

ACM Awards – 2011 Edition

Was it really 11 years ago already that we got to attend the 2000 Academy of Country Music Awards in Los Angeles? Newcomer Brad Paisley won that year for Best New Male Vocalist, and he's now a country music veteran who took the Top Male Vocalist prize in 2011. Someday, I'd like to attend the recording of another live awards show. Nothing beats the excitement in the air and participating in a live tv show taping where anything goes. And never in one place will you see so many super performances by a variety of outstanding performers – both from country music and also outside the genre. But my 4.5 kids keep me grounded, and I don't travel as much as I would or as much as I used to. So until the day when I can get back to a live country music awards show taping (and I will be in no hurry to go to the ACMs until they move it out of Vegas!), I will enjoy watching and voting along at home.

This year was a super show; I had a nice time watching it last night. And a surprise awaited me at the end...

Some highlights:

– Brad Paisley opens with a performance, and then he's joined by none other than – ALABAMA!! They were so awesome; this number really got my country blood pumping!

– Some unlikely duos performing this year:

Unlikely duet #1 – Jennifer Nettles from Sugarland and pop star Rihanna. Their duet made for an interesting performance. Not my favorite kind of music, but they sounded good.

Unlikely duet #2 – Country music sweetheart Carrie Underwood screaming alongside Aerosmith frontman turned American Idol judge Steven Tyler. The first song wasn't great; it was more for Tyler than Underwood, in fact, I thought it a waste of her

lovely voice. But their "Walk This Way" duet was toe-tappin' fun!

Unlikely duet #3 – Zac Brown Band and James Taylor. I'm really starting to enjoy the harmonies of the Zac Brown Band, and their performance with James Taylor tonight was thoroughly enjoyable!

– Probably the first time I've cried while watching the ACM awards – Darius Rucker's song backed by a chorus from the Lifting Lives music camp was incredibly uplifting and awe-inspiring! I loved every minute of it!

Overall, a wonderful show! Except one thing – where the heck was Rascall Flatts?!?

And oh yeah, that surprise at the end – Taylor Swift won Entertainer of the Year. No surprise there; if I had paid attention when I filled out my fan ballot and realized that the Entertainer award was fan-chosen, I would have picked Swift in a heartbeat. But I spaced and chose Miranda Lambert (still beat Hubby on the ballot 7-3, just sayin') for some reason. The real surprise came when they announced the nominees for Entertainer of the Year, and I actually found myself rooting for Taylor Swift – what was going on? I've never been a fan of Swift's music, and I hadn't voted for her, so what gives? My 6-year-old daughter was enjoying the show with me, and every time Taylor Swift came on or her name was mentioned, Sammie got SO excited. So I told her I would let her know when "the big award" was coming on, and you should have seen her face when Taylor Swift won – she cheered! It was adorable, and I cried. I cried at the ACM awards twice last night, what is wrong with me? Oh yeah – pregnancy will do that to you. Probably a good thing that I was watching from the safety of my own home.

CMA Time Already!!

It's that time of year again! Dust off your cowboy hat, put it on, and get ready for a rootin' tootin' time watching the 44th annual Country Music Association Awards!!



I'm going to try something different this year – I'm not going to watch it.

Not that I don't want to, because I really do, especially when I [go to the website](#) and see all the stuff about live streaming comments and things like that. It wasn't too many years ago when I made my own blog of live streaming comments, and I had fun doing it. But I won't be able to watch the CMAs this year because I have something much more important to do: I lead a small group of 6th grade girls at our church's youth group on Wednesday nights. I'm not about to put a tv show above those girls, and I certainly wouldn't be prepared to tell them the reason for my absence was because of the CMA awards – that would not be acceptable. If one of my own kids was sick and I stayed home for that reason (as it happened last year on CMA night), that would be a different story, but it's a great thing that everyone is healthy enough for me to have to miss one of my two most favorite tv events of the year (not including a year the Chicago Cubs would make it into MLB playoffs, but that hasn't been anything I need to concern

myself with in quite some time, Grrrr – my other favorite tv event is the other big country music awards show, the ACMs in the spring).

