

COUNTRY AIRCHECK *Remembering* BOB KINGSLEY

October 22, 2019

Remembering Bob Kingsley

March 19, 1939 to October 17, 2019

Bedridden for a year at age seven, Bobby Kingsley found escape, entertainment and connection in the radio at his bedside.



Bob Kingsley

For more than 45 years, Bob Kingsley offered the same to country audiences nationwide, first on *American Country Countdown*, then on his own *Country Top 40*. His passing last week sparked an outpouring of grief and memories from those who knew him well, as well as many who only knew the voice on the radio. Collected here are just some of the stories they tell.

• CT40 Nashville Bureau Chief **Rob Simbeck**: One night, Bob was having a

pick-and-grin in the studio. It's a gorgeous setting with Remington sculptures he collects all around. WPAP/Panama City, FL's Shane Collins, myself and other staff including Jeff Ogle were picking guitar, and Bob always maintained he doesn't have a musical bone in his body. He'd say he's tone deaf, can't sing, can't pick – all that stuff. Well, everyone there was a huge fan of the classics, so we were singing Ray Price songs, George Jones songs and others. At one point I hear a voice behind me, and it was Bob. He could sing! And there was heart in it. It really touched and struck me hearing his voice in song for the first and only time.

A couple more observations: Walking with Bob across the lobby of a CRS hotel was like trying to get through a historian convention with Abe Lincoln. Also, I met him when Ronna Rubin hired me to do his bio, and he spent so much time talking about his staff – how much he respected and appreciated them. And finally, I remember him saying, "There's someone I picture when I do the show. A woman with two kids, the first one up on a Sunday morning. She's having her cup of coffee and a moment of peace listening to the countdown, and I want her to know the people who make the music."

• Songwriter **Jeffrey Steele**: Back in the early '80s when Bob was at KLAC/Los Angeles, he would meet his attorney for a drink at the Palomino Club on talent night. I was probably 21 or 22. He would come up to me every time and say, "Hey kid, keep writing

those songs. Don't quit writing." That's a small thing, but I didn't have a lot of people telling me that, and it was a huge part of carrying me through. Over the years I played his wedding and so many of his events. He celebrated songwriters and let everybody shine around him. Coming up in the business, you try to emulate that. But the main memory is after my boy died, we had just gotten back from a horrific nightmare at the hospital, and Bob was at my door. He'd gotten on a plane and was the first guy there. That's who he was. I don't know a lot of people like that.

• Industry vet **Cyndi Hoelzle**: Bob often said radio saved his life. The official story is that while he was stationed in Iceland in Air Force in 1959, a friend suggested he try out for the Armed Forces radio station. In private, he added a little more color: There had been an altercation when another soldier insulted his mama, and Bob wound up in the brig for punching him out. When the officer in charge heard his voice, he told Bob he could either be an announcer at the station or be dishonorably discharged. Thus began his radio career.

When I first met him, he was 45 and had been the voice of *American Country Countdown* for eight years. I was 18 and



working at the *Gavin Report*, and I can still remember the moment he introduced himself and I heard that voice in person. The hole he leaves in the heart of country music can't be overstated. I'm still not used to the idea that I'll never hear that laugh – or that voice – ever again.

• Industry vet **John Zarleng**: "Long Life, Lots Of Happiness." That's the name of an obscure 1971 vinyl 45 B-side by Eddy Arnold that was made into a clock I noticed sitting on a shelf in Bob's office the day he passed. And it really sums up his journey

In Loving Memory of the one and only, Mr. Bob Kingsley



You touched our lives with your kindness, generosity of spirit, friendship and enthusiasm for us, our artists and most especially, the music.

You will always be with us

Love,
Your UMG Nashville Family



UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP
NASHVILLE



*Sony Music Nashville
sends our condolences and
thoughts to Bob Kingsley's
family & loved ones*



*We are deeply saddened
and will forever remember the
incredible legacy Bob left*



through this world. Bob lived life to the fullest. He lived his dream on the radio. He lived his dream on his ranch. And he lived with the love of his life for more than 30 years. His joy was contagious. His spirit left a lasting impact on everyone he met. He never met a



stranger and he was fiercely protective of those he loved. He respected his listeners. He cherished artists and music. He advocated for songwriters. And, he sure loved his animals. Yes, he had his struggles – especially early in his life – but he never let those challenges define him. The way he balanced the power of his platform with

humility, I believe, will be his lasting legacy. Certainly my family is blessed to have known him and Nan the way we have. So few of us get to live out our dreams the way Bob did. And he did it with grace, style, and that twinkle in his eye that let you know he was glad to share the moment with you. Thanks for all the happiness your presence brought to my life. Here's to you, one of the greatest men I've ever known.

