egg yolks (reserve egg whites for later use)
1 pound finely ground walnuts
Misc. jelly flavors
Powdered sugar
Mix flour, sugar, butter and egg yolks in large bowl with hands until well mixed.
Take a small amount of dough and roll out very thin on floured counter.
Using a small juice glass, cut circles out of dough that are about 2" wide.
Do this until you have one cookie sheet full of round cookies. Then cut out an equal number of circles, but with these, also use a thimble to cut out a circle in the center of each cookie. Brush the tops with egg whites and dip in the ground nuts.
Place on baking sheet. Bake each sheet at 350 until light brown (about 10 minutes)...
remove from cookie sheet onto cooling rack and let cool completely. Repeat this until all the dough is used. Makes about 60 or 70 2-layer cookies. On each bottom layer, place a small amount of jelly, then top with the cookie with the hole so that the jelly comes through. Sprinkle with powdered sugar and serve.

Sheri Thrower

artist, speaker, vice president of marketing –
Phil Cross Music

<http://www.sherithrower.com/>

SHERI'S PUMPKIN ROLL

3 eggs
1 c. sugar
2/3 c. mashed pumpkin (Can use butternut squash that has been cooked in a microwave for 10 minutes.)
1 t. lemon juice
3/4 all purpose flour (plain, not self rising)
2 tsp. Cinnamon
1 tsp. Baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. Ginger
1 tsp. Nutmeg
1 1/4 cup confectioner's sugar
1 8 oz. Pkg. softened cream cheese
1/2 tsp. vanilla
Beat eggs 5 minutes at high speed. Gradually add sugar, beat well. Stir in pumpkin or squash and lemon juice. Combine flour, cinnamon, baking powder, salt, ginger and nutmeg. Add to pumpkin; blend well. Spoon batter on greased and floured 15x10x1 pan or use cookie sheet. (Can use parchment paper, and you don't have to grease or flour.) Spread evenly to corners. Bake @375 degrees for 15 minutes.
Turn cake on to towel. Sprinkle with 1/4 cup of confectioner's sugar. Begin at small end and roll into towel and cool for several hours. Cream the cream cheese, butter, 1 cup confectioner's sugar, and vanilla. Beat until smooth and creamy. Unroll cake and spread with filling. Roll again and chill on edge.

Rhonda Spurrell

artist, songwriter

http://www.rhondaspurrell.com/fr_home.cfm

RHONDA'S CHOCOLATE CRINKLE GINGER COOKIES

3/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 cup Dutch-process cocoa powder
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoons ground ginger

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter at room temperature
7 ½ oz. Semi-sweet chocolate
1 cup granulated sugar
¼ cup packed dark brown sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ cup finely chopped crystallized ginger
Confectioners' sugar for rolling
Whisk together the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, salt, ginger, and cinnamon in a medium bowl.

Combine the butter and 3 ounces of the chocolate in a medium, heatproof bowl. Set the bowl over a saucepan filled with about 1 1/2 inches of simmering water (being sure not to let the bottom of the bowl touch the water) and stir occasionally until the chocolate and butter have melted and the mixture is smooth. Remove the bowl from the saucepan and set aside to cool slightly, about 10 minutes. (You can also melt the mixture in the microwave, heating it at about 20-second intervals and stirring periodically until it is melted and smooth.)

Stir the granulated and brown sugars into the melted chocolate mixture, using a wooden spoon or heatproof spatula. Drop in the eggs, one at a time, mixing briskly until smooth. Stir in the vanilla extract and gradually incorporate the flour mixture. Fold in the remaining 4 1/2 ounces of chocolate and the crystallized ginger. Cover the dough with plastic wrap and set in the refrigerator to chill for at least 2 hours or overnight.

Position a rack in the middle of the oven and preheat the oven to 350°F. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

Shape the chilled dough into walnut-size balls, roll in confectioners' sugar, and arrange them about 2 inches apart on the prepared baking sheets. (If your kitchen is quite warm and the dough becomes too soft, return it to the refrigerator until chilled and fairly firm.) Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, or until the cookies have spread and the tops are cracked.

