billboard Country Update

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Click Here For Friday's Billboard Country Update **And Country Airplay Chart**

ON THE CHARTS

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Kelsea Ballerini Sets New Pattern With First No. 1 Album



KELSEA BALLERINI

Patterns

The Knoxville, Tenn., native achieves her first No. 1 on Billboard's Top Country Albums chart as Patterns blasts in

at the summit. Released Oct. 25, the set earned 54,000 equivalent album units — a new weekly best for **Ballerini** — with 35,000 in album sales (aided by

\$4.99 sale-pricing in the iTunes Store) through Oct. 31, according to Luminate. On the all-genre Billboard 200, it enters at No. 4, marking her second top 10 and highest rank, outpacing the No. 7 peak for Unapologetically in 2017. She coauthored all 15 tracks on the new LP. On Oct. 28, a digital version was released on her website with two bonus cuts.



SHABOOZEY

"A Bar Song (Tipsy)" The smash by **Shaboozey** (below) rebounds for a 20th week atop Hot Country Songs, tying Zach Bryan's

2023 single "I Remember Everything" (featuring Kacey Musgraves) for the eighthlongest reign since the survey became the genre's singular chart in 1958. It leads with 72.6 million in all-format audience. 22.1 million U.S. streams and 5,000 sold.



CODY JOHNSON & "I'm Gonna Love You"

CARRIE UNDERWOOD

The team-up rises 21-15 on Hot Country Songs

after starting at its No. 13 best four weeks earlier. The love song pushes 32-30 on Country Airplay (4.5 million) and totaled 6.5 million streams (up 10% in each metric) and 2,000 sold. It's one of 13 new tracks on Johnson's Leather Deluxe Edition, which arrived Nov. 1.



BALLERINI: PATRICK TRACY, SHABOOZEY: DANIEL PRAKOPCY, JOHNSON: JASON STOLTZFUS

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EXCLUSIVE CHARTS including Hot Country Songs, Country Airplay, Top Country Albums, Country Streaming Songs, Country Songwriters, Country Producers and more!

Bi-weekly content including Makin' Tracks, On the Charts, a roundup of executive moves and timely analysis of the latest country news and trends

