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#21/110 OCTOBER 1998



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PUSH & PULL • BIRTHS & DEATHS
REVIEWS**

**BAD LIVERS • BULL RIDERS: CHASING THE DREAM
HILLBILLY BOOGIEMEN • LUCKY STRIKES
HEATHER MYLES • PINE VALLEY COSMONAUTS
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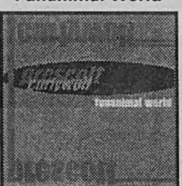


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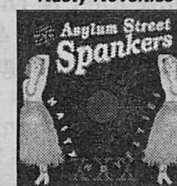
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Mark the 24th in your calendar for another Bradley Jay Williams initiative, a festival of Tex-Mex, Zydeco and Cajun music and food. Sponsored by Hohner, it'll feature San Antonio traditionalists Los Pioneers, Jude Moreau & The Bon Temps Playboys from Port Arthur, Williams' own Conjunto and Cajun bands, Los Pinkys and Gulf Coast Playboys, and Benjamin Serrato's Jet Set Zydeco.

FESTIVALS ACADIENS REPORT

On *Fais Do Do* the following Tuesday, Tom Manke put himself in the doghouse with a few people when, as a comment on the Austinites who skipped this year's Festival, fearing torrential rain, he played Eddie LeJeune's *I Made A Mistake* ("It was a joke, lighten up"). In the event, it sprinkled lightly for about half an hour on Saturday morning and that was it. Tom's Festival highlights were Jackie Caillier & The Cajun Cousins, featuring Ivy Dugas, "blew the crowd away, no weak links;" Steve Riley & The Mamou Playboys' sunset slot; the "awesome" Horace Trahan; and Jesse Legé & Mac Manuel's Lake Charles Ramblers, "real hot dancehall stuff with steel guitar." Big moment away from the Festival was fiddler Black Ardoin sitting in with his son Chris at Sido's, "tore the roof off."

On the food front, Tom hit Enola Prudhomme's in Carencro, Ray's Grocery in Opelousas and Guiding Star in New Iberia, but "the find of the trip" was the Cajun sweet dough pies he bought at a little shack on the east side of Eunice. He's forgotten what it's called, but does remember the owner's called Cormier, plays the accordion and is married to Will Balfa's daughter, which should be enough clues to track it down.

OCTA CLARK

From Mike Pinkerton: I just read in the Lafayette newspaper about the death of Octa Clark at the age of 94. I had the pleasure of eating, dancing and just listening to Octa for years at Mulate's. A lifelong resident of Judice, Mr Clark was a legendary Cajun accordionist, who performed since the age of 14 and continued to play until just a few years ago. Honored by the CFMA, Louisiana Music Hall Of Fame, Festivals Acadiens, Festival International de Louisiana and many others. He was noted for his weekly performances with his lifelong music partner, Hector Duhon, at Mulate's, Breaux Bridge. He performed with many other musicians, such as Paul Simon, Michael and David Doucet, Steve Riley, David Greely, Peter Schwarz, Christine Balfa, Tony Thibodeaux, Marcus Boudreaux, Bessyl, Alan and RL Duhon, Jo Simon and others who have joined his band, The Dixie Ramblers. Octa was best noted for his combination of a legendary accordion style and soulful vocals, along with a very vivid and lighthearted humor that kept both his audiences and friends captivated and amused.

Note: In a 75 year career, Octa Clark made only three albums, the last when he was 89! *Let The Good Times Roll!*: A Guide To Cajun & Zydeco Music (reviewed last issue) labels Ensemble Encore (Rounder, 1983) 'The Best,' but *You Can't Go Wrong . . . If You Play It Right* (Rounder, 1993) and *Old Time Cajun Music* (Arhoolie, 1982) are also recommended.

OCTOBER ACCORDION SHOWS

SUNDAYS

Texana Dames Güero's, 3pm
Tosca Continental, 9.45pm-ish

WEDNESDAYS

Ponty Bone & The Squeezetones
Jovita's, 8pm

THURSDAYS

Gulf Coast Playboys Antone's, 6pm
Jet Set Zydeco Black Cat, 9.30pm
Tosca Ritz/Upstairs, 7pm

THURSDAY 1st

Ruben Ramos Antone's, 10pm

FRIDAY 2nd

Gulf Coast Playboys Jovita's, 8pm

SATURDAY 3rd

Jet Set Zydeco Threadgill's Saloon,
7.30pm

SUNDAY 4th

Dance Hall Boys Moravia Store,
Moravia, 3-7pm
Ponty Bone & The Squeezetones
Gruene Hall, 5pm

TUESDAY 6th

Zydecowgirl Broken Spoke, 8pm

FRIDAY 9th

Gulf Coast Playboys Threadgill's
Saloon, 9.30pm

SATURDAY 10th

Dance Hall Boys Czech Club, Dallas,
8.30pm

Los Pinkys Jovita's, 8pm

THURSDAY 15th

Steve Riley & The Mamou Playboys
Stubb's, 10pm

FRIDAY 16th

Buckwheat Zydeco Antone's, 10pm

SATURDAY 17th

Dance Hall Boys Red Barn Nursery,
Slaughter Lane, 11am-3pm
Gulf Coast Playboys Plum Creek
Jubilee, Lockhart, 6pm
Buckwheat Zydeco Antone's, 10pm

SUNDAY 18th

Dance Hall Boys Red Barn Nursery,
183 & 620, 11am-3pm

WEDNESDAY 21st

Dance Hall Boys Filling Station,
8pm. 3CAN Showcase
Gulf Coast Playboys Broken Spoke,
9pm

SATURDAY 24th

Texas Squeeze: Los Pioneers + Los
Pinkys + Jude Moreau & The Bon
Temps Playboys + Gulf Coast
Playboys + Jet Set Zydeco Club 21,
Uhland, 6pm-midnight

SUNDAY 25th

Dance Hall Boys Czech Fest, Civic
Center, Victoria, noon

FRIDAYS 30th

Rubinchik's Orkestyr Central
Market, 6.30pm

SATURDAY 31st

Gulf Coast Playboys Continental
Club, 10pm (w/Doug Sahm)
Ponty Bone & The Squeezetones
Po-Po's, Welfare, 8pm

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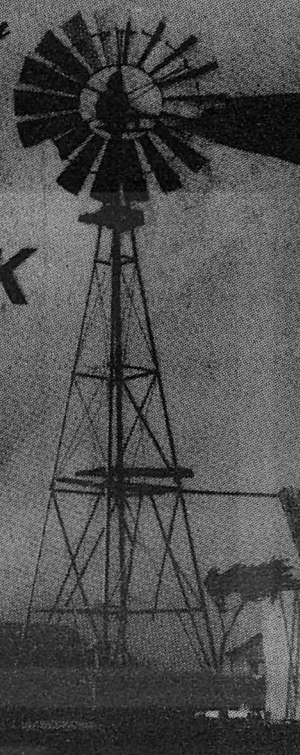