- Singer-songwriter **Bruce Robison**: He really just plucked me out of obscurity and included me in these heavy hitter events he did in Weatherford and Nashville. That was a world I didn't touch in any other way, but here I was playing my music in between these massive songs. It was a sign of respect and approbation that was really something.

There is a small group of people who have helped me immeasurably, either by doing something specific for my career or by just giving me a vote of confidence. He did both.

- Living Legend event co-producer **Maurice Miner**: You might think someone would be comfortable simply being proud or honored to have an event and award bearing his name, but not Bob – he also felt a



With Jeffrey Steele.

responsibility. He never took it lightly that the annual Bob Kingsley Living Legend Award fundraiser had grown from an original one-time event meant to celebrate his 40th anniversary counting down the hits. He was an active participant – the six people who have a crystal trophy with his name on it all have one because Bob and Nan helped select them for the honor. The event, which has raised tens-of-thousands for the Opry Trust Fund, only exists because he was willing to allow it to be established and continue. And he only did so knowing others would benefit from it.

One of the most rewarding moments each year is surprising the honoree with the news as they arrive onsite under some other premise. Bob's smile was always wider than any other in that room, his laughter louder. I can still see him hugging Lon Helton, giving Clarence Spalding a hearty handshake, applauding Lorianne Crook & Charlie Chase, congratulating Jim Ed Norman and beaming at Joe Galante. I can also still hear his voice recounting their lives and careers. I truly believe the award bearing his name was not the most important aspect to Bob. It was the knowledge that music and stories combined to raise money to help others while celebrating our format's truest advocates made him most proud. He didn't take that responsibility lightly.

- CT40 Producer **Ken Halford**: One of my favorite things

Celebration Of Life

Bob Kingsley's life and enduring legacy will be celebrated at the CMA Theater in the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum Nov. 14 at 1pm CT with a reception to follow. The celebration of life is open, but organizers are requesting attendees RSVP [here](#).

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations in Kingsley's name to the [Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum](#) or the [Grand Ole Opry Trust Fund](#).

[Note: Advertising was not solicited for this special issue and ad fees were waived with the suggestion of donations to the Hall or OTF instead.]

– really in my life – has been tracking first American Country Countdown and later Bob Kingsley's Country Top 40 with Bob. I did this every week for nearly 30 years. The laughs and the stories we would tell that never made it to the air are something I will cherish forever.

It was surprising to learn that Bob first got excited about music in the '50s when a family friend's son stayed with them for a period of time during the Korean war. He brought with him a box of records which he left at the Kingsley home while he was shipped overseas. When Bob's parents were out, he would go through those records, falling in love with Louis Jordan's "Saturday Night Fish Fry" and "Choo Choo Choo Boogie." The authenticity he heard in those records is what eventually led to his love of country music. I will never forget the way Bob's face would light up when he would talk about the records that inspired him. Even those from that far back.

- Country Aircheck's **Lon Helton**: Bob Kingsley was one of the first people to call and congratulate me when it was announced in 1992 that I would be hosting Country Countdown USA. The first words I heard came in that unmistakable voice, "Welcome to the countdown world!" Fourteen years later, that same voice was also one of the first on a call – not email, not text, call – offering support when we started Country Aircheck. Through the years, he called to convey his sentiments on countless personal moments as well – the birth of grandkids, the passing of parents, a birthday.

As I write this, I realize that my friendship with Bob began with a phone call. American Country Countdown had not been on the air in Los Angeles until KHJ flipped to Country in Nov. 1980. Bob not only called PD Charlie Cook to thank him, he also called me, the APD, just to say how much he appreciated being on the air in LA.



With Garth Brooks, Nan Kingsley and Ken Halford.

I got to know Bob a year or so later when I joined the ACM board, at that time a close knit group of folks who mostly lived in LA. Bob welcomed me to that first meeting with the warmth that



The One and Only

BOB KINGSLEY

1939 - 2019

 Westwood One



**WARNER
MUSIC
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SALUTES
the great BOB
KINGSLEY**

**NUMBER ONE IN OUR HEARTS FOR 2,340+ CONSECUTIVE WEEKS
ON AMERICAN COUNTRY COUNTDOWN AND CT40.**

Rest in peace.





With Midland and Nan Kingsley

was his trademark, taking me around the room introducing me to everyone, and making me feel totally comfortable with this group of LA country power players.