Expert insight and commentary by Tom Roland and Jim Asker



THANK YOU COUNTRY RADIO



A M
NOT
OKAY

6TH CONSECUTIVE #1

NEW SINGLE "LIAR"
IMPACTING IMMEDIATELY





BMG

billboard Hot Country Songs

AIRPLAY, STREAMING & SALES DATA

LUMINATE

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TWO WEEKS AGO	WKS ON CHART	TITLE PRODUCER (SONGWRITER) Artist IMPRINT / PROMOTION LABEL	COUNTRY AIRPLAY RANK	PEAK Position
1	2	1	29	A BAR SONG (TIPSY) ★★ No. 1 (20 Weeks) ★★ Scook,N.SASTRY,J.JONES,J.A.KENT,M.A.WILLIAMS) AMERICAN DOGWOOD/EMPIRE/MAGNOLIA MUSIC	5	1
2	3	2	26	I HAD SOME HELP LBELL, CHARLIE HANDSOME, HOSKINS (A.R. POST, M.C. WALLEN, L.B. BELL, CHARLIE HANDSOME, E.K. SMITH, J. J. HOSKINS, C. PWALTERS, A.G. GORLEY) MERCURY/REPUBLIC/BIG LOUD	RC	1
3	1	_	2	LOVE SOMEBODY J.MOI,CHARLIE HANDSOME (M.C.WALLEN, J.BYRON, A. G.GORLEY, J.K.HINDLIN, E.LOELY, CHARLIE HANDSOME, N.J. GALE, M.SORBARA, S. C.FRANK, S.F.R.MASTROIANNI, YGRUZMAN) MERCURY/REPUBLIC/BIG LOUD	20	1
4	4	3	21	I AM NOT OKAY Z.CROWELL (J.B.DEFORD,T.PHILLIPS,A.G.GORLEY,C.BROWN) ★★ Airplay Gainer ★★ BAILEE & BUDDY/BMG/REPUBLIC/STONEY CREEK	1	3
5	5	4	17	LIES LIES LIES J.MOI (J.J.DILLON,J.MILLER,D.ROSS,C.TOMPKINS) MERCURY/REPUBLIC/BIG LOUD	4	3
6	6	5	26	MILES ON IT MARSHMELLO, DIGITAL FARM ANIMALS, EARWULF, C. MCDONOUGH (MARSHMELLO, K. BROWN, J. TORREY, R. MCDONOUGH, C. MCDONOUGH, CASTLE, N. J. GALE, TERIKSEN) Marshmello & Kane Brown JOYTIME COLLECTIVE/RCA NASHVILLE	2	4
7	9	8	35	AUSTIN T.HEIDELMAN (A.D.NOVOTNY,K.T.HEIDELMAN,A.WENDLER,C.R.ARNSPIGER) VERSION III.WARNER/WMN	8	3
8	7	7	23	PINK SKIES Zach Bryan Z.L.BRYAN (Z.L.BRYAN) BELTING BRONCO/WARNER/WAR	-	3
9	8	6	25	AIN'T NO LOVE IN OKLAHOMA CHIP MAITHEWS,J.D.SINGLETON,LCOMBS (LCOMBS,J.L.ALEXANDER,J.D.SINGLETON) UNIVERSAL STUDIOS/ATLANTIC/SEVEN RIDGES/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE	RC	3
0	10	9	19	YOU LOOK LIKE YOU LOVE ME W.BUNDY (E.LANGLEY, A. RAITIERE, R. GREEN) SAWGOD/COLUMBIA/NASHVILLE HARBOR	7	9
0	13	12	31	WIND UP MISSIN' YOU CLACORTE (T.ARCHER,T.P.WETMORE,C.LACORTE) Tucker Wetmore BACK BLOCKS/EMI NASHVILLE	15	11
12	11	11	21	HIGH ROAD G.SIMON (R.WETZEL,A.R.ALLEN,G.SIMON,C.KARPINEN,J.MURPH,L.J.VELTZ,J.SERRATO) Koe Wetzel & Jessie Murph YELLABUSH/COLUMBIA/RECORDS NASHVILLE	12	8
13	12	10	19	POUR ME A DRINK LBELL, CHARLIE HANDSOME (A.R.POST, L.B.BELL, CHARLIE HANDSOME, J.BYRON, R.H.BLOCK, J.DOZZI) Post Malone Featuring Blake Shelton MERCURY/REPUBLIC/BIG LOUD	3	3
14	14	13	18	28 Zach Bryan Z.L.BRYAN (Z.L.BRYAN) BELTING BRONCO/WARNER/WAR	-	5
Œ	21	14	5	I'M GONNA LOVE YOU T.W.WILLMON (C.STEVENS,K.ARCHER,T.DENNING) COJO/WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE/CAPITOL NASH	30	13
16	18	21	11	I NEVER LIE C.CHAMBERLAIN (Z.TOP,C.CHAMBERLAIN,T.NICHOLS) Zach Top LE033	52	16
17	16	17	14	GUY FOR THAT LBELL, CHARLIE HANDSOME, HOSKINS (A.R. POST, L.B. BELL, CHARLIE HANDSOME, L. COMBS, J. MCNAIR, E.K. SMITH, J.J. HOSKINS) Post Malone Featuring Luke Combs MERCURY/REPUBLIC/BIG LOUD	21	7
18	17	15	25	BEAUTIFUL AS YOU J.BUNETTA,J.H.RYAN,AMMO,D.HUFF (THOMAS RHETT,J.C.BUNETTA,J.E.COLEMAN,J.K.HINDLIN,A.IZQUIERDO,Z.KELSEY,J.H.RYAN) FIFTY-ONE/FORTY-NINE/VALDRY	9	15
19	19	20	50	THINK I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU C.STAPLETON,D.COBB (C.STAPLETON) CSTAPLETON,D.COBB (C.STAPLETON) SOUND,MERCURY NASHVILLE	19	12
20	20	19	20	WHISKEY WHISKEY Woneybagg Yo Featuring Morgan Wallen TURBO_EVRGRN,CHARLIE HANDSOME (J.THOMPSON, D.D. WHITE, JR.,M.C.WALLEN, J.LOWE, C.A. DURHAM, A.M. NURANI, CHARLIE HANDSOME, A. G. GORLEY, E.K.SMITH, E.K.LUGHAMMER, D. RUDFF) CMG/N-LESS/NITERSCOPE/ICLG CMG/N-LESS/NITERSCOPE/ICLG	-	6
3	23	22	16	AM I OKAY? K.BUSH (M.MORONEY,LLAIRD,J.J.DILLON) MEGAN MORONEY/COLUMBIA/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE	32	19
22	15	16	14	LONELY ROAD SLIMXX,BAZEXX,CHARLIE HANDSOME,T.L.BARKER (T.L.BARKER,B.ALLEN,J.DENVER,W.DANOFF,TAFFY NIVERT-DANOFF,R.C.BAKER,S.BASIL,N.A.LONG) Mgk & Jelly Roll EST19XX/INTERSCOPE/ICLG	-	13
23	22	18	8	LIAR Z.CROWELL (J.B.DEFORD,B.J.JOHNSON,A.G.GORLEY,T.PHILLIPS) BAILEE & BUDDY/BMG/REPUBLIC/STONEY CREEK	-	18
24	47	40	17	COWBOYS CRY TOO ** Sales & Streaming Gainer ** Kelsea Ballerini & Noah Kahan A VANDERHEYM,K.BALLERINI (K.BALLERINI,A VANDERHEYM,N.KAHAN) BLACK RIVER	43	16
25	36	36	6	I AIN'T SAYIN' PDIGIOVANNI (T.P.WOOD, S.MOAKLER, M.L.HOLMAN, E.REID) MCA NASHVILLE MCA NASHVILLE	25	25

COUNTRY SONGWRITERS™

	1	#1 ZACH BRYAN
	2	ASHLEY GORLEY
	3	CHARLIE HANDSOME
	4	RILEY GREEN
	5	JESSIE JO DILLON
	6	TAYLOR PHILLIPS
	7	JELLY ROLL
	8	CHRIS STAPLETON
TIE	9	LOUIS BELL
TIE	9	POST MALONE



COUNTRY PRODUCERS™

	1	#1 CHARLIE HANDSOME
	2	JOEY MOI
	3	ZACH CROWELL
	4	ZACH BRYAN
	5	LOUIS BELL
TIE	6	NEVIN SASTRY
TIE	6	SEAN COOK
	8	TRAVIS HEIDELMAN
	9	WILL BUNDY
	10	CARSON CHAMBERLAIN

The weekly Country Songwriters and Country Producers charts are based on total points accrued by a songwriter and producer, respectively, for each attributed song that appears on the Hot Country Songs chart. As with Billboard's yearly recaps, multiple writers or producers split points for each song equally (and the dividing of points will lead to occasional ties on rankings).

