



**Gold Rush.** A CBS Records "Goldmine" party in Nashville salutes four of the label's gilded acts. Pictured, from left, are Roy Wunsch, senior VP, CBS Records/Nashville; Ricky Van Shelton; Vern Gosdin; Charlie Daniels (who also received a platinum honor for his "Devil Went Down To Georgia" single); and Rodney Crowell. (Photo: Alan L. Mayor)

## Jackson To Artists: Support Social Causes Rev. Speaks To Music Biz Folk, Politicians In Nashville

BY EDWARD MORRIS

NASHVILLE—Speaking to a group of political, music business, and academic figures here May 13, the Rev. Jesse Jackson pleaded for musical artists to involve themselves in a crusade for social justice. "Artists, I appeal to you," Jackson said. "You must come forward and think new thoughts with a value higher than conventional politics."

In Nashville to address the 1990 graduating class of Fisk Univ., Jackson was earlier the guest of honor at a reception hosted by singer/songwriter Bonnie Hill, who had met the Rainbow Coalition chief at the recent Farm Aid IV concert. Hill was formerly a background

singer for the Allman Brothers Band, J.J. Cale, and Conway Twitty, and has had songs recorded by Billy Joe Royal, Gail Davies, and Robin Lee.

Hill says she is trying to interest members of the fundamentally conservative country music business in the social and environmental concerns Jackson embraces.

Among the more than 50 guests attending the reception were Steve Popovich, A&R rep-at-large for MCA Records and former head of Mercury/PolyGram's Nashville office; Dandalion, music director of WRKZ Harrisburg, Pa.; John Seigenthaler, USA Today editorial director and publisher of the Tennessean; Dr. Henry Ponder, president of Fisk Univ.; Randall "Tex" Cobb, actor and former boxer; Pam Lewis, co-manager of country singer Garth Brooks; John J. Hooker, former Tennessee gubernatorial candidate and adviser to Jackson in his 1988

presidential campaign; and David Thomas and Mark Kibble of Take

Jackson told the crowd that the link between blacks and country music was longstanding. He noted that he had listened faithfully to such Grand Ole Opry stars as Grandpa Jones, Roy Acuff, Minnie Pearl, and Red Foley when he was growing up in Greenville, S.C. "The most traumatic experience I had" in those days, he said, "was hearing that Red Foley had had a heart attack. Our No. 1 song was 'Peace In The Valley,'" a 1951 hit for Foley.

Asserting that music transcends political approaches to social problems, Jackson cited the importance of Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr. and Dean Martin performing in the South during the Civil Rights era. Said Jackson, "They gave us by their presence the hope of what America should look like... There must be no isolation and polarization in the body of music."

## Russian Reader Treasures His Billboard Back In The U.S., Dirt Band Readies Album, Tour

**FROM RUSSIA, WITH LOVE:** Just when the music business scene was getting to be a jumble of stickering skirmishes, configuration battles, and record-company/radio wars, along comes a letter to Nashville Scene from a music fan deep in the heart of Russia—and suddenly we realize how much we have to be thankful for. Here are quotes from the letter that was painstakingly handwritten in English: "I am Yury Chistyakov. I'm from the Soviet Union. And excuse me please for my very bad English but I hope that you can understand my letter. Today, for the first time in my life I took in hand the Billboard magazine, although much heard about it. [The first thing] to strike me was the high quality of the graphics. In our country I have never seen anything like it. I should like to express a hope that sometime in the U.S.S.R. [there will] appear a Soviet Billboard..."



by Gerry Wood

taking the "business" out of "music." We need that from time to time. Knowing that there are people like you out there for us to someday discover makes the idea of the oncoming "global village" less overwhelming and much more positive. Good luck in getting the music and news that you desire, and good fortune in your life.

(Note: Nashville Scene is preparing a Billboard CARE package of past issues, CDs, albums, and music-related promotion items to be sent to Yury Chistyakov in Russia. Those wishing to contribute, please send items to Billboard, P.O. Box 24970, Nashville, Tenn. 37202.)



**DOWN TO EARTH:** The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band is preparing for a major summer tour of the U.S., Canada, Europe, and Japan. June 26 has been set as the release date for the Dirt Band's new album, "The Rest Of The

Dream." The MCA album features songs written by the group as well as some from such writers as Bruce Springsteen, Ron Davies, and John Hiatt. Produced by the Dirt Band and Randy Scruggs, the release marks the 23rd album in the group's 24-year career... Garth Brooks has been recording his second album with Allen Reynolds producing. It's due for August release... Janis Ian will headline two shows at the Bottom Line in New York, June 29. The shows, "A Tribute To The Bluebird Cafe," will also feature Ashley Cleveland, Kevin Welch, and Gary Nicholson. All four performers frequently appear at Nashville's famed Bluebird Cafe, one of the most successful launching pads for singer and song in the entire country. Ian, along with Minnie Pearl, was honorary co-chairperson of AIDSwalk, a recent pledge walk that raised money for hospices and care centers for AIDS patients... Townes Van Zandt is on tour with the Cowboy Junkies throughout the U.S. and Canada. He has just completed work on an anthology for Tomato Records, due for summer release... Buddy Mondlock has been writing with Ian, Brooks, and Chuck Cannon. Mondlock and Brooks co-wrote "Every Now And Then"—the title cut of the new Randy Van Warmer album. A Cannon update: Since his recent appearance in Nashville Scene's Talent Watch, Cannon, a talented writer and performer, has had four of his songs put on hold with major artists. Stayed tuned...

**SIGNINGS:** McBride & the Ride to MCA Records, the Ken Stilts Co. for management, and Triad Artists for bookings... Hank Thompson to WorldClass Talent for career representation... Becky Hobbs to Curb Records.

## TNN's Paul Corbin Tapped As New ICMBA Confab Keynoter

NASHVILLE—Additional speakers have been confirmed for the International Country Music Buyers Assn.'s 20th annual meeting and seminar here, June 1-4. The event will be based at the Hermitage Hotel, although several sessions will be held throughout the city.

Paul Corbin, director of programming for The Nashville Network, will replace Tennessee Senator Albert Gore as keynote speaker.

Slated to speak on "Trends For The '90s" are Jimmy Bowen, president of Capitol Records/Nashville, and Joe Galante, senior VP and GM of RCA Records (speaking on

recording-industry trends); T. Wilson Sparks, executive director of the Georgia National Fair And Agricenter (fairs); Sonny Anderson, director of talent booking for Disneyland, Disney World, and Tokyo Disneyland (amusement parks); David Smith, Allied Specialty Insurance (insurance); Al Antee, president of the International Assn. Of Auditorium Managers (buildings); and Bernard Thomas, founder of Thomas Carnival (carnivals).

Additional information on the meeting and seminar is available from Dean Unkefer, ICMBA's executive director, at 615-321-5130.



**Roger And Out.** As Nashville Capitol Records president Jimmy Bowen watches, Roger Whittaker blows out the candles on his customized birthday cake at Capitol's Nashville office. He was in Nashville playing the Tennessee Performing Arts Center as part of a tour supporting his Capitol/Nashville album "I'd Fall In Love Tonight." (Photo: Beth Gwinn)