Bob and I never viewed ourselves as competitors. I think the only time we ever talked about countdown shows was in that 1992 call. We mostly talked about our wives, lives and cars – usually in that order. Any business talk usually centered around music, artists and songwriters. And those conversations would inevitably turn to new music, new artists and songwriters new to town.

I will forever cherish the night of April 10, 2019; the evening I was honored with the Bob Kingsley Living Legend award. I'm so thankful he was there to celebrate with me.

- Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum's **Lisa Purcell**: One of the greatest gifts of my career was walking through the galleries with Bob, which is something that really energized him. He not only knew the music and the history, he deeply knew it. He lived it and shared his remarkable stories, in his singular warm voice, which made the experience all the more spectacular. One evening, Bob invited Midland to tour the galleries with him, Nan, my husband Jack and me. When we stopped at Country Music Hall of Fame member Merle Travis' custom-made Gibson Super 400 Special archtop electric guitar, we could all feel Bob's connection to it. Bob went on to explain that he helped manage Merle during a particularly difficult time in Merle's life, ensuring he kept his performance commitments and the world could continue to enjoy Merle's voice and his innovative, syncopated guitar picking that influenced generations of pickers, including Chet Atkins. That story tells you exactly who Bob was: A gentleman who knew great art and served as a willing bridge between creators, their music and the people. A radio icon who embraced and celebrated music's past and present. And an empathetic soul who made everyone feel like a best friend.

- Publicist **Ronna Rubin**: In 1991, Warner Bros. Nashville partnered with the Disabled American Veterans to produce a cassette containing an explanation of all military benefits available to veterans as they returned home from Operation Desert Storm. It had been years since U.S. troops were at war and, as a result, it involved a new generation of soldiers, sailors, marines and

airmen – as well as major changes and updates in military benefits and options. Artists including Randy Travis, Emmylou Harris, Charlie Daniels, Ricky Skaggs, Lee Greenwood and others recorded benefits information and greetings. Bob was the only choice when deciding who should narrate this project, which was called Operation Open Arms. I remember sitting around a table in a hotel suite with Bob and DAV executive Bruce Nitsche as Bob recorded his parts. His words were so heartfelt. And as a veteran, his passion for the topic was palpable; so much so that more than once we had to press pause so that he could regain his composure.

- Reviver's **Paul Williams**: Our family was in Texas for a six-week radio tour one summer and Bob and Nan insisted we stay at their place for a weekend. Jack was six, Charlie was eight and the legend Bob Kingsley gave them their first lesson on how to ride horses. He also let the boys ride all over their property on a Kawasaki Mule. They even ran it out of gas at one point. With all the tributes written this week, all I think about is the loss of a friend. Of Nan's loss. And the folks that have worked for the Kingsleys for years. At breakfast with Bob



With Jack Williams.

and Nan earlier this year, he was having back trouble. It kept him from riding his beloved horses. There's no more pain for Bob. Ride all day, my friend.

- Journalist **Deborah Evans Price**: A few years ago, I was in Texas to cover the Academy of Western Artists Awards, and Bob and his wife Nan invited me to come stay at their ranch. It was one of the most beautiful places I've ever been, and I loved getting to see Bob's prized cutting horses, but the highlight of the trip was getting to go to the studio and watch him record the countdown. At the time I was working as one of the writers for the show, and it was such a thrill. Seeing Bob in action was watching a master at work. He not only had that incredible voice, but his broadcasting talent was about so much more than that. Bob put his heart into every word, and you could feel the warmth. Millions who never met him felt like he was their friend. To say he will be missed is an understatement.



With Deborah Evans Price

(continued on page 15)

A LEGEND THEN,
A LEGEND ALWAYS.



WE'LL MISS YOU, BOB.

NAN, MUCH LOVE FROM
YOUR FRIENDS AT THE ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC.



Posts For The Host

Here's a small fraction of the posts made on social media following Bob's passing.

Bobby Bones @mrBobbyBones Follow

Rest In Peace to Bob Kingsley . I spent many weekends as a kid listening to his countdown. And spent many occasions as I got older telling him how much I admired him. This picture is just one of those occasions. Rest easy friend.



locash the voice. the man. the friend. #BobKingsley ... from day 1 you've been in our corner. we truly lost 1 of the good 1's ❤️ big prayers to Nan. rest easy brother...till we meet again!! @bobkingsleyct40



Big D and Bubba @bigdandbubba Follow

Brokenhearted to hear of this radio legend's passing. Bob Kingsley was someone to look up to. A man to learn from, a host we respected. He was someone listen to as well as someone to talk to. We are incredibly grateful that we have been blessed to have called Bob a friend.