billboard Hot Country Songs

AIRPLAY, STREAMING & SALES DATA

LUMINATE

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TWO WEEKS AGO	WKS ON CHART	TITLE PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	Artist IMPRINT / PROMOTION LABEL	COUNTRY AIRPLAY RANK	PEAK Position
20	27	26	9	FIX WHAT YOU DIDN'T BREAK LRIMES (N.SMITH,A.G.GORLEY,T.PHILLIPS,L.RIMES)	Nate Smith RCA NASHVILLE	-	24
27	26	27	36	HOLY SMOKES A.R.SHAWN (A.R.SHAWN,B.ZIMMERMAN,B.M.STENNIS,LHUNGATE,M.TYLER)	Bailey Zimmerman ELEKTRA/WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE/WEA	29	13
23	28	31	8	4X4XU J.JOYCE (L.WILSON, J.DECIOUS, A.RAITIERE)	Lainey Wilson BROKEN BOW	23	28
29	29	29	10	SOUNDS LIKE THE RADIO C.CHAMBERLAIN (Z.TOP,C.CHAMBERLAIN,W.MCCUBBIN)	Zach Top LE033	16	29
30	33	28	11	LOSERS LBELL, CHARLIE HANDSOME (A.R. POST, L.B. BELL, CHARLIE HANDSOME, A.G. GORLEY, E.K. SMITH, J. S. REEVES, C.P. WALTERS)	Post Malone Featuring Jelly Roll MERCURY/REPUBLIC/BIG LOUD	-	12
3	38	34	7	GONNA LOVE YOU D.FANNING (M.THOMAS,D.FANNING,A.DEAN,A.SHERIDAN)	Parmalee STONEY CREEK	6	31
32	40	35	9	MESSED UP AS ME K.URBAN,D.HUFF (J.J.DILLON,S.MCANALLY,R.CLAWSON,M.LOTTEN)	Keith Urban HIT RED/CAPITOL NASHVILLE	17	24
33	35	32	36	BOYS BACK HOME J.A.FOX (D.MARLOWE,S.ENNIS,J.A.FOX)	Dylan Marlowe & Dylan Scott PIA/CURB/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE	14	32
34	45	43	4	COWBOY SONGS LGUZMAN,M.MCGINN (G.BIRGE,M.TYLER,M.MCGINN,LGUZMAN)	George Birge RECORDS NASHVILLE	10	34
3 5	42	39	29	DEVIL YOU KNOW S.MARTINEZ (G.BARHAM,Z.DYER,J.HALL,S.MARTINEZ)	Tyler Braden WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE/WMN	53	25
36	31	_	2	ENDS OF THE EARTH B.HOOD (T.MYERS)	Ty Myers RECORDS/COLUMBIA/RECORDS NASHVILLE	-	31
37	32	24	3	WINNING STREAK Z.CROWELL,A.NIVAREL (J.B.DEFORD,A.A.NIVAREL,J.RAGOSTA,R.RAGOSTA)	Jelly Roll BAILEE & BUDDY/BMG/REPUBLIC/STONEY CREEK	-	24
33	46	44	4	CAN YOU DIE FROM A BROKEN HEART LRIMES (K.R.FISHER,M.MOTASIC,T.WALKER)	Nate Smith & Avril Lavigne RCA NASHVILLE	-	29
39	41	38	20	RELAPSE M.ELIZONDO (W.ZEIDERS,B.PENDERGRASS)	Warren Zeiders 717/WARNER/WEA	59	30
40	44	41	11	JUST LIKE JOHNNY REDFERRIN,M.WILSHIRE,J.SAGHI (B.REDFERRIN,M.WILSHIRE)	Redferrin Round Here/Warner Music Nashville/WMN	-	38
41	43	33	7	A LOT MORE FREE S.FEE (M.MCNOWN,J.REEVES,S.FEE)	Max McNown FUGITIVE RECORDINGS/THE ORCHARD	-	29
②	RE-EI	NTRY	2	BIGGER HOUSES D.SMYERS,S.HENDRICKS (A.ALBERT,D.SMYERS,J.T.MINTON,J.REYNOLDS)	Dan + Shay Warner Music Nashville/War	13	42
43	25	_	2	DON'T MIND IF I DO D.HUFF (R.GREEN)	Riley Green Featuring Ella Langley NASHVILLE HARBOR	-	25
4	48	48	6	ONE BAD HABIT B.GALLIMORE,T.MCGRAW (M.BEESON,A.ESHUIS,T.LANE)	Tim McGraw MCGRAW/BIG MACHINE	11	44
45	RE-EI	NTRY	18	WANNA BE LOVED D.COBB (D.COLEMAN,M.COLEMAN)	The Red Clay Strays HBYCO/RCA	-	27
46	NE	w	1	BAGGAGE ★★ Hot Shot Debut ★★ A.VANDERHEYM,K.BALLERINI (K.BALLERINI,J.J.DILLON,K.FAIRCHILD,H.LINDSEY,A.VANDERHEYM)	Kelsea Ballerini BLACK RIVER	-	46
4	THIS TOWN'S BEEN TOO GOOD TO US J.DURRETT, CHARLIE HANDSOME (D.SCOTT, A.G. GORLEY, CHARLIE HANDSOME, J. BYRON, T. PHILLIPS)		Dylan Scott CURB	24	36		
48	50	46	9 PORCH LIGHT NOT LISTED (NOT LISTED)		Josh Meloy JOSH MELOY	-	41
49	49	42	18	AMERICAN NIGHTS ZLBRYAN (ZLBRYAN)	Zach Bryan Belting Bronco/Warner/War	-	8
50	NE	w	1	DAMN GOOD DAY TO LEAVE D.HUFF (R.GREEN,ERIK DYLAN,J.D.SINGLETON,N.WALSH)	Riley Green NASHVILLE HARBOR	18	50

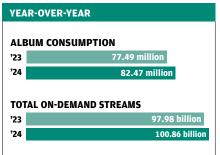
The week's most popular country songs, ranked by radio airplay audience impressions as measured by Luminate, sales data as compiled by Luminate and streaming activity data from online music sources tracked by Luminate. Descending titles below No. 25 are moved to recurrent after 20 weeks.

