



jsmith@bncpr.com

**PRESS
CONTACT:**
Julie Smith / Enjoli Duval
BNC
Office: 310.854.4800
eduval@bncpr.com

**DICK CLARK, THE OAK RIDGE BOYS, BRENDA LEE AND MORE
ANNOUNCED AS OFF-CAMERA WINNERS
FOR THE 43rd ANNUAL ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS**

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Special Awards, Industry Awards, Radio Awards and MBI Honorees Announced

ENCINO, CA (May 7, 2008) – Today the Academy of Country Music is announcing the winners of awards that will not be televised during the live telecast of the **43rd ANNUAL ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS**. The ceremony, which honors country music's top talent as well as the industry's hottest emerging talent, will be broadcast **LIVE** from MGM GRAND in Las Vegas on Sunday, May 18th, 2008 at 8:00 PM ET/PT on the CBS Television Network.

The Academy will present the Special Awards and MBI Awards to recipients at a special event in Nashville later this year, date to be announced. The Industry and Radio Awards will be presented during the **New Artists' Party for a Cause** on Saturday May 17, in Las Vegas.

SPECIAL AWARDS

The Academy of Country Music Special Awards are voted on by the ACM Board of Directors and are awarded during years where the Board of Directors feels there are clear and deserving candidates. Honorees include:

Jim Reeves International Award -- Dick Clark

Dick Clark has been selected as the recipient of the **Jim Reeves International Award**, which is presented to an individual for outstanding contributions to the acceptance of country music throughout the world. In 1979, Clark joined forces with the Academy of Country Music to bring the show to NBC and then later to CBS. With his guidance, the Academy of Country Music Awards broadcast has continued to grow with every decade. Clark was more than just a producer, he hosted the show four times, starting in 1969 and following with stints in 1971-1973. In the eighties and nineties, he was a fixture backstage doing live interviews with winners. Just as American Bandstand was a rite of passage for up-and-coming pop singers, talking to Dick Clark backstage at the ACM Awards on live network television was a mark of success for country acts.

Clark has also been welcoming to country acts on his other productions. Dick Clark's New Years Rockin' Eve and the American Music Awards have featured country acts prominently since their inceptions in 1972 and 1973, respectively, and American Bandstand also offered exposure to artists such as Alabama, Patsy Cline, Johnny Cash, Tanya Tucker and Conway Twitty.

Past recipients of the Jim Reeves International Award include Merv Griffin, Roy Clark, Garth Brooks, Charlie Nagatani and Buck Owens, among others.

Poet's Award -- Bill Anderson and Fred Rose

Bill Anderson and **Fred Rose** have been selected to receive the first-ever Poet's Award, which honors songwriters for outstanding musical and/or lyrical contributions throughout their careers in the field of country music.

Over the course of 50 years, "**Whisperin' Bill**" **Anderson** has written songs for some of the biggest names in country music, ranging from Ray Price to George Strait – and racking up 37 Top 10 country hits as a performer in his own right. In 1962, Anderson perched at No. 1 for seven weeks with his own song, "Mama Sang a Song" and repeated that remarkable achievement in 1963 with "Still." Contemporary artists such as Vince Gill, Kenny Chesney, Brad Paisley and George Strait have all recorded songs penned by Anderson, who won his first Academy of Country Music award in 2007 for co-writing Strait's hit track "Give It Away."

Following the success of writing songs for Hollywood's singing cowboys, **Fred Rose** co-founded Nashville's first music publishing house, and nurtured the career of a young Hank Williams. Both men were charter inductees into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1961. As a songwriter, Rose scored a Western-inspired hit, "We'll Rest at the End of the Trail" in 1936. He penned songs for legendary artists Gene Autry and Roy Rogers, landing his most famous hit posthumously with Willie Nelson's 1975 recording of "Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain." Rose is an inductee of both the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame and the Songwriters Hall of Fame. In 1942, he and Roy Acuff founded Acuff-Rose Music, still one of the most successful publishing companies in Nashville today.

Cliffie Stone Pioneer Award -- Brenda Lee, The Oak Ridge Boys, Conway Twitty, and Porter Wagoner

Brenda Lee, The Oak Ridge Boys, Conway Twitty, and Porter Wagoner have been chosen to receive the Cliffie Stone Pioneer Award honoring individuals who are pioneers in the country music genre. Past recipients of the Cliffie Stone Pioneer Award include Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, Bob Wills, Tex Ritter, Charlie Pride, Loretta Lynn, Charlie Daniels, Hank Williams, Sr., Merle Haggard, George Jones, Dolly Parton and Alabama, among others.