If you watch the CMA awards, HAVE FUN!! I'm hoping that whatever recording device my husband has in mind to record these will work – we often have bad luck with recording devices. Part of me will miss being a part of the event, reading the live commentary and providing my own, and part of me was ready to move on anyway – seems I've become increasingly disconnected with today's country music scene (now I just sound old). I'll still give my picks, but they are guesses at best because I really haven't been following the genre lately. I didn't even know until I looked last night to find out what time the awards came on that Gwyneth Paltrow, the movie star, has a hit song on country radio right now. I'm actually more into Christian music than ever before; there is some pretty good stuff out there. And listening to Christian music gives me a chance to practice my dances I have on Sunday mornings with the 1st graders ☐ But all of that leaves less time to listen and keep up with country music.

But what the hey, I've had fun trying to pick the winners every year so here goes. My picks are in **green** with random thoughts in *itallics*:

♦♦**Entertainer of the Year – Brad Paisley**, Lady Antebellum, Keith Urban, Miranda Lambert, Zac Brown Band (*What?!? No Kenny Chesney?? That's great news for those of us who aren't big fans... now, who to choose to take his place?*)

Female Vocalist – Miranda Lambert, Martina McBride, Reba McEntire, **Taylor Swift**, Carrie Underwood (*So great to see 2 of my favorites (Martina and Reba) back in the game! I don't think Martina will win, but I SO WANTED to choose her!! Carrie Underwood is great too – I'm not a big fan of Taylor Swift, but unfortunately, I think she will win this one*)

♦♦Male Vocalist – Dierks Bentley, Brad Paisley, Blake Shelton, George Strait, Keith Urban

New Artist – Luke Bryan, Easton Corbin, Jerrod Nieman, Chris Young, Zac Brown Band (*Explain to me how Zac Brown Band is still considered “new”? They have some great music and have proven themselves, as I would think being a nominee for Entertainer of the Year would prove!*)

Vocal Group – Lady Antebellum, Little Big Town, Rascal Flatts, The Band Perry, Zac Brown Band (*Let’s be honest, I think Lady Antebellum will take it. But I just love the music of Rascal Flatts, and can’t bear to vote against them. I’m not trying to get 2 votes in – officially, my pick is Rascal Flatts*)

Vocal Duo – Brooks and Dunn, Joey + Rory, Montgomery Gentry, Steel Magnolia, Sugarland (*The last year for Brooks and Dunn, and I don’t think they’ll pull a GARTH Brooks and pull out of retirement, so this powerful duo gets my vote – they are so talented, so they deserve it anyway. I was lucky enough to see them in concert 3 times, and they did not disappoint once!*)

♦♦Single – A Little More Country Than That by Easton Corbin, Hillbilly Bone by Blake Shelton featuring Trace Adkins, Need You Now by Lady Antebellum, The House That Built Me by Miranda Lambert, White Liar by Miranda Lambert

♦♦Song – A Little More Country Than That, Need You Now, The House That Built Me, Toes, White Liar

♦♦Musical Event – Bad Angel by Dierks Bentley feat. Miranda Lambert & Jamey Johnson, Can’t You See by Zac Brown Band feat. Kid Rock, Hillbilly Bone by Blake Shelton feat. Trace Adkins, I’m Alive by Kenny Chesney with Dave Matthews, Till The End by Alan Jackson with Lee Ann Womack

Music Video – Hillbilly Bone by Blake Shelton feat. Trace

Adkins, Need You Now Lady Antebellum, **The House That Built Me** by **Miranda Lambert**, **Water** by **Brad Paisley**, White Liar by Miranda Lambert

Musician – Paul Franklin – Steel Guitar, Dann Huff – Guitar, Brent Mason – Guitar, **Mac McAnally** – **Guitar**, **Randy Scruggs** – **Guitar**

Hmm, 5 correct of the 11 I guessed... not too great. Oh well, it was a good show and fun to watch!

2010 Academy Of Country Music Awards

Today is one of those days that come only twice a year – one of the two annual country music awards shows. I've been super excited all week, well, for months actually; even if a few of the nominees are anonymous to me. Country music is changing, and I just don't have the time to keep up with who the new artists are and what their sound is like. Consider that my disclaimer for doing badly on my picks, haha. Here is the list for the major nominees with my picks in green. I will change them to red as the show airs if I get them wrong, but I'm being optimistic by putting them in green – as winners are announced, I will change the category color to red for wrong and green for correct. Good luck to everyone, guessers and nominees alike! Whatever happens, I know I will have a great time watching as always!!