COUNTRY MARKET WATCH

A Weekly National Music Sales Report

WEEKLY UNIT COUNT									
	ALBUM CONSUMPTION	AUDIO ON-DEMAND	VIDEO ON-DEMAND						
This Week	1,799,000	2,174,750,000	115,803,000						
Last Week	1,870,000	2,269,660,000	118,130,000						
Change	-3.8%	-4.2%	-2.0%						
This Week Last Year	1,567,000	1,890,277,000	115,475,000						
Change	14.8%	15.0%	0.3%						

YEAR-TO-DATE									
	2023	2024	CHANGE						
Album Consumption	77,490,000	82,467,000	6.4%						
Audio On-Demand	92,069,738,000	100,059,897,000	8.7%						
Video On-Demand	5,907,828,000	5,315,458,000	-10.0%						



All data measures U.S. activity as of the week ending October 31, 2024. All units counts are rounded to the nearest thousand. Album consumption units — also known as albums plus TEA plus SEA — consists of album sales; track-equivalent album (TEA) sales whereby 10 tracks equal one consumption unit; and stream equivalent albums (SEA) whereby 1,250 paid and/or 3,750 ad-supported audio on-demand streams (OAD) equal one consumption unit.



THANK YOU COUNTRY RADIO & OUR STREAMING PARTNERS

DREW BALDRIDGE TOUGH PEOPLE #1 MOST ADDED 107 FIRST WEEK STATIONS

MUSIC CHOICE KKGO/LOS ANGELES KSCS/DALLAS **KBAY/SAN FRANCISCO** KILT/HOUSTON KKBQ/HOUSTON WKHX/ATLANTA WUBL/ATLANTA WMZQ/WASHINGTON DC WBWL/BOSTON WKIS/MIAMI KKWF/SEATTLE KMLE/PHOENIX KNIX/PHOENIX WYCD/DETROIT KMNB/MINNEAPOLIS KWBL/DENVER WKKT/CHARLOTTE WSOC/CHARLOTTE WJVC/NASSAU WPOC/BALTIMORE

KUPL/PORTLAND. OR KSD/ST. LOUIS WIL/ST. LOUIS KAJA/SAN ANTONIO KCYY/SAN ANTONIO KFRG/RIVERSIDE KSOP/SALT LAKE CITY **KUBL/SALT LAKE CITY** KASE/AUSTIN WWKA/ORLANDO KCYE/LAS VEGAS **KWNR/LAS VEGAS** WDSY/PITTSBURGH KBEQ/KANSAS CITY WNCB/RALEIGH WQDR/RALEIGH WCOL/COLUMBUS WLHK/INDIANAPOLIS WKDF/NASHVILLE WSIX/NASHVILLE WGNE/JACKSONVILLE

WGH/NORFOLK WPAW/GREENSBORO WTQR/GREENSBORO WIRK/WEST PALM WGKX/MEMPHIS WLFP/MEMPHIS WKMK/MONMOUTH WWGR/FT. MYERS WWYZ/HARTFORD KTEX/MCALLEN WSSL/GREENVILLE WONU/LOUISVILLE WYRK/BUFFALO WBEE/ROCHESTER WZZK/BIRMINGHAM KIIM/TUCSON WHKO/DAYTON KSKS/FRESNO WGNA/ALBANY WKLI/ALBANY KHKI/DES MOINES

KRST/ALBUQUERQUE WIVK/KNOXVILLE WCYQ/KNOXVILLE WCTO/ALLENTOWN WCKN/CHARLESTON WTGE/BATON ROUGE KUZZ/BAKERSFIELD KATM/STOCKTON WOGK/GAINESVILLE KAWO/BOISE KIZN/BOISE WRBT/HARRISBURG WXCY/WILMINGTON WKRO/DAYTONA BEACH KDRK/SPOKANE KXLY/SPOKANE KATC/COLORADO SPRINGS KCCY/COLORADO SPRINGS WWQM/MADISON WPOR/PORTLAND, ME WTHT/PORTLAND. ME WUSY/CHATTANOOGA

KBUL/RENO WQMX/AKRON WRNS/GREENVILLE WOLF/SYRACUSE **KUAD/FT. COLLINS** KXBG/FT. COLLINS KZSN/WICHITA WKKO/TOLEDO WKXC/AUGUSTA KJUG/VISALIA WGTY/YORK WXBQ/JOHNSON CITY WQHK/FT. WAYNE KMDL/LAFAYETTE WIOV/LANCASTER WOKO/PORTSMOUTH KHAY/OXNARD-VENTURA WUSJ/JACKSON WITL/LANSING WKML/FAYETTEVILLE KTTS/SPRINGFIELD WNCY/GREEN BAY



Spotify NEXT FROM NASHVILLE

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MAKIN' TRACKS TOM ROLAND tom.roland@billboard.com

Drew Baldridge Uses Tragedy To Explore American Resilience In 'Tough People'

BALDRIDGE



America is at a peak in anxiety as it reaches Election Day, angry on one side about immigration and fearful on the other about a descent into dictatorship.

In the midst of that tension, **Drew Baldridge**—on the heels of his first top five single, "She's Somebody's Daughter"—targeted Nov. 4, Election Day Eve, as the add date for his new single: a litany of disasters and a celebration of resilience titled "Tough People."

"What I love about this song is that it's honest and it's real," Baldridge

says. "It's what our world's going through. It's what we're all feeling."

And, it suggests, we can all survive whatever crisis emerges—a tornado, cancer, a school shooting or a war.