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Tue 20th	Texas Bar & Grill, 14611 Burnet, 9.30pm

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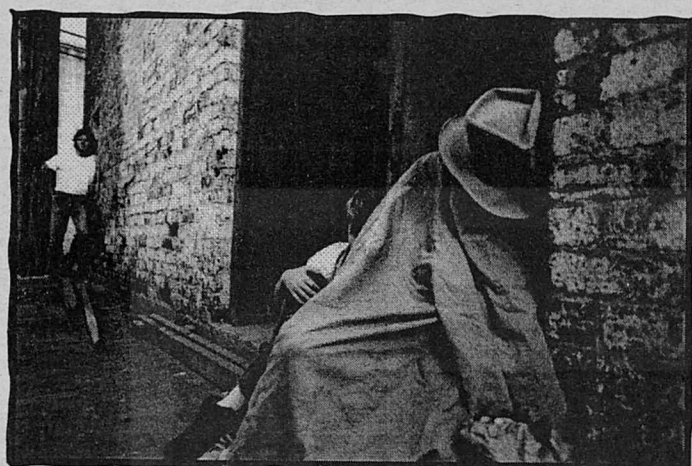
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3CM REVIEWS

TOWNES VAN ZANDT • ABNORMAL

(Normal [German])

Normal first released this, in a limited, long sold out, edition of 2,000, a couple of years ago on their Return To Sender mail order only subsidiary and I seem to recall reviewing it with a 'Good Luck' caveat. Anyway, the German label's now reissued it in a more regular way, though Zandtistas will be delighted to hear that it's been tinkered with a bit, so you still need both versions for a complete Townes collection. With 12 tracks common to both, the changes are in the first three tracks, *If I Needed You*, *Pancho & Lefty* and *Snake Mountain Blues* being replaced with *Coo Coo*, *Shrimp Song* and *Dollar Bill Blues*. As with most of his albums, the liner notes are, um, not sure what's the best word to describe them. Terse? Tightlipped? Noncommittal? Anyway, all we're told is that these songs, *Two Girls*, *Kathleen*, *Waiting Around To Die*, *Tecumseh Valley*, *Dead Flowers*, *Catfish Song*, *Flying Shoes*, *Blaze's Blues*, *Marie*, *A Song For*, *Lungs* and *Old Shep* were "recorded live throughout Europe." From internal evidence, it's fairly obvious they were recorded not long before the original release, but, frail and inconsistent as he was, even towards the very end, Van Zandt could still pull it out on occasion, and, indeed, his very fragility, or perhaps the listener's knowledge that he didn't have much time left, gives these recordings an extra edge of intensity. **JC**

DO YOU FEEL IT BABY?

THE CAPTIVATING LIVE SOUNDS OF ? & THE MYSTERIANS

(Norton)

Even though they actually charted twice, ? & The Mysterians have always seemed the quintessential one-hit wonders, blazing out of nowhere with a sensational single and then sinking back into obscurity. Nowhere was actually Detroit, though ? himself, otherwise Rudy Martinez, was born in Mexico and most of The Mysterians were from South Texas (O'Donnell, Crystal City, Weslaco and Encinal). The single was, of course, the immortal *96 Tears*. A glorious illustration of the populist dynamics of rock & roll hitmaking, the band's manager released *96 Tears*, reputedly recorded in her living room, on her own Pa-Go-Go label as the B-side of a 45 of which only 750 copies were pressed. Michigan DJs started playing the flip and it quickly became the most requested number on area radio, so Cameo bought it, taking it to national #1 in 1966. The following year, the band scored again, albeit on a lower level, #22, with *I Need Somebody*, and that was that. Though the band folded in '68, *96 Tears*, a garage/punk staple, has been successfully covered several times over the years, and recently the band reformed and this album was recorded last year, live at Coney Island High, NYC. Perhaps because this is almost the actual original band (their first guitarist was drafted in 1966 and the lineup features his replacement, Bobby Balderama, who I'm told lives in Austin), and they haven't been plodding the oldies circuit for 30 years, playing their hits over and over, they sound amazingly fresh and vibrant. Their five minute workout of *96 Tears* may, indeed, be even better than the original. Though Norton try to keep the ? mystique going, most of the 19 tracks, including *8 Teen*, once covered by Alice Cooper, are credited to Martinez, which rather blows his cover. As a footnote, and you may already know this, I used to think *96 Tears* was one of the Farfisa's defining moments, but in a 1981 *Goldmine* interview, Martinez revealed that Frank Rodriguez always played a Vox. **JC**

THE LUCKY STRIKES

SONG AND DANCE

(Lazy SoB)

Frankly (ha, ha), I have very little use for the Swing revival. Like any other form, it had its great moments and exponents first time round, which have largely been preserved and are still available, but, like the Rockabilly revival, the current movement seems longer on attitude and style than on musical substance (though I gotta admit, the clothes are cool). However, again like the Rockabilly revival, one's obliged to make exceptions for people who really do seem to have their hearts in it, and among these few are Austin's Lucky Strikes, which have some very strong cards in their hand. One is that Craig Marshall is not just a very polished vocalist in the swing crooner style, but wrote all 14 catchy songs and, as I think I remarked of their first album, his titles alone evoke classic Tin Pan Alley, *Every Time I Look At You*, *Just Lucky That Way*, *Days Gone By*, *When You Are Near*, *The Lonely Goodbye*. Then there's trombonist and arranger Freddie Mendoza, tenor saxman Elias Haslanger, trumpeter Milan Moorman, bassman Dave Miller and drummer David Levy, a formidable lineup, supplemented at various times by pianist Floyd Domino, Evan Christopher blowing some mean baritone sax, as well as alto sax and clarinet, violinists Jamie Desautels and Tracy Seeger and cellist Carolyn Hagler. I mean, these are people who can play a bit. I can't help feeling that Lounge is pretty much of a live see and be scene, but if you like to drink martinis and/or smoke cigars at home, this would go real well with either. If they only had Stan Smith on clarinet, they'd be pretty much perfect. **JC**

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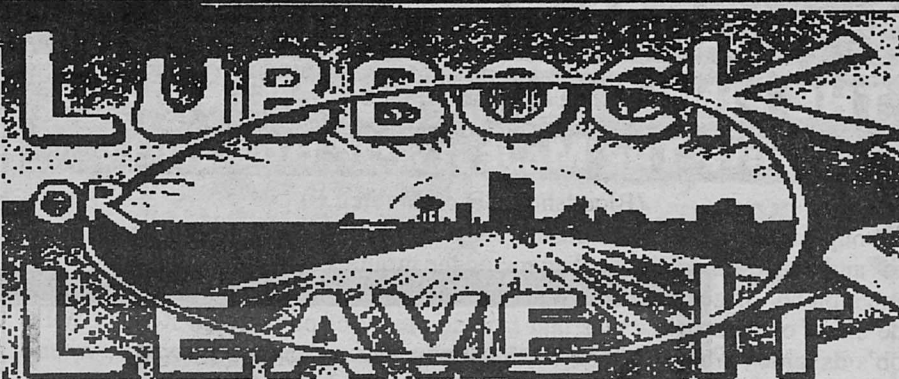


