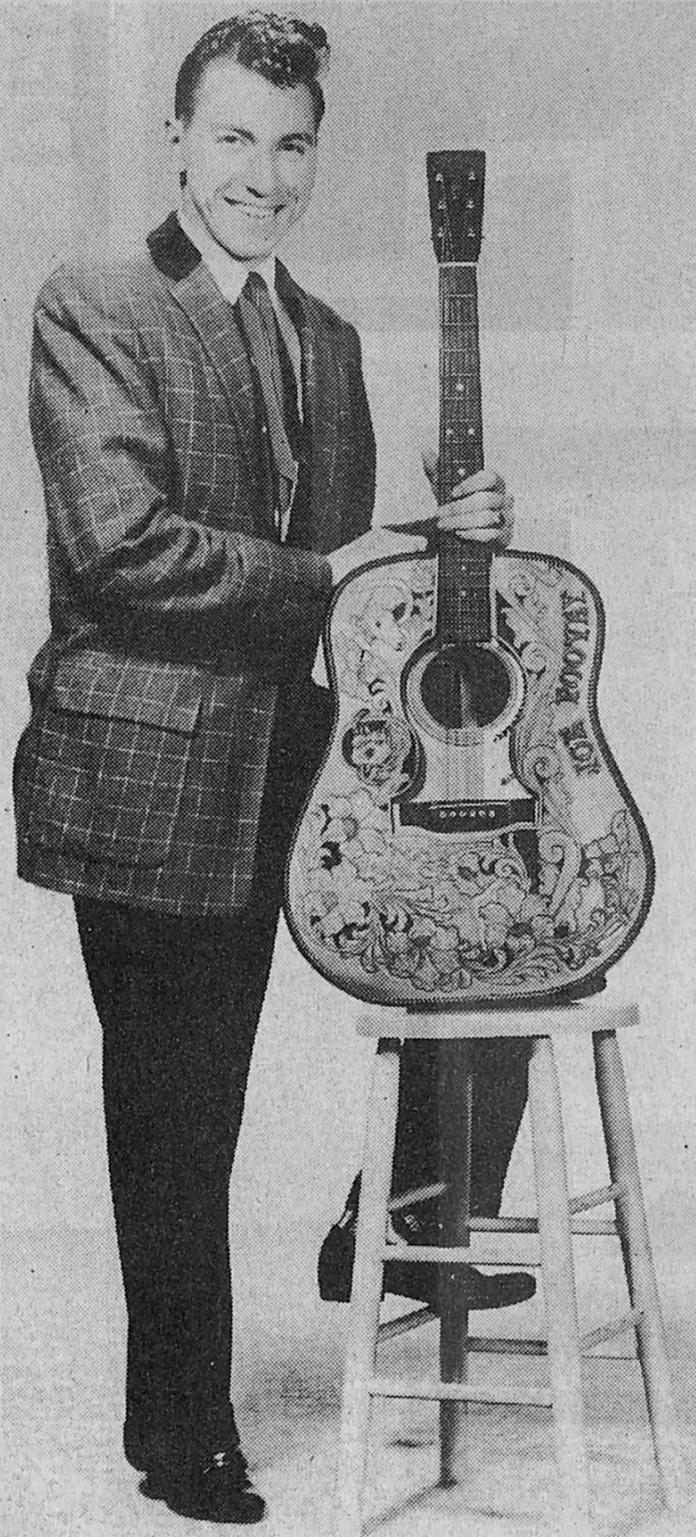


3rd COAST MUSIC

GROOVEY JOE POOVEY #22/111 NOVEMBER 1998



JOHNNY CONQUESO
PUSH & PULL
COMINGS & GOINGS



REVIEWS

***** (or not)

BALFA TOUJOURS

•

**PAUL BURCH
& THE WPA BALLCLUB**

•

CISCO

•

**DEKE DICKERSON
& THE ECCO-FONICS**

•

DEVIL IN A WOODPILE

•

JOE ELY

•

BEAVER NELSON

•

PAULA NELSON

•

RUTHIE & THE WRANGLERS

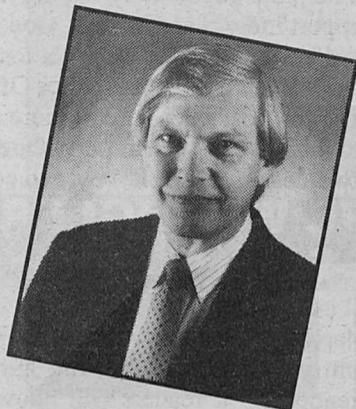
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FRANKIE YANKOVIC

Long before Alan Freed or the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Cleveland was famous as the home base of The King of Polka. I hoped Joyce Snodgrass, who was raised in Cleveland's ultra-ethnic Collinwood neighborhood (and who once sharply corrected me for referring to him as Polish rather than Slovenian), could contribute a few words on Frankie Yankovic, who died last month, aged 83, but she was going out of town. One of the true giants of the piano accordion, though perhaps cursed by other performers because, known as the iron man of polka, he was one of the first to play the bastard standing up, the charismatic Yankovic was such a giant figure in Polka that his name registered in the world outside the Middle European communities of the Midwest. In 1986, he won the first Grammy ever awarded for Polka and recently reached a whole new audience by teaming up with Drew Carey and Weird Al (No Relation) Yankovic. Incidentally, I have to give the *American-Statesman* credit for running a substantial obituary, but Joyce did remark to me that having learnt the sad news there, she can now let her subscription expire.

SAINT CECILIA'S DAY

Hot on the heels of his successful Texas Squeeze bash at Club 21 last month, Bradley Jay Williams second annual St Cecilia's Day Festival, in honor of the patron saint of music, was a little skeletal as 3CM went to print. However, The Dancehall Boys and Los Pinkys are confirmed (Gulf Coast Playboys can't play as a key member will be out of town), and Ponty Bone is a probable. Watch out for more details nearer the date, November 22nd, once again at Jovita's.