"Don't give up. Don't stop loving people. Don't stop helping people out," he says. "What you're going through, you're going to come out better because of it. I think that's the message that we want to share."

Baldridge was in a David vs. Goliath mindset, he remembers, when he wrote it on July 24, 2023. He was about to self-release "She's Somebody's Daughter" to radio via PlayMPE the next day. He met with fellow indie artist Adam Sanders and songwriter Jordan Walker ("When It Rains It Pours") in writing room two at Sony Music Publishing Nashville. Sanders had heard, on Joe Rogan's podcast, a version of "The Cycle of Man," an assessment of generational changes from author G. Michael Hopf's Those Who Remain: A Postapocalyptic Novel—"Hard times create strong men, strong men create good times, good times create weak men, and weak men create hard times."

Sanders held on to the hook, "Hard times make tough people," until he could write with Baldridge, who wasn't afraid of difficult topics. Both of them were thinking about their own careers as they worked on it, inserting some optimism into the hard times.

"It's just always a fight and a struggle," Sanders says. "But hey, if you keep going, you can achieve your dreams no matter what. That's where that came from."

Walker turned the "hard times" hook into "Tough times make tough people" and started playing guitar in a drop-D tuning, ideal for power chords.

"It's emotional, it's deep," he says. "As soon as you hit that first note, it just hits you."

The first image accomplishes the same thing. A Midwest town endures a tornado that leaves only a Baptist church and a baseball field standing. The tough people, of course, rebuild it, as they would after a flood or a hurricane.

"In my little town, one year, the whole roof of the cafeteria got ripped off, and a couple of farmers lost their barns," Southern Illinois native Baldridge recalls. "The next morning, I woke up and I went out there, and my dad and other farmers — everybody was coming together to help fix stuff. And that just has really stuck with me."

A 4-year-old girl battling cancer in Memphis — presumably at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital — follows the tornado in the text.

"You want to talk about three guys in a room crying: Drew's got a little boy, and I've got two little girls," Walker says. "We all got choked up, and that was probably, honestly, the hardest part of the song to write."

Not that the rest of it was rainbows and unicorns. The final vignette reveals a soldier who returns home in a flag-covered casket, and another recognizes a police officer putting his life on the line at a school shooting. The latter subject was timely: Six people had been killed at Nashville's Covenant School in a massacre just four months prior, scarring the entire community. They debated including that particular tragedy and decided to go for it.

"It's one of the biggest problems in this country — it needs to be talked

about," Walker says. "I've got two little girls that are in day care, and luckily, there's a cop that sits in the parking lot every day, so that deters anyone from wanting to do anything ignorant. But I can't imagine when these girls get in high school, middle school, just kind of dropping them off and praying you see them at four o'clock."

All of the song's hard times, though, were offset by the chorus, beginning with a melodic lift. After a couple lines of lyrics that border on victimhood, it

turns to self-determination—a series of "Keep on fighting" mantras leading to the feel-good conclusion: "Hard work pays off, good beats evil/And tough times make tough people."

They cut a demo, though in retrospect, they missed the creative mark. "I just don't think that we captured the right emotion," Sanders says. "It kind of felt a little stale. We turned the song in to our publishers, and I don't think anybody said anything."

But when Baldridge presented a handful of songs to producer **Nick Schwarz**, he knew "Tough People" had to be part of the next round of recording.

"The school shooting line is what made me go 'Holy moly,' "Schwarz recalls. "It's so real."

They recorded it in mid-December at the Sony Tree Studios, focused on making it sound tougher than the demo. A tremolo guitar helped establish some tension.

"I'm a sucker for tremolo and slap back — I just love those two sounds," Schwarz says. "So I asked for tremolo, and they were like, 'Nick and his tremolo' and laughed."

But the recording took an unexpected turn. Sanders got a standing ovation when he performed an acous-

tic version of "Tough People" on Dec. 14 at the Franklin Theater. Based on that reception, Walker made a new acoustic demo, and it was so good that he played it on Dec. 29 for **Luke Combs**, who wanted to cut it. A few weeks later, **Lainey Wilson** heard it while visiting Baldridge, and she called Combs to ask if she could record it with him. They made their recording on Jan. 25. Combs rewrote a couple of lines in verse two, but he kept the school shooting in place.

"One of the responding officers [at Covenant] is the canine officer for Metro Nashville," Walker says. "He actually lives on Luke's property and trains dogs out there. So Luke was like, 'If anything, that line is staying.' He goes, 'That guy's a buddy of mine, and I think nobody talks about that.'"

But when Baldridge partnered with BBR Music Group/BMG to market the follow-up to "She's Somebody's Daughter," the label insisted "Tough People" was his best option as an artist. Baldridge told Combs he thought he should take it back, and Combs agreed. And when the writers wanted to give Combs a songwriter credit for contributing a few lines, he insisted on taking only 10% ownership instead of 25%.

Schwarz subsequently worked more on the recording, cutting new parts and moving a lot of the existing instrumental support around to heighten the song's drama and better emulate the acoustic demo's spirit. Baldridge tried to match the story's intensity in his final vocal. When he heard the results later, he recut the vocal on the second chorus to make that part more forceful ahead of the guitar solo.

"I can't sing the word 'tough' weak," he reasons.

Stoney Creek released "Tough People" through PlayMPE on Oct. 25. While the hard times in the track may play into the issues of the day, Baldridge hopes he can remain neutral about the song's controversies but still inspire people to be their best selves.

"I don't want to have to do political interviews or anything," he says. "This is where we're at. Take it how you want to take it, and hopefully, some good can come out of it."

billboard



TOP BUSINESS MANAGERS

On Nov. 16, Billboard will showcase the most in-demand business managers, whose financial expertise ensures their music industry clients invest (and spend) their money wisely.

