

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, **Rascall 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 Rascall Flatts, and can’t bear to vote against them. I’m not trying to get 2 votes in – officially, my pick is Rascall 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!

THAT Time Of Year!!

The list of Academy Country Music Award nominees was announced today! And while I'm not entirely in agreement with some of them, that still does not dampen my excitement for the actual awards show – now held in April, which is even earlier than its past May ceremonies. I'm going to wait to give my picks for winners until we get closer to the show – I need some more time to listen to the artists, their songs, and the buzz surrounding them on country radio. But I can say that I'm not a big fan of Lady Antebellum, a group who leads the pack in number of nominations. Uh, oh... perhaps country music is leaving me behind since I strongly prefer classic country and those modern artists who are seemingly fading into the background such as Alan Jackson, Garth Brooks, Martina McBride, Tim McGraw, Faith Hill, George Strait, Reba McEntire, Brooks and Dunn, and Rascal Flatts... I do like Carrie Underwood, but I'm not so crazy for Taylor Swift (cute name though!). All that being said, I still enjoy the annual extravaganza immensely; especially the live performances. I am especially excited that unlike the ACM awards autumn counterpart, the CMA awards which are held on Wednesday nights, the spring ACM awards show is held on Sunday evenings – which means that I don't have to ditch my youth group students, haha! Here's the list of nominees; we will find out who wins on April 18, 2010!

Entertainer of the Year:

• Kenny Chesney • Toby Keith • Brad Paisley • George Strait • Taylor Swift • Carrie Underwood • Keith Urban • Zac Brown Band

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

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

Country Music Award Time!!!

It’s time for the CMAs, and I’m making just a quick little post to share my guesses – we’ll see how I do at the end of the night. I know, I know I whined and cried about missing the show this year, but my family came down with H1N1 and we’re under a self-imposed quarantine. I think the kids need to get to bed early – for their health, of course ☹ – and I get to watch the show live after all! Believe me, I would so much rather be at youth group tonight, despite all my whining, I swear! This is an awful sickness, and I would so much rather not have anyone in my family have to have it... but I don’t want to dwell on that now – we’ve been living this illness since Friday night, so it’s time to break from that now a little bit – CMA time!!!!

My picks – I’ll try to update throughout the night to see how

I did. Correct in green, wrong in red.

TOTAL: 4/11

Entertainer of the Year:

Taylor Swift, winner

Kenny Chesney

Female Vocalist:

Taylor Swift, winner

Carrie Underwood

Male Vocalist:

Brad Paisley

Vocal Duo:

Sugarland, winner

Brooks and Dunn

Vocal Group:

Lady Antebellum, winner

Rascal Flatts

New Artist:

Darius Rucker, winner

Jake Owen

Album:

Taylor Swift's Fearless

Single:

I Run To You – Lady Antebellum

Song:

In Color – Jamey Johnson, winner

I Told You So – Randy Travis

Event:

Start a Band

I Told You So

Music Video: Taylor Swift

NOTES: Awesome show so far – great performances, and I love the hosting duo of Brad Paisley and Carrie Underwood. Their little duets are entertaining, funny, and even pleasant music to listen to! I especially appreciate the ditty about the swine flu – priceless, and it really hits home right now! Carrie Underwood has an **amazing** voice! Thank you American Idol for gifting her to country music!

I love the infusion of the classic country: Mamas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to be Cowboys and especially the Zac Brown Band's rendition of Devil Went Down to Georgia (on speed!) was EXCELLENT!!

Brooks and Dunn's final CMA performance (retiring) with ZZ Top is a highlight!

Still enjoying the show, but what the heck happened to the awesome hosting duo of Paisley and Underwood? Seems like they haven't been onstage together for a while. And when they do reappear together, let's can the jokes about Brad checking out Carrie's looks behind the back of his wife, [Kimberly Williams-Paisley](#) – there's just been too many of those jokes, and they're stale.

What could be better than Martina McBride singing When Country Wasn't Cool with Charlie McCoy on harmonica as a tribute to Barbara Mandrell to welcome her into the Country Music Hall of Fame?!? That was GREAT! That reminds me of an addition I must make to a fellow tangents.org blog about my favorite Christmas special – The Mandrell Sisters Christmas!

Oh man... the show started out the best CMA awards show EVER! But then it slowly went downhill... until the final award – Taylor Swift?!? You've got to be kidding. She is very talented and has done a wonder for attracting teen and tween girls to the country music genre, but... What about the rest of us?!? Let's face it, she did have a heck of a time hitting some of those high notes... Well, I'm not going to act like

Kanye West. Taylor Swift deserves her time in the spotlight, even if it did ruin the entire flow of the CMAs...