Cool the cookies on the baking sheets set on wire racks for about 2 minutes before removing them to the racks to cool completely. Store the cookies in an airtight container or in a zip-top

bag for up to 4 days.
Makes 40 cookies.

Mercy Rain

artist

<http://www.mercyrain.com/>

PECAN PIE

1 c. Karo Syrup
3 eggs
1 c. sugar
2 tbsp. butter, melted
1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 c. pecans
1 unbaked deep dish pie crust
Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees. Stir in the first 5 ingredients thoroughly using a spoon. Mix in pecans. Pour into crust. Bake at center rack of oven for 55-60 minutes. Cool for 2 hours.

Stephen Widener

artist, assistant pastor, writer for SGM Radio

<http://www.sgmradio.com/>

Here is the recipe for one of my favorites! Note: you can also crush the Oreos into the filling and pour onto pie filling. Then cover with Cool Whip. Then it becomes what I call Dirt Cake, which I love. Brenda Earp makes the best Dirt Cake I eat. She attends our church.

PUDDING PIE

2 cups of cold milk
2 pkgs. Jello instant pudding
1 Oreo pie filling crust
1 package of Double Stuff Oreos
1 bowl Cool Whip French Vanilla topping
Pour milk into medium bowl. Add dry pudding mixes. Beat with wire whisk or blender for 2 minutes or until well blended (mixture will be thick). Spoon mixture onto piecrust. Then place Oreos into filling and then place thawed Cool Whip on top of Cookies and filling. Refrigerate for 3 hrs. Should make 10 servings.

Brittany Maxwell

director of media at Godsey and Associates

<http://www.godseyandassociates.com/>

OATMEAL CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

1 stick of butter
1 cup of quick cook oats
1 box of yellow cake mix
1 cup of semi-sweet chocolate chips
2 eggs
Mix ingredients in a mixing bowl. Preheat oven to 350 F. Scoop spoonful size of mixture onto a cookie sheet. Cook for 10 minutes. Enjoy :)

Jean Grady

television personality, Gospel Music Today
<http://gospelmusictoday.com/>

Twenty-five years ago, I couldn't afford Christmas gifts for the 26 employees that worked for me. I decided I would make 26 loaves of banana bread and give to each one of them. That was the best I could do. The next year, I was able to purchase a gift for each of them and they all complained because they were waiting for the banana bread. After that, it became a tradition to make the banana bread for the employees and later for each of my choir members. Last year, I went to North Carolina to stay with our grandkids for a week while my daughter was recuperating from surgery. When I got there, she had all the ingredients to make banana bread. I made 21 loaves and put them in her freezer. Today, I make the loaves for the people who lovingly take care of my 100 year old mother, for my Gloryland Gospel Choir members and for the guys who pick up our trash every week and they look forward to their gift every year!. Here is the recipe:

BANANA BREAD

1/2 c. shortening

1 tsp. soda

1 c. sugar

3 large crushed bananas (very ripe)

2 eggs (unbeaten)

1/2 cup pecans or walnuts

2 c. flour

Blend sugar and shortening. Add eggs and mix well. Add soda to bananas and crush. Add flour and bananas all at once. Mix well and then add nuts. Spoon into loaf pan and bake 1 hour at 325 degrees. Note: I double and triple the recipe when making large amounts.

Miles Pike

artist, songwriter

<http://www.milespikemusic.com/>

This is what Martha and I will be contributing to the family feast this Thanksgiving and maybe even again for Christmas. It's a simple recipe that I made a few adjustments on. If there is a whipped topping that you think would compliment it, go for it! But, it does stand alone as a great dessert. Makes 1 - 9 or 10-inch cake. Martha and I found that this recipe was okay warm, better right out of the fridge, but our favorite was just refrigerated. Also, you might want to cook

a double batch so you can eat one and freeze one. A warning though: you do not want to get any on your fingers. Someone will get bitten.

Disclaimer: May throw into a diabetic coma or cause tongue to slap brains loose.

