



2013 AWARDS VOTING CRITERIA

AWARD SHOW VOTING PROCEDURES

(EFFECTIVE FOR 2013 AWARDS SHOW)

The following are the official criteria and voting procedures used by the Academy of Country Music (ACM) to determine its annual award winners. The criteria and voting procedures are set forth by the ACM Board of Directors ("the Board") in accordance with the bylaws, and may be amended from time to time as the Board deems appropriate in the best interest of country music. Any disputes shall be resolved by the Chairman of the Board in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

VOTING PROCEDURE

The voting procedure shall comply with all legal requirements and any requirements of any network airing the awards show. Disputes as to voting procedure shall be resolved by a majority of the Board. Ballots will be tabulated by an independent accounting firm. ACM members will vote via the Internet for all award categories. The voting eligibility period is December 1st, 2011 to November 28th, 2012 for all awards, with the exception of the Radio Awards where the voting eligibility period January 1st, 2012 – December 7th, 2012.

NOMINATION ROUND:

The professional membership will submit one nomination in each of the following categories: Entertainer of the Year, Male Vocalist, Female Vocalist, Vocal Group, Vocal Duo, Album of the Year, Single Record of the Year, Song of the Year and Vocal Event of the Year. The professional membership will submit (2) two nominations in the following categories to determine the (3) three nominees in each respective category: New Male Vocalist, New Female Vocalist and New Vocal Duo or Group (see criteria on page 2).

The top 20 vote getters will go before a review committee to ensure the entry meets all eligibility criteria (see "criteria" below). The top 20 vote getters must also have achieved a minimum of 2% or more of the vote within the respective category.

SECOND ROUND:

In the second round, up to 2 (two) votes may be cast in each category for the category to be counted. For New Male Vocalist, New Female Vocalist and New Vocal Duo or Group, only (1) one vote will be cast to determine the winners in these categories. The 5 (five) nominees receiving the most votes in each category will be placed on the third ballot. In the case of a tie, the additional nominees will be included on the third ballot.

FINAL ROUND:

In the final round, only 1 (one) vote will be cast in each category. The nominee receiving the most votes in each category will be deemed the winner. In the case of a tie, all winners will receive an award.

ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES VOTED ON THE THIRD BALLOT

A Blue Ribbon Committee will submit 5 (five) nominees to be approved by the Board for the third and final ballot in the following categories; Song of the Year, Video of the Year, Casino of the Year, Nightclub of the Year, Venue of the Year, Don Romeo Talent Buyer of the Year and Promoter of the Year, based on the criteria for each category (see "criteria" below). The nominee receiving the most votes in each category will be deemed the winner. In the case of a tie, all winners will receive an award.

MBI BALLOT (Musician-Bandleader-Instrumentalist)

The MBI ballot is voted on by only those members classified in the Artist-Entertainer/Musician-Bandleader-Instrumentalist category, and the Producer-Engineer-Studio Manager *subcategory* [contained within the Affiliated category].

A Blue Ribbon Committee will submit 5 (five) nominees to be approved by the Board for the MBI ballot in the following categories; Guitar, Piano/Keyboards, Bass, Percussionist/Drummer, Steel Guitar, Fiddle, Specialty Instrument(s), Producer and Audio Engineer. The nominee receiving the most votes in each category will be deemed the winner. In the case of a tie, all winners will receive an award.

SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR BALLOT

The Songwriter of the Year Award is voted on by only those members classified in the following categories; Artist-Entertainer/Musician-Bandleader-Instrumentalist, Composer, Music Publisher/PRO, Record Company, and the Producer/Engineer/Studio Manager *subcategory* [contained within the Affiliated category]. A Blue Ribbon Committee will

submit 5 (five) nominees to be approved by the Board for the third and final ballot. The nominee receiving the most votes in the category will be deemed the winner. In the case of a tie, all winners will receive an award.

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to the individual, duo or group who showed the most overall success in the country music industry during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, success at radio, sales of pre-recorded music, success of music videos, vocal performances, live concert ticket sales, artistic merit, appearances on television, appearances in films, songwriting, success in digital media, and contributions to the country music industry. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The final nominees are voted on by the ACM professional membership with the winner being determined by a combination of votes from the professional membership of the ACM and fan voting (online and/or text).

MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding individual male vocalist in the country music industry during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, success at radio, sales of pre-recorded music, success in digital media, live concert ticket sales and vocal performances. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the ACM professional membership.

FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding individual female vocalist in the country music industry during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, success at radio, sales of pre-recorded music, success in digital media, live concert ticket sales and vocal performances. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the ACM professional membership.

VOCAL DUO OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding duo featuring at least one vocalist in the country music industry during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, success at radio, sales of pre-recorded music, success in digital media, live concert ticket sales and vocal performances. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the ACM professional membership.

In the event that the Board of Directors determines that there are not enough nominees in this category in any particular year, this category may be merged with the Vocal Group by the Board, and shall be called Vocal Duo or Group.

VOCAL GROUP OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding group featuring at least one vocalist in the country music industry during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, success at radio, sales of pre-recorded music, success in digital media, live concert ticket sales and vocal performances. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the ACM professional membership.

In the event that the Board of Directors determines that there are not enough nominees in this category in any particular year, this category may be merged with the Vocal Duo by the Board, and shall be called Vocal Duo or Group.

NEW MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding individual male vocalist in the country music industry who gains either initial fame or significantly greater recognition through his efforts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The artist must have success in digital media, charted a single in the Top 40 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts; and/or sold 100,000 album units reflected in Nielsen SoundScan during the qualifying period. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The final nominees are voted on by the ACM professional membership with the winner being determined by a combination of votes from the ACM professional membership and fan voting (online and/or text).

Any solo artist that has sold 500,000 copies of a previously released album (with general exclusions of specialty albums, such as seasonal or live recordings) according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for the New Male Vocalist category. Additionally, solo artists that previously served (or are currently serving) as lead vocalists for, or otherwise fronted duos or groups that have sold 500,000 copies of previously released albums, according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for the New Male Vocalist category.

An artist may be a nominee two times in a three-year period. If an artist is a winner in this category his first year on the ballot, he will not be eligible in this category again.

In the event that the Board of Directors determines that there are not enough nominees in this category in any particular year, this category may be merged with the New Female Vocalist by the Board, and shall be called New Solo Vocalist.

NEW FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding individual female vocalist in the country music industry who gains either initial fame or significantly greater recognition through her efforts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The artist must have success in digital media, charted a single in the Top 40 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts; and/or sold 100,000 album units reflected in Nielsen SoundScan during the qualifying period. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The final nominees are voted on by the ACM professional membership with the winner being determined by a combination of votes from the ACM professional membership and fan voting (online and/or text).

Any solo artist that has sold 500,000 copies of a previously released album (with general exclusions of specialty albums, such as seasonal or live recordings) according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for the New Female Vocalist category. Additionally, solo artists that previously served (or are currently serving) as lead vocalists for, or otherwise fronted duos or groups that have sold 500,000 copies of previously released albums, according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for the New Female Vocalist category.

An artist may be a nominee two times in a three-year period. If an artist is a winner in this category her first year on the ballot, she will not be eligible in this category again.

In the event that the Board of Directors determines that there are not enough nominees in this category in any particular year, this category may be merged with the New Male Vocalist by the Board, and shall be called New Solo Vocalist.

NEW VOCAL DUO OR GROUP OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding duo or group featuring a vocalist (herein called "duo or group") in the country music industry who gains either initial fame or significantly greater recognition through their efforts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The duo or group must have success in digital media, charted a single in the Top 40 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts; and/or sold 100,000 album units reflected in Nielsen SoundScan during the qualifying period. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The final nominees are voted on by the ACM professional membership with the winner being determined by a combination of votes from the ACM professional membership and fan voting (online and/or text).

Any duo or group that has sold 500,000 copies of a previously released album (with general exclusions of specialty albums, such as seasonal or live recordings) according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for the New Vocal Duo or Group category. Additionally, solo artists that previously served (or are currently serving) as lead vocalists for, or otherwise fronted duos or groups that have sold 500,000 copies of previously released albums, according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for the New Vocal Duo or Group category.

A duo or group may be a nominee two times in a three-year period. If the duo or group is a winner in this category their first year on the ballot, they will not be eligible in this category again.