Oh, and judging by my total guesses correct, it's obvious how much I'm allowed to listen to country music radio these days... For me, it's mostly KidsSongs and videos from the library (lately Shelley Duvall's Fairy Tale Theater) in the car. Whatever – no one could have seen that Taylor Swift Entertainer of the Year coming no matter what you spend your day listening to. I don't care if she IS the youngest CMA nominee for Entertainer of the Year ever – in my opinion, she should have had a lot more ground to cover before she won an award like that! The show started out great, but I have to say, I am left disappointed, and not only by my terrible score

□

The Drama...

I'm going on my third month as a youth group leader, and while I always enjoy myself at church on Wednesday nights, in recent weeks I've also felt a strange kind of dread. I couldn't put my finger on it until last night. There was a huge drama in our small group of 7th grade girls involving a friendship between two of the girls. The situation made for a lot of tension and was also a huge distraction from our lesson. After group, I mentioned this to the other 7th grade girls leader and the youth pastor, and neither seemed surprised, especially given the dramatic nature of a specific girl in my group – their words, not mine. I came home around 9 pm last night with 4 of my own little kids to put to bed while feeling entirely emotionally drained. I realized that even though I enjoy being a youth group leader for the most part, that strange sense of dread that I feel in the beginning of the

week has to do with bracing myself for the weekly Wednesday night drama. The more I thought about it, the more I realized that the other 7th grade girls leader's attitude has greatly improved since the beginning of the year. Also, a few weeks ago, two students were transferred into my group because their friends were in my group – so now I have the entire clique in my group, and I get to oversee and facilitate all of their various factions. Wonderful. I have a theory that the other leader was very discouraged and emotionally drained by these girls and their drama by the end of last year, and so when I showed up, I was given the clique and their dramatics for my group. Ah, the joys of being the newbie. I'm happy to help, and I'm glad the other leader seems much happier, but I really need to find a way to encourage these girls to shift their priorities a little bit.

Complicating the matter is the fact that we meet in the youth pastor's office, so it's really hard to supervise everyone at once, especially when there is drama. I have girls wanting to poke through his drawers, lie under his computer desk, read his post-it notes and memos, and to sit on his desk. I'm starting to feel more like a babysitter than a small group leader, and the girls in my group are turning 13; it's not like they're little kids (which is what I'm dealing with all day and at night AFTER youth group).

Don't get me wrong; I do enjoy it; I'm just really frustrated right now. I really like the fact that it's something I get to do with my husband (the small group part is only about 40 minutes. For the rest of the two hours, we get to do things together), and I like hanging out with the other leaders and the girls when they're not acting crazy. I'm just saying that those times are getting few and far between. I need to find a way to focus the kids and also to get our group back to concentrating on the weekly lessons. We can still have fun while we do that, but step #1 will probably be to get us out of the pastor's office – I don't even know where to start if

not there.

When I signed up for this gig, I failed to realize that aside from the long-shot of the Chicago Cubs making the World Series, my two favorite yearly live televised events – the Country Music Awards and the Academy of Country Music Awards – air on Wednesday nights. I cannot express how much I enjoy watching these shows, and it's kind of like an athletic event – it's not really the same to watch them after the fact. One year, I even did a live blog while watching one of these awards shows, and it was hectic, but a lot of fun. Tempted as I am to call in sick to youth group next week, I could not look seven 7th graders in the eyes and tell them that I missed our group to stay home and watch the Country Music Awards, especially after the major drama that was this week. So next week, I will actually be avoiding cnn.com and the media from late Wednesday night until whenever I will get a chance to watch the recorded CMAs – which might not be until the weekend!!! Yes, I'm pouting, but I'm going to put my best face forward and just do it. But I reserve the right to complain about it all I want on my blog!!!!

Country's Biggest Night!

After my extremely busy weekend (more about that in my next post!), I'm just not up to the task of doing a live blog about the Academy of Country Music Awards like I did last year. I had a lot of fun doing it at that time, but this year we were lucky enough to share our awards experience with friends at our house, and I want to be a good host (well, as good as I can be with both eyes and ears on the awards show!). It's bad enough that I had to practically kick out people who were here for our voluntary monthly organizational meetings so I could

watch the awards show when it started at 8 – hehe. I was accused of “chomping at the bit”, to get to the awards show – but then again, I did sacrifice and miss the entire red carpet coverage... so I guess a point was made – I WAS chomping at the bit, so to speak!