PIKE'S CHRISTMAS CHEESECAKE

Crust:

1 1/2 cup vanilla wafer/graham cracker crumbs

1/2 cup butter, softened

2 tablespoons white sugar

1 tablespoon cocoa powder

Cheesecake:

3 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese, softened

1 cup white sugar

3 eggs

8 (1 ounce) squares semisweet chocolate

2 tablespoons whipping cream

1 cup sour cream

1/4 teaspoon salt

4 teaspoons instant coffee granules dissolved in 1/4 cup hot water

3 teaspoons vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Butter one 9 or 10 inch spring form pan.

Combine the wafer/cracker crumbs, softened butter, 2 tablespoons white sugar, and the cocoa. Mix well and press mixture into the buttered spring form pan. Cook crust for five minutes and then take out and set aside to cool while you finish mixing the cheesecake.

In a medium sized bowl beat the softened cream cheese until smooth. Gradually add 1 cup white sugar mixing until well blended. Add eggs, one at a time. Beat at low speed until very smooth.

Melt the 8 ounces semisweet chocolate with 2 tablespoons whipping cream in a pan or bowl set over boiling water, stir until smooth. Add chocolate mixture to cream cheese mixture and blend well.

Stir in sour cream, salt, coffee, and vanilla; beat until smooth. Pour mixture into prepared pan.

Bake in the center of oven at 350 degrees F for 45 minutes. Center will be soft but will firm up when chilled. Do not over bake. Leave cake in oven with the heat turned off and the door ajar for 45 minutes. Remove cake from oven and chill for 12 hours. Yields 16 servings. (Yeah, right!)

Ann Miller

West Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Here is a recipe for date-nut balls that we make for the holidays. They are absolutely heavenly and easy to make. We started our holidays early by making a batch last week!

DATE-NUT BALLS

2 sticks butter

1 c. sugar

8 oz. chopped dates

1 c. freshly chopped pecans

2 c. Rice Krispies

Powdered sugar

Melt butter in large pan over low heat. Add sugar and nuts and bring to simmer, stirring frequently. Simmer for 8 minutes. Remove from heat. Add pecans and Rice Krispies and mix well. Allow mixture to cool till it can be handled. Roll into 1-inch balls and cool completely. Then roll in powdered sugar.

Dawn Kirby

Fredericton, New Brunswick

These are melt-in-your-mouth delicious and can be frozen. They even taste good frozen!

DAWN'S WHIPPED SCOTCHCAKES

1 cup butter

1/2 cup icing sugar

dash salt

1 1/2 cups flour

Blend butter, sugar, add salt and flour. Beat with electric beaters for 10 full minutes. Will be light and fluffy. Drop by tsp onto ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 20 minutes at 350 degrees or until edges are lightly brown. Makes about three-dozen cookies. Once cooled you can frost them with your favorite frosting and decorate with sprinkles or Christmas candy decorations.

Melinda Stice

Seymour, Tennessee

(wife of Jeff Stice, artist – Triumphant Quartet)

Super easy and unbelievably good!

MELINDA'S CAKE MIX PEPPERMINT COOKIES

1 box yellow cake mix

4 oz. cream cheese

1/4 cup oil

1 egg

1 package Andes peppermint crunch chips 10oz.

Mix all ingredients and put spoonfuls on cookie sheet.

Bake at 375, Just till barely golden.

Ann Downing

artist

<http://www.anndowning.com/>

ANN'S MAJIC COOKIE BARS

1/2 cup margarine

1-14 oz. can of Eagle Brand Condensed Milk

1 1/2 cup graham cracker crumbs

1 6 oz. package M&M's or butterscotch chips

1 cup chopped walnuts

Melt margarine and stir into graham cracker crumbs.

Press into 9x13 in. pan. Pour condensed milk over this. Top with remaining ingredients and press down firmly. Bake 25-30 minutes at 350 until lightly browned. Cool before cutting.

Sarah Herring

artist, songwriter

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1613388358&fref=ts>

SARAH'S SWISS CHOCOLATE CAKE

1 box Duncan Hines Swiss Chocolate cake mix

3/4 cup oil

1 1/2 cup milk

1 pkg vanilla instant pudding

3 eggs

Combine cake mix, oil, milk, pudding and eggs in bowl; mix with fork. Divide and pour batter into 3 9-inch greased and floured cake pans; bake at 350 degrees until done. (Do not over bake).