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Tosca Continental, 9.45pm-ish

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Ponty Bone & The Squeezetones Jovita's, 8pm

THURSDAYS

Gulf Coast Playboys Antone's, 6pm
Jet Set Zydeco Black Cat, 9.30pm + Zydeco dance lessons, 8.30pm
Tosca Ritz/Upstairs, 7-9pm

FRIDAY 6th

Gulf Coast Playboys Jovita's, 8pm
Dancehall Boys SPJST#28, Taylor
Brave Combo + Jet Set Zydeco
Liberty Lunch, 9pm

SUNDAY 8th

Ponty Bone & The Squeezetones Jovita's, 7pm (Ouhouse Reunion)
Geno Delafosse & French Rockin' Boogie Continental, 8pm

WEDNESDAY 11th

Gulf Coast Playboys Broken Spoke, 9pm

FRIDAY 13th

Gulf Coast Playboys Threadgill's Saloon, 9.30pm

TUESDAY 17th

Zydecowgirl Broken Spoke, 8pm

FRIDAY 20th

Jet Set Zydeco Threadgill's Saloon, 9.30pm

SATURDAY 21st

Balfa Toujours Threadgill's Saloon, 9.30pm

SUNDAY 22nd

Dancehall Boys + Ponty Bone & The Squeezetones + Los Pinkys + more Jovita's, 2-8pm. St Cecilia's Day Festival

FRIDAY 27th

Los Piunkys + Gulf Coast Playboys Club 21, Umland, 8pm

SATURDAY 28th

Los Pinkys Jovita's, 8pm

THE TABLE BY THE DOOR

Not sure if this will be a regular deal because it poses a thorny dilemma. Here are a couple of very cool, if utterly dissimilar, bands coming to Texas on what, if they were on major labels, would be promotional tours, pushing a new product. However, one of the many differences between major label and indie acts is that the former don't personally flog their albums, the tours being intended to stimulate Soundscan sales, while hawking albums from the stage is financially crucial for the latter. The ugly twist is that one wants to support indie artists, who make considerably more from direct sales, but equally one wants to support the stores that stock indie albums and also need those sales. Anyway, I guess the point, such as it is, of *The Table By The Door* is to highlight indie lbum tours, so if you fancy a copy, you can help the guys out by buying it from them, and if you can't make it to a show, support indie record stores. God, that sounds wishy-washy. What can I say? I want these bands to at least not lose money on coming to Texas, and I also want Antone's Record Shop and Miles Of Music to be able to carry on their vital work, but if a few lost sales here or there aren't going to bring any of these specific parties to their knees, seen as part of the big picture, there's a real conflict between those two desires. Oh hell, buy two copies. **JC**

RUTHIE & THE WRANGLERS LIFE'S SAVINGS

(Lasso)

Once again making the trek from Maryland, the honky-tonk/rockabilly quartet's high cards are the classic country vocals, songwriting and, not least, personality of Ruth Logsdon. Experienced 3CM readers will know that perky, peppy and bubbly are not normally used as terms of approval in these here pages, but I have to make an exception for Logsdon, who scores very high on charm with her infectious and engaging joy in performing. Such qualities tend, of course, to get muted in the studio but, underpinned by solid guitar, bass and drums backing (in the real sense of the word, they never get in her way), her voice and songs alone give her a decided edge. Though she only wrote four of the 11 tracks, guitarist Phil Mathieu contributing the instrumental *Farewell Polka*, on their second album, the upbeat *What Mama Don't Know*, transsexual novelty *He's A Honky Tonk Man* ("but he wants to be a honky tonk woman"), and tearjerker *Forgive And Forget* and *If It's The Last Thing I Do* are all winners. For the rest, apart from Loretta Lynn's *Fist City*, sort of a chanson a clef, the band's dug very deep into the archives, the only songs I can even tentatively identify being *Don't Bug Me Baby*, originally done, I think, by obscure RCA rockabilly Milton Allen, and *I'm Satisfied*, which I vaguely associate with The Shells, but I wouldn't swear to either. I like that in covers. **JC** ♦ 11/12, Continental, Austin; 11/13, Cibolo Creek, San Antonio; 11/14, Muddy Waters, Dallas; 11/15, White Elephant, Fort Worth

BALFA TOUJOURS • LA POINTE

(Rounder)

Making its first visit ever to Texas, the group led by Dewey's daughter Christine (guitar, triangle, washboard, banjo ukelele, vocals) and her husband Dirk Powell (accordion, second fiddle, guitar, banjo, vocals) has a well deserved reputation for great live shows, but I've been disappointed by their previous albums, which emphasised the kind of technical perfection that makes bluegrass so tedious. It seems, remarking on "the clinical environment of the studio," they too are aware of the problem, because this time round they've made a deliberate, and successful, attempt to recreate the vitality of the front porch music for which their Bayou Teche home has become noted in Cajun circles. In fact, the album, produced by Mamou Playboy Peter Schwarz, who also plays bass, was actually recorded in their living room and kitchen, on vintage analog equipment. The 14 tracks mix originals, two songs by Octa Clark and traditional material from sources like Dennis McGee, Austin Pitre and, of course, the Balfas. One nice touch is Dewey Balfa's voice, from his *Basile Cajun Hour* radio show, introducing *Marshall's Club*, written in honor of a Basile venue owned by Christine's cousin. From their staid studio outings, Balfa Toujours have made an enormous leap, an album at turns sprightly, passionate and dolorous. **JC** ♦ 11/17, Mucky Duck, Houston; 11/21, Borders and Threadgill's Saloon, Austin; 11/22, Gypsy Tea Room, Dallas

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3CM REVIEWS

JOE ELY

LIVE AT THE CAMBRIDGE FOLK FESTIVAL

(BBC/Strange Fruit [UK])

When *Letter To Laredo* came out, I'd just been given a fantastic bootleg tape of a live solo acoustic Ely show and basically said *that* was the album he should have released. Now I can say the same thing over again and be legit at the same time. This only has six tracks, Ely's *I Had My Hopes Up High, Me And Billy The Kid, Rich Man, Poor Boy* and *My Eyes Got Lucky* and Butch Hancock's *She Never Spoke Spanish To Me* and *Boxcars*, but it's well worth seeking out, because Ely playing solo and acoustic is something else. He puts just as much high octane energy into those bravura performances as he does into the full band rock & roll, but though he gets rave reviews for his solo shows, up to now they've been fairly rare, especially in Texas. However, this album, recorded at the 1990 Festival, may be putting his audience on notice. While it seems possible that, though he's been dropped by MCA, another major may pick him up, he has, after all, been running a touring band for over two decades, an exhausting business even if it was a paying proposition which, at the tag end of the century, means having to do sad, sorry things like opening for Mary Chapin Carpenter. Anyway, point is, now he's turned 50, it wouldn't surprise me at all if Ely folded his band and went solo, and if that means more albums like this, only more so—my tape has an absolute killer version of RC Banks' *Where Is My Love*, for instance—that would be just fine and dandy with me. **JC**

RUFUS AND TONY THIBODEAUX FIDDLIN' WITH FRIENDS

(La Louisianne)