In the event that the Board of Directors determines that there are not enough nominees in this category in any particular year, this category may be merged with the New Vocal Group by the Board, and shall be called New Vocal Duo or Group.

NEW ARTIST OF THE YEAR

The Board of Directors may elect to give out this award from time to time, in lieu of, or in addition to, the New Male Vocalist, New Female Vocalist and New Vocal Duo or Group, **or** New Solo Artist, New Vocal Duo and New Vocal Group by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

This award is presented to an outstanding male vocalist, female vocalist, duo or group in the country music industry who gains either initial fame or significantly greater recognition through their efforts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The artist(s) must have success in digital media, charted a single in the Top 40 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts; and/or sold 100,000 album units reflected in Nielsen SoundScan during the qualifying period. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The winners in the (3) three individual newcomer categories (New Male Vocalist, New Female Vocalist and New Vocal Duo or Group of the Year) shall be deemed nominees for New Artist of the Year and will compete for the overall title. The New Artist of the Year winner is determined by a combination of votes from the ACM professional membership and fan voting (online and/or text).

Any solo artist that has sold 500,000 copies of a previously released album (with general exclusions of specialty albums, such as seasonal or live recordings) according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for this category. Additionally, solo artists that previously served (or are currently serving) as lead vocalists for, or otherwise fronted duos or groups that have sold 500,000 copies of previously released albums, according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for the this category.

An artist may be a nominee two times in a three-year period. If an artist is a winner in this category their first year on the ballot, they will not be eligible in this category again.

TRIPLE CROWN

This award is presented to an artist, duo or group upon receiving the New Male Vocalist *or* New Female Vocalist *or* Vocal Duo *or* Group **and** Male Vocalist *or* Female Vocalist *or* Vocal Duo *or* Group **and** Entertainer of the Year awards.

The Board decides when and where the recipient will be honored with this award (not always an annual award).

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to the artist(s), producer(s) and record company of an outstanding country music album during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the ACM professional membership.

Any album released during the eligibility period and achieving its largest cumulative sales impact in the Nielsen Sounds can Country Albums chart is eligible. If the album was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its largest cumulative sales impact during the eligibility period, it is eligible unless it has won previously in this category.

Any album, which contains more than 3 (three) previously released full-length selections including, but not limited to, "best of" or "greatest hits" albums, is not eligible.

SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to the artist(s), producer(s) and record company of an outstanding country music single during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, success at radio, record sales, success in digital media and impact of the single on consumers and the country music industry. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the ACM professional membership.

Any single released and achieving its highest charted position on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts during the eligibility period is eligible. If the single was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its highest charted position during the eligibility period, it is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category.

SONG OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to the songwriter(s), publisher(s), and artist(s) of an outstanding country music song during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, success at radio, record sales, success in digital media and impact of the song on consumers and the country music industry. A Blue Ribbon Panel of 1 (one) representative from each Membership Class, 1 (one) representative from each Performing Rights Organization (PRO), and 3 (three) established songwriters will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the final ballot once approved by the Board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the ACM professional membership.

Any song that received its highest charted position on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts during the eligibility period is eligible, unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category.

SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an individual known predominately as a songwriter, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges composed of songwriters, publishers, producers, and performing rights organization (PRO) representatives. The Panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the final ballot once approved by the Board. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, a commercially released single crediting the songwriter that charted on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th.

If the single was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its highest charted position during the eligibility period, it is eligible, unless it appeared on a final ACM ballot. The winner shall be determined by a vote of ACM members classified in the following categories; Artist-Entertainer/Musician-Bandleader-Instrumentalist, Composer, Music Publisher/PRO, Record Company, and the Producer/Engineer/Studio Manager *subcategory* [contained within the Affiliated category].

VIDEO OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to the producer(s), director(s) and artist(s) performing in an outstanding country music video during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. Emphasis shall be placed on creativity, production, visual appeal and impact on consumers and the country music industry. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the ACM professional membership.

A Blue Ribbon Panel of professionals from the video/production industry will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the final ballot once approved by the Board. The Panel will choose the final nominees from a pool of eligible videos submitted by record labels, as well as any other country music video that the panel deems worthy for consideration based on its artistic merit. If the video was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its biggest impact during the eligibility period, it is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category.

VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to the artist(s), producer(s) and record company of an outstanding country music vocal event single record during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, success at radio, record sales, success in digital media, video exposure and artistic merit of the single. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The winner shall be determined by a vote of the ACM professional membership.

Any vocal event single record released and achieving its highest charted position in Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts during the eligibility period is eligible. If the vocal event single record was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its highest charted position during the eligibility period, it is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category. To be eligible, the single must be a collaboration between two or more artists who do not normally perform together and are credited on the track listing.

In the event that the Board of Directors determines that there are not enough nominees in this category in any particular year, this category may not be awarded.

OFF-CAMERA AWARDS

INDUSTRY AWARDS

VOTED ON BY THE PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP OF THE ACM IN THE THIRD AND FINAL ROUND OF VOTING

CASINO OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding casino, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The casino must have bought or promoted at least 5 (five) country concerts/dates during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th, be in good standing with all agents and help promote country ticket sales. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category.

NIGHTCLUB OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding country music nightclub, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The nightclub must have bought or promoted at least 10 (ten) country concerts/dates during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th, be in good standing with all agents and help promote country ticket sales. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category.

VENUE OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding venue, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The venue must have bought or promoted at least 5 (five) country concerts/dates during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th, be in good standing with all agents and help promote country ticket sales. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category.

DON ROMEO TALENT BUYER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding talent buyer, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The buyer must have bought at least 20 (twenty) country concerts/dates during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th, be in good standing with all agents and help promote country ticket sales. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category.

PROMOTER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding promoter, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The promoter must have promoted at least 20 (twenty) country concerts/dates during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th, be in good standing with all agents and help promote country ticket sales. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category.

MUSICIAN – BANDLEADER - INSTRUMENTALIST AWARDS (MBI)

VOTED ON BY MEMBERS CLASSIFIED IN THE ARTIST-ENTERTAINER/MBI CATEGORY, AND THE PRODUCER-ENGINEER-STUDIO MANAGER SUBCATEGORY [CONTAINED WITHIN THE AFFILIATED CATEGORY]

GUITARIST OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding session guitar player, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, a commercially released single or album embodying the player's performance which achieves Top 20 or better on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS), Billboard's Top Country Albums or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. If the single or album was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its highest charted position during the eligibility period, it is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category. The winner shall be determined by a vote of ACM members classified in the Artist-Entertainer/Musician-Bandleader-Instrumentalist category, and the Producer-Engineer-Studio Manager *subcategory* [contained within the Affiliated category].

PIANO/KEYBOARDS PLAYER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding session piano/keyboards player, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, a commercially released single or album embodying the player's performance which achieves Top 20 or better on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS), Billboard's Top Country Albums or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. If the single or album was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its highest charted position during the eligibility period, it is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category. The winner shall be determined by a vote of ACM members classified in the Artist-Entertainer/Musician-Bandleader-Instrumentalist category, and the Producer-Engineer-Studio Manager *subcategory* [contained within the Affiliated category].

BASS PLAYER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding session bass player, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, a commercially released single or album embodying the player's performance which achieves Top 20 or better on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS), Billboard's Top Country Albums or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. If the single or album was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its highest charted position during the eligibility period, it is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category. The winner shall be determined by a vote of ACM members classified in the Artist-Entertainer/Musician-Bandleader-Instrumentalist category, and the Producer-Engineer-Studio Manager *subcategory* [contained within the Affiliated category].

PERCUSSIONIST/DRUMMER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding session percussionist/drummer, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, a commercially released single or album embodying the player's performance which achieves Top 20 or better on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS), Billboard's Top Country Albums or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. If the single or album was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its highest charted position during the eligibility period, it is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category. The winner shall be determined by a vote of ACM members classified in the Artist-Entertainer/Musician-Bandleader-Instrumentalist category, and the Producer-Engineer-Studio Manager *subcategory* [contained within the Affiliated category].

STEEL GUITAR PLAYER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding session steel guitar player, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, a commercially released single or album embodying the player's performance which achieves Top 20 or better on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS), Billboard's Top Country Albums or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. If the single or album was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its highest charted position during the eligibility period, it is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category. The winner shall be determined by a vote of ACM members classified in the Artist-Entertainer/Musician-Bandleader-Instrumentalist category, and the Producer-Engineer-Studio Manager *subcategory* [contained within the Affiliated category].