Watch the show we did, and it was great – although I didn’t win the tally for the most awards guessed ahead of time. My picks for winners of the most popular categories are following in **blue** with the winners in **bold** (the ones I got right are in **bold blue** and my commentary is in *italics*. I’ll let you know how our guests and I did at the end:

Entertainer of the Year

- **Kenny Chesney**
- Brad Paisley
- George Strait
- **Carrie Underwood**
- Keith Urban

Big shocker here, for real. Kenny has won this one for the past 4 years straight, so you can’t blame me for voting the way I did – SHOCKER he didn’t win tonight!

Top Male Vocalist

- Kenny Chesney
- Toby Keith
- **Brad Paisley**
- George Strait
- Keith Urban

Top Female Vocalist

- Miranda Lambert
- Heidi Newfield
- Taylor Swift
- **Carrie Underwood**
- Lee Ann Womack

Top Vocal Group

- Lady Antebellum
- Little Big Town
- **Rascal Flatts**
- Randy Rogers Band
- The Lost Trailers

A given – Rascal Flatts has a ton of talent and are one of my favorite bands!

Top Vocal Duo

- Big & Rich
- Brooks & Dunn
- Joey + Rory
- Montgomery Gentry
- **Sugarland**

Album of the Year

- Carnival Ride – Carrie Underwood
- Back When I Knew It All – Montgomery Gentry
- **Fearless – Taylor Swift**
- That Lonesome Song – Jamey Johnson
- Troubadour – George Strait

So there you have it. I didn't do so well, compared to past my past performances guessing on country music awards shows – I got 4/10 correct. But we had a great time watching... some highlights include Trace Adkins' performance with the West Point Glee Club, very moving, especially because the performance was introduced by a young veteran in a wheelchair. Another highlight, Carrie Underwood's humongous dress during her resurrection of Randy Travis' "I Told You So". (notice they didn't show her getting on or off stage in that dress – think she was "snapped" into it? That thing was HUGE!!!)... But I guess I'm a country fan-child of the 80's and 90's, sigh. The awards shows during that time period were so much more exciting to me because of the awesome music that was performed, unlike tonight. Just another sign that I'm getting old, I guess, since I much preferred our friends' conversation

tonight to the live performances... just nothing special on the modern country artists' part, I guess...

But congrats to those who won, and it was a great show to watch and predict, even if I didn't do so well. Until the CMA's in the fall – maybe I will do a LIVE broadcast for that one – we'll see!

CMA TIME!

It's fall – time for the CMA Awards already! If you don't know that CMA is short for Country Music Association, then you have my permission to skip this blog post – it will only bore you anyway!

For other country music fans like me, this is one of our two biggest nights of the year – the Superbowl for country fans. I get really excited, and unlike other awards shows like the Oscars, I don't like to ~~tape~~ (I am a child of the '80's) record country music awards, and I especially don't like to miss anything – the live performances are some of the best parts! I always play along and try to choose the winners, but I don't think my picks are going to be that strong this year because I'm listening to country music radio less than ever – I enjoy talking to my kids in the car, or they're watching dvd's. At home I'm usually listening to Dora, the DoodleBops or Noggin. But the CMA Awards show will be a blast to watch, as always, and there are only two nights like this a year – cross your fingers for me that my kids decide to act like human beings tonight and let me watch the show. My picks for the winners, however uneducated they may be, are made obvious by my *comments in itallics*:

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

Kenny Chesney – *ok, so he doesn't dominate this awards show like the ACMs, but I'm going with him anyway – just because he is not one of my favorite singers and I'm not expecting the show to go well for me*

Brad Paisley

Sugarland

George Strait

Keith Urban

Top Female Vocalist

Alison Krauss

Miranda Lambert

Martina McBride

Taylor Swift

Carrie Underwood – *I called her from one of her first appearances in American Idol. I said – she's going to win Idol, but she has a voice for country. Now she's established herself as one of the best female country singers out there today.*

Top Male Vocalist

Kenny Chesney

Alan Jackson – *my favorite of those nominated, but what's he done lately?*

Brad Paisley

George Strait

Keith Urban – *my pick to win – tough call between Keith and Brad, but you gotta congratulate a guy for a successful stint in rehab*

Vocal Duo of the Year

Big & Rich

Brooks & Dunn

Montgomery Gentry

Sugarland – *their unique sound will win them many awards – just one question: who else is in Sugarland besides Jennifer Nettles?*