Making money in the music industry is hard enough for artists and executives, which is why they turn to an elite few to help with financial profit and investment.

As a result of the rise of branding deals and streaming services, the task of managing artist income has become more complicated than ever, making the role of music business managers invaluable.

Advertise in this issue and reach an elite group of influencers who guide their clients' financial fortunes and know a thing or two about how to invest their own money.

CONTACTS

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Latin: Marcia Olival | marciaolival 29@gmail.com

Southeast: Lee Ann Photoglo | laphotoglo@gmail.com

STREAMING & SALES DATA COMPILED BY LUMINATE

billboard top country albums

THIS	LAST WEEK	2 WEEKS AGO	WEEKS ON CHT	ARTIST TITLE IMPRINT & NUMBER / DISTRIBUTING LABEL	CERT	PEAK POS.
0	NE	w	1	KELSEA BALLERINI PATTERNS BLACK RIVER		1
2	2	2	87	MORGAN WALLEN BIG LOUD/MERCURY 037570*/REPUBLIC ONE THING AT A TIME	5	1
3	1	1	3	JELLY ROLL BEAUTIFULLY BROKEN BAILEE & BUDDY/STONEY CREEK/BMG 602468028123*/REPUBLIC		1
4	3	3	11	POST MALONE F-1 TRILLION MERCURY 602465958249*/REPUBLIC		1
5	4	4	199	MORGAN WALLEN BIG LOUD 033180*/REPUBLIC DANGEROUS: THE DOUBLE ALBUM	6	1
6	5	5	18	ZACH BRYAN THE GREAT AMERICAN BAR SCENE BELTING BRONCO DIGITAL EX/WARNER (093624839989*)		1
7	7	6	62	ZACH BRYAN BELTING BRONCO 725898*/WARNER		1
8	6	7	128	ZACH BRYAN BELTING BRONCO 86979*/WARNER AMERICAN HEARTBREAK		1
9	9	8	22	SHABOOZEY WHERE I'VE BEEN, ISN'T WHERE I'M GOING AMERICAN DOGWOOD 1023*/EMPIRE	•	2
10	10	10	387	LUKE COMBS THIS ONE'S FOR YOU RIVER HOUSE/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE 538883*/SMN	6	1
0	13	12	155	TAYLOR SWIFT RED (TAYLOR'S VERSION) REPUBLIC 034504*		1
12	11	11	15	SOUNDTRACK TWISTERS: THE ALBUM UNIVERSAL PICTURES/ATLANTIC 075678606632*/AG		3
13	12	9	16	MEGAN MORONEY MEGAN MORONEY/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE 281342*/SMN/COLUMBIA		3
14	8	_	2	RILEY GREEN NASHVILLE HARBOR 843930116935/BMLG		8
15	15	13	84	LUKE COMBS GETTIN' OLD RIVER HOUSE/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE 877494*/SMN		2
16	16	14	15	ZACH TOP COLD BEER & COUNTRY MUSIC LE033 0001*		14
17	14	15	335	MORGAN WALLEN IF I KNOW ME BIG LOUD 783*	3	1
18	18	16	496	CHRIS STAPLETON TRAVELLER MERCURY NASHVILLE 019405*/UMGN	6	1
19	17	17	77	BAILEY ZIMMERMAN RELIGIOUSLY. THE ALBUM. ELEKTRA/WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE 712554*/3EE/WMN		3
20	22	22	4	TUCKER WETMORE BACK BLOCKS/EMI NASHVILLE DIGITAL EX/UMGN WAVES ON A SUNSET		18
21	20	18	260	LUKE COMBS WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT YOU GET RIVER HOUSE/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE 595687*/SMN	5	1
2	25	20	69	TAYLOR SWIFT SPEAK NOW (TAYLOR'S VERSION) REPUBLIC 455678*		1
23	21	19	307	TOBY KEITH 35 BIGGEST HITS SHOW DOG-UNIVERSAL 010334/UME		1
24	23	23	207	CHRIS STAPLETON STARTING OVER MERCURY NASHVILLE 032689*/UMGN		1
25	27	24	4	NATE SMITH CALIFORNIA GOLD RCA NASHVILLE 889213*/SMN		12

Top Country Albums ranks the most popular country albums of the week, as compiled by Luminate, based on multi-metric consumption (blending traditional album sales, track equivalent albums, and streaming equivalent albums). Copyright 2024, Billboard Media, LLC and Luminate. All rights reserved.

bilboard AMERICANA/ FOLK ALBUMS

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	L	U	V	П	ļ	A	T	E

THIS	LAST WEEK	2 WEEKS AGO	WEEKS ON CHT	ARTIST TITLE IMPRINT & NUMBER / DISTRIBUTING LABEL	CERT.	PEAK POS.
1	1	1	73	NOAH KAHAN STICK SEASON MERCURY 036702*/REPUBLIC	2	1
2	2	2	18	ZACH BRYAN THE GREAT AMERICAN BAR SCENE BELTING BRONCO DIGITAL EX/WARNER (093624839989*)		1
3	4	3	62	ZACH BRYAN BELTING BRONCO 725898*/WARNER		1
4	3	4	128	ZACH BRYAN BELTING BRONCO 86979*/WARNER AMERICAN HEARTBREAK		1
5	5	5	22	SHABOOZEY WHERE I'VE BEEN, ISN'T WHERE I'M GOING AMERICAN DOGWOOD 1023*/EMPIRE	•	1
6	6	6	488	HOZIER RUBYWORKS/COLUMBIA 309996*/LEGACY	3	1
7	7	7	442	CHRIS STAPLETON TRAVELLER MERCURY NASHVILLE 019405*/UMGN	6	1
8	NEW		1	CROSBY, STILLS, NASH & YOUNG LIVE AT THE FILLMORE EAST, 1969 BROKEN ARROW/GOLD HILL/GRAHAM NASH/ICONIC STST MASTERS 695025*/RHINO		8
9	9	8	207	CHRIS STAPLETON STARTING OVER MERCURY NASHVILLE 032689*/UMGN		1
10	8	11	15	KOE WETZEL YELLABUSH 800551*/COLUMBIA (VINYL) 9 LIVES		3