Many years ago, Tony Thibodeaux adopted fiddler Rufus Thibodeaux ("I think maybe we're third or fourth cousins down the line somewhere") as his model, but, while both grew up round Rayne, Louisiana, their careers were very different. In a six decades career, Rufus, living in Nashville, went on the road with Bob Wills, Neil Young and Jimmy C Newman, was a session player on George Jones' first album and recorded with The Everly Brothers, Porter Wagoner and Jim Reeves, while Tony, ten years his junior, spent 13 years with Aldus Rogers then joined Belton Richard and is currently in Sheryl Cormier's band. With Rufus now back in Louisiana, they got together to recreate two almost lost arts, twin fiddles and Cajun Swing. Much of the material is taken from various artists one or other has worked with, Jimmy C Newman's *Blue Darling* (he in turn got it from Narvel Felts), Belton Richard's *Fool's Waltz*, Vin Bruce's *Teala's Waltz* and *Clair De La Lune*, Blackie Forestier's *Lonesome Nights Waltz*, with others of the 15 tracks coming from Doc Guidry (*La Valse D'Amitie*), Marty Robbins (*Convict & A Rose*), Johnnie Allen (*A Father's Love*) Ivy Dugas (*Le Vent Nord* and *Élevé De La Louisiane*), The Moms & Dads (the uncredited *Sidewalk Waltz*) and, via Warren Storm's Louisiana hit version, Vernon Dalhart (*Prisoner's Song*). In the liner notes, Tony remarks, "It sounds beautiful, the two fiddles," and, in the hands of these two veterans, truer words were never spoken. This really grows on one. **JC**

DEKE DICKERSON & THE ECCO-FONICS • NUMBER ONE HIT RECORD

(HMG/Hightone)

Great to have at least one of the much-missed Dave & Deke Combo back in action. In case you miss the point of the cover, there are four other pictures of Dickerson flaunting his Joe Maphis style doubleneck guitar, and one of his guests is none other than Larry Collins, no longer a kid but doing some great duelling doubleneck work. Other guests are saxman Joey D'Ambrosio of the original Comets, boogie-woogie pianoman Carl Sonny Leyland and, introducing The Spaniels' *Poon-Tang*, Claude Trenier. Clues aplenty to Dickerson's devotion to the past and present of hillbilly rock & roll. Recorded, in mono, on vintage analog equipment, the 16 tracks, Dickerson originals for the most part, exude an assured nonchalance and relaxed virtuosity. **JC**

CISCO

WISHING YOU WELL FROM THE PINK MOTEL

(Propellant Transmissions)

My father's sage advice that people who only use one name are invariably mountebanks has served me well for decades, so this alt country singer-songwriter starts out with a hefty knock against him, the fact that his handle echoes that of Christo, poster boy for charlatanism, not helping any. However, I may have to downgrade that tenet to mere rule of thumb, because this guy really is good. On *Crazy Ones*, he and The Reasons Why sound uncannily like The Derailers, and there are echoes of other neo-Bakersfield artists, but he—sorry, I still can't bring myself to actually use his name—has written at least 12 damn good songs and delivers them convincingly, with a fine twangy sound. There's also a jokey little Hawaiian-style thing (*Island Girl?*), less than a minute long, that screws up the listed sequence, the kind of thing that really pisses DJs off. **JC**

BEAVER NELSON • THE LAST HURRAH

(Freedom)

Will T Massey's may have crashed and burned, but the career of Beaver Nelson, his heir presumptive as hot young Austin singer-songwriter with a Big Future, never even got off the ground and, seven years later, his press kit still leads with a quote from an MCT cover story from when he was voted Best New Artist in my 1991 Poll. Nelson spent those intervening years in major label limbo, a series of deadend development deals, but has finally resurfaced where he should have started out in the first place, with a local indie. That quote, by the way, was, "Nelson's great strengths are his intensity in performance and his quite exceptional depth and penetration as a songwriter," and after all these years I can still stand by those words. Even at 18, Nelson's songs and presence had a jagged, unsettling edge and while he's matured, he hasn't mellowed—these are *not* happy little pop songs. I've always found Nelson more impressive as a solo performer and, given that he isn't the strongest or clearest of singers, his album, produced by Jud Newcomb, who also plays guitars and dulcimer, with Champ Hood on fiddle and guest appearances by Rich Brotherton, Casper Rawls, Pete Gordon, Gurf Morlix, Toni Price and, singing harmony on the song apiece they cowrote with Nelson, Michael Fracasso and Jules Shear, seems too busy. I'm not one to underestimate the stupidity of major labels, but if two or three of them couldn't figure out how to make Nelson a rock star, just maybe it's time to try something else, like positioning him as a singer-songwriter. Dumping the rhythm section, for a start, would have helped enormously, making the album far more accessible. However, if the approach to recording them was arguably misguided, the 12 remarkable songs are still strong enough to punch through and Nelson is prolific, and consistent, enough to allow this to be taken as a flawed but still very striking debut. **JC**

PAUL BURCH & THE WPA BALLCLUB WIRE TO WIRE

(Checked Past)

Ever since I featured Burch on the cover at the beginning of the year, I've been hearing about this album, people who had copies of the French release telling me it's even better than the wonderful *Pan-American Flash*. Well, it is a terrific album, no question, but, even after factoring in the endearing 'discovery' factor, I have to say that if you don't own either, I'd still recommend its predecessor. Let's put it this way, I like this one real well, but if I'd got it first, it wouldn't have had me thinking cover story, which was my immediate reaction to PAF. This batch of songs, 14 of them, will do absolutely nothing to hurt Burch's reputation, but none of them grab me quite the same way as four or five of those on the other album. **JC**

DEVIL IN A WOODPILE

(Bloodshot)

Frankly, I can't make up my mind whether this pastiche of jug band, country blues, ragtime and early country is genuine atavism or facile artifice, but it don't really matter because, if it is contrived, it's so superbly done that, either way, one can only admire the end result. Rick 'Cookin' Sherry (vocals, harmonica, washboard, jug, bass drum), Paul K (National and archtop guitars), Tom Ray (standup bass, ukelele), and Gary Scheper (tuba) really put the roots back into roots music. The originals, four credited to the band, one to Ray, blend in perfectly with Sonny Boy Williamson (1)'s *Good Morning School Girl*, Sonny Boy Williamson (2)'s *Whiskey Headed Blues*, Tampa Red's *Boogie Woogie Dance* (also recorded by Steve James), Ray Charles' *I Got A Woman*, Sleepy John Estes' *Some Day Baby*, Washboard Sam's *Easy Ridin' Mama* and *Barbecue*, Big Bill Broonzy's *Keep On Drinkin'*, Leon McAuliffe's *Steel Guitar Rag* and Sonny Terry's *I Love You Baby*. Cut live in three days, an album that, in theory, should be dismissed as superfluous, but is so much fun, so utterly enjoyable, it disarms criticism. **JC**