FROSTING

1 (8 oz.) box cream cheese (Room temperature)

2 1/2 cup confectioners sugar

1 (16 oz.) Cool Whip

3 Hershey Candy Bars (regular size)

Combine cream cheese and confectioners sugar; mix together in mixer.

Gradually add Cool Whip. In separate bowl, grate Hershey Bars (If you put them in freezer or refrigerator to harden, it makes them easier to grate.) Gradually add 2/3 Hershey bar (grated) into frosting. Use remaining grated Hershey bar on top of cake for decoration.

Dedre Henry

artist, The Shadrix Trio

<http://www.theshadrixtrio.com/index.html/>

DEDRA'S PEANUT BUTTER CUPS

1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon baking soda

1/2 cup butter, softened

1/2 cup white sugar

1/2 cup peanut butter

1/2 cup packed brown sugar

1 egg, beaten

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 tablespoons milk

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Sift together the flour, salt and baking soda; set aside.

Cream together the butter, sugar, peanut butter and brown sugar until fluffy. Beat in the egg, vanilla and milk. Add the flour mixture; mix well. Shape into 40 balls and place each into an ungreased mini muffin pan. Bake at 375 degrees for about 8 minutes. Remove from oven and immediately press a mini peanut butter cup into each ball. Cool and carefully remove from pan.

Sandi Miller

Hamilton, Ontario

SANDI'S CRANBERRY UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

8 tbsp unsalted butter, at room temperature (divided)

1 cup granulated sugar (divided)

1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

1/4 tsp ground allspice

1 3/4 cups fresh cranberries

1 large egg

1 tsp vanilla extract

1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour

1 1/2 tsp baking powder

1/4 tsp salt

1/2 cup milk

Preheat oven to 350F with a rack in the center. Rub the bottom and sides of an 8" round cake pan with 2tbsp of butter. In a small bowl, whisk together 1/2 cup sugar with the cinnamon and allspice. Sprinkle the mixture evenly over the bottom of the pan; arrange the cranberries in a single layer on top.

With electric mixer, cream remaining 6 tbsp butter and 1/2 cup sugar until light and fluffy. Add egg and vanilla; beat until well combined. In another bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder and salt. With

mixer on low speed, add flour mixture to butter mixture in three batches, alternating with milk until well combined. Spoon batter over the cranberries in the pan and smooth the top. Place the pan on a baking sheet; bake the cake until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool on a wire rack for 20 minutes. Run a knife around the edge of the cake; invert onto a rimmed platter.

Kym Hinson

artist, The Hinsons

<http://www.thehinsons.org/>

I like mine topped with whipped cream!

KIM'S JAPANESE FRUIT PIE

1 cup sugar

1 stick butter or margarine (melted)

a pinch of salt

2 eggs (beaten)

1 tbsp vinegar

1/2 cup flaked coconut

1/2 cup chopped walnuts

1/2 cup raisins

1- 9Inch pie shell

Mix sugar, butter, salt, eggs and vinegar: add coconut, walnuts and raisins.

Pour into pie shell. Bake @ 325 degrees for 35 minutes. Yields approx. 6 servings.

Kelly Nelon Clark

artist, The Nelons

<http://www.thenelons.com/home.cfm>

OREO DIRT CAKE

1 bag Oreos, crushed

8 oz. cream cheese

1/4 c. butter

1 c. powdered sugar

3 c. milk

2 sm. pkg. instant vanilla pudding

1/2 tsp. vanilla

12 oz. Cool Whip, thawed

Cream together cream cheese, butter and powdered sugar. In separate bowl mix together milk, pudding, vanilla, and Cool Whip. Add cream cheese mixture. Layer with Oreos. Chill.

Phil Foster

writer, SGM Radio

<http://www.sgmradio.com/>

My brother made this cake a few years back. I don't like peel in Christmas cake, so he made it with gumdrops. Mmm mmm good !