Thanks to an impressive string of pop hits in the 1950s and 1960s, **Brenda Lee** remains one of the best-selling female artists in history, and she introduced Nashville's music to audiences throughout the world. She made her first chart appearance in 1957 with "One Step at a Time," debuting on the Grand Ole Opry that same year and earning the nickname "Little Miss Dynamite" from the success of her following hit song "Dynamite." Lee expanded the horizons of country music with successful international tours and recordings in multiple languages, becoming best-known for her beloved classic "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree." She joined the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1997 and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2002, becoming the only woman in history to be honored by both institutions.

Although their roots were in gospel, the **Oak Ridge Boys** ultimately scored enormous success in country music with their signature four-part harmonies and crowd-pleasing concerts. In 1978, the Academy of Country Music awarded them with two trophies – Vocal Group of the Year and Album of the Year. Their career momentum continued for another decade, with an astonishing 17 No. 1 hits, including "I'll Be True to You," "Leaving Louisiana in the Broad Daylight" (an early cut for Rodney Crowell) and "Trying to Love Two Women." Their most famous song "Elvira" appeared in 1981 and won the Academy of Country Music's Single Record of the Year as well as a Grammy for country vocal group. Multiple other No. 1 hits followed, giving them chart-topping songs for three consecutive decades. The group is still actively touring today.

In 1970, **Conway Twitty** set the astonishing pace for the decade with "Hello Darlin'" one of the most recognizable singles in country music history. He later teamed with Loretta Lynn and the Academy of

Country Music awarded their partnership with four trophies for Top Vocal Group in 1971, 1974-1976. In 1975, he won two more Awards for Album of the Year and Top Male Vocalist. Before he died in 1993, Twitty had scored a record breaking 40 number one hits, either as a solo artist or with his close friend Loretta Lynn.

Porter Wagoner's smiling face and sparkling jackets made country fans feel at home during his 50 years on the Grand Ole Opry. A recognized country music artist, he reached number one on the country chart with the song "A Satisfied Mind" in 1955. When television came into homes in the sixties, he greeted them with his own show and most famous singing partner, Dolly Parton, who famously was inspired to write one of her greatest hits, "I Will Always Love You" about Wagoner. He died in 2007.

MBI (MUSICIANS, BAND, INSTRUMENTAL) AWARDS:

TOP GUITARIST OF THE YEAR

Dann Huff

TOP PIANO/KEYBOARD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Matt Rollings

TOP BASS PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Michael Rhodes

TOP PERCUSSIONIST/DRUMMER OF THE YEAR

Shannon Forrest

TOP STEEL GUITAR PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Paul Franklin

TOP FIDDLE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Stuart Duncan

TOP SPECIALTY INSTRUMENT(S) PLAYER

Jerry Douglas

AUDIO ENGINEER OF THE YEAR

Justin Niebank

PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

Mark Wright

INDUSTRY AWARDS:

NIGHTCLUB OF THE YEAR

Bill Bob's, Ft. Worth, TX

CASINO OF THE YEAR

Mohegan Sun Arena, Uncasville, CT

DON ROMEO TALENT BUYER OF THE YEAR

Gil Cunningham, Neste Event Marketing

PROMOTER OF THE YEAR

Brian O'Connell, Livenation

VENUE OF THE YEAR

Nissan Pavilion, Bristow, VA

RADIO AWARDS:

NATIONAL ON-AIR PERSONALITY

The Big D and Bubba Show

The Lia Show

ON-AIR PERSONALITY - MAJOR MARKET

Gerry House & The house Foundation, WSIX- FM, Nashville, TN

ON-AIR PERSONALITY - MEDIUM MARKET

Valleri St. John, WWGR-FM, Ft. Meyers, FL

ON-AIR PERSONALITY - SMALL MARKET

Gator & The Styckman, WGSQ- FM, Cookeville, TN

RADIO STATION - MAJOR MARKET

WMIL- FM, Milwaukee, WI

RADIO STATION - MEDIUM MARKET

WUSY- FM, Chattanooga, TN

RADIO STATION - SMALL MARKET

WGSQ- FM, Cookeville, TN

The winners of the MBI, Industry and Radio Awards are voted based on Academy of Country Music ballots in their respected category.

About the Academy of Country Music

Founded in 1964, the **ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC** is an artist and industry-driven organization, that provides the financial resources to ensure the on-going philanthropic work of its Charitable Fund. The Academy of Country Music Charitable Fund promotes and supports music education and humanitarian programs that transform the human spirit. Through its charitable donations, the ACMCF works towards promoting Learning Through Music and Healing Through Music. The Academy is comprised of more than 4,500 professional members and more than 40,000 associate members and is headquartered in Encino, Calif.

About the Academy of Country Music Awards

The 43rd **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, May 18, 2008 at 8:00 PM live ET/delayed PT on the CBS Television Network. R.A. Clark is executive producer, 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. For more information on the **ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC CHARITABLE FUND**, please visit www.acmcf.org.

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