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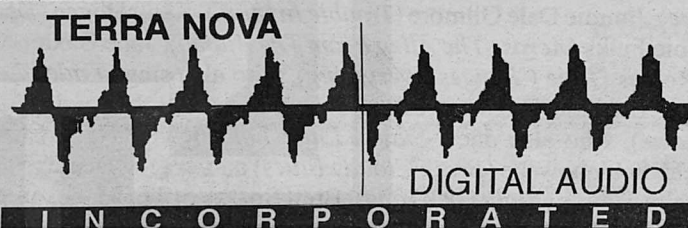
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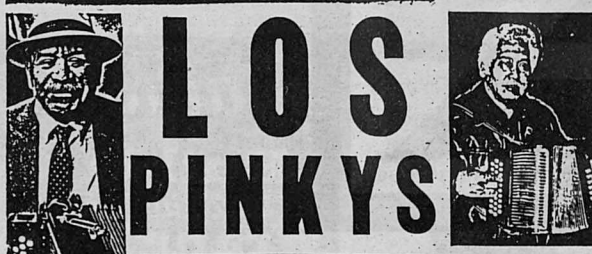
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3CM REVIEWS

THE PINE VALLEY COSMONAUTS SALUTE THE MAJESTY OF BOB WILLS

(Bloodshot, CD or double LP)

Couple three years back, I trashed *Asleep At The Wheel's* tribute to Bob Wills, and would cheerfully do it again, on the grounds that, apart from being crap, there's plenty of genuine Bob Wills product available, so who needs ersatz? A side effect of that review was that I made plenty of points with Rosetta Wills, Bob's daughter, who also thought the album was redundant. However, when I confessed to her that I absolutely adore this one, it didn't hurt our relationship any because so does she. Which, of course, raises an obvious question: isn't it a massive contradiction to dismiss a Bob Wills tribute made under the banner of America's most prominent Western Swing band and rave about another other cooked up by a British punk turned alt country hardcase? Sure is. And, frankly, it's not an easy one to resolve in words. The two have a certain amount in common, Bob Wills material, of course, pretty damned obvious Bob Wills material at that, and a house band playing with various guest artists, after that they differ enormously, but in ways that are best appreciated by playing them head to head. On a superficial level, the Cosmonauts and their friends never once indulge in fake Wills-isms, "yee-haws" and such, though, come to think, not so superficial because that was the single most annoying thing about the *Wheel* album. Really it comes down to spirit, which is where the *Wheel* project perished and the Cosmonauts flourish. Assembled in 1994 by Mekon/Waco Brother Jon Langford to make *Misery Loves Company: Pine Valley Cosmonauts Explore The Dark And Lonely World Of Johnny Cash* for a German label, the group features Waco Brother Mark Durante pedal steel, Bottle Rocket Tom Ray standup bass, Mekon/Waco Brother Steve Goulding drums, Chicago all-star John Rice guitar, mandolin, fiddle and tenor banjo and Poi Dog Pondering's horn section. Their guests are Chris Mills (*Home In San Antone*), Jimmie Dale Gilmore (*Trouble In Mind*), Kelly Hogan (*Drunkard's Blues*), Robbie Fulks (*Across The Alley From The Alamo*), Jane Baxter-Miller of The Texas Rubies (*Time Changes Everything*), who also sings *Faded Love* with Rico Bell and Brendan Croker, western swing veteran Bob Boyd (*Hang Your Head In Shame*), who also duets *Stay A Little Longer* with Neko Case, Waco Brothers Dean Schlabowske (*Brain Cloudy Blues*) and Tracey Deare (*Bubbles In My Beer*), Sally Timms (*Right Or Wrong*), Brett Sparks of The Handsome Family (*Roly Poly*), Edith Frost (*My Window Faces The South*), Alejandro Escovedo and Langford (*San Antonio Rose*) and The Meat Purveyors (*Take Me Back To Tulsa*). The band gets three instrumentals, *Texas Playboy Rag*, *Steel Guitar Rag* and *Panhandle Rag*, and Langford has his own vocal turn with *Sweet Kind Of Love*. Obviously enough, they didn't dig very deep into the Wills canon, but overall they deliver these Greatest Hits with considerable panache and right thinking. My only real quibble is that I wish they'd given Neko Case something more substantial. *Betcha My Heart I Love You* would have made for a neat acknowledgment of Wills' all but forgotten female vocalists, Laura Lee McBride, the McKinney sisters and Darla Daret. **JC**

HILLBILLY BOOGIEMEN ROCKIN' AND CLOGGIN'

(Marl Stone [Holland])

On their insert, this Dutch four piece, which, I'm told, is wildly popular all over Europe, particularly France, has two band pictures. In one, wearing Western shirts, their instruments are upright bass, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, lap steel and snare drum, in the other, with sports jackets and ties, they're wielding upright bass, acoustic guitar, banjo and mandolin. The one obviously suggests rockabilly, the other, of course, bluegrass, and both are accurate. Their album opens with two Jimmy Martin bluegrass standards *Hold Whatcha Got* and *Hitparade Of Love*, then segues into Jimmy Lee's proto-rockabilly *Love Me*, though perhaps the best statement of intent comes at the end, Grandpa Jones' *Eight More Miles To Louisville* followed by George Jones' *White Lightnin'*, a combination you sure don't hear every day. Other bluegrass tracks include Hylo Brown's *Lost To A Stranger*, *True Loving Woman*, which sounds vaguely familiar but I can't place offhand, *Ole Slewfoot* (though, as this was recorded by both Bill Monroe and Johnny Horton, they could have gone either way), Hank Williams' *Mansion On The Hill* and Ralph Stanley's *If I Lose*, interspersed with Horton's *One Woman Man*, Carl Smith's *There Stands The Glass*, George Jones again, *Why Baby Why*, Hank Snow's (*Now And Then*) *There's A Fool Such As I*, and *I'm Gonna Hang In There (Like A Rusty Fish Hook)* and *Whoa Boy* which are both new to me. Bassplayer vocalist Aart Schroevers seems rather more comfortable and confident with the hillbilly material than the bluegrass (though his occasionally erratic accent is most obvious on the *Rusty Fish Hook* song), but this is a very stylish and entertaining group which, if nothing else, has to be commended for not treating bluegrass like sacred texts. Hillbilly Boogiemens are playing some Austin dates in October and the album's available at Cheapo and Under The Sun. **JC**