Buzz Jackson @BuzzJackson Follow

Bob Kingsley and Casey Kasem are together counting down the hits in heaven this morning.



codyalan I'm deeply saddened to hear of the passing of my longtime friend, Bob Kingsley. and my heart breaks for his wife Nan. anyone who loves country music knows Bob's iconic voice. his countdown is the gold standard. for generations, he cut through the radio with warmth and the kind of storytelling only Bob could do, always a champion for the music. I got to know him during my years in Texas. we became friends. we would call or text about music, radio, life, politics, anything. always encouraging at whatever career step, or life change I was going through. when I came out, he reached out to me with such kindness. through whatever, I often could hardly believe he cared so much. it was always a little surreal to know I was speaking with that voice I listened to on the radio all those years growing up, wanting to be like. they say legends are made, not born. certainly Bob's back story is exactly that. read it and you'll see he worked hard to become

the legend he will always be remembered as. one more thing - it's rare to find anyone in any industry who is beloved by all. but in the country music industry, that was Bob. everyone loved him! as did I...RIP, Bob.

jackingram My friend, Bob Kingsley, @countrytop40 , passed away. That hurts. He was as passionate about music as anybody I've met and shared that with the world! He took care of us and our songs. I have a good feeling that will continue where he's headed. Godspeed, Bob. #ComingInThisWeekAtNumberOne



angiewardonline The first year of my career in #CountryRadio I was tapped to Emcee part of @TheAlabamaBand's June Jam Festival. At that point (and maybe even now!) it was the largest crowd I had ever been on stage in front of...50,000 people! I was so nervous I could barely breathe! But Bob Kingsley saw me standing side stage, hugged me in this photo, and told me there was nothing to it...he then walked on stage and introduced me to the crowd! #RIP 🙏 #BobKingsley. You were a kind man, a legend in the industry, and there will never be another one like you.



steeleemusic Our heartfelt prayers and condolences to our lifelong friend and mentor Bob Kingsley who passed on today. He was the voice that spoke to millions over the years, shining a spotlight on the stories behind the hits for almost 50 years. Bob was the first one at my door the night my son Alex died. And my earliest memories of him go back to the early 1980s in North Hollywood, Ca when he first saw me play a tune i wrote at a talent night and said "keep writing them songs kid"! My prayers to Nan , his "rock" ! I will never forget the times all of us spent from your wedding to the ranch w our kids the gigs the countdown the horses and just the hugs and love ! There will never be another BOB KINGSLEY



Billy Bob's Texas @BillyBobsTexas Follow

Our hearts are shattered as we hear of the passing of our friend, Bob Kingsley. Bob's Country Top 40 has been a staple on our radios for many years and his voice, wisdom, and friendship will be missed.

We extend our thoughts and prayers to his family and friends.

thetimmcgraw We lost a country music legend in Bob Kingsley. Such a kind man and so gracious. Our prayers go out to his family and friends, especially his wife Nan.



rascalfatts We are saddened to hear about the passing of the legendary Bob Kingsley but so honored to be among the many who called him friend. Country radio will never be the same!



BOB KINGSLEY



**THANK YOU FOR BEING THE BEST
PART OF OUR WEEKENDS FOR THE
LAST FOUR DECADES.**

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT

BIG MACHINE
LABEL GROUP

**BIG
MACHINE
RECORDS**

**VALORY
MUSIC**

**BMLG
RECORDS**

Travis Denning @travis_denning
 Damn man. RIP to Bob Kingsley. Absolutely country radio legend. I remember getting to interview with him and was 10 minutes late to my next one. Such an amazing guy.
 7:42 AM - 17 Oct 2019

The Oak Ridge Boys @oakridgeboys
 So sorry to hear that radio broadcasting LEGEND Bob Kingsley has gone HOME ... He was always so very good to us ...
 #RIPBobKingsley

Randy Travis
 October 17 at 7:23 PM · 🌐
 Bob Kingsley was a radio legend, a consummate professional and a dear friend. He and Nan resided near Mary and I in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area and we often would run into each other around town. Earlier this year we honored Lon Helton as he received the Bob Kingsley Living Legend Award and got to spend some time with Bob. We will miss our friend and I am grateful for all the support he has shown me throughout my career. Our prayers are with Nan and the Kingsley family. - Randy Travis

SiriusXM The Highway @SXMTheHighway
 Devastating news in the world of country music...the iconic radio host Bob Kingsley has passed away from cancer at the age of 80. Bob was a great friend and mentor to so many in the radio world, including some of our own here at The Highway...RIP, Bob
 #StormeWarrenShow



Travis Tritt @TravisTritt
 One of my fondest Bob Kingsley memories was when he invited me to his Texas ranch to train and then participate in a cutting horse competition. Bob and his wife, Nan showed me an enormous amount of hospitality and friendship. I will always treasure that wonderful experience.
 Travis Tritt @TravisTritt
 So sad to hear the news that legendary broadcaster @bobkingsleyct40 has died. Bob was a good friend to me throughout my career. All my love and deepest condolences to his family. #ripbobkingsley #access.com/net-news/arch...