Americana/Folk Albums ranks the most popular Americana/folk albums of the week, as compiled by Luminate based on multi-metric consumption (blending traditional album sales, track equivalent albums, and streaming equivalent albums). Copyright 2024, Billboard Media, LLC and Luminate. All rights reserved.

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COUNTRY STREAMING SONGS

18 17 34 AUSTIN DASHA

21 22 4

Ø RE-ENTRY

19 18 386 TENNESSEE WHISKEY CHRIS STAPLETON 20 19 21 HIGH ROAD KOE WETZEL & JESSIE MURPH I NEVER LIE

24 23 127 YOU PROOF MORGAN WALLEN 25 24 191 WASTED ON YOU MORGAN WALLEN

22 21 41 WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE I'M GONNA LOVE YOU

CODY JOHNSON & CARRIE UNDERWOOD

billboard COUNTRY DIGITAL SONG SALES

STREAMING & SALES DATA COMPILED BY

LUMINATE

THIS	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE ARTIST	THIS	LAST WEEK	WKS ON CHART	TITLE ARTIST
1	1	2	LOVE SOMEBODY Morgan Wallen	1	1	2	LOVE SOMEBODY Morgan Wallen
2	2	29	A BAR SONG (TIPSY) Shaboozey	2	2	29	A BAR SONG (TIPSY) Shaboozey
3	3	25	I HAD SOME HELP Post Malone Feat. Morgan Wallen	3	3	21	I AM NOT OKAY Jelly roll
4	4	23	PINK SKIES Zach Bryan	4	RE-EI	NTRY	WONDERING WHY THE RED CLAY STRAYS
5	5	17	LIES LIES LIES MORGAN WALLEN	5	4	19	YOU LOOK LIKE YOU LOVE ME ELLA LANGLEY FEAT. RILEY GREEN
6	6	62	I REMEMBER EVERYTHING Zach Bryan Feat. Kacey Musgraves	6	7	24	I HAD SOME HELP Post Malone Feat. Morgan Wallen
7	7	57	COWGIRLS Morgan Wallen Feat. Ernest	7	5	10	A LOT MORE FREE MAX MCNOWN
8	8	132	SOMETHING IN THE ORANGE Zach Bryan	8	8	5	I'M GONNA LOVE YOU CODY JOHNSON & CARRIE UNDERWOOD
9	10	24	AIN'T NO LOVE IN OKLAHOMA Luke combs	9	12	26	MILES ON IT MARSHMELLO & KANE BROWN
10	11	20	I AM NOT OKAY JELLY ROLL	10	9	25	AIN'T NO LOVE IN OKLAHOMA LUKE COMBS
11	12	92	LAST NIGHT MORGAN WALLEN	11	10	14	LONELY ROAD MGK & JELLY ROLL
12	9	26	MILES ON IT Marshmello & Kane Brown	12	13	13	HIGH ROAD Koe wetzel & Jessie Murph
13	13	87	THINKIN' BOUT ME MORGAN WALLEN	13	15	6	LIAR Jelly Roll
14	15	18	YOU LOOK LIKE YOU LOVE ME ELLA LANGLEY FEAT. RILEY GREEN	14	11	15	LIES LIES LIES MORGAN WALLEN
®	20	12	WIND UP MISSIN' YOU Tucker wetmore	15	NE	w	I NEVER LIE ZACH TOP
16	16	17	28 ZACH BRYAN	-			
17	14	84	FAST CAR LUKE COMBS	١			



streamed and top-selling paid download country songs, respectively, from sales reports collected and provided by Luminate. Charts update weekly on Tuesdays at www.Billboard.Biz/charts. Copyright 2024. Billboard Media, LLC and Luminate. All rights reserved.

billboard Bluegrass Albums

SALES DATA COMPILED BY LUMINATE

THIS	LAST WEEK	2 WEEKS AGO	WEEKS ON CHT	ARTIST TITLE	CERT.	PEAK POS.
1	1	1	5	BILLY STRINGS HIGHWAY PRAYERS REPRISE 726466*/WARNER		1
0	NE	w	1	BUFFALO WABS & THE PRICE HILL HUSTLE BUFFALO WABS & THE PRICE HILL HUSTLE		2
3	3	2	16	BILLY STRINGS REPRISE 093624844778*/WARNER		1
4	4 NEW 1		1	GEORGE JACKSON AND BRAD KOLODNER SHADY LANE GEORGE JACKSON DIGITAL EX		4
6	7	_	30	THE DEAD SOUTH CHAINS & STAKES SIX SHOOTER 174*		1
6	RE-EI	NTRY	11	BRIDGE CITY SINNERS IN THE AGE OF DOUBT FLAIL 027*		2
Ø	NE	w	1	APPALACHIAN SMOKE APPALACHIAN SMOKE MOUNTAIN FEVER		7
8	10	7	67	MOLLY TUTTLE & GOLDEN HIGHWAY CITY OF GOLD NONESUCH 698603*/WARNER		1
9	8	8	6	MOLLY TUTTLE & GOLDEN HIGHWAY INTO THE WILD (EP) NONESUCH 7278001*/WARNER (VINYL)		1
10	6	_	11	LOST DOG STREET BAND LOST DOG STREET BAND 008*/THIRTY TIGERS		1