PAULA NELSON • COMING HOME

(Luck)

For lovers of a good irony, one of Willie's daughters actively sought to follow in his footsteps despite a lack, instantly obvious to everyone except her doting father and his fawning entourage, of any discernable musical talent, while another had to be more or less dragged on stage, and into the studio, despite being able to write pretty good songs and sing them even prettier. We are, of course, dealing here with the latter, and I don't think I've ever come across a better argument for the principle Less Is More. Initially I thought her album was somewhat overproduced but definitely interesting, then I went to see her perform and changed my mind. Nelson has such a distinctive and compelling voice, which I can't describe better than saying she somehow manages to be simultaneously aloof and intimate, an ice maiden with a core of fire, that she needs minimal support, anything else being mere distracting clutter. Somewhere in the first set, I figured she needed to dump her whole band except for Amy Tiven on fiddle, mandolin and harmony vocals, then go back in the studio and recut the entire album, just the two of them. I'm going on pure instinct here, but I think it'd be fuckin' amazing. Course, it probably wouldn't sell for shit but then this probably won't, and certainly doesn't deserve to if only because it undersells her talent. Let's hope making ten crappy albums for every good one isn't a family tradition. **JC**

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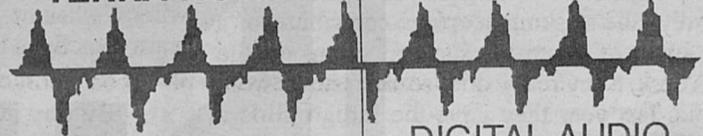


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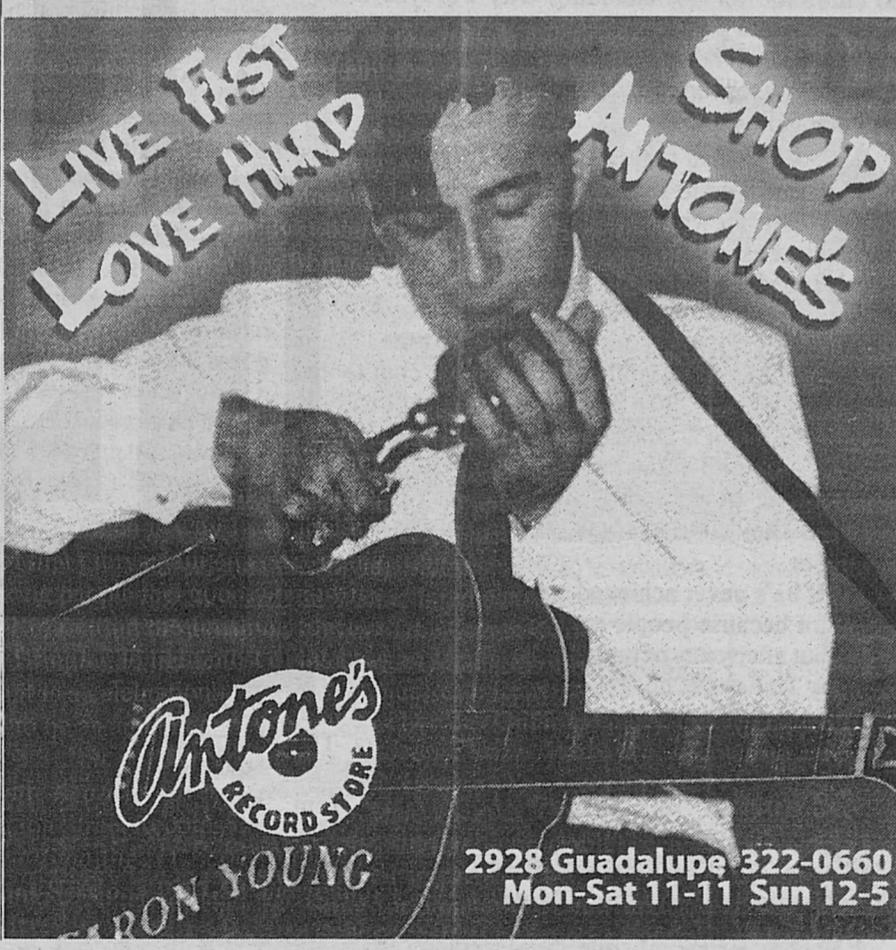


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JOHNNY CONQUESO—THE BIG DIPPER

Just after the last issue came out, I learned that **Bad Livers** (and Terry Allen, Guy Clark, James McMurtry and a whole bunch of others) now work for **Lawrence Welk**. Hmm, maybe I should clarify that one. The Welk Group, which handles syndication of *The Lawrence Welk Show* and operates resorts in San Diego, Palm Springs, Maui and Branson, has just purchased the estimable Sugar Hill Records. If this sounds moderately bizarre, Welk already owns Vanguard Records and Sugar Hill will also remain independent, so I guess we won't be hearing Mark Rubin going, "And a vun and a two and a three" as Myron Maddux breaks into champagne music.

And in re **Mark Rubin**, thought to be the most heavily tattooed person observing the high holy days, I didn't have space for the story of how he and Santiago Jimenez Jr got together. Seems Steve James overheard an Austin jazz bassplayer being snotty about having to go down to San Antonio to record low-class Tejano hick music. James went straight to a phone, called Rubin and gave him Jimenez's number. Very next day, Rubin was in the studio with Jimenez, cutting an album.

By the way, good thing **Bad Livers** aren't with Sony. **Sophie B Hawkins** (*Damn, I Wish I Was Your Lover*) has launched an Internet campaign, Project Cracker, against Columbia which is holding up her new album, insisting she replace the banjo featured on one track with a guitar to make it more radio-friendly. She's asking people to contribute to "a 10-pound stack of protests" she can dump on the chairman's desk. Sony really does seem to suffer from banjophobia, last year they gave the Indigo Girls a hard time about using one.

"But apart from that . . ." I owe **Hot Club Of Cowtown** a bit of an apology for ambiguity last month. Though the grammar was technically correct, some readers might have got the impression that the trio suffers from a deficit of *all* the attributes (charisma, stage presence, humor, etc) mentioned, when, in fact, they were either/or alternatives, posited independently by various people. Also, a reader called to chide me for not including **Guy Forsyth** in my master classes guide, and the point is well taken. For tyro musicians, Forsyth is definitely worth close study, though it's a toss up whether his forte is Stage Presence or Personality.