Toby Keith @tobykeith
 RIP Bob Kingsley. THE VOICE. Genuine professional and a giver. I never met a nicer guy in my life. Rest well cowboy. -T
 11:32 AM - 17 Oct 2019

Amy Paige @CRASATRY
 We lost a country broadcasting legend. Back when I started in country radio - I'd never miss a Sunday. American Country Countdown with Bob Kingsley. He taught me everything I needed to know. Praying for his family and friends. @bobkingsleyct40

midland Today we lost a good friend and a country radio icon...We'll forever be grateful that we got to hear your legendary voice call out "Drinkin' Problem" as #1 on "Bob Kingsley's Country Top 40 and got to call you, "Our Friend,...Bob." Sending all our love to Nan and all the lovely Kingsley family. Happy trails amigo.



Randy Houser @RandyHouser
 Hard to imagine a world without this amazing man blasting my radio on Sundays. He was always so kind to me. Will be missed. RIP buddy.

Brent Michaels @brentmichaels
 My smile is so wide in this picture at CRS because I'm next to the legend that is Bob Kingsley. Bob, you will be so missed. You have inspired generations of country radio broadcasters.



Crook and Chase @crookandchase
 It is with great sadness we hear of the passing of our friend and colleague Bob Kingsley. He passed early today after a battle with cancer. Bob is a shining star and pioneer in radio broadcasting. Hard to imagine country music without Bob Kingsley. He was loved by us & so many.

Keith Urban @KeithUrban
 Today I lost a longtime great friend and we lost a beautiful human named Bob Kingsley. Every memory I have of being with Bob (and Nan) is one of rare warmth and grace. I will miss you dearly Bob- peace be with your spirit, and blessings & peace be with your family today. - KU



Clay Walker @ClayWalker
 Just heard of my good friend Bob Kingsley's passing. Kind man, awesome talent. One of my fondest memories was winning the cutting in his name at the Futurity in Ft. Worth. Will miss you friend...cheers
 3:42 PM - 17 Oct 2019

lindsayell He taught us so much about country music. He was such a supporter of me and my music. A believer and a friend. He loved talking to me about guitars and told me how important he thought I was to this genre. We will never forget you, Bob. You will be sincerely missed. Prayers and love to your family. 🙏❤️



Aaron Watson @aaron_watson
 It never got old and it was always the coolest to turn on the countdown on Sundays and hear your song on Bob Kingsley's countdown. Gonna miss hearing that voice and laugh. God Bless ya Bob Kingsley

Josh Turner @joshturnermusic
 Hearing Bob Kingsley's voice coming through the radio on American Country Countdown is ingrained in my memories. He will be missed tremendously. He did a lot for country music and I will forever be grateful for that.

Clint Black @Clint_Black
 Bob Kingsley was a favorite in our radio world, both as a professional and as a person. We are wishing his family and friends comfort and peace of mind in their time of loss.

John Michael Montgomery @JM2Squared
 I will never forget hearing Bob Kingsley say my name the 1st time I broke Top 40 in #AmericanCountryCountdown with "Life's A Dance." That's when I knew I had made it! As a kid, I couldn't wait to listen to him every weekend. Thank you for the memories. Rest in Peace.

IN MEMORIAM

BOB KINGSLEY



Bob's passion for songwriters and new artists was unequaled as was his love for his friends and family. 'Icon' doesn't justly describe his importance in our format. Sunday mornings will never be the same without hearing Bob on the countdown. Our prayers and best wishes go out to Nan, his co-workers, family and friends.

Remembering Bob Kingsley

(continued from page 9)

Premiere's **Robin Rhodes**: The first CRS I attended with Bob was a real lesson. We were heading to the opening cocktail party and planned to meet 15 minutes before to walk together. That quickly turned out to be impossible – something he failed to mention! Everyone – and I mean everyone – wanted to talk to Bob and take pictures. And it didn't matter how big your name was, you were important to Bob. He was stopping to chat, and I was watching the minutes tick away. We made it to the event about 30 minutes late, and I learned to pad the time we really had to be somewhere from then on. And it was always the same. Bob adored every minute of seeing familiar faces and meeting new ones. It was a real honor to watch just how much he looked forward to that. And I never failed to get pulled aside by an artist or affiliate with a worried look on their face after they spoke with him. "Did I sound okay? I was so nervous! He started talking, that voice came out and all I could do was stare at him!"