The Wreckers

Vocal Group of the Year

Eagles

Emerson Drive

Lady Antebellum

Little Big Town

Rascal Flatts – *tried and true, these guys have talent. So do Brooks and Dunn, but they haven't come out with anything lately*

New Artist Of The Year

Jason Aldean

Rodney Atkins

Lady Antebellum

James Otto

Kellie Pickler – *another American Idol reject—crossover*

Album Of The Year [Award to Artist(s)/Producer(s)/Record Company]

Carrie Underwood's Carnival Ride Produced by Mark Bright

Brooks & Dunn's Cowboy Town Produced by Tony Brown, Ronnie Dunn and Kix Brooks

Alan Jackson's Good Time Produced by Keith Stegall

Kenny Chesney's Just Who I Am: Poets & Pirates Produced by Buddy Cannon and Kenny Chesney

George Strait's Troubadour Produced by Tony Brown and George Strait – *gotta give him something*

Single Of The Year [Awarded to artist and producer]

"Don't Blink" Kenny Chesney Produced by Buddy Cannon & Kenny Chesney BNA Records

"Gunpowder & Lead" Miranda Lambert Produced by Frank Liddell & Mike Wrucke Columbia Nashville

"I Saw God Today" George Strait Produced by Tony Brown & George Strait MCA Nashville

"Stay" Sugarland Produced by Byron Gallimore, Kristian Bush and Jennifer NettlesMercury Nashville – *not really sure of the difference between single and song of the year, but Stay has to win one of these. I'm going with Single, I guess.*

"You're Gonna Miss This" Trace Adkins Produced by Frank Rogers Capitol Nashville

Song Of The Year [Awarded to songwriter and primary publisher]

"Good Time" Alan Jackson EMI-April Music/Tri-Angels Music

"I Saw God Today" Rodney Clawson/Monty Criswell/Wade Kirby Big Red Toe/Extremely Loud Music/Steel Wheels Music/Blind Mule Music – *like I said, I don't think Strait will walk away with nothing tonight – just hope I didn't reverse the single and song of the year!*

"Letter To Me" Brad Paisley EMI-April Music/New Sea Gayle Music

"Stay" Jennifer Nettles Jennifer Nettles Publishing

"You're Gonna Miss This" Lee Thomas Miller/Ashley Gorley EMI Blackwood Music/New Songs of Sea Gayle/Noah's Little Boat Music/Songs of Combustion Music

Musical Event Of The Year [Awarded to each Artist]

"Another Try" – Josh Turner featuring Trisha Yearwood MCA Nashville

"Every Other Weekend" – Reba McEntire and Kenny Chesney MCA Nashville

"Gone Gone Gone" – Robert Plant and Alison Krauss Rounder Records

"Life In A Northern Town" – Sugarland featuring Little Big Town and Jake Owen Mercury Nashville

"Shiftwork" – Kenny Chesney (duet with George Strait) BNA Records – *What does 'vocal event' mean anyway? By the looks of how they wrote the nominees, I guess 'vocal event' means 'when record labels lease their stars'. Chesney always wins big at awards shows, but I personally prefer Jimmy Buffet's beachcomber style over Kenny Chesney's knock-off version. I'm guessing the Country Music Association does not agree.*

Music Video Of The Year [Awarded to artist and director]

Don't Blink Kenny Chesney Directed by Shaun Silva

Good Time Alan Jackson Directed by Trey Fanjoy

Stay Sugarland Directed by Shaun Silva – *everyone knows by now that Jennifer Nettles cried real tears during the filming of this video, is it enough to win her the award? My vote is yes, but maybe it's just wishful thinking.*

Waitin' On a Woman Brad Paisley Directed by Jim Shea

You're Gonna Miss This Trace Adkins Directed by Peter Zavadil

Musician Of The Year

Jerry Douglas, Dobro – Drums

Paul Franklin – Steel Guitar

Dann Huff – Guitar – *will win. But then again, this is the blind lottery award for viewers. Like I know who any of these people are, so I just picked the name that jumped out at me, and Dan Huff it was.*

Brent Mason – Guitar

Mac McAnally – Guitar

For sure, a great time will be had by all. I might update my blog with winners as I watch tonight. And after reviewing my reasons for my picks for tonight's awards, it needs to be said that it's been way too long since some classic artists (and my personal favorites) came out with anything noteworthy! Alan Jackson ~~Garth Brooks~~ and Martina McBride, you know who you are!