Hall About It: The Inductions

“The slots in radio and the slots in music are rare, so you cherish it if you get one.” That’s the newly enshrined Charlie Chase offering a perspective that carried the evening at Tuesday night’s 2013 Country Radio Hall of Fame Dinner & Ceremony. As always, the emotional cornerstone of CRS offered stories, laughs and some truly moving moments.

Bob Romeo: The President’s Award honoree answered the call to the stage from the CRB’s Mike Culotta and thanked many who have helped the ACM in its work with Country radio, singling out the organization’s Brooke Primero and her “tireless” work. He then showed a clip of 2013 Medium Market Personality winners (spoiler alert) Rowdy Yates, Sunny Leigh and Carly Rush from KVOO/Tulsa reacting on-air to the news of their nomination. “Guys, that’s the thank-you for us,” he said. “We appreciate all the support.”

George Strait: The Career Achievement Award recipient was honored in a video compilation featuring Dierks Bentley, Taylor Swift, Lee Ann Womack, Blake Shelton, Jamey Johnson, Martina McBride, Alan Jackson, Ronnie Dunn, Reba and Tim McGraw offering their thoughts. McBride encapsulated the sentiment, saying, “Everyone wants to be George Strait when they grow up.”

To no one’s surprise, Strait didn’t linger at the podium after receiving a lengthy standing ovation. “It’s meant so much to me over the years to have made so many friends out there,” Strait said. (continued on page 2)

Breaking: Swift Adds Tour Guests

Taylor Swift has chosen Joel Crouse, Brett Eldredge, Florida Georgia Line and Casey James for guest slots on The Red Tour, which opens March 13 in Omaha. Crouse is slated for 11 shows, Eldredge for 14, FGL for seven and James for 14. Ed Sheeran was previously announced for all tour stops, and Austin Mahone joins the bill in stadiums. The tour will include 66 shows in 47 cities, including nine stadium dates. See the full itinerary here.
WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE

Welcomes You to CRS 2013 & Invites You to
Warner Wednesday 3

That '70s Showcase

February 27, 2013
9:30 PM
@ Avenue
120 3rd Avenue South

Featuring: Blake Shelton, Sheryl Crow, Hunter Hayes,
Big & Rich, Jana Kramer, John Oates, Gloriana, Ashley Monroe,
Charlie Worsham, The Farm, Brett Eldredge, Frankie Ballard,
Dean Alexander, & Big Smo

CRS registrants and invited guests only.
A&O&B: Running The Gamut

Beyond revealing their annual Roadmap Study, the Albright & O’Malley & Brenner Pre-CRS Client Seminar touched on everything from being active, engaged and relevant with your audience via social media, digital tools and station branding, to tips for talent and what Gen Y will mean to our industry in the coming years. Here are some take-aways from each presentation.

### 2013 Roadmap Study:

Of 6,272 Country P1 participants from 50 markets in the U.S. and Canada, 70% report being satisfied with the format. Of those who aren’t, song-repetition and commercials were top reasons. Country listeners are increasingly tech savvy, with 75% reporting using some sort of social media every day (up from 66% last year), and 31% report having an internet connection of some sort in their cars.

### Are You Active Or Engaged:

Radio and artist management vet Rick Barker of MusicIndustryBlueprint.com says stations too often use digital tools to “push” information to the audience without “engaging” them. “You have to offer value,” he says. Among his examples: teaming with new artists you can’t yet include in your playlist who are willing to offer free song downloads via the station website and social media. Attached sponsorships can help drive NTR.

### Talent Mechanic:

“Content is key,” says Mike Stern. “I’m not talking about information. They’re already getting information from everywhere. Be a friend and a companion. Be a filter, give them something they can steal to use themselves, and focus on things that make you react.”