• Singer-songwriter **Radney Foster**: I got to know Bob because of his relationship to [my wife] Cyndi Hoelzle and Gavin. In a sense, meeting him was almost like meeting her dad. "I want to know your intentions, young man." I'd already met her parents and they were good, but that put a whole new twist on it.

When he came to town, he'd call about coming over for dinner or a drink, and he and Nan were always welcome. We have a basement that has kept many a broke songwriter in Nashville – mostly Texans. On two occasions, one with Brandon Rhyder and the other with Randy Rogers, they'd come up out of the basement to find Bob sitting there. Of course, they didn't know him on sight, they'd just heard him on the radio. So one of the greatest things in the world was to watch Bob extend his hand and say with that voice, "Hi, I'm Bob Kingsley" and watch those guys come unglued.

"I'm Bob Kingsley..."

National Radio Hall of Famer and *Country Top 40* host **Bob Kingsley** passed away last week at the age of 80 following a battle with bladder cancer (*Chronicle 10/17*). His storied career garnered him numerous accolades, and his love of the format, its artists, writers and music endeared him to those in the industry. It seems only appropriate to give Bob the last word via excerpts from the myriad interviews he did with **Country Aircheck** over the years.

On his early love of radio: When I was a kid, I spent a year in bed [after contracting polio]. Every day, I woke up looking forward to that radio beside my bed, waiting for the soap operas to be over and the good stuff to start around 4pm. I was just this scared-to-death kid. But that radio, man. I've got this big picture of lying there in bed listening to things like *The Lone Ranger*, *The Shadow*, *Amos & Andy*, *The Green Hornet* and *Jack Benny*.

Later, I discovered [Rock 'n' Roll] KFVB-AM/Los Angeles. Al Jarvis and Joe Yocum did a countdown from nine to noon every Saturday morning, and I never missed it. I was working as a box boy at a local market not far from home, and I would sneak out



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Bob, your love and dedication to Country radio, Country music, artists, and songwriters has inspired generations. Your integrity and character will forever serve as a positive example to our entire industry. Your decades of support for CRS has been immeasurable, and paramount to its growth. You'll be dearly missed, but never forgotten.

**With love,
The CRB Board of Directors, Officers, & Staff**



CRS
2020
FEBRUARY 19-21 | NASHVILLE, TN

- 1998 COUNTRY RADIO HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE
- 2012 CRB PRESIDENT'S AWARD RECIPIENT
- 2012-2019 HOST OF "BOB KINGSLEY'S ACOUSTIC ALLEY" AT CRS



HERO.
LEGEND.
FRIEND.

BOB, THE WORLD IS A BETTER PLACE BECAUSE OF YOU.
WE COULD NEVER THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR YOUR INVALUABLE
CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR ARTISTS AND OUR COMPANY. REST
WELL, FRIEND. YOU WILL BE MISSED.

WITH LOVE AND GRATITUDE,
YOUR FRIENDS AT CURB RECORDS



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Bob...

You will Always be #1
with a Bullet to us.



BMG

*Your voice
reached the heavens,
and there
you shine
among its stars.*

Honoring the life and legacy of our friend

BOB KINGSLEY

Country countdown legend

and constant friend

to country music creators,

radio listeners,

and the Museum.

Rest In Peace



HONOR THY MUSIC®

to people's cars – nobody locked their cars then – and get in and turn the radio on. I had to hear the top 10, and I was always so disappointed when the song I thought should be No. 1 was not. I always believed a countdown was a good thing for a radio station.

On the genesis of his career: The first time I flipped that microphone on [as an announcer on Armed Forces Radio's TFK while stations in Iceland with the U.S. Air Force] I thought, "Man, I am absolutely in heaven." I didn't care – did not care – about making a dollar. I just wanted to play records on the radio.

On being fired multiple times: The common thread is if you hang in there long enough in this business, something will come together. I sat there [at the NRHoF induction ceremony] listening to everyone talk about all the various stations they worked at and thought, "Do we realize just how fortunate we all are?"

On his parents' thoughts about his chosen profession: My parents never had a whole lot of faith in my chosen endeavor. "Bobby, you should be giving some thought to a real job," they said, and this was after the 15th time I was fired. This is where I would say to my folks, "This is what perseverance brings." God in heaven, it really is true. Here I am.