As a sidebar to this month's editorial bit, I was introduced to the Austin Outhouse by the late **Blaze Foley**, for whom it wasn't so much a home away from home as, well, home. Legend had it that the BFI emblazoned on Austin dumpsters stood for 'Blaze Foley Inside,' and while I'm not saying he occasionally dossed at the Outhouse, one time I heard him tell someone complaining about the pool tables being out of true, "I'm just surprised I don't roll off during the night." Draw your own conclusions. For what it's worth, I know for a fact that **Will T Massey** spent some time kipping under Chicago House's counter. They just don't make starving artists like that anymore.

If he's never achieved starving artist status, it's not because people putting on benefits haven't tried, but after years of turning out for countless others, **Jimmy LaFave** is hosting a benefit for a cause dear to his own heart, the American Indian College Fund, and he's calling in a whole bunch of markers. The lineup, at La Zona Rosa on Thursday 22nd, includes LaFave himself, Terri Hendrix, Betty Elders, Toni Price, Michael Fracasso, Billy Joe Shaver, Eliza Gilkyson, Jon Dee Graham, Slaid Cleaves, Ginger MacKenzie (whose father was with the BIA), Mary Reynolds, George DeVore and Bobby Bridger with Jimmy still twisting on other luminaries.

A convincing nomination for Sideman of the Year comes from **Ronnie Dawson**, who's postponed his late November Austin and Dallas dates because bassmonster **Kevin Smith** won't be available. The shows were to be showcases for Dawson's new CD, currently only available at his gigs, and he wanted to have the same players with him. On the down side, the reason Smith is out of pocket is that 8 1/2 Souvenirs have signed to a three month tour opening for **Brian Setzer**, which sure ain't going to do his standing among rockabilies any good.

Not sure whether to be narked or amused by **Michael Corcoran** who, in his *American-Statesman* column, lifted a line from my March column and ascribed it to a bumper sticker. That line was, "Friends don't let friends sign to **Watermelon**." The label's bad karma has finally kicked in, with existing acts jumping ship, potential acts backing out and lawsuits piling up. One of these latter, brought by publicists The Press Network, who rather ill-advisedly carried **Watermelon** on their books for two years before realizing they were going to get stiffed, has already come to trial, a Travis County court ordering **Watermelon** to cough up \$50,000, a moral victory at least—they seem kinda pessimistic about ever seeing the readies. Rather oddly, without asking or telling them, **Watermelon** listed at least two people with strong professional and personal ties to The Press Network as expert witnesses for their side, one of whom, when he found out, warned the label it would learn exactly what the term 'hostile' means if they called him to the stand.

By way of contrast, **Lazy SoB**, an Austin label that actually pays its artists, has had a mad dog lawyer set on it by one of them. I have to wonder if **Ana Egge** knows just what her mouthpiece is up to, because he's making really vicious accusations about malfeasance and misfeasance which she has to know aren't true. The prevailing theory is that Egge has been approached by a bigger label and is trying to cut **Dave Sanger**, her benefactor, who believed in her when no one else did, out of the deal by breaking her contract. As another local music biz watcher observed, "It seems rather disloyal of her, but what am I saying? She's a musician."

A mammoth *American-Statesman* article on Austin radio, written, rather oddly, not by the resident expert, radio columnist **Rob Patterson**, but by **Don McLeese**, I guess at a loose end since the paper quietly shitcanned his column, omitted one crucial word—"sucks." Or, for those of you who demand in-depth analysis, "sucks big time." Thank God for my **KSYM** tapes. Mind you, the *San Antonio Current* recently attacked **KSYM** for not playing local music—guess the new management hasn't got round to hiring a factchecker yet—and **Third Coast Music Network** DJs in particular for the heinous crimes of being over 40 non-students (**KSYM** is San Antonio College's station). Can't speak for the rest, but I still give thanks every day I'm not a fucking student anymore, though I have to admit I wouldn't mind being 40 again.

The *Statesman* also ran a big feature on that Christian Music shit, which I thought of responding to with an antidotal piece, but it woulda been a bit short as all I can come up with offhand is **Cary Swinney**, **Terry Allen** and **Jo Carol Pierce**. Suggestions would be welcome. **Swinney** and **Richard Bowden**, by the way, were mistakenly billed as a trio in **Jovita's** ad, but it worked out OK because **Ponty Bone** came by to eat and ended up winging it with them. If you haven't seen **Swinney**, or heard his album, the guy is really hot, tons of great material, and I'm trying to convince **Checkered Past** they and he are a match made in, whoops, let me rephrase that . . .

IT'S FARON'S WORLD. WE JUST LIVE IN IT.

Moving on to an actual Anti-Christ, sampling, which turned out to be something of a false alarm, has been displaced as the Great Satan of music. The new Beast is a black box called **AutoTune** into which singers plug their mikes and automatically get their pitch corrected. So, even if you can't sing a note, the machine will make you sound perfect. Apparently Nashville has been a big market for the gadget, with a sound engineer quoted, in the *San Francisco Weekly*, as saying, "Let's face it, a lot of country guys can't sing. Our buying public expects a lot more than people did in the 70s and 80s. People want perfection now." Don't know if he was specifically thinking of Nashville, but the voice of sanity in the article came from one **Robert Greenberg**, of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, who tersely remarked of **AutoTune**, "It's still shit in, shit out."

Nice bit of spin in *XL. ent* recently, referring to **Lucinda Williams' Car Wheels On A Gravel Road** selling "a rather impressive 178,000 copies." I have to wonder if this is how **Mercury**, which reputedly paid American best part of half a million bucks for the album, would describe that figure. Bad news for **Lucinda** is that **Seagram's** has put **Mercury** and **Polygram** on the auction block, with **MCA**, which recently dropped **George Jones** his very own self because he was only averaging some 250,000 sales per album, the most likely buyer. **Joe Horn** and I are trying to work out if the shrinkage of the Big Six to an even smaller number is necessarily a bad thing, but I'll have to get back to you on that one.

Haven't passed on any cybershit recently, but, especially for DJs, I'd like to recommend man about the Austin music scene **Al Ragle's** daily 'Music & Art With A Southern Attitude' **doowop.com** missives. Sprinkled with quotes, often from **HL Mencken**, and musings on Southern life, **Ragle** offers a daily factual Nugget from the **Doowop Treasure Trove** (the **Worst Career Move** series was a riot) and an 'on this day' listing of memorable, usually offbeat, musical events, births and deaths. Sign up by contacting **Al** at aragle@freewwwweb.com.

