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Skip Ewing, Charlie Daniels, Hillary Lindsey, Allen Shamblin, Josh Turner & other top performers share the stories behind your favorite country hits

Chicken Soup for the Soul: Country Music shares stories from country's biggest stars

COS COB, Conn. — No music genre is more tied to storytelling than country music. From Hank Williams to Miranda Lambert, country music stars have been master storytellers, with their lyrics about life, love, family and more. But where do country music singers and songwriters get the inspiration for their biggest hits?

Chicken Soup for the Soul has partnered with veteran country music journalist, Randy Rudder, to share the stories behind 101 of country music's biggest songs with the upcoming release of *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Country Music* (Chicken Soup for the Soul Publishing, LLC, May 3, 2011, 978-1935096672, \$14.95).

In the book, songwriters share some never-before-released details on the inspiration behind their work. Allen Shamblin tells the story of how he and Tom Douglas wrote "The House that Built Me" based upon Shamblin's childhood experiences and visiting his home in Huffman, Texas. Miranda Lambert recorded the song, and at the 53rd Annual Grammy Awards on February 13, 2011, she won a Grammy for Best Female Country Vocal Performance for it.

Hillary Lindsey shares her story of writing "American Honey" with Shane Stevens and Cary Ryan Barlowe while on a road trip through the Smoky Mountains when they saw a sign for "American Honey" whiskey. This song of innocence and freedom from being young – and missing that – was recorded by Lady Antebellum and became a #1 hit single from their first album.

Readers will learn the story of how Kenny Chesney and Skip Ewing wrote "You Had Me From Hello" after hearing one line from the movie *Jerry McGuire*. Tony Arata wrote Garth Brooks' hit, "The Dance," after seeing *Peggy Sue Got Married*. And, Mark Irwin and Alan Jackson wrote, "Here in the Real World" in about 45 minutes after coming up with an idea resulting from a verse Jackson sang and Irwin's love of movie trivia.

This book includes stories of classic country songs, spanning five decades. They are songs born of dreams, joy, pain, anger, love found, love lost, family, faith, courage, pity, compassion, and honor. They are, as many songwriters say, "life set to music."

Ken Kragen, the past president of the Country Music Association and Academy of Country Music, wrote the foreword and says of the book, "You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll be amazed and entertained. The next time someone says, 'I wonder why they wrote that?' you'll know right where to go to get the answer. And if, by chance, you're one of those people who love to write music and lyrics, you'll get all the motivation you could ever ask for in the pages of this book."

Chicken Soup for the Soul: Country Music (Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, and Randy Rudder) will be released on May 3, 2011. Chicken Soup for the Soul Publishing, LLC, publishes all the latest titles in the famous Chicken Soup for the Soul book series which are distributed through Simon & Schuster, Inc. Since 1993, books in the Chicken Soup for the Soul series have sold over 112 million copies, with titles translated into over 40 languages. Chicken Soup for the Soul Publishing also licenses the right to use its famous trademark to high quality licensees. The company is currently implementing a plan to expand into all media, is working with TV networks on several TV shows and is developing a major Internet presence dedicated to life improvement, emotional support, inspiration and wellness. In 2007, *USA Today* named Chicken Soup for the Soul one of the five most memorable and impactful books in the last quarter century. For more information visit: www.chickensoup.com.

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To receive a review copy of *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Country Music* or to request an interview, please contact Beth Gwazdosky at (512) 921-8148 or beth@sheltoninteractive.com.