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Soup for the Sountry

With Stories by:
Dolly Parton
Randy Travis
Gary Chapman
Bill Anderson
Michael Peterson
Paul Brandt

And Many More

4:

Jack Canfield Mark Victor Hansen Ron Camacho

Soul

Stories Served Up Country-Style and Straight from the Heart

心灵鸡汤。

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CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE COUNTRY SOUL



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This book is dedicated with love and appreciation to the performers of The Grand Ole Opry and to ALL the people Who have enriched our lives by singing, performing and working toward the evolution of country music. We have been lifted out of loneliness, reminded of our core American values, heartbroken and healed, and inspired to go for greatness by your songs and your lives.

The last two years have seen the passing of far too many legendary personalities.

Chicken Soup for the Country Soul would like to remember:

Owen Bradley, Sarah Ophelia "Minnie Pearl" Cannon,

Floyd Cramer, Grandpa Jones, Bill Monroe,

Patsy Montana, Carl Perkins, David "Skull" Schulman,

Chuck Seals, Cliffie Stone, Justin Tubb,

Tammy Wynette and Faron Young.

Your memories will live in our hearts forever.

This book is dedicated to country life and the tradition that has come to be known as country music.

Country music is America. It started here, it's ours. It isn't something that we learned from some other nation; it isn't something we inherited, and so it's as native as anything we can find. It comes from the heart of America. It talks about family. It talks about religion, the faith of God that is so important to our country, and particularly, to our family life; and, as we all know, country music radiates of this nation's patriotism; it's good for Americans to hear it. We come away better for having heard it.

Richard M. Nixon At the Reopening of the Grand Ole Opry





<u>Acknowledgments</u>

First a huge thank-you to our families!

To Jack's wife, Georgia, and his son, Christopher, who in the midst of the pressure-filled weeks it takes to finish a book like this, constantly remind him to slow down, smell the roses, and listen to some music. To Jack's parents, who instilled in him a love of music and helped him buy his first guitar.

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Julie's mother. Judy Barnes, for her constant energies in both problem solving and endless spiritual support.

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All the other Chicken Soup for the Soul coauthors — current, past and future — for sharing abundantly of their resources and themselves in an incredible spirit of TEAM (Together Each Achieves More).

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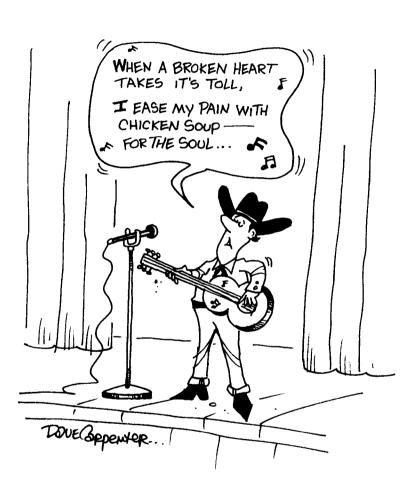
We also wish to thank the over five hundred people who took the time to submit stories, poems and other pieces for consideration. You all know who you are. Without you this book could never have happened. While most of the stories submitted were wonderful, we were only able to include the stories you find here. The decisions were often agonizing. We hope in each case we have done what is best for the book.

Because of the immensity of this project, we may have left out names of some people who have helped us along the way. If so, we are sorry. Please know that we really do appreciate all of you.

We are truly grateful for the many hands and hearts that have made this book possible. We love and appreciate you all!













Introduction

Country music springs from the heart of America.

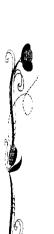
Tex Ritter

A song ain't nothin' in the world but a story just wrote with music to it.

Hank Williams Sr.

Three years ago Ron Camacho approached us with the idea of our compiling a book of *Chicken Soup* stories by and about country music artists. Because the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books had been gathering and presenting stories from the heart of America for the past five years and country music had been doing the same thing through songs for over seventy, it was natural for the two to come together in a book of heartwarming stories to nurture the souls of country music fans and anyone else interested in the love, wit and wisdom that emanate from the world of country music.

With former tour manager Ron acting as the point man, we took off on a venture that would profoundly change our lives — especially Ron's. After a few months, it was clear we needed to go where the music and the artists were. Ron actually relocated from





Southern California to Nashville — which we visited often —and began meeting with artists and their managers. We all received a warm welcome as people were excited about the project. Artists, managers, agents, songwriters, deejays, journalists and people at the recording labels and the Country Music Association all opened their office doors and their hearts to us.

Then it was off to Lukenbach, Texas, for Willie Nelson's Fourth of July Party and back to Nashville — where Ron now resides — for the Fan Fair, with lots of stops in between. Along the way, we had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of some of the warmest people we have ever met — entertainers, writers, sound technicians, cowboy poets, street prophets, pastors, and, most important, country music fans. Everywhere we went, we were treated with down-home cooking and neighborly hospitality. Before we were done, we must have asked over a thousand people to submit a story for the book.

Porter Wagoner and Billy Walker at the Grand Ole Opry introduced Ron to everyone he needed to meet, and Prime Time Country and Crook and Chase welcomed Mark on their shows to put the word out to get stories. The people at country. com — a new country Web site — allowed us to post stories every week for evaluation and the Nashville Scene and Country Weekly helped us sponsor a storywriting contest to solicit even more stories.

I go through a thousand songs to find ten for a new record.

Conway Twitty

Similar to Conway Twitty, we have gone through over five hundred stories to end up with the stories that appear in this book. While the decisions were often painful, we hope we have created a final result as good as any double-platinum record you have ever purchased. What you are about to read is the best of the





best.

In the same spirit of bringing together the best of the best, Porter Wagoner of the Grand Ole Opry invited 112 Opry stars and country entertainers to come together to record "In the Shade of the Family Tree" as a fund-raiser for the Opry Trust Fund. We are proud that we have been able to include this song in a CD in this book and that twenty cents for each book sold will be donated to the Opry Trust Fund.

We are very excited about this book and the accompanying CD, and we hope that you will have as much fun reading and listening to them as we have had compiling and editing them.





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