FIDDLE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding session fiddle player, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, a commercially released single or album embodying the player's performance which achieves Top 20 or better on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS), Billboard's Top Country Albums or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. If the single or album was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its highest charted position during the eligibility period, it is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category. The winner shall be determined by a vote of ACM members classified in the Artist-Entertainer/Musician-Bandleader-Instrumentalist category, and the Producer-Engineer-Studio Manager *subcategory* [contained within the Affiliated category].

SPECIALTY INSTRUMENT(S) PLAYER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding session specialty instrument(s) player, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, a commercially released single or album embodying the player's performance which achieves Top 20 or better on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS), Billboard's Top Country Albums or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. If the single or album was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its highest charted position during the eligibility period, it is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category. The winner shall be determined by a vote of ACM members classified in the Artist-Entertainer/Musician-Bandleader-Instrumentalist category, and the Producer-Engineer-Studio Manager *subcategory* [contained within the Affiliated category].

AUDIO ENGINEER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding audio engineer, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, a commercially released single or album crediting the engineer, which achieves Top 20 or better on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS), Billboard's Top Country Albums or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. If the single or album was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its highest charted position during the eligibility period, it is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category. The winner shall be determined by a vote of ACM members classified in the Artist-Entertainer/Musician-Bandleader-Instrumentalist category, and the Producer-Engineer-Studio Manager *subcategory* [contained within the Affiliated category].

PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding producer, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The panel will submit 5 (five) nominees, which will be placed on the ballot once approved by the Board. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, a commercially released single or album crediting the producer, which achieves Top 20 or better on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS), Billboard's Top Country Albums or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. If the single or album was released prior to the eligibility period, but achieved its highest charted position during the eligibility period, it is eligible unless it has appeared on a final ACM ballot in this category. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category. The winner shall be determined by a vote of ACM members classified in the Artist-Entertainer/Musician-Bandleader-Instrumentalist category, and the Producer-Engineer-Studio Manager *subcategory* [contained within the Affiliated category].

RADIO AWARDS

ON-AIR PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding country music on-air radio personality, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. A demonstration of the disc jockey/personality's on-air presentation of a maximum length of 10 (ten) minutes must be uploaded to the ACM voting site along with their dayparts market share/ratings information for the submissions period of January 1st to December 7th, the nominee's community service, industry involvement, charitable contributions, etc. All entries become the property of the ACM. A panel of Blue Ribbon Judges, approved by the Board of Directors, shall give consideration to ratings, community service, industry involvement, entertainment and professionalism of the demo tape in determining the top 5 (five) nominees for the ballot. Only submissions from radio professionals with current Academy of Country Music memberships will be accepted. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category. The winner will be notified in advance of the Academy of Country Music Awards so they may make arrangements to be in attendance for the presentation of the award.

Entries will be judged using market size consideration based on Arbitron markets: 1-25 Major, 26-50 Large, 51-100 Medium, and 101+ Small.

NATIONAL ON-AIR PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding national country music on-air radio personality, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. National on-air personality entrants must provide information showing that they air on a minimum of 10 (ten) markets with a minimum of 36 shows airing in the submissions period of January 1st to December 7th. A demonstration of the disc jockey/personality's on-air presentation of a maximum length of 10 (ten) minutes must be uploaded to the ACM voting site along

with a description of any industry involvement. All entries become the property of the ACM. A panel of Blue Ribbon Judges, approved by the Board of Directors, shall give consideration to industry involvement, entertainment and professionalism of the demo tape in determining the top 5 (five) nominees for the ballot. Only submissions from radio professionals with current Academy of Country Music memberships will be accepted. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category. The winner will be notified in advance of the Academy of Country Music Awards so they may make arrangements to be in attendance for the presentation of the award.