On landing the gig with ACC: I got the call from Tom Rounds in 1974, but it was a couple years before that when Don Bustany told me they were thinking about doing a country version of *AT40*. I was working at KLAC/ Los Angeles and went somewhere in Hollywood to cut a demo for them. They told me what they were going to do, and I liked the idea, but I never heard from them, and there was nothing new about that.

They actually started with Don Bowman as the host and, a couple years later, realized they weren't all that familiar with country music. I got the gig as producer of ACC from '74-'78. I sat in for [Bowman] a couple of times. In April of '78, I took over.

On his vision for the perfect countdown show: Get artists to talk. I slowly started moving to direct interviews, which was probably one of the biggest changes. Then we started using some of those interviews on the air. That worked extremely well. When you've got 40 records and three hours, which is what we started with, you had to be careful about what you used, because you didn't have a whole lot of time. So, I had to be really point-on. Going to actualities was big time; I don't think anybody was doing that then.

On his approach to interviews: You better have done your homework. I don't care if it's a new artist or a superstar, once they realize you've done your homework, are there to really talk with them and bring up some things they might not even remember, I've yet to find anybody that didn't really open up. Then it becomes just a couple folks visiting. It's wonderful and that's what I try to do every time.

Just be really prepared. I'm going with a list of things about them and, sometimes, there are topics they don't want to discuss. That's easy to detect and you don't push ... at least I don't. You can always find something on the list to get them going. The trick is – and it's pretty doggone simple – listen. Just listen. Out of one question and one answer will come 10 more questions. If you pay attention at the very beginning, you can get them for as long as you can keep the door closed and the handlers away.

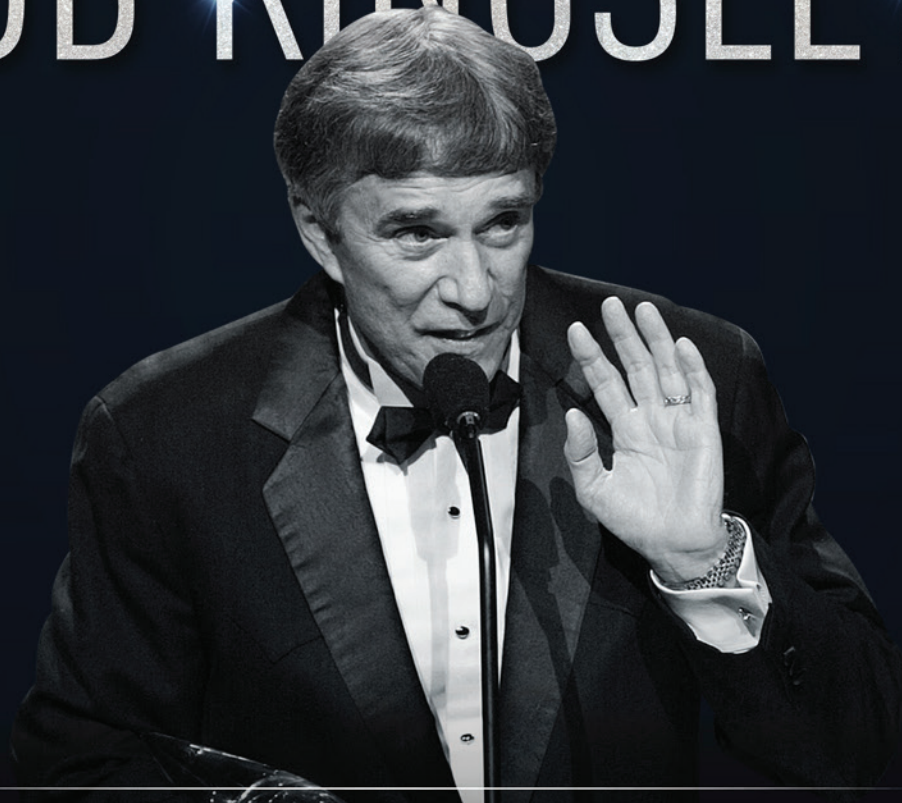
On his favorite interviews: There have been a few that showed up and weren't 100% straight. Those are always interesting, but overall, everybody's been really great even when they got to superstar status. The one that comes to mind frequently