### Relevancy In The Digital Age:

Presslaff Interactive’s Steve Zielonka encourages programmers to “always be collecting data (ABCD)” and use it to engage the audience. “You can’t just send out irrelevant information anymore. They’ll delete you, they’ll mark you as spam and they’ll block you. There are always negative consequences.” Use your tools to conduct surveys, for example. “Ask, ‘Are you a Toby Keith fan? Here’s a chance for you to sing on stage with him.’ Then follow-up with other Toby Keith-related contests. When you send a targeted email, you’ll see your open rates double and triple.”

### Brand Like A Rock Star:

Newcap Radio VP/Programming and Brand Like A Rockstar author Steve Jones says, “Brands are feelings that live in the heart of the customer. Jimmy Buffett’s biggest song wasn’t that big of a hit. ‘Margaritaville’ peaked at No. 7. But at his shows, people are painting their bodies, getting drunk and having a great time because he sells the experience of being a beach-bum.” Make it a point to understand your enemy and let them help define your brand. “Walmart’s slogan ‘Save Money, Live Better’ makes it all about saving money,” Jones explains. “Then Target comes in with ‘Expect More, Pay Less,’ basically saying, ‘You’re above that crap they’re selling at Walmart.’”

### The Gen X Versus Gen Y Conflict:

Jaye Albright closed with thoughts about the population shift ahead of us. Gen Y is estimated at 78 million, much larger than the 40-50 million-strong Gen X preceding it, and it sees the world quite differently. It’s a group that Country programmers will need to adjust to, she says. See how well you relate with Gen Y with the Pew Center’s “How Millennial Are You?” quiz here; read more from Albright here.

Fill In The Blank:

The Republic Nashville team hangs with the Albright & O’Malley & Brenner crew at the latter’s Pre-CRS Client Seminar in Nashville Tuesday (2/26). Pictured (l-r) are RN’s Megan Knutson and Lois Lewis, Mike O’Malley, the label’s Cliff Blake and Mark Gray, Becky Brenner, RN’s Jimmy Harnen, the event’s showcase artist Greg Bates, Jaye Albright, and the label’s Matthew Hargis and Stacy Blythe.
his role with the organization. “Thank you to current and past board members,” Haley said. “I also want to congratulate all of tonight’s inductees and all the award winners. Most of all, I want to thank all of you in the audience, because without your continued support we couldn’t have this great event.”

Gaylon Christie: Former CRB Exec. Dir. Paul Allen introduced the Texas broadcaster, saying, “His early passion for country music as a steel guitar and bass player was eclipsed by his passion for his wife, Jane Christie.” Coming off the road, Christie got into radio.

Christie hailed his opportunity to “get paid as well as I got paid, and have as much fun and pure enjoyment out of doing what I did, playing country music. “I want to thank everybody that has been part of this explosion and acceptance of country music as an art form appreciated around the world. Thank you so much for this moment. I’ve been known to be long winded, but I won’t be tonight. I hope sometime during your life you will feel as thankful and blessed as I feel tonight.”

Bill Poindexter: Veteran Chattanooga radio exec Sammy George brought out the WUSY afternooner, who focused on the opportunities he has been given throughout his career. “Every one of you going into this Hall tonight, someone took a chance on you,” he said.

At radio, it was an afternoon personality at a local radio station. “He’s not very smart, surely I can do this,” Poindexter recalled thinking. “The record business came calling and Charlie Minor took a chance on me. He was killed by a hooker, and if you know Charlie, you know that’s exactly the way he’d have wanted to go. I’m not making this stuff up!”

Others he cited as taking a chance on him included Ed Mascolo, George and the late David Earl Hughes. Discussing the talented people he’s worked with, he turned to his current co-host Melissa “Mo” Turner. “She did traffic and never left the traffic booth. I didn’t know what kind of kidneys this person had. [Bringing her on] is the best thing I’ve ever done in my life. She’s rejuvenated me, given me energy and a new vision.”