BULL RIDERS: CHASING THE DREAM CHRIS WALL • TAINTED ANGEL

(both Cold Spring)

Haven't had one of those 'Only in Austin' moments for a while, but the cover of this 'original soundtrack to the motion picture' sure provided one. Don Walser, Derailers, Doug Supernaw, Jack Ingram, Chris Wall, Reckless Kelly, *Stop The Truck* and—*ThaMuseMeant*!! I love those guys, but how on earth did they get a gig on a film about bull riding? Aha, this is from Chris Wall's label, and assuming he had some input would shed much light on this otherwise inexplicable lineup. Wall tells me the film is quite a riot as its makers, knowing nothing about bullriding, intended it to be a wry Weird Americana documentary but got completely caught up in the sport and its mystique. Most of the songs were fairly obviously commissioned and the album suffers somewhat from occasional leaden rhymes and concepts, but while one can imagine Walser et al sweating over rhymes for 'rodeo,' for the most part they pull it off pretty well. In fact *Bring On That Bull* by Nathan Moore, songwriter of *ThaMuseMeant*, is about the best, rivaled by Walser's *Bullrider's Last Ride*, one of his good old West Texas boy story songs. Wall himself had a bit of an advantage, having three appropriate songs already written, his anthem, *Cowboy Nation* and *Let 'Er Buck*, with a band featuring Lloyd Maines and Gene Elders, and *Rodeo Wind*. The latter is the album's standout, not just because it's a fine song but because Wall gave it to one Joannie Keller to sing, and she delivers it in magnificent style. Wonderful voice.

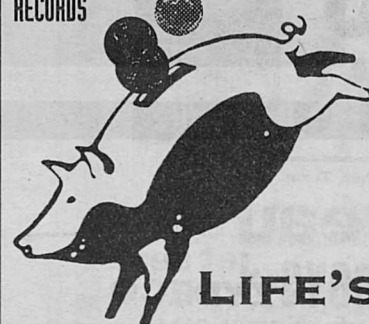
♦ Wall's own album is a considerable departure from his previous four—he ain't in Broken Spoke mode, that's for sure. He remarks, "Some of these songs were written years ago, but they didn't really click until I played them with Reckless Kelly." His young 'hick rocker' discoveries, led by the sons of an old friend from the Rocky Mountain roadhouse rock circuit, are a bit different from his honky tonking Rhythm Wranglers, but the combination of Wall's cowboy poetry and gruff, barroom vocals with Reckless Kelly's twangy alt country, if a bit of a shock at first, grows on one very quickly. Perhaps because he isn't having to think about filling a dance floor, Wall's witty observation, sardonic machismo and songs of sensitive but stoic heartache (it's the cowboy way) come across more vividly and movingly than ever before and this is better described as a singer-songwriter, rather than country, album. Hell, it doesn't even look like a country album. **JC**

HEATHER MYLES SWEET LITTLE DANGEROUS: LIVE AT THE BOTTOM LINE HIGHWAYS & HONKY TONKS

(Demon [UK]/Rounder)

Now you may be thinking, OK, a live album and a studio album, just guess which way Conquest is going to go. Well, you're absolutely right. Though Myles has established a righteous reputation for putting on a great show, her 1992 debut, *Just Like Old Times*, classic California country straddling the traditionalist/alternative divide, is proof she can do worthwhile things in the studio, but since then, an element of calculation seems to have crept into the process. *Highways & Honky Tonks* sounds—and looks—like an upmarket demo to show she has the voice, the musical chops and the all-important cutes to justify signing. Featuring Pete Anderson on lead guitar, a duet with Merle Haggard and goodish covers of Charley Pride's *Kiss An Angel Good Morning* and Ray Price's *I'll Be There If You Ever Want Me*, Myles' ten originals don't match her own back catalog. That catalog, along with Buck Owens' *Gonna Have Love*, Loretta Lynn's *When The Tingle Becomes A Chill* and George Jones' *Walk Through This World With Me*, forms the backbone of an album recorded a couple of years ago at a club in London, which, I understand, is where Myles, who's consistently done better over there than back home, now lives. With a hot band, led by British guitar wizard Wes McGhee, backing her bold, confident vocals, the album eloquently captures the verve of her live performance, and one has to wonder why, if they wanted to put out another Myles album, Rounder didn't just license it, rather than lashing out money on their own dud. **JC**

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JOHNNY CONQUESO, THE BIG DIPPER

Credit's due: last month, I didn't think to ask **Lloyd Maines** who took the photo of him I used on the cover, and Lloyd didn't think to tell me until the issue was actually in the hands of my trusty inkies, in fact, actually on the presses. For the record, it was the work of **Emily Joyce**.

Kinda ticked off **Eric Taylor** with last month's review of **Resurrect**, not because I mentioned his former drug and alcohol problems, well enough known when he was Houston's premier singer-songwriter, but because I linked them to his time in Vietnam. He's real emphatic that they're entirely unrelated. To be candid, I was going on a stored away for future reference comment by his ex-wife, **Nanci Griffith**, not, to be sure, the most reliable of sources, but on the other hand, bracketing Vietnam and subsequent substance abuse isn't what you'd call inherently preposterous. However, he refuses to blame his own problems on the war, so please amend your thinking accordingly. Sorry, Eric.

Couple of last month's threads, **Butch Hancock** & **Jimmie Dale Gilmore** and **The Texana Dames**, sort of came together when **Conni Hancock**, calling to say no joy on recovering their ripped-off equipment, told me her dad, **Tommy Hancock**, former leader of **West Texas' Roadside Playboys** and longtime owner of **Lubbock's Cotton Club**, was offered a **Walk Of Fame** star but declined—he's holding out for a statue in **Comanche Park**. That **Tommy**. And I was kind of tickled by **Conni's** remark that one of the group's busiest sidelines is playing at the weddings of people who met at their Sunday afternoon shows at **Güero's**.

When I'm in hardline bastard mode, I argue that anyone who needs more than eight hours to record an album basically doesn't know what they're doing and shouldn't be allowed in a studio in the first place, but if I'm feeling magnanimous, I'll concede a week or so (after that I dig my heels in again). Now you may well be far more generous, and have very cogent reasons, but how about *twenty* years? That's how long **Linda McCartney** had been working on an album that **Paul's** fixing to have released sometime soon. Of course, it can't possibly be any good, and wouldn't be even if she'd taken 100 years, but my worry is that **Lucinda** may regard this as a precedent.

Thinking of **Paul**, much as I've always detested **The Beatles**, I have to say that even in my most hostile moment I wouldn't have wished a **Celine Dion** cover (of *Here, There And Everywhere*) on them. Apparently it's going to be on an all-celebrity album of Beatles covers, something the world really needs.