FOSTER'S GUMDROP CAKE

1/2 lb. butter

1 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese

1 1/2 cups white sugar

4 eggs

2 1/4 cups flour

1 1/2 tsp. vanilla

2 tsp. baking powder

2 cups gum drops

Put 1/4 cup of the flour over the gum drops coating well. Beat the butter and the sugar, add eggs one at a time and beat well after each addition. Beat in the cream cheese and the vanilla. Add flour, baking powder and gumdrops. Mix well. Put in a well greased tube pan and bake at 325 F 70 to 80 minutes. Note: I use the sugared gum drops not the baking ones. The cream cheese in the recipe makes the cake very moist.

Jim Copenhaver

artist, GloryWay Quartet

<http://glorywayquartet.weebly.com/index.html>

GRANNY RUSSELL'S PEANUT BUTTER FUDGE

1 cup of peanut butter

3 cups of sugar

1 cup of milk

pinch of salt

Mix sugar and milk together in a large pan, heat on medium, turn heat up to rolling boil, boil 5 minutes until soft ball stage, take off fire, add peanut butter, stir well, put in buttered pan, set, slice and enjoy!

Ty Johnson

musical director, Renaissance Revival

<http://www.reverbnation.com/renaissancerevival>

TY'S GINGERBREAD CHEESECAKE

3 lbs cream cheese, softened

2 cups sugar

12 eggs

1 tsp vanilla extract

3 cups crushed gingerbread cookies

1 cup brown sugar

1/4 lb butter

4 oz white baker's chocolate

1/2 cup + 1 tbsp eggnog

Preheat oven to 200 degrees. The key is low and slow... don't rush the cooking.

Make Crust: Melt butter, mix in brown sugar and 1 1/2 cups of crushed cookies. Press mixture into a springform pan. Set aside.

Make Batter: Using softened cream cheese mix thoroughly with brown sugar. Add eggs, 1/2 cup eggnog, and vanilla. Mix all together. Gently pour over crust, and bake for

5-6 hours at 200 degrees. After removing from the oven let this rest for at least 1-hour before removing from the pan.

Topping: Melt white chocolate, and slowly add remaining eggnog, mixing constantly. When smooth, evenly pour over cake. Top with remaining 1 1/2 cup of cookies.

Sandi Miller

Hamilton, Ontario

SANDI'S SKOR BARS

1 box unsalted crackers

1 cup butter

1 cup brown sugar

400 g Jersey Milk or Hershey chocolate bars (approx. 4 bars)

Line a four-sided cookie sheet; one that has edges all the way around, not just straight, with foil. Lay unsalted crackers across the entire tray until it is fully covered.

Melt 1 cup of butter with 1 cup of brown sugar together in the microwave until syrup like. Pour the syrup over the crackers, coating well.

Bake in a pre-heated oven 375 for 10 minutes.

While this is baking, melt 400 grams of Jersey Milk or Hershey chocolate bars in a double boiler. When 10 minutes is done, remove the tray from the oven.

Spread the chocolate over the crackers, carefully, coating well.

Freeze for at least an hour, more if you can. Tear off the foil and break into pieces.

Store pieces in an airtight container in fridge.

Note: when I put the tray in my freezer, I make sure to set it on a tea towel so it isn't touching anything else in the freezer as it could melt a plastic bag, etc.

Special thanks to Kathy Woodward who submitted a recipe we'd already received. Obviously, Oreo Balls are really good!

Kathy Woodward
artist, songwriter - OREO BALLS
<http://www.kathywoodwardministries.com/>

This is something that I love, and have to hide from the rest of the family until company gets here or there wouldn't be any left. Have a wonderful Holiday Season.