Equating her with family, he also thanked his three children, then broke up as he referenced his late wife. “The only thing missing is Sheila. Forty-one years we were married and eight weeks ago she wanted to be with Jesus and there’s a hole in my heart. The very last text she sent me after we found out about this award – and I’ll save it on my cellphone forever – she said, ‘I love you so much and I’m so proud of you.’ I know she is tonight and I thank you so much for this honor.”

Dr. Don Carpenter: PD Tim Roberts offered the induction to the WYCD/Detroit morning man. “I had Tim do my introduction because of all the PDs I’ve had, Tim is probably the only one who hasn’t fired me, thought about firing me or gotten fired for hiring me,” Carpenter said. “The rest of you are in the room tonight.”

His theme revolved around surprise at the honor. “I still haven’t really figured out how I got here, and I’ll be working on that for quite a while,” he said.

“They dragged me to Detroit kicking and screaming to do Talk radio, which failed as it bled red ink in about five months. That was a lot of fun for a two-share. So when they came in they started playing country music. I called my wife and said, ‘We’re screwed.’
But the GM and PD both came in and said, ‘We’re going to need you here.’ I came to love the format. It was the southern rock I grew up with transitioned to country music.”

Further questioning himself as a Hall of Famer, he pointed out, “I made country stars play the trombone. I made them sit on a toilet to be interviewed. I timed interviews with a toaster. I made them eat that toast, autograph it and stick it in a bag so we could give it away later. I asked Billy Ray Cyrus math questions.

“I co-invented the Cleve Francis award. We give it to the country star who gives the absolute worst interview possible. If you don’t know who he is, don’t worry, him and all the other winners also quickly faded into obscurity.

“I’ve done all this and you still want to give me this award? I only have one thing to say, and I’d like to quote Garth Brooks, if I might. Give it to Hootie. Darius Rucker deserves this more than I do.”

Carpenter thanked his GM Debbie Kenyon and Roberts for their support, as well as his wife, friends and other colleagues. “As for all the PDs and GMs who fired me, thought about firing me or got fired for hiring me, I’ll try to catch your shift at the drive-thru and thank you in person.”

Eddie Edwards: WNOE/New Orleans PD Don Gosselin introduced his afternoon personality, who took the stage to “who dat?” chants and promptly moonwalked before playing a few harmonica riffs. And those weren’t his only riffs:

• “That’s great wine. If I’d have had one more glass I’d have come up here as Randy Travis.”
• “When they first told me I was getting this prestigious honor, the first thing I asked was, ‘Can I voice track it?’”
• “People always ask, ‘What made you choose radio?’ Well, look at me. What were my career options?”
• “Along this incredible journey, I have literally made hundreds of dollars. But I have a thousand t-shirts and hats.”
• “The perks are incredible. Every Saturday afternoon for 40 years, I’ve gotten to spend with my favorite car salesman. Eating pizza, always single-topping. I don’t know if you’ve heard, but there’s zero-percent financing for 60 months. On approved credit. And you can come by and spin our prize wheel. But if you’re smoking hot, forget the prize wheel, we’ll give you the prize. Because that’s how we roll.”

Turning semi-serious, he acknowledged his wife of 30 years Marie, three grown children and four-year-old grandson. “He is like a radio savant already. He can talk over intros, he can post-up to the vocal, he knows NextGen and he knows Cool Edit Pro. His name is Blake Edward and I’m proud to announce that this Monday he’s the new morning host on WSIX. They’ve tried everybody else, including myself.”

He closed by professing his devotion to the cause of St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital. “When it’s all said and done, when Mr. Eddie has kicked off his final 10-in-a-row of today’s hot country and your all-time favorites, if I’m remembered for my involvement with St. Jude, it’s good enough for Mr. Eddie.”

Crook & Chase: Tim McGraw did the introduction, citing them among country’s great duos. He told of naming his jackass Charlie, to great laughter. “I named him after Charlie Chase not because of the reasons you might think. Yeah, he was good looking, charming and smart, but he likes my wife a lot better than he likes me.” Painting to Lorianne Crook’s “grace, beauty and intelligence,” McGraw added, “I bet when she was studying Russian and Chinese at Vanderbilt, she never thought she’d team up with Charlie Chase and be inducted into the Country Radio Hall of Fame.”