And thinking of **Lucinda Williams**, I hear she was so unhappy with her latest *Austin City Limits* segment that she's having it redone at her own expense. I love and admire the woman, but jeez, she brings a whole new meaning to the word 'neurotic.'

Many cyber-enabled artists have replaced the traditional mailing list postcards with mass emailings. For sheer entertainment value, the e-master is **Orange County** music journalist **Buddy Seigal**, aka **Bud E Blue**, one of the few swing players who isn't in it for as long as the fad lasts, of whose **Greasy Jass** CD you may vaguely recall seeing my review (#15/104). As an example of his style, with some local content, this comes from an early September missive: "Linda of Linda's Doll Hut thought the band was so fuckin' mahvelous she did me the honor of putting us on the bill with **Wayne Hancock** this Sunday night. Now if you've been on this mailing list for a while you know I think this guy is like God's left asscheek. On top of his great, authentic, ass-kicking hillbilly swing music, this little fucker has an even worse attitude than I do. I like that in a guy." He also appended an excellent feature on **Hancock** he wrote, in his **Seigal** persona, for the *Orange County Weekly*.

'Who is **Rudy Martinez**?' has always been my favorite music trivia poser because it's the only one that contains its own answer. He was, of course, the frontman of **? & The Mysterians** (see Reviews). Runner-up would be 'What was **Woody Guthrie's** middle name?', in which the answer (**Wilson**) is implied in the question. Actually, my real favorite **Q**, which I pass on to you, my loyal readers, so you can stun your friends with your esoteric musical lore or mock their pitiful ignorance, whichever you prefer, has always been: When **Lauren Bacall** sings with **Hoagy Carmichael** in **To Have And To Have Not**, whose voice is it? You'll find the answer at the end of the column.

Predating **Kevin Connor's** Friday show on **KGSR**, **Jamie Hoover**, under the handle **Cow Patti**, used to have a Texas music show called *Lone Star State Of Mind* on **KCSS**, **Turlock, CA**. She lost it during one of the periodic attacks of **Insecure New Program Director** that radio stations are so prone to. However, she's back in business at **KGLP**, the public station in **Gallup, NM**, and would love to hear from people with product she can play to the **3CM** style music deprived **Dinee**. You can reach her at **KGLP**, 200 College Rd, **Gallup, NM 87301**, call her at 505/863-7626 or email her at jhoover@gallup.net.

Country music has always struggled on **Sixth Street** and the last bastion has finally fallen. For many years, **Jim Hawke** featured weekday shows by **Don Walser**, **Alvin Crow** and **Dale Watson** at **Babe's**, and says he never once lost money on them. However, he recently sold the place on the understanding he'd go on managing it, but the new owners fired him and offered the bands \$1 a head (ie if 40 people showed up, they'd get \$40, and so on). **Walser** quit when he heard that **Hawke** had gone and **Crow** and **Alvin** departed shortly after. So too did the cook, who's been with **Hawke** for 15 years and it turns out nobody else knows the arcane secrets of the **Babe's** hamburger, so regular customers are bitching, moaning and moving on, ha ha. **Walser's** now at **Threadgill's Saloon** on Thursday nights, while **Hawke**, and his faithful burgermeister, are scouting for a new location.

Also on the club front, **Flipnotics** have thrown in the towel on outdoor music. After years of struggling with a single neighbor who basically would settle for nothing less than inaudible and called the police no matter what the decibel meter said, they've retreated indoors. They're looking into expanding the building by enclosing the porch, but there are many architectural and financial problems.

For what it's worth, **San Antonio's** musically ambitious (occasionally overambitious) hotspot, **Carlsbad Tavern**, have told **Cary Swinney** that they should reopen in time for his October date. They clean forgot to renew their liquor license, which seems an odd thing for a bar to neglect, but it happened to the **Austin Stubb's** recently and a few years ago the same error put **Blue Bayou** out of business. Problem is, the **TABC** makes you restart the process from scratch and, of course, you can't sell booze in the interim, which has a rather negative effect on a bar's bottom line.

A radical new innovation from the **Cornell Hurd Band**—tipping the audience! Down at **Jovita's** one Thursday night, **Danny 'Lord of the Board' Young** went round the house putting a dollar bill in front of everyone there, as a gesture of the band's appreciation for their support. What a great bunch of guys, though I should add that when I got back from having a piss, my dollar had been reclaimed for the tip jar, but it's the thought that counts.

Hot **Walser** news—**Mark Rubin** has laid his hands on the masters of eight hours worth of early 60s radio recordings by **The Texas Plainsmen**, of **Midland, TX**. The band's vocalist, and sadly, its only

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

surviving member, was **Big Don** and **Mark**, who says they're phenomenal, is trying to get someone to make the tapes available to the public.

Haven't thought of the **Austin Klezmerim** for a while, but talking to **Mark Rubin** reminded me of the time, some years back, when a member of **Chicago's** rather useless **Maxwell Street Klezmer** moved to **Houston** and loudly announced she was going to form **Texas' first ever klezmer**. As the **Austin Klezmerim** had been going for 15 years, playing weddings, bar mitzvahs and other events all over the state, even maintaining an 800 number (**SIX-YIDS**), you can imagine how they felt about that one.

Quote of the month: **Kurt Wagner** of **Lambchop** on **Nashville** songwriting, in the **British daily The Independent**, "If the guys who wrote these songs actually wrote about what was happening in their lives, they'd be writing about doing too much coke, screwing around on their wives, about their four divorces and all the alimony and how they've screwed up their lives. And country music would be much richer for it."

A: **Andy Williams**. Ain't it cool?

CHARLIE FEATHERS

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When **Rosemary**, his wife of 47 years, called to tell me **Charlie Feathers** had passed away, it wasn't a great shock and I wasn't really sad for him. He'd been in a lot of pain in the last ten years and that was over. I was just sad because the greatest, earliest and only true blue **Rockabilly** artist wasn't in the same world anymore. One thing I'm really glad about is that on our last visit, I was able to give him a copy of my book (see below) in which an entire chapter is devoted to him because his music is, and will always be, the most important and artistic in all of **Rockabilly**. **Charlie Feathers** was the most soulful hillbilly singer I ever heard, and he defined the true essence of **Rockabilly** in songs like *Tongue-Tied Jill*, *Stutterin' Cindy*, *One Hand Loose*, *Bottle To The Baby*, *Everybody's Lovin' My Baby*, *Get With It* and tons more. On songs like *Jungle Fever*, from 1958, **Charlie** was way ahead of his time with his vocals, sound and arrangement, it's almost **Punk!** Veteran **Memphis** musician **Ronald Smith** once told me, "Singers and musicians were kinda scared of **Charlie's** way of thinking when it came to how a song should be sung or played, 'cause his ideas were always way out there in left field even back in the early 50s." None other than **Johnny Cash** testified, "**Charlie Feathers** is the main reason there was **Sun Records**. His songs were recorded by all of us there and he has never been given the credit or recognition he deserved, I will always be a **Charlie Feathers** fan."

