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WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR THE 44th ANNUAL ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

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FANS NAME CARRIE UNDERWOOD ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

LAS VEGAS (April 5, 2009) – Winners have been announced for the **44th ANNUAL ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS**, a star-studded ceremony broadcast LIVE tonight on the CBS Television Network from MGM GRAND in Las Vegas. More than half a million fans voted in the Entertainer of the Year category, and named **Carrie Underwood** for the evening’s biggest honor.

Underwood is only the 7th female to take the award in the 39 year history of this category; previous winners include Loretta Lynn in 1975, Dolly Parton in 1977, Barbara Mandrell in 1980, Reba McEntire in 1994, Shania Twain in 1999 and most recently Dixie Chicks in 2000. 2009 was the second year that fans chose the winner of the Entertainer of the Year category.

Underwood is now eligible for the Triple Crown Award thanks to her wins for the categories of Entertainer of the Year, Top Female Vocalist and Top New Female Vocalist, which has been won by only one other female artist – Barbara Mandrell in 2004. Underwood also won Top Female Vocalist – her third win in the category.

Brad Paisley won Top Male Vocalist and **Carrie Underwood** won Top Female Vocalist, both for the third consecutive year in a row; **Sugarland** won Top Vocal Duo and **Rascal Flatts** continues to lead the category for their win of Top Vocal Group.

THE ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC also honored **Jennifer Nettles** and **Taylor Swift** with the **Crystal Milestone Award**. This award is given to artists or industry leaders to commemorate a specific, remarkable achievement.

Jennifer Nettles reached new heights of her own by sweeping the ACM Award, CMA Award and Grammy Award for country songwriting with Sugarland’s hit “Stay.” She is the first woman to solo-write the Academy’s Song of the Year since 1972, when Donna Fargo penned “The Happiest Girl in the Whole U.S.A.”

Taylor Swift is a multimedia sensation, selling more than nine million digital downloads in 2008, and surpassed six million in sales for her first two studio albums on Big Machine Records. Swift was the #1 selling artist, in all formats and all genres in 2008, and is the first female to have five top 10 singles off her debut album, *Taylor Swift*.

Also this evening, **Leann Rimes** was honored with the 8th annual **ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC / The Home Depot Humanitarian Award**, which salutes an artist or group in the country music industry who is committed to serving others, has a generosity of spirit and a dedication to helping build the dreams of those in need.

Rimes was selected by a special blue-ribbon committee comprised of executives in the country music industry as well as local and national philanthropic leaders for her ongoing community service and charitable giving of her time and talent.

As the award's winner, Rimes will have a community playground built in a city of her choice through the efforts of The Home Depot and KaBOOM!, a national nonprofit organization that envisions a great place to play within walking distance of every child in America.

Following is the list of winners in the 16 categories voted on by the membership (excluding the Entertainer of the Year and Top New Artist categories, which were voted on by fans online):

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

CARRIE UNDERWOOD

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

FEARLESS

TAYLOR SWIFT (BIG MACHINE)

PRODUCED BY: SCOTT BORCHETTA, NATHAN CHAPMAN, TAYLOR SWIFT

TOP MALE VOCALIST

BRAD PAISLEY

TOP FEMALE VOCALIST

CARRIE UNDERWOOD

TOP VOCAL GROUP

RASCAL FLATTS

TOP VOCAL DUO

SUGARLAND

TOP NEW ARTIST

JULIANNE HOUGH

TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST

JAKE OWEN

TOP NEW FEMALE VOCALIST

JULIANNE HOUGH

TOP NEW VOCAL DUO OR GROUP

ZAC BROWN BAND

SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR [Award to Artist(s)/Producer(s)/Record Company]

YOU'RE GONNA MISS THIS
TRACE ADKINS, PRODUCED BY FRANK ROGERS
CAPITOL NASHVILLE

SONG OF THE YEAR [Award to Composer(s)/Publisher(s)/Artist(s)]

IN COLOR
JAMEY JOHNSON
COMPOSERS: JAMEY JOHNSON, LEE THOMAS MILLER, JAMES OTTO
PUBLISHERS: BIG GASSED HITTIES (BMI), ELDOROTTO MUSIC PUBLISHING (BMI),
EMI BLACKWOOD MUSIC, INC., LUCKY THUMB MUSIC (BMI), NEW SONG OF SEA
GAYLE (BMI), NOAH'S LITTLE BOAT MUSIC (BMI)

VIDEO OF THE YEAR [Award To Producer(s)/Director(s)/Artist(s)]

WAITIN' ON A WOMAN
BRAD PAISLEY
PRODUCER: MARK KALBFELD, JIM SHEA
DIRECTOR: JIM SHEA, PETER TILDEN

VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR [Award to Artist(s)/Producer(s)/Record Company]

START A BAND
BRAD PAISLEY DUET WITH KEITH URBAN
PRODUCED BY: FRANK ROGERS
ARISTA NASHVILLE

CRYSTAL MILESTONE AWARD

TAYLOR SWIFT
JENNIFER NETTLES

THE HOME DEPOT HUMANITARIAN AWARD

LEANN RIMES

FAST FACTS ON THIS YEAR'S AWARDS:

- This is **Reba McEntire's** eleventh year hosting the **Academy of Country Music Awards**.
- **Carrie Underwood's** win of **Entertainer of the Year** makes her the 7th female to take award in the 39 years of that awards history. Previous winners are Loretta Lynn (1975), Dolly Parton (1977), Barbara Mandrell (1980), Reba McEntire (1994), Shania Twain (1999) and Dixie Chicks (2000).
- **Carrie Underwood** is now eligible for the Triple Crown Award thanks to her wins for the categories of Entertainer of the Year, Top Female Vocalist and Top New Female Vocalist, which has been won by only one other female artist – Barbara Mandrell in 2004.
- **Brad Paisley** and **Taylor Swift** led the wins with three awards each. Brad Paisley won Top Male Vocalist, Video of the Year and Vocal Event of the Year. Taylor Swift won the Crystal Milestone Award and Album of the Year for which she earned two awards as artist and producer.
- **Brad Paisley** now holds a career total of 12 ACM Awards.
- This is the first time **Jamey Johnson** has won as an artist. He previously won an Academy of Country Music Award in 2006 as a writer for Song of the Year for "Give It Away," which was recorded by George Strait.
- First-time nominee **Julianne Hough** won two awards including Top New Female Vocalist and Top New Artist – both chosen by her fans via online voting.

Getty Images is the official photographer for the **ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS** and photos can be accessed at www.gettyimages.com.

About the Academy of Country Music Awards

The 44th ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS is dedicated to honoring and showcasing the biggest names and emerging talent in the country music industry. The show is produced for television by **dick clark productions** and will be broadcast LIVE from the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas Sunday, April 5, 2009 at 8:00 PM live ET/delayed PT on the CBS Television Network. Orly Adelson and R.A. Clark are executive producers, Barry Adelman is producer and Bob Bardo is executive in charge of production.

For more information on the **ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC** and the **ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS**, please visit www.acmcountry.com.

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