RADIO STATION OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding country music radio station, selected by a panel of Blue Ribbon Judges. The radio station will upload a 10 (ten) minute (maximum length) composite demonstration of the station's on-air presentation to the ACM voting site along with description of the radio station's best attributes including market share/ratings information for the submissions period of January 1st to December 7th, community service, industry involvement, charitable contributions, etc. All entries become the property of the ACM. A panel of Blue Ribbon Judges, approved by the Board of Directors, shall give consideration to ratings, community service, industry involvement, entertainment and professionalism of the demo tape in determining the top 5 (five) nominees for the ballot. Only submissions from radio professionals with current Academy of Country Music memberships will be accepted. The winner from the previous year is ineligible for a consecutive nomination in this category. The winner will be notified in advance of the Academy of Country Music Awards so they may make arrangements to be in attendance for the presentation of the award. Entries will be judged using market size consideration based on Arbitron markets: 1-25 Major, 26-50 Large, 51-100 Medium, and 101+ Small.

**Radio award dates change annually due to the voting timeline.*

CATEGORIES NOT AWARDED ON THE 2013 AWARDS SHOW

NEW SOLO VOCALIST OF THE YEAR

The Board of Directors may elect to give out this award from time to time in lieu of New Male Vocalist and New Female Vocalist by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. This award is presented to an outstanding individual male or female vocalist in the country music industry who gains either initial fame or significantly greater recognition through their efforts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The artist must have success in digital media, charted a single in the Top 40 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts; and/or sold 100,000 album units reflected in Nielsen SoundScan during the qualifying period. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The final nominees are voted on by the ACM professional membership with the winner being determined by a combination of votes from the ACM professional membership and fan voting (online and/or text).

Any solo artist that has sold 500,000 copies of a previously released album (with general exclusions of specialty albums, such as seasonal or live recordings) according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for the Solo Vocalist category. Additionally, solo artists that previously served (or are currently serving) as lead vocalists for, or otherwise fronted duos or groups that have sold 500,000 copies of previously released albums, according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for the New Solo Vocalist category.

An artist may be a nominee two times in a three-year period. If an artist is a winner in this category his first year on the ballot, he will not be eligible in this category again.

NEW VOCAL DUO OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding duo featuring a vocalist (herein called "duo") in the country music industry who gains either initial fame or significantly greater recognition through their efforts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The duo must have success in digital media, charted a single in the Top 40 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts; and/or sold 100,000 album units reflected in Nielsen SoundScan during the qualifying period. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The final nominees are voted on by the ACM professional membership with the winner being determined by a combination of votes from the ACM professional membership and fan voting (online and/or text).

Any duo that has sold 500,000 copies of a previously released album (with general exclusions of specialty albums, such as seasonal or live recordings) according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for the New Vocal Duo category. Additionally, solo artists that

previously served (or are currently serving) as lead vocalists for, or otherwise fronted duos or groups that have sold 500,000 copies of previously released albums, according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for the New Vocal Duo category.

A duo may be a nominee two times in a three-year period. If the duo is a winner in this category their first year on the ballot, they will not be eligible in this category again.

In the event that the Board of Directors determines that there are not enough nominees in this category in any particular year, this category may be merged with the New Vocal Group by the Board, and shall be called New Vocal Duo or Group.

NEW VOCAL GROUP OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to an outstanding group featuring a vocalist (herein called "group") in the country music industry who gains either initial fame or significantly greater recognition through their efforts during the prior calendar year of December 1st to November 28th. The group must have success in digital media, charted a single in the Top 40 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs (BDS) or Country Aircheck (Mediabase) country charts; and/or sold 100,000 album units reflected in Nielsen SoundScan during the qualifying period. The nominees shall be determined by a nomination ballot(s) and are subject to the approval of the Board. The final nominees are voted on by the ACM professional membership with the winner being determined by a combination of votes from the ACM professional membership and fan voting (online and/or text).

Any group that has sold 500,000 copies of a previously released album (with general exclusions of specialty albums, such as seasonal or live recordings) according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for the New Vocal Group category. Additionally, solo artists that previously served (or are currently serving) as lead vocalists for, or otherwise fronted duos or groups that have sold 500,000 copies of previously released albums, according to Nielsen SoundScan, are not eligible for the New Vocal Group category.

The group may be a nominee two times in a three-year period. If the group is a winner in this category their first year on the ballot, they will not be eligible in this category again.

In the event that the Board of Directors determines that there are not enough nominees in this category in any particular year, this category may be merged with the New Vocal Duo by the Board, and shall be called New Vocal Duo or Group.