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2024

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 $\textbf{International} \ | \ \ \text{Ryan O'Donnell} \ | \ \ \text{rodonnell@pmc.com}$

Latin | Marcia Olival | marciaolival29@gmail.com



billboard Hot Country Songs Index

TITLE Publishing-Licensing Org. (Songwriter) Chart Position

28 Zach Lane Bryan Publishing Designee, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (*Z.L.Bryan*) **14**

4X4XU Sony Countryside, BMI/Story Farmer, BMI/ Reservoir 416, BMI/Songs Of One Riot Music, BMI/ONE 1001H PRODUCTIONS, BMI/Super LCS Publishing, BMI/ Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (*LWilson*, *JDectous, A.Raitiere*) **28**

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AIN'T NO LOVE IN OKLAHOMA Songs Of Universal, Inc., BMI/Bootleg Lyrics, BMI/WC Music Corp., ASCAP/Mhere I Started Music Publishing, ASCAP/Hist Of 50 Egg Music, ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Universal Pictures Music, ASCAP/Braven Baker Music, ASCAP (*L.Ombs, J.L.Alexander, J.D.Singleton) 9

AMERICAN NIGHTS Zach Lane Bryan Publishing Designee, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI (Z.L.Bryan) 49

AM I OKAY? Sony Timber Publishing, SESAC/ Georgiamo Music, SESAC/Concord Global Music, GMR/ Songs Of CN, GMR/Crawford Mercer Music, SESAC/Big Music Machine, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI (M. Moroney, LLaird, J.J.Dillon) 21

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BAGGAGE Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/ Feel Your Way Through Publishing, ASCAP/Big Music Machine, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/ Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Self Made Entertainment, BMI/The Piano Room, ASCAP/W.C.M. Music Corp., SESAC/Vandeezy Songs, SESAC/Songs Of Rhythm House Black, SESAC (K.Ballerini, J.J.Dillon, K.Fairchild, H.Lindsey, Al/Anderheym) 46

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Universal, Inc., BMI/Essancy Music Publishing, ASCAP/
Range Media Partners LLC, ASCAP/EMI April Music, Inc.,
ASCAP/Hood Hop Music, ASCAP/Tarpo Music Publishing,
ASCAP/Kobalt Songs Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP/Le
Seek C'est Chic, ASCAP (C.O.Chibueze, S.C.Cook, N.Sastry,
JJones, J.A.Kent, M.A.Williams) 1

BEAUTIFUL AS YOU Warner-Tamerlane
Publishing Corp., BMI/Be A Light Publishing, BMI/Music
Of Big Family, BMI/Dragon Bunny Music, BMI/Don Wyan
Music, BMI/Alien Cargo Plane Music, ASCAP/Top Noth
High Qualify Music, ASCAP/Till Music, ASCAP/Kobalt
Songs Music Publishing LLC, ASCAP/Maverick King
Publishing, ASCAP/Sony Tunes, ASCAP/Sidron Publishing
LLC, BMI/The Place To Be Is LMC Publishing, BMI/Songs
Of Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., BMI (Thomas
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DAMN GOOD DAY TO LEAVE Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Back 40 Publishing International, BMI/Duckman Publishing, BMI/Flatland Boy Music, BMI/Hits Of 50 Egg Music, ASCAP/Wildhawk Publishing, BMI/Spirit Nashville Two Crescendo, ASCAP/ Spirit Vault Songs, ASCAP/Prestige Countrywide, ASCAP (R.Green, Erik Dylan, J.D.Singleton, N.Walsh) 50

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FIX WHAT YOU DIDN'T BREAK Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Coreent Music, ASCAP/Master Of My Domain Music, ASCAP/Poppy's Picks, ASCAP/Sony, Iree Publishing, BMI/Rudy Rocks The USA, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/TDP Publishing, BMI/ Hits From The Tape Room, BMI (N.Smith, A.G.Gorley, T.Phillips, Elmies) 26

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JUST LIKE JOHNNY Blake Redferrin Publishing Designee, BMI/Peermusic III, Ltd., BMI/Sounds Epic Music, BMI (*B.Redferrin, M.Wilshire*) **40**

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MESSED UP AS ME Big Music Machine, BMI/Big Ass Pile Of Dimes Music, BMI/Warner Geo Met Ric Music, GMR/Tempo Investments, GMR/Smackstack Music, GMR/ Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Speakers Go Boom Songs, BMI/Quivira Road Songs, BMI/Twelve6 Red Oak Songs, BMI/Still Between The Pines, BMI (J.J.Dillon, S.McAnally, R.Clawson, M.Lotten) 32

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WIND UP MISSIN' YOU Songs Of Back Block Publishing, BMI/Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., BMI/Back Block Music, BMI/Combustion Music, BMI/Hang Your Hat Hits, SESAC/Beats Building Fences, BMI/Concord Tunes, SESAC/Card Tables Music, SESAC (T.Archer, T.PWetmore, C.LaCorte) II

WINNING STREAK Bailee's Ballads, BMI/BMG Platinum Songs US, BMI/BMG Gold Songs, ASCAP/Austin Nivarel Publishing, ASCAP/Sony Cross Keys Publishing, ASCAP/Robert Ragosta Publishing, BMI/Reservoir 416, BMI (J.B.DeFord, A.A.Nivarel, J.Ragosta, R.Ragosta) 37

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billboard

THE NO. 1s ISSUE

YEAR IN MUSIC

ISSUEDATE 12/14 | AD CLOSE 12/3 MATERIALS DUE 12/5

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