What, to me, makes **Charlie Feathers** the most important of all **Rockabilly** artists is that he never quit, changed his mind or moved over to other styles for the sake of the almighty dollar. **Charlie** told me many times, "When I found that **Cotton Patch Blues** sound and mixed it over into hillbilly and bluegrass, there was nothin' better, man. It was the beginning and the end of all music and all you can do is keep rearranging it. It just got deep inside my soul and it'll never leave me till I leave this earth." And it never did.

Billy Poore

There are over a dozen **Charlie Feathers** CDs available, the most comprehensive being **Charlie Feathers: 1954-1969** (**Revenant Records**). **Billy Poore's Rockabilly, A Forty Year Journey** (**Hal Leonard**) has the most complete account of **Feathers' career** and **Poore's** speciality label, **Renegade**, released and reissued much rare material, including **Feathers' last album**. For a catalog, send \$2 to **Billy Poore**, **Renegade Records**, PO Box 366, **Linden, TN 37096** (email: rbillygal@netease.net; fax: 931/589-3276).

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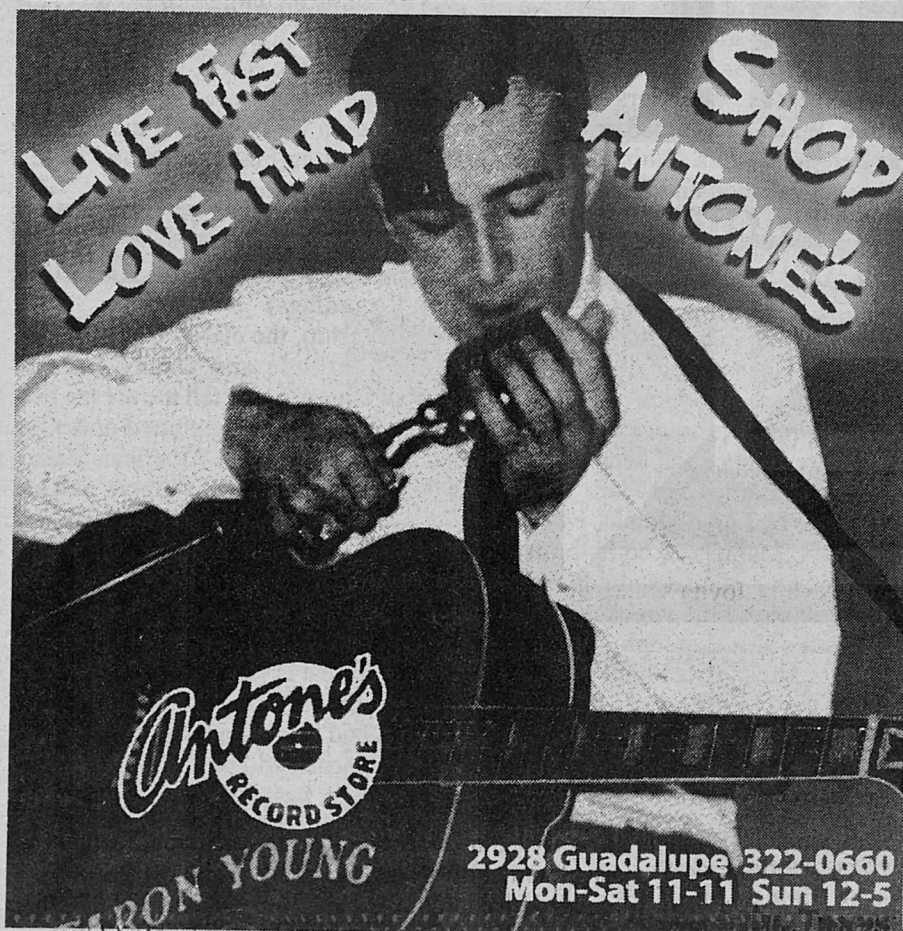


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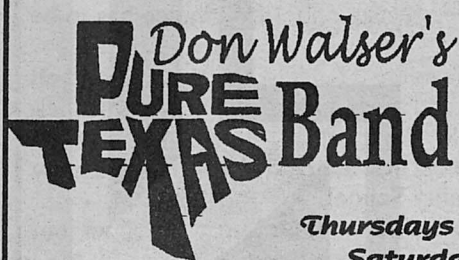
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HOW TO MAKE FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE AUDIENCES

Not that I want to get on Hot Club Of Cowtown's case because, no matter what, there are aspects of them I truly admire, but quite a few people seconded my comment on the trio's inability to relate to an audience.

What was kind of interesting though were the different root causes they came up with, variously citing lack of charisma, stage presence, personality, confidence, charm, humor, social skills or professionalism.

♦ The thing of it is, talent is only one, if rather essential, dimension of music, especially live music. I'm no admirer of showmanship, per se, but once you've seen an act, unless there's some appeal above and beyond technical ability, my feeling is pretty much been there, done that. Austin is full of more or less impressive people I've heard and don't really care if I never hear again, but there are others I go to over and over, because they've got that extra something. Of course, in Austin, where the supply of live music grossly outstrips the demand, such discrimination is more necessity than luxury.

♦ Point is, if you want to make it in Austin, you have to be more than a great picker or intriguing songwriter. Those we got out the wazoo. So, as a public service, to all aspiring Austin musicians, here's Dale Conquest's guide to Master Classes that will help you make up the deficit in your show, eliminate empty room misery and build up that repeat business you need for the long haul. Remember though, the best you can hope for are reasonable simulations. Do not, for instance, attempt to grow a personality.

CHARISMA • The obvious or, to be more precise, only local choice has to be Joe Ely's Larger Than Life School.

STAGE PRESENCE • Check into Jovita's every Thursday to study at Cornell Hurd's We're All In This Together School and try and figure out why his schtick never gets stale.

PERSONALITY • Lot of choices here, but the best are Don Walser's Big Daddy School and Ponty Bone's Mister Congeniality School.

CONFIDENCE • I recommend Mark Rubin's Like It Or Lump It School, but remember, confidence really ought to be based on something.

CHARM • Easy one, Terri Hendrix's Basket Of Kittens School. Charm may not sound like all that much, but as people can't wrap Hendrix up and take her home, they buy a CD or two instead. You hear what I'm saying?

HUMOR • You'll learn a lot about humor from Cornell Hurd, but for an even more advanced course in the art of delivery, getting people to laugh at the same jokes again and again, try Ray Wylie Hubbard's Sit Down Stand Up School.

SOCIAL SKILLS • Sadly, High Noon's Rush Week School, is no longer functioning. Those guys can work a room better than anyone I know. However, Christine Albert's Den Mother School has much to offer. Both use sincerity as their main tool, but, hell, if you can't fake that, what are you doing in the music business anyway?