Entertainer of the Year:

• Kenny Chesney • Toby Keith • Brad Paisley • George Strait • **Taylor Swift** • **Carrie Underwood** • Keith Urban • Zac Brown Band
(Now that hurt. I'm not a big fan of Taylor Swift, but she

won Entertainer of the Year at last fall's CMA awards, plus she is favored to win by industry experts Reba McEntire and Blake Shelton. Unfortunately, this is not about who I **want** to win, but who I **think** will win.)

Top Male Vocalist:

- Kenny Chesney • Brad Paisley • Darius Rucker • George Strait
- Keith Urban

Top Female Vocalist:

- Miranda Lambert • Reba McEntire • Taylor Swift • Carrie Underwood • Lee Ann Womack

Top Vocal Group:

- Lady Antebellum • Little Big Town • Randy Rogers Band • Rascal Flatts • Zac Brown Band

(Another ouch factor pick – I love Rascal Flatts and want to see them win – they deserve to win; they're awesome! But Lady Antebellum has so much buzz, so again, logic prevails for this pick. I actually hope I'm wrong here, but only if Rascal Flatts takes the prize.)

Top Vocal Duo:

- Brooks & Dunn • Joey + Rory • Montgomery Gentry • Steel Magnolia • Sugarland

Top New Solo Vocalist:

- Luke Bryan • Jamey Johnson • Chris Young

Top New Vocal Duo:

- Bomshel • Joey + Rory • Steel Magnolia

Top new Vocal Group:

- Eli Young Band • Gloriana • The Lost Trailers

Album of the Year:

- "American Saturday Night" – Brad Paisley • "Lady Antebellum" – Lady Antebellum • "Play On" – Carrie Underwood • "Revolution" – Miranda Lambert • "The Foundation" – Zac Brown

Band

Single Record:

• “Need You Now” – Lady Antebellum • “People Are Crazy” – Billy Currington • “Red Light” – David Nail • “Toes” – Zac Brown Band • “White Liar” – Miranda Lambert

Song:

• “Cowboy Casanova” – Carrie Underwood • “Need You Now” – Lady Antebellum • “People Are Crazy” – Billy Currington • “White Liar” – Miranda Lambert • “You Belong With Me” – Taylor Swift

Video:

• “Boots On” – Randy Houser • “Need You Now” – Lady Antebellum • “Welcome To The Future” – Brad Paisley • “White Liar” – Miranda Lambert • “You Belong With Me” – Taylor Swift

Vocal Event:

• “Hillbilly Bone” – Blake Shelton featuring Trace Adkins • “Honky Tonk Stomp” – Brooks & Dunn featuring Billy Gibbons • “I Told You So” – Carrie Underwood featuring Randy Travis • “I’m Alive” – Kenny Chesney with Dave Matthews • “Seeing Stars” – Jack Ingram featuring Patty Griffin

TOTAL SCORE: 5/13 – Not my best, but slightly better than I thought I would do, I guess... FUN SHOW, and that’s all that matters! Don’t think I’ll be winning the \$1,000 from CBS.com though!

You Delivered My Pizza, But Please Don’t Watch Me Eat It

We had a great weekend, even though the weather on Sunday was

horrid – so cold my Christmas teddy bear got frozen to the window! Friday night was an all-night work session to finish up the planning and organization of our community theater's awards show, which is where we went Saturday night. But first on Saturday afternoon, it was a birthday celebration for our oldest who turned 9 on Sunday with a MUCH anticipated visit from family who live out of state. We had a great time catching up and watching the kids open their birthday and Christmas presents, and the kids got to have a sleepover in the hotel with Grandma, Papa, and Uncle Bud while we went to the awards show. The awards show was lots of fun, as always, and I got to watch 2 very good friends win much-deserved achievement awards. Congratulations, guys!