Another month, another patty of **Garth Brooks** bullshit. According to **Minneapolis/St Paul's Star-Tribune**, **Brooks** wanted his new double live set released on DVD but when he heard the plant could only turn out 12,000 copies a day, meaning it would take about a year to produce the *six million* he wanted ready for immediate shipment, he scrapped the whole idea. What a wanker. How many people, let alone **Brooks** fans, have DVD players for fuck's sake?

Here's an item that will appeal most to my confreres in this curious music mag publishing lark. So, **Marc**, **Jason**, **Susan**, **Peter**, **Jeff**, didja see where, after nine years, **Country America** is shutting down because, with a claimed 900,000 readers, it can no longer generate the income necessary to survive? That's NINE HUNDRED THOUSAND.

Following up on **Billy Poore's Charlie Feathers** obituary, a subscriber asked where I stand on the **Blue Moon Of Kentucky** debate. For those of you unaware of this bit of Sun esoterica, it revolves round the question of whether **Elvis** lifted his version from a **Feathers** demo tape. No such tape has ever surfaced, but then **Sam Phillips** is known to have recycled not just demos but actual masters. The crux of the matter seems to me that **Blue Moon** would have been, far as I know, the one and only time **Elvis** changed the meter of a song, in this case from 3/4 to 4/4, while such radical rearrangement was a lifelong **Feathers** trademark. So, while none the principals in the matter can be trusted an inch and aren't available for truth serum, on balance the answer is I go along with **Feathers'** version.

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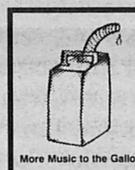
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BLAZE FOLEY INSIDE

For the last few years, I've been a 'Used To,' a member of that vast legion of folks who once went to clubs on a regular basis but don't get out too much anymore. I was always vaguely supportive of husband and father Don McLeese's doomed Why Can't Austin Music Start Earlier? crusade, but it took marrying a teacher, thus coming up hard against the nonnegotiable demands of 'school night,' to make me a true believer. Though as I moved to Round Rock just when all the Californians arrived and made Austin traffic really shitty . . . well, what with one thing and another, it takes way more than idle curiosity to drag our asses into Austin most nights.

◆ However, the seven years during which I routinely hit two or three clubs pretty much every night are enough to qualify me as an authentic Austin Venue Snob. Of course, my timeframe, 1988-1995, means I can't compete with true veterans, Grand Masters who can pull off, as I've heard done more than once, such esoteric oneupmanship as specifying which Soap Creek Saloon they Used To be regulars at, but I can still boast of having been on first name terms with the staff of such historic joints as Henry's, Chicago House, the old Black Cat, the Blue Bayou/Big Mamou continuum and La Zona Rosa Mk's 1 and 2, as well as more obscure, not to say ephemeral, places like Grizwald's (famed in memory for free Billy Joe Shaver & Jesse Taylor shows every Sunday afternoon one summer and, as I recall, the last public appearance of Dan Del Santo).

◆ By the time I got to Austin, the Continental Club had, much to the disgruntlement of some, already been refurbished, so I can't personally testify to its previous degree of funkiness, though I'm told it was pretty definitive. Be that as it may, by then if you wanted funky—the real deal—there was one obvious place to go, The Austin Outhouse, at Guadalupe and 35th. Squeezed out two and a half years ago, it's hard to explain now, to those who never experienced it, the ramshackle, no frills appeal of the Outhouse. Like Henry's, it was the absolute antithesis of all things yuppy. Its old license plates decor was low concept, its acid casualty hardcore clientele fairly deranged, its jukebox a mystery to anyone under 40, its wine list nonexistent and its booking policy a hit or miss affair that offered everything from the genius of Blaze Foley to some of the worst music I've heard in Austin, which, let me tell you, is really saying something.

◆ Basically, for 15 years Chuck Lamb and Ed Bradfield gave just about anyone a shot and if they came up with an awful lot of duds, occasionally they hit a bullseye, most notably with Timbuk 3, whom they booked regularly when no one else would touch them. Later, Pat and Barbara K repaid their faith by returning, unbeknownst to their label or management, as Fred & Wilma. Among Chuck and Ed's other successes—artistic if not always financial—were Blaze Foley, George Enslie, Calvin Russell, Herman The German and Terri Hendrix. There are probably others I'm forgetting, but I spent many happy nights in the Outhouse with those people, though my fondest memory is going there with Sean Mencher to see Bill Neely, neither of us, of course, knowing it would be his last performance.

◆ Just as Don Walser lured some of the old Henry's crowd to Jovita's, so Sheri Frushay, a member of the Calvin Russell circle before she emerged as a performer in her own right, began seeing familiar faces in her crowd and started billing her monthly shows as Outhouse Reunions. This month, the link gets a major boost when Jovita's hosts a two day Outhouse party, on the 7th & 8th, featuring Frushay & David Waddell, George Enslie, Barbara K, Terri Hendrix, Don Walser, Sarah Elizabeth Campbell, Herman The German, Ponty Bone, Guy Forsyth, Rhythm Rats, Stan Smith, Slaid Cleaves, Champ Hood, Mickey White and many others (see Jovita's ad for full lineup/timetable) including organizer Lost John Casner. Oh yes, and "special surprise guests." Admission is, as always at Jovita's, free, but they're asking for donations of new underwear, socks, T-shirts, toiletry and just plain old cash for ARCH (Austin Resource Center for the Homeless). **JC**

† GROOVEY JOE POOVEY

Being a fan of authentic roots rock & roll is getting to be more and more painful every year. Not for lack of music though. On the contrary, the CD revolution has produced a veritable gusher of reissues, fully restored to their original luster, complete with extensive liner notes, wonderful candid photos and detailed discographies, retrospectives of famous artists, serious collections on obscure artists and even newly discovered material by artists we've never heard of before! Even the notoriously ham-fisted majors seem to be striving to treat their valuable archives with more respect. Yes, it's a great time to be a roots music fan, that's for sure. It's also a very sad time to be one, if you really care about the music and the people who made it, because the first generation pioneers who carved rock & roll out of the fabric of their daily lives, unique one-of-a-kind-accept-no-substitutes personalities whose essence was so intense that to imitate them only invites derision, are almost all gone.

◆ Last month, I had the sad task of saying goodbye to yet another of these originals, Arnold 'Groovey' Joe Poovey, at a funeral attended by handful of his peers, Mac Curtis, Sid King, Homer Henderson, Jimmy Velvit, Russell Simms, and a bevy of other musicians, teamsters, fans and family. Poovey had had heart trouble requiring a balloon angioplasty, but curiously, just a week before his death, he emerged from a complete six day inpatient physical at Baylor Medical Center a new man, ready to take on the world and start performing again! A hell-raiser reborn!