PROFESSIONALISM • You can learn most of what you need—and I mean need—to know about the painstaking nuts and bolts of career-building at Terri Hendrix's Lavender Notepaper School. However, you might also want to check out Bradley Jay Williams' Eagle Eye School for instruction in how to play an instrument and run a show while simultaneously keeping tabs on everything that's happening in the room and everyone who walks in the door.

AND/OR • If you master all of the above, you can study Butch Hancock's Grin Go Way Of Knowledge. Alternatively, there is a way to succeed with minimal grasp of any of them, however it's currently a lost art as Townes Van Zandt's Flying Dutchman Academy closed with his death. Either way, did I mention you have to be genius? Whoops, sorry.

JC

MARK RUBIN

He's sitting on the terrace of a chateau near Bordeaux, sipping vin rouge, noshing Camembert, with the lovely and talented Rachel Rhodes at his side, along with the other first rate musicians who make up his band. So when Patrique Laveau, promoter of Les Nuits Atypiques de Langdon, remarked, "You are a very lucky man," he wasn't telling Mark Rubin anything he didn't already know.

♦ Rubinchik's Orkestyr was in France this summer for Langdon's international music festival, which he'd hooked up with while playing with Santiago Jimenez Jr, an example, incidentally, of the way every experience, good or bad, is grist for Rubin's personal synergy. Having mentioned the Orkestyr and Jimenez in the same sentence, I should say right now that he's very definite that they're side projects, "Bad Livers is my real band, my real job."

♦ Rubin was born and raised in Stillwater, OK, "a great place to be from," of parents who met in a band (his father played baritone horn, his mother baritone sax) and had strong feelings about the value, even nobility, of music, particularly American music. When he was six, they enrolled their son in a Suzuki Method violin class, but "I was such a little bastard about it, they eventually let me off." He met his destiny in his High School marching band when, solely on account of his size, he was summarily assigned the tuba.

♦ Later, influenced by punk, he moved to electric bass and, in the early 80s, joined a reggae band, "pretty subversive stuff in rural Oklahoma, let me tell you," which paid so well he dropped out of OU. However, in 1986 he moved to Dallas where he eventually joined his favorite local group. "They were all in other bands and Killbilly was supposed to be a fun thing, but then it started taking off—there's a lesson in that!" He also bought an upright bass, "Seven days later, I was playing it at a gig."

♦ The Killbilly story is fraught with useful lessons for musicians, mainly "there's a reason why you're not successful," but in 1989, "I woke up one day and thought all these great ideas are going to help these sons of bitches," and he left Dallas for Austin on eight hours notice. There he shared a house with High Noon's Kevin Smith, "one stop bassplayer shopping," and in his first full year played with 32 different outfits. Which led him to the conclusion that "This sideman thing sucks," but his turning point was watching Steve Earle and Michael Corcoran in a New York club drool over a band "whose name I've completely blocked. They were shit." From the club's payphone, he called Danny Barnes, whom he'd met when they were both being screwed over by Killbilly, and Bad Livers was born. "All the industry people in town hated the name, but my tattooist liked it, say no more."

♦ "We formed it to have fun and make good music, it's an extension of our personalities. Like Steve James says, it makes our schtick be ourselves. Of course, we're screwed commercially. Don Walser started the thing about us not playing requests, it's not something we made a conscious decision about, but in fact now we get requests for our own material, and we won't even play those. What the band thinks is cool is more important than what the audience thinks is cool."

♦ "The great thing about Bad Livers is that people have learned not to have preconceptions about us, so now we can, and do, show up with anything we want, drums, electric guitars, whatever, and they don't have a problem with it. There may only be eight or nine thousand of those people in the world, but that's fine."

♦ Important as Bad Livers are to him, the Orkestyr is also here to stay. "Ulterior motive. When I'm abroad or on tour, I think, wouldn't it be great if the old lady was here to see this. With the Orkestyr, we got to go to France together, have a European vacation and we made money! You can't beat that."

JC

BAD LIVERS • INDUSTRY AND THRIFT RUBINCHIK'S ORKESTYR • FLIPNOTICS FREILACHS

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You can talk about the extraordinary musicianship, the clarity of vision, the razor sharp precision, the freewheeling attitude and Danny Barnes' exceptional songs, which people who know about these things tell me are the best Bluegrass material in decades, but no one's ever satisfactorily pinned down the Bad Livers essence and I can't really do better than Superlative American Music. These days, Barnes and Mark Rubin are a duo, enrolling ad hoc support, and are joined here by Lloyd Maines, who also produced, Rubinchik's Orkestyr members and others. Making no compromises, Bad Livers are ruthlessly demanding and thus somewhat of an acquired taste, but for pure musicality, they have no equals.

♦ Formed out of the wreckage of the Austin Klezmerim, Mark Rubin's one-off Rubinchik's Kapelye took on a life of its own with a semi-residency, subject to Bad Liver demands, at Flipnotics. This is a what you hear is what you get document, seven of the 11 tracks come from a KUT Live Set, the rest from a live recording at Flipnotics itself. With Rubin on tuba, string bass and balalaika bass, the Orkestyr consists of Mike Maddux accordion, Ben Saffer clarinet and bass clarinet (lovely sound), Lisa Schneider violin, Mike Stinnett clarinet, bass clarinet and c-melody sax, Jake Zuckerman National and acoustic guitars and, of course, the wonderful Rachel Rhodes, the Klezmerim's greatest contribution to Western Civilization, Yiddish vocals. This is music from a great tradition, the celebratory music, infused with Gypsy and East European styles, of the Ashkenazim, performed by superb musicians having a lot of fun. No Horas, that's a promise.