CMA

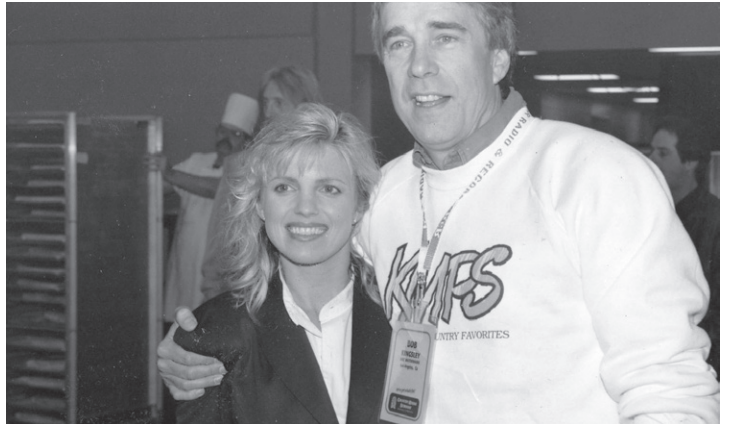
remembers

BOB KINGSLEY



*thanks for counting down
the hits for more than 40 years*

1939-2019





Bob taught us by example that being iconic requires more than professional perfection. Bob was generous, kind, supportive, he loved the music, cared for his friends, and gave back to the world. Bob and Nan welcomed our music and family into listeners' homes and we are forever grateful.

Nan, our hearts go out to you. We send you so much love.

Love,
Faith and Tim



GOOD RIDE COWBOY

Here's to Friends and Heroes

*Love, Garth, Trisha
and the
Pearl & Gwendolyn Records Family*

PEARL *Gwendolyn*
RECORDS RECORDS



is Garth Brooks. In the beginning, he was very available, obviously, but as his stature grew he was even more accessible and forthcoming. I've always had an amazing regard for that. He's the epitome of a great interview. Waylon was fascinating and, when he got straight, had so much to say. Cash was a great interview, too. It took a little bit, it really did.

On why he loves his job: When I walk in that door like I do every Monday and that theme hits, for the next four or five hours I am there. Truly. I love the artists, the songs and the writers – even the new artists who nationally may not be big-time yet. I know out there in their hometown somewhere their mother, friends or somebody that knows them is listening, and they're thrilled to death at what they're hearing. I can see 'em turn their radio up a dB or two and saying, "Kingsley, man, he's talking about whoever!"

On his passion for veterans' causes: I was in the Air Force, though I certainly didn't see combat or anything along those lines. I can't relate to what a combat veteran must have gone through. My dear friend Bruce Nitsche lost a leg in Vietnam and was not treated well when he came home. He dedicated his life to veterans, particularly combat veterans. He started the Wounded Warrior Project and, when he called me about it, I said I'll do whatever I can to be helpful. How could you not support that?

On his love of cutting horses: I'm fortunate to own one of the great mares, Little Pepto Gal. She no longer cuts, but she's a breeding mare. I've loved horses since I was a kid. Until you have ridden your first cutting horse, there's no way to explain that rush beyond compare. I do a lot of riding out in the country, but I am competitive and enjoy that aspect. I'm breeding what I think are some pretty good horses, work with some outstanding trainers who are great showmen and I'm enjoying watching them show my horses as much as I do riding them. It's a dream that finally came to fruition, and I couldn't be happier about it.

On being named a Living Legend: I kept trying to get a handle on it, because I'm much more comfortable in my little booth with a couple of people on the other side of the glass. What I do hasn't been in isolation – you talk about a lot of artists over the years, and they may have heard it or heard about it, but you don't really hear from them. You know it has an impact, if nothing else, because of the ratings. It's just not my nature to have that much of a spotlight shined on me, but I have to put it right up there in about the top three events of my life, never to be forgotten. Interestingly enough, I remember most everything that went on that night. I was dumbstruck. I thought, "Wow, I guess I can walk away a happy guy now, because this is unbelievable."

On leaving his mark: I got a note not long ago from an airman that said, "Hey, we just took this old radio console apart that's been in storage for like 30 years. Is that 'B-K' on it you?" It was. I got underneath there one night and carved my name on it. I was just getting ready to come back to the states all those years ago and thought, "I gotta leave my mark on this."

On being Bob Kingsley: I'm at a point in time where I'm pretty relaxed and think that most of the decisions I've made have been good ones ... I just truly enjoy where I am today. Everything is good with my wife. The dogs are good, the cats are good. The horses are particularly good. The people I work with – everything is just right ... I've got a really nice view from my chair in the bedroom, so every morning I sit with my first cup of coffee, look out over the ranch and feel grateful. I try to do the same thing every evening ... I am probably the luckiest disc jockey to ever walk the road. All of this just worked out so well, and I'm still having a great time. I truly enjoy it. Not exactly sure what the future holds, except I do know that one way or the other, I will continue to be counting them down. **CAC**



Godspeed, my friend.