With a nod to the prior honorees, Chase joked, “There’s been a lot of humor up here. There’s a lot of frightening truth that’s been revealed up here as well.” Crook told of being teamed up with Chase and attending her first radio convention. “The way you party, how crazy you guys are — I didn’t think I could ever fit in, but Charlie has ruined me. I feel right at home.” Chase added, “That first night we pinned some bail money on her lapel and said, ‘Go at it, girl. We’ll catch you later.’”

Crook became emotional recounting a show the duo hosted for then-newcomer Tim McGraw, and how it taught her to focus on the music, the artists and the fans. “We’re not here to fill time,” she said. “We’re not here to entertain. We are here to let other people’s talents shine, to help be a conduit for those talents to the world. It’s not about Crook & Chase, it’s about that artist, country music and the fans.”

Among those thanked were executive producer and Crook’s husband Jim Owens, other family members and their long-tenured staff. Chase thanked his parents for moving next to a radio station: “You could pick up ‘Swap Shop’ on the toaster, that’s how close we were,” he quipped, before thanking his wife of 42 years Karen. He thanked Crook for making “going to work a lot of fun.” And, in closing, he said, “We’d like to congratulate our fellow inductees ... Lorianne and I are honored and blessed to join all the radio professionals in the Country Radio Hall of Fame. Thank you very much.”

CAC

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The Day Ahead

Here’s an all-in look at the official CRS 2013 proceedings for Wednesday, Feb. 27:

9am
Lonestar Showcase
Renaissance Music City Ballroom

9:30am
Opening Ceremonies
Artist & Radio Humanitarians
Mike Culotta, Lois Choolijan (presenters), Big & Rich, Little Big Town (anthem)
NCC 204-205

10:15am
Keynote: Jeff Smulyan
Sponsored by Compassion International
NCC 204-205

11am
CMA Research Presentation
Karen Stump, Brandi Simms (presenters)
NCC 204-205

12pm
UMG Lunch & Performance
Ryman Auditorium

2:30pm
CRS Research Presentation
Larry Rosin (presenter)
Presented by Edison Research
NCC 204-205

4pm
WCRS Live!
The Warren Brothers, Thomas Rhett
Sponsored by Country Aircheck, BMI
NCC 204-205

4pm-2am
Fox Hill/4 Star After Hours Party
One Night Rodeo, Lonestar
Renaissance Ryman Room

4:30pm
Rodeowave Happy Hour
Old Dominion, Phil Vassar, High Valley, Billy Ray Cyrus
Past Perfect (122 3rd Ave. S.)

5pm
Artist Attendee Welcome Reception
NCC Performance Hall

6pm
Chris Janson
Swingin’ Doors Saloon (111 4th Ave. S.)

7pm
Grand Ole Opry
Brad Paisley, Darius Rucker, Dustin Lynch, Scotty McCreery, Vince Gill, Little Big Town, Greg Bates, Josh Turner, Kacey Musgraves
Presented by My Well Being/Humana
NCC Performance Hall

9:30pm
Blackberry Smoke
The Stage (412 Broadway)

9:30pm
That ’70s Showcase presented by Warner Music Nashville
aVenue (120 3rd Ave. S.)

10pm
HitShop Poker Tournament
Renaissance Fisk Room

1st Annual CRS Late Night Poker Tournament

DON’T BACK UP, STACK UP

LAST NIGHT’S RESULTS
1. Dan Vanlandingham
2. Jeff Elliott
3. Glenn Forrester

OFFICIAL WINE OF TOURNAMENT
DREAMING TREE

OFFICIAL BEER OF TOURNAMENT
Starr Hill

PERFORMANCES BY
WESTON BURT NIGHTLY

GRAND PRIZE WINNER WILL WIN
1 WEEK CARIBBEAN VACATION