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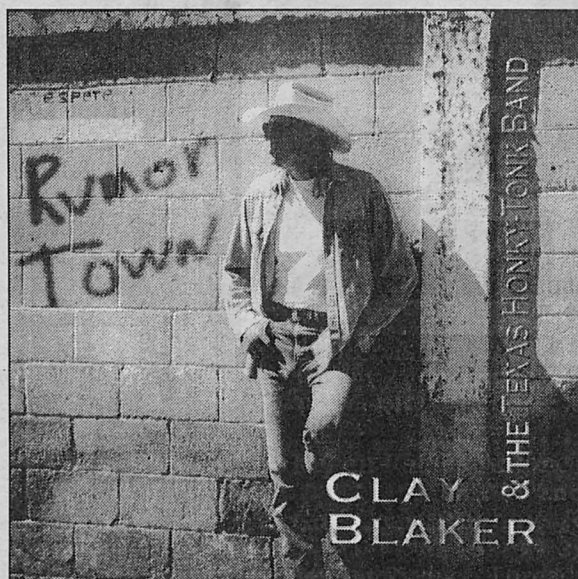
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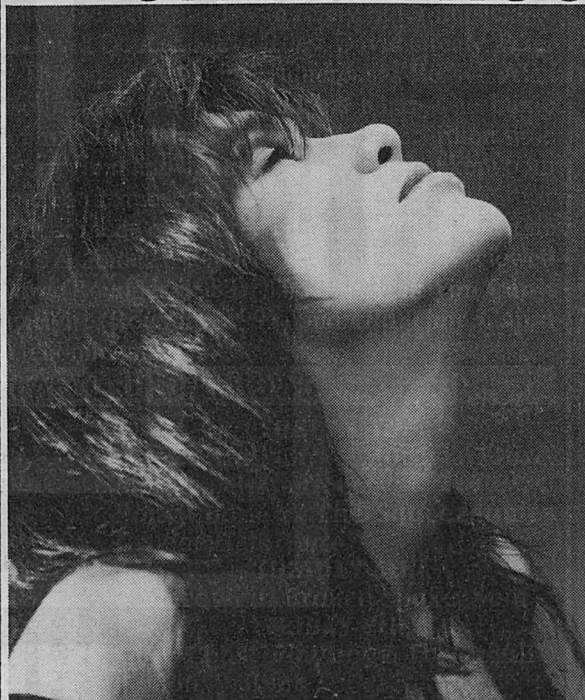
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American Good Southern Style

OCTOBER ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

- 1st _ Marc Savoy • 1941 • Eunice, LA
 2nd _ Leon Rausch • 1927 • Springfield, MO
 _ Jo-El Sonnier • 1946 • Rayne, LA
 _ Wayne Toups • 1958 • Lafayette, LA
 _ Kelly Willis • 1968 • Lawton, OK
 3rd _ Albert Collins • 1932 • Leona, TX
 _ Eddie Cochran • 1938 • Albert Lea, MN
 _ Chris Gaffney • 1950 • Vienna, Austria
 _ Stevie Ray Vaughan • 1955 • Dallas, TX
 _ Woody Guthrie † 1967
 _ Victoria Spivey † 1976
 _ Dennis McGee † 1989
 4th _ Leroy Van Dyke • 1929 • Spring Fork, MS
 _ Larry Collins • 1944 • Tulsa, OK
 _ Janis Joplin † 1970
 5th _ Billy Lee Riley • 1933 • Pocahontas, AR
 _ Johnny Duncan • 1938 • Dublin, TX
 _ Belton Richard • 1939 • Rayne, LA
 _ BW Stevenson • 1949 • Dallas, TX
 6th _ Sammy Price • 1908 • Honey Grove
 7th _ Uncle Dave Macon • 1870 • Smart Station, TN
 _ Dale Watson • 1962 • Birmingham, AL
 _ Smiley Lewis † 1966
 _ Johnny Kidd † 1966
 8th _ Pete Drake • 1933 • Augusta, GA
 9th _ Goebel Reeves • 1899 • Sherman, TX
 _ Ponty Bone • 1939 • Dallas, TX
 _ Sister Rosetta Tharpe † 1973
 10th _ Ivory Joe Hunter • 1914 • Kirbyville, TX
 _ John Prine • 1946 • Maywood, IL
 _ Tanya Tucker • 1958 • Seminole, TX
 11th _ Gene Watson • 1943 • Palestine, TX
 _ Jon Langford • 1957 • Carleon, Wales
 _ Tex Williams † 1985
 12th _ Gene Vincent † 1971
 13th _ Natalie Maines • 1964 • Lubbock, TX
 14th _ Bill Justis • 1927 • Birmingham, AL
 15th _ Victoria Spivey • 1906 • Houston, TX
 _ Mickey Baker • 1925 • Louisville, KY
 _ Sid King • 1936 • Denton, TX
 _ Al Stricklin † 1986
 16th _ Stoney Cooper • 1918 • Harmon, WV
 _ Canray Fontenot
 _ • 1922 • L'Anse aux Vaches, LA
 17th _ Little Joe • 1940 • Temple, TX
 _ Michael Elwood • 1955 • Bethlehem, PA
 _ Billy Williams † 1972
 _ David Guion † 1981
 18th _ Lotte Lenya • 1898 • Vienna, Austria
 _ Chuck Berry • 1926 • San Jose, CA
 _ Emily Kaitz • 1951 • Washington, DC
 19th _ Piano Red • 1911 • Hampton, GA
 _ Marie Adams • 1925 • Linden, TX
 _ Jeannie C Riley • 1945 • Anson, TX
 _ ZuZu Bollin † 1990
 20th _ Stuart Hamblen • 1908 • Kellyville, TX
 _ Wanda Jackson • 1937 • Maud, OK
 _ Bugs Henderson • 1943 • Palm Springs, CA
 _ Merle Travis † 1983

- 21st _ Mel Street • 1933 • Grundy, WV
 _ Steve Cropper • 1941 • Willow Springs, MO
 _ Monette Moore † 1962
 _ Bill Black † 1965
 _ Mel Street † 1978
 22nd _ Bobby Fuller • 1942 • Baytown, TX
 23rd _ Speckled Red • 1892 • Monroe, LA
 _ Boozoo Chavis • 1930 • Lake Charles, LA
 _ Carol Fran • 1933 • Lafayette, LA
 _ Johnny Carroll • 1937 • Cleburne, TX
 _ Ellie Greenwich • 1940 • Brooklyn, NY
 _ Maybelle Carter † 1978
 24th _ Big Bopper • 1930 • Sabine Pass, TX
 _ Glen Glenn • 1934 • Joplin, MO
 25th _ Walter Hyatt • 1948 • Spartanburg, SC
 _ Roger Miller † 1992
 _ Johnny Lee Wills † 1984
 26th _ Mahalia Jackson • 1911 • New Orleans, LA
 _ Beto Villa • 1915 • Falfurrias, TX
 _ Wes McGhee • 1948 • Lutterworth, UK
 27th _ Floyd Cramer • 1933 • Samti, LA
 28th _ Bill Bollick • 1917 • Hickory, NC
 _ Blackie Forestier • 1928 • Cankton, LA
 _ Iry LeJeune • 1928 • Church Point, LA
 _ Hank Marvin • 1941 • Newcastle, UK
 29th _ Albert Brumley • 1905 • Spiro, OK
 _ Narciso Martinez • 1911 • Tamaulipas, Mexico
 _ Lee Clayton • 1942 • Russellville, AL
 _ Duane Allman † 1971
 30th _ Patsy Montana • 1914 • Hot Springs, AR
 _ Otis Williams • 1949 • Texarkana, TX
 _ Debra Peters • 1956 • Vancouver, Canada
 31st _ Dale Evans • 1912 • Uvalde, TX
 _ Ray Smith • 1934 • Melbar, KY
 _ Sumter Bruton • 1944 • Fort Worth, TX
 _ Calvin Russell • 1948 • Austin, TX

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