

THE WRITE BRAIN

A free, semi-occasional newsletter for and about songwriters ✍

Brought to you by 11/22 Publishing, LLC, Publishers of
"Your First Cut, A Step-by-Step Guide to Getting There"
by Jerry Vandiver and Gracie Hollombe ISBN 0-971-7745-0-1

Issue No. 2 - Spring 2004

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Dear Reader,

Welcome to our second edition of *The Write Brain*, a free, semi-occasional newsletter for and about songwriters. To view our first issue, visit our archive at www.yourfirstcut.com.

Please share this newsletter with your songwriting buddies. We hope to start bringing you *The Write Brain* every season instead of just every year. You can look forward to reading interviews with hit songwriters in issues to come.

As always, wishing you much success!

Happy reading,
Gracie and Jerry

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## 11/22 Designs

### Cool Stuff for Songwriters

It's spring - and what could be a better time of year for the birth of a new enterprise! 11/22 Designs was launched when owners (and songwriters) Gracie Hollombe and Jerry Vandiver hired artist (and songwriter) Alan Rhody to bring their t-shirt designs to life. With themes ranging from whimsical to political, 11/22 Designs proves that country music isn't the only thing to come out of Nashville, TN. The 11/22 Designs secure online store can be found at [www.yourfirstcut.com/1122designs](http://www.yourfirstcut.com/1122designs).

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Pitching Outside the Box:

Next time you visit the Your First Cut Discussion Forum, click on the *search* link in the navigation bar and type in a music business or songwriting topic to search for all related posts. We've recently entered a couple "Pitching Outside the Box" posts. We hope to continue to share information with you to expand pitching possibilities for your songs. Check back often - and while you're there, we'd love to hear from you.

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### New Cuts!

"Train, Train"

Written by Jerry Vandiver, Dusty Drake, & Benny Bolling

In a writing session two years ago, Jerry, Dusty & Benny were talking about when they put coins on the railroad tracks as kids, and the idea for "Train, Train" was born. Just last week, the Oak Ridge Boys recorded "Train, Train" at Emerald Sound in Nashville. (Congratulations Jerry!)

"A Long, Long Time Ago" written by Gracie Hollombe & Jon Vezner is included on Jon's new CD. "Vezner & Songs" was voted Best Independent Album of 2003 by the Nashville Rage. The CD is available on Jon's website at [www.jonvezner.com](http://www.jonvezner.com).

This past winter, Gracie & Jerry co-wrote with Danish recording artist Peter Vesth ([www.vesthbrothers.dk](http://www.vesthbrothers.dk)). Peter recorded the tracks for his new CD at County Q in Nashville before heading back to Denmark to complete vocals and mixing. The double CD, entitled "Winter Nights," is scheduled for release in October 2004. "It's Gonna Be a Long Winter" is one of three duets featuring Suzy Bogguss, Jess Leary, and Julie Burton.

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Educational Corner

On January 31, 2004, we helped launch the Springboard Musician's Association in Tampa, Florida. Co-sponsored by the Tampa regional chapter of NSAI, their kickoff expo was a huge success. Visit www.yourspringboard.org and dive into your musical potential.

We're happy to announce that SongU.com, the e-learning site that offers songwriters the opportunity to learn, improve, network and stay motivated 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year without leaving home, is offering a special discount to friends of "Your First Cut." If you use the discount redemption code FIRSTCUT when signing up at SongU.com, you'll receive an extra three months free with your yearly membership (15 months for the price of 12). Or, you can choose to pay your yearly tuition using their monthly billing for a reduced rate of \$24.95/month. For a virtual campus tour visit www.songu.com.

On May 8th, the NSAI's Chicago Regional Chapter hosts a "Your First Cut" seminar with Jerry (on his way to canoeing in the Boundary Waters of Minnesota) from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. For more information contact coordinators Bob Osgood (r4osgood@aol.com) or Damon Henrichs (damon@damonsongs.net).

NSAI's Annual Songwriter's Symposium is April 2-3, 2004. Symposium highlights will include Special Guest Performances, a Song Evaluation With A Music Row Publisher, Ellen Britton on "The Nashville Number System," Ralph Murphy on "The Anatomy of a Hit Song," Joe Johnston on "How To Fail in the Music Industry," Jerry Vandiver, Karen Staley, Tim Buppert & Sherrill Blackman with Music Business Role Playing, Jimmy Kachulis on "Writing Great Melodies," not to mention the "Single-Song Showdown" whose winning song will be published by Sony/ATV Music Publishing Nashville! For more information, visit www.nashvillesongwriters.com.

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## Visiting Nashville?

*The Nashville Muse*, edited by Doak Turner, is a weekly listing of who's playing where in Nashville clubs. You can subscribe by sending an email to [doakt@comcast.net](mailto:doakt@comcast.net) or visit [www.nashvillemuse.com](http://www.nashvillemuse.com).

Want to audition for a Bluebird Café Sunday Writer's Night? Mark your calendar for Tuesday, April 6<sup>th</sup> and call (615) 383-1461 between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to sign up. The actual audition date is May 2<sup>nd</sup>, but you can't audition without signing up first - and you can only sign up on April 6<sup>th</sup>. Good luck! ([www.bluebirdcafe.com](http://www.bluebirdcafe.com))

Join us in Nashville for NSAI's Tin Pan South Songwriters Festival: March 29 - April 3, 2004 ([www.tinpansouth.com/index.cfm](http://www.tinpansouth.com/index.cfm)).

Saturday, April 3, 2004 7:00 p.m. - Caffeine

"Will Write For Food" (formerly known as "The Bald & the Beautiful)

If you're in Nashville for Tin Pan South Week, be sure to catch:

Jerry Vandiver ("For a Little While" / Tim McGraw)

Tim Buppert ("She's Sure Taking It Well" / Kevin Sharp)

Julie Burton ("Like a Rocket" / Lila McCann / Tanasi Music staff writer / [www.julieburton.com](http://www.julieburton.com))

Rachel Thibodeaux (Murrah Music staff writer who just got her first cut with Lila McCann, "I Can Do This")

and special guest new RCA recording artist Jason Jones

Saturday, April 24, 2004 - Country Music Marathon

If you're in Nashville during the Country Music Marathon, come cheer Gracie on as she walks the half marathon (13.1 miles). As a member of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Team In Training, Gracie pledged to raise \$1,600 for patient aid, research and education for those with blood-related disorders. With the generosity of family and friends, she's received contributions of over \$1,000 so far. Last week Gracie was awarded a matching funds grant from Wal-Mart, which now puts her over the \$2,000 mark! If you would like to contribute, drop her a note at [gracie@yourfirstcut.com](mailto:gracie@yourfirstcut.com).

Wednesday, June 9, 2004 - SGA Showcase - Bluebird Café - 6:30 p.m.

The Songwriter's Guild ([www.songwritersguild.com](http://www.songwritersguild.com)) holds their bimonthly showcase at the Bluebird Café. The June 9<sup>th</sup> show features BMG staff writer Barry Dean and Gracie Hollombe. (As of press time, we don't know who the other two writers will be. More will be revealed.)

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A special thanks goes out to all who have purchased our book and contributed to its success.

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