It was lots of fun putting the show together, even if we didn't have much time to do so due to last minute notice from the theater. It was fun and also rewarding to watch the individual skits, shorts, songs, and awards presentations start as ideas on paper and then watch when they came together as a whole. It's also a fun excuse to get everyone together, and it's always nice to see long-lost busy friends who are unable to get together but for this one night. It might be fun to produce the awards show again next year, but then again, I'd love to have my best friend sitting beside me to watch them because I missed him this year – even though he did make an excellent host. If there are a few individuals in the theater community who have a hard time because they don't win awards, then let them have their hard time. There is talk of cancelling this awards show, and I would be very sad if that happened. It's definitely a whole ton of fun for most of us, and I really don't think we should let a few individuals ruin it for everyone. That's all I'm going to say on the subject for now, but expect to hear more from me once this very topic is discussed at the next production board meeting.

Sunday we had major Grandma-let-down, and because we didn't want our oldest daughter to be depressed on her actual

birthday, we let her have a friend sleep over. During football season, we usually set aside Sundays for low-key stuff, like watching football, reading newspapers, and blogging, but we always end up with crazy kids so it's never exactly low-key. But I don't usually cook dinner on Sundays, and today we ordered pizza. Five minutes after the pizza was delivered, we noticed the delivery guy was still parked out front and that he was standing outside of his car. Turns out, he had locked himself out of the car, and so we offered him a warm place to wait for his ride. Since the temperature outside has been hovering around 0° all day, with wind chills near -20°, he gratefully accepted. And he stood in our front hall for almost 30 minutes! If he were outside, he would have frozen to death. But it did feel a little awkward eating the pizza he delivered while he stood there. We offered him a seat in the living room, but he opted to stand in the entryway, and I'm kind of glad because at least we were then eating out of his view. Our 2-year-old kept asking about "the pizza guy", and then he became scary to her – "I scared pizza guy" – probably cuz he was just standing there, doing nothing, and she's never seen anyone do that in our front hall before. But finally his ride came, thank goodness, and he left. I wonder if he gets paid for the time he was standing in our house? I wonder who pays for the gas that was used in his running car while he was waiting for his ride? Should we have offered him some pizza? It was kind of a weird situation, but it does make for interesting blog fodder. Of course it had to happen on the coldest day of the year – that guy has a new story to tell!

Spring Ahead... to Country Music Award Time!

Actually, it's time for the Academy of Country Music awards (ACM's), which are totally different than the Country Music Association's awards (CMA's), but somehow *Spring Ahead to the Academy of Country Music Awards* just didn't make such a great blog title. For you country music fans out there, you know that spring and fall are the awesome times of year for country music awards. We get 2 great awards shows, and coming up in May are the ACM awards – the nominations were announced last week, that's why I get to write about this now. I was lucky enough to attend this show live one time in 2000. It was TOTALLY AWESOME – I'd LOVE to go back... something like that (and lots of liquor) just might get me on an airplane again... yeah right. Anyway, Dolly Parton hosted, and Dick Clark ran around the stage during the breaks fretting over this and that and everything in between. Winners' acceptance speeches got cut off, and there was the general glitz and glam of any L.A. awards show – only we were there! And talk about a GREAT concert! Getting to see like, 15 top country music performers LIVE, singing only their hits was unbeatable. And I learned a lot too because I had never been to the taping of a live tv event before. Did you know that they have "stand-ins" ready in case anyone who is seated down in front has to leave for the bathroom or anything else? They pay models to dress up and get ready in case they need to sit in say, Wynonna Judd's seat so it's not empty when they show the audience on tv if Wy needs a potty break (that actually happened!). So anyway, this year I will be watching the ACM's from the comfort of my couch; hopefully without interruptions from kids (should change the name of this post to *Yeah, Right*).

I can't remember if it's the ACM's or the CMA's where they'll have a live performer, and then that person will be nominated

for the next award, so after their performance they'll be waiting backstage, and every time they end up winning the award! I wish they'd make it a little less obvious! We like to fill out our own ballots and make a guessing game out of our picks for winners, and this type of format makes that too easy! All you have to do is figure out the order of award presentations, figure out the schedule of performers, and *Viola!* You've won the bet! I'll let you know come CMA awards time which awards show does this, unless they've (hopefully) changed things by now.

Here are the nominees this year, enjoy the show!