◆ Joe and I spent the last two years working together on a retrospective CD of his best recorded material and he was tireless in servicing my demands for more original masters, more vintage photos and more information about his life and the 16 year phenomenon that was the Big 'D' Jamboree, Dallas' hillbilly Carnegie Hall. On Sunday October 4th, we were rummaging through yet another incredible box of 45s and vintage photos. As usual, it was a real blast and I'm convinced he was going to put a new band together and start playing the rockabilly weekend festivals. He was really looking forward to the release of his first CD and I was determined to have it out in time to get the wind in his sails. I can't express the shock I felt when I called on Tuesday with a question about the liner notes and was told he'd died quietly in his sleep during the night.

◆ Born in Dallas on May 10th, 1941, Poovey was strongly encouraged by his parents, who bought him an electric lap steel and amplifier when most kids got baseball gloves and bats. When he was only 12, 'Jumping' Joe Poovey was playing in front of thousands of people every Saturday night as a Big 'D' Jamboree regular rubbing elbows and taking bows with all the legends of American music, from Roy Acuff to Hank Snow, from Patsy Cline to Rose Maddox. After his conversion to rockabilly, he opened for a young, nervous Elvis Presley, hung out with Gene Vincent and swapped tall tales about girls with Johnny Carroll and the rest of the Dallas 'Cat Music' gang. Looking through his old photos is a virtual history lesson in early rock & roll, a black & white glimpse back to a time when true originals roamed the earth freely, dressed in outlandish clothes and making a new type of music that electrified some and horrified others.

◆ I was living in the same town, going to the same music store (McCords) and listening to the same rock & roll (under the bedcovers at night!), yet Joe and I never met back then because we lived in separate worlds divided by then insurmountable social barriers. My family were supporters of the Dallas Symphony and my parents wouldn't have dreamed of letting me go to the Dallas Sportatorium, where bluecollar folks went to forget their troubles, drink, fight and enjoy country music and rockabilly down by the Trinity River. It was only ten minutes from my home, but it might as well have been ten million. I had to find the value there later in life, unfortunately, because I missed seeing all the great originals who performed there in their prime, entertaining the people who understood and appreciated them the best.

◆ And now many of them, most of them even, are gone. Passed away at an early age from the intensity with which they burned, many heartbroken at the way they were carelessly tossed aside. After so many years of glory as a young performer, I'm sure Joe Poovey secretly felt some of that pain, which is why I was looking forward so much to having him reclaim some of that glory again on stage, doing the thing he loved most, making music and making people feel good. So now it's with a mixture of sadness and excitement that I'm putting the finishing touches on 'Groovey' Joe Poovey's **Greatest Grooves**. Bringing to light most of his best recordings is now as much an epitaph of Joe as it is a celebration.

◆ As I said, it's getting to be downright painful to be an authentic rock & roll fan these days.

David Dennard

◆ Groovey Joe Poovey's **Greatest Grooves**, with 23 tracks covering 50 years of musical activity, is scheduled for release by Dragon Street Records in early 1999. It will be the third in Dragon Street's *Legends Of the Big 'D'* series, following Gene Vincent & His Blue Caps: **The Lost Dallas Sessions 1957-58** and Johnny Dollar: **Mr Action Packed**.

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- 2pm Bill Bailey & The Wild Bunch/Wildsiders
- 2.45pm Phil Stevens
- 3.15pm Rhythm Rats
- 4pm Mickey White
- 4.30pm Quatropaw & Shelley King
- 5.15pm Sarah Elizabeth Campbell
- 6.15pm Cody Hubach
- 6.45pm Walter Tragert
- 7.15pm Laughing Dogs
- 7.45pm George Ensle
- 8.15pm Herman The German & Das Cowboy
- 9pm Poor Yorick

Sunday, November 8th

OUTHOUSE REUNION AT JOVITA'S

- 2pm Sheri Frushay with David Waddell
- 2.30pm Horsewreck
- 3pm Don Walser
- 3.30pm Champ Hood
- 4pm Barbara K
- 4.30pm Doak Short
- 5pm Slaid Cleaves
- 5.30pm Terri Hendrix, Guy Forsyth & Stan Smith
- 6.30pm Ms Xanna Don't & I ne wanted
- 7pm Ponty Bone & The Squeezetones
- 10th Don Walser & The Pure Texas Band
- 11th Ponty Bone & The Squeezetones
- 12th Cornell Hurd Band
- 13th The Ex-Husbands (from New York City)
- 14th The Kevin Fowler Band
- 15th Th'Mezz (CD release party)
- 17th Don Walser & The Pure Texas Band
- 18th Ponty Bone & The Squeezetones
- 19th Cornell Hurd Band
- 20th The Andres Cantisanti Band
- 21st Sheri Frushay