Bev McCann Ministries

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Contributors

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



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



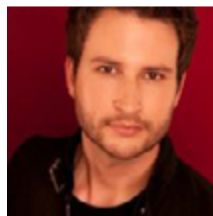
Lou Wills Hildreth appears on the Gaither Homecoming Videos, and is a founding member of Texas First Family Of Gospel Music, the "Singing Wills Family." She helped pioneer Christian television as host of "Wills Family Inspirational TV." After moving to Nashville in the sixties, she was the first woman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



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



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



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



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

Contributors

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



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

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

www.themansionentertainment.com

www.avidgrouppublishing.com

www.thepathwayrecords.com

www.johnmathisjr.com



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

bend. She serves as a group leader for Women of Faith, designs websites, and writes an inspirational blog at <http://jenniferjoycampbell.blogspot.com> Learn more about Jennifer at <http://jennifercampbell.net>



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



Angela Griffin is an International Field Representative for Love A Child, Inc., a 501 c 3 humanitarian organization to the island of Haiti. A rich Christian family heritage guided her path to minister in song to the broken, to feed the hungry, and lead others to Christ.

On December 31, 2002 she married Tim Griffin, an accomplished Southern Gospel pianist. Tim and Angela then combined their musical talents and formed the group "The Griffin's." They have traveled throughout the Southeast spreading the love of Christ.

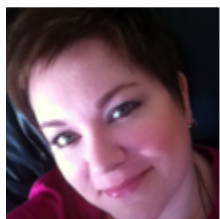
Contributors

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Janene Dubbeld is a freelance writer from Moneta, Va, where she resides with her husband and five children. She has written devotionals articles, children's stories, VBS material, greeting cards for Dayspring, poetry, and numerous songs. Her desire is to write for God's glory, inspire,

and encourage.



Laura Kennedy. Music moves me. Christ's loves inspires me. Mixing the two together in the beautiful array of the message of the gospel through Southern Gospel music is the purest of joys to me. Raised in Charlotte, North Carolina around the 5th Sunday night sings at church; that hand clappin',

foot stompin', spirit flowing rhythm of harmony stirs me to moments of Heaven on Earth. Believing it is still about the music, God has given me a heart for writing and a platform to learn from my heroes as well as sharing their ministry to expand their touch to others. Listen with your heart and hear the gentle, yet assured voice of our Father speaking to your heart, and be blessed!

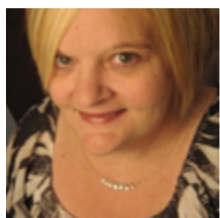


Scott Rhoades has a passion for writing, and enjoys sharing his experiences and interests through publication and speaking in public forums. After completing graduate work in 2006, he began to pursue freelance writing and continued public speaking. In 2009, he

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

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

Website: www.scottrhoades.net



Joan Walker grew up with music in the house and first heard Southern Gospel in her early teens. With almost a quirky (some may say 'weird') need to make sure words are spelled correctly and the apostrophes are in the right place, she

enjoys proofreading the articles for the SGN Scoops magazine each month...and looks beyond the letters and commas to the wonderful words each writer has written. Joan counts it as a blessing in her life to be part of SGN Scoops!



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

online at <http://peteschwager.com>



Staci Schwager helps with marketing and communication with her husband's web design company, Cre8able Media. Together they make a great team! Staci being the "talkative" one, loves being able to communicate one on one with clients and organizing ideas. While Pete on the other hand is diving into the design and coding

aspects to make the real masterpiece! Most of Staci's days are filled with preparing homeschool lessons for her kids, couponing, gardening, tending to her chicken flock and spending as much time on the beautiful, country land God has blessed them with. She also has a couponing blog with one of her best friends at <http://Craftycoupongirlz.com>



Charlie Sexton is a Minister Of Music near Atlanta, Georgia and possesses a passion for traditional Southern Gospel Music. His formative years were spent attending church with Wendy Bagwell and the Sunliters. He credits them for instilling a love for exciting, entertaining, yet heartfelt music

presentations. An avid historian, Charlie has over 5000 vinyl Southern Gospel recordings, cassette tapes and compact discs, as well as vintage memorabilia. He is an accomplished pianist, having toured with several well-known groups like Liberty and New Desire. As a sound and recording engineer, Charlie was nominated in 2008 for an Emmy® Award for his work on a featured documentary on Kennesaw State University's Men's Basketball team. Charlie and his girlfriend, singer Linda Foster, have worked with singers, musicians, promoters and pastors over the years promoting Southern Gospel Music. Email: chsexton@mindspring.com www.sweetcreekpromotions.com