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

Kenny Chesney

Brad Paisley

Rascal Flatts

George Strait Keith Urban

TOP MALE VOCALIST

Rodney Atkins

Kenny Chesney

Brad Paisley

George Strait

Keith Urban

TOP FEMALE VOCALIST

Miranda Lambert

Martina McBride

LeAnn Rimes

Taylor Swift

Carrie Underwood

TOP VOCAL GROUP

Diamond Rio

Eagles

Emerson Drive

Little Big Town

Rascal Flatts

TOP VOCAL DUO

Big & Rich

Brooks & Dunn

Halfway To Hazard

Montgomery Gentry

Sugarland

TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST

Luke Bryan

Jack Ingram

Jake Owen

TOP NEW FEMALE VOCALIST

Sarah Buxton

Kellie Pickler

Taylor Swift

TOP NEW DUO OR VOCAL GROUP

Carolina Rain

Lady Antebellum

The Wreckers

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

5th Gear – Brad Paisley (Arista Nashville) Produced by Frank Rogers

Crazy Ex-Girlfriend – Miranda Lambert (Columbia) Produced by Frank Liddell, Mike Wrucke

Just Who I Am: Poets & Pirates – Kenny Chesney (BNA) Produced by Buddy Cannon, Kenny Chesney

If You're Going Through Hell – Rodney Atkins (Curb) Produced by Rodney Atkins, Ted Hewitt

Taylor Swift – Taylor Swift (Big Machine) Produced by Scott Borchetta, Nathan Chapman # 6 Produced by Robert Ellis Orrall

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

Don't Blink – Kenny Chesney, Produced by Buddy Cannon, Kenny Chesney BNA

Famous In A Small Town – Miranda Lambert, Produced by Frank Liddell, Mike Wrucke Columbia

Lost In This Moment – Big & Rich, Produced by Big Kenny, John Rich – Warner Bros/WRN

Stay – Sugarland, Produced by Kristian Bush, Byron Gallimore,
Jennifer Nettles Mercury

Watching Airplanes – Gary Allan, Produced by Gary Allan , Mark
Wright MCA Nashville

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

Don't Blink – Kenny Chesney – Writers: Casey Beathard, Chris
Wallin_Publishers: Lavender Zoo Music (BMI), Mama's Dream
Music (ASCAP), Sony/ATV Acuff Rose (BMI), WB Music Corp.
(ASCAP)

Lost In This Moment – Big & Rich – Writers: Keith Anderson,
Rodney Clawson, John Rich Publishers: EMI April Music, Inc.
(ASCAP), Romeo Cowboy Music (ASCAP), WB MusicCorp. (ASCAP),
Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp. (BMI), Writer's Extreme
Music (BMI)

Moments – Emerson Drive – Writers: Dave Berg, Annie Tate, Sam
Tate Publishers: Gravitron (SESAC), WB Music Corp. (ASCAP)

Watching You – Rodney Atkins – Writers: Rodney Atkins, Steve
Dean, Brian White Publishers: Bethar Music (BMI), Mike Curb
Music (BMI), Multisongs (SESAC), Songs From The White House
(SESAC)

Stay – Sugarland – Writer: Jennifer Nettles – Publishers:
Jennifer Nettles Publishing (ASCAP)

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

Don't Blink – Kenny Chesney – Producer: Tacklebox Films
Director: Shaun Silva

Lost In This Moment – Big & Rich Producer: Big Kenny, Steve
Lamar, Marc Oswald Director: Robert Deaton and George Flanigen

Online – Brad Paisley – Producer: Frames Per Second –
Director: Jason Alexander

Stay – Sugarland – Producer: Kristian Bush, Byron Gallimore,
Jennifer Nettles – Director: Shaun Silva

Watching You – Rodney Atkins – Producer: Broken Poet
Production – Director: Eric Welch

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

Because Of You – Reba McEntire Duet With Kelly Clarkson –
Produced by Tony Brown, Reba McEntire MCA Nashville

Find Out Who Your Friends Are – Tracy Lawrence With Tim McGraw
and Kenny Chesney – Produced by Julian King, Tracy Lawrence –
Rocky Comfort/C05

Shiftwork – Kenny Chesney Duet With George Strait – Produced
by Buddy Cannon, Kenny Chesney BNA

Till We Ain't Strangers Anymore – Bon Jovi Featuring LeAnn
Rimes – Produced by Dann Huff – Mercury

What You Give Away –Vince Gill With Sheryl Crow – Produced by
Vince Gill, John Hobbs, Justin Niebank – MCA Nashville