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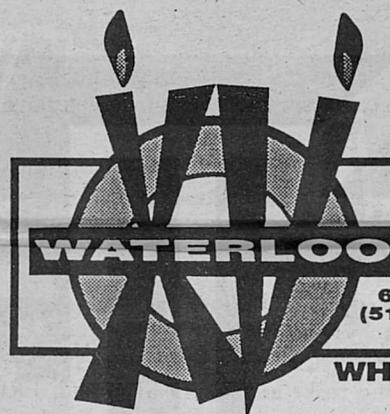
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- 13th Malcolm Welbourne (Killer Bees)
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- 19th Amy Atchley
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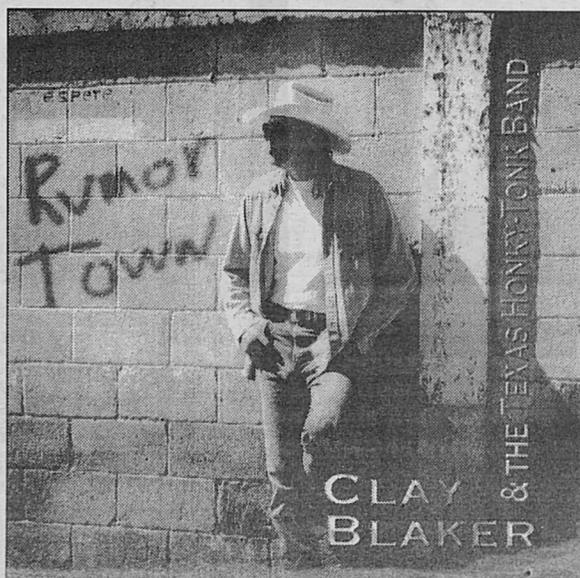
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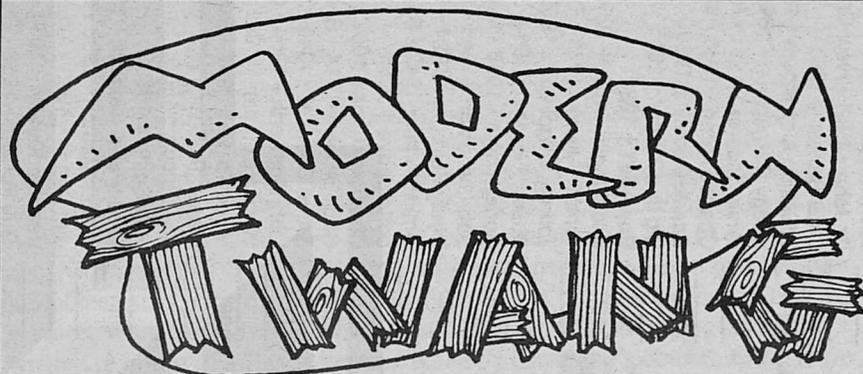
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- | | | | |
|------|--|------|---|
| 1st | Tony De La Rosa • 1931 • Sarita, TX | 21st | Lloyd Glenn • 1909 • San Antonio, TX |
| | Kinky Friedman • 1944 • Chicago, IL | | Jean Shepard • 1933 • Paul's Valley, OK |
| | Lyle Lovett • 1956 • Klein, TX | | Dr John • 1941 • New Orleans, LA |
| | Kim Lenz • 1966 • San Diego, CA | | Cecil Brower † 1965 |
| | Sippie Wallace † 1986 | 22nd | Whistling Alex Moore • 1899 • Dallas, TX |
| 2nd | Charlie Walker • 1926 • Collin Co, TX | | Hoagy Carmichael • 1899 • Bloomington, IN |
| | JD Souther • 1945 • Detroit, MI | | Ernie Cacades • 1911 • Rockport, TX |
| | Nan Warshaw • 1962 • Chicago, IL | | Charles Mann • 1945 • Welsh, LA |
| 3rd | Sonny Rhodes • 1940 • Smithville, TX | 23rd | Spade Cooley † 1969 |
| | Hugh Moffatt • 1948 • Fort Worth, TX | | Big Joe Turner † 1985 |
| 4th | Delbert McClinton • 1940 • Lubbock, TX | | Roy Acuff † 1992 |
| 5th | Etta Moten • 1901 • San Antonio, TX | 24th | Scott Joplin • 1868 • Bowie Co, TX |
| | Roy Rogers • 1911 • Cincinnati, OH | | Tommy Allsup • 1931 • Tulsa, OK |
| | Ike Turner • 1931 • Clarksdale, MS | | Johnny Degollado • 1935 • Austin, TX |
| | Gram Parsons • 1946 • Winterhaven FL | | Buster Pickens † 1964 |
| | Johnny Horton † 1960 | 26th | Curley Mays • 1938 • Maxie, LA |
| 6th | Stonewall Jackson • 1932 • Tabor City, NC | | Bob Livingston • 1948 • San Antonio, TX |
| | Frenchie Burke • 1933 • Kaplan, LA | 27th | Werly Fairburn • 1924 • Folsom, LA |
| | Guy Clark • 1941 • Monahans, TX | | Jimi Hendrix • 1942 • Seattle, WA |
| | Doug Sahm • 1942 • San Antonio, TX | | Lotte Lenya † 1981 |
| 7th | Little Bob • 1937 • Arnaudville, LA | | Charline Arthur † 1987 |
| | AP Carter † 1960 | 28th | Cecil Brower • 1914 • Bellevue, TX |
| | Black Ace † 1972 | | Bruce Channel • 1940 • Jacksonville, TX |
| 8th | Ivory Joe Hunter † 1974 | | Libbi Bosworth • 1964 • Galveston, TX |
| 11th | Sippie Wallace • 1898 • Houston, TX | | Wanna Coffman † 1991 |
| | Mose Allison • 1927 • Tippo, MS | 29th | Merle Travis • 1917 • Rosewood, KY |
| | LaVern Baker • 1929 • Chicago, IL | | Mason Ruffner • 1952 • Fort Worth, TX |
| | Hank Garland • 1930 • Cowpens, NC | | Joe Falcon † 1965 |
| | Dave Alvin • 1955 • Los Angeles, CA | | Ray Smith † 1979 |
| | Beau Jocque • 1957 • Basile, LA | 30th | Fred 'Papa' Calhoun • 1904 • Chico, TX |
| 12th | Bukka White • 1906 • Houston, TX | | Walter Mouton • 1938 • Scott, LA |
| | Booker T Jones • 1944 • Memphis, TN | | Jim Patton • 1950 • Alton, IL |
| | Neil Young • 1945 • Toronto, Canada | | Jeannie Kendall • 1954 • St Louis, MO |
| | James Intveld • 19?? • Los Angeles, CA | | Guy Forsyth • 1968 • Denver, CO |
| 13th | Sonny Fisher • 1931 • Tyler, TX | | |
| | Little Frankie Lee • 1941 • Mart, TX | | |
| | Ray Wylie Hubbard • 1946 • Hugo, OK | | |
| | Ruthie Logsdon • 19?? • New London, CT | | |
| 14th | Buckwheat • 1947 • Lafayette, LA | | |
| | Joe Gracey • 1951 • Fort Worth, TX | | |
| | Tex Edwards • 1954 • Dallas, TX | | |
| | Anson Funderburgh • 1954 • Plano, TX | | |
| 15th | Wes Reeves • 1933 • La Mesa, TX | | |
| | Clyde McPhatter • 1933 • Durham, NC | | |
| 16th | Bois-Sec Ardoin • 1916 • Duralde, LA | | |
| | Earl Bollick • 1919 • Hickory, NC | | |
| | Shirley Bergeron • 1933 • Church Point, LA | | |
| | WC Clark • 1939 • Austin, TX | | |
| | Albert Collins † 1993 | | |
| 17th | Gene Clark • 1941 • Tipton, MO | | |
| | Black Ardoin • 1946 • Duralde, LA | | |
| 18th | Hank Ballard • 1936 • Detroit, MI | | |
| | Leeann Atherton • 1955 • Birmingham, AL | | |
| 19th | Katy Moffatt • 1950 • Fort Worth, TX | | |
| 20th | Eck Robertson • 1887 • Amarillo, TX | | |
| | Duane Allman • 1946 • Nashville, TN | | |

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