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Strategic Initiatives, White House Office of Rove, Karl - Subject Files

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Folder Title:

Graham, B.

Withdrawn/Redacted Material

The George W. Bush Library

DOCUMENT NO.	FORM	SUBJECT/TITLE	PAGES	DATE	RESTRICTION(S)
001	Video Cassette	Kennedy Center Homecoming A Celebration of Our Faith and Heritage	1	N.D.	Transferred
002	CD	CD - Gaither Vocal Band "I Do Believe"	1	N.D.	Transferred

COLLECTION TITLE:

Strategic Initiatives, White House Office of

SERIES:

Rove, Karl - Subject Files

FOLDER TITLE:

Graham, B.

FRC ID:

7190

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advise between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

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The

FROM	FOLDER/TITLE	DATE	TRANSFERRED TO
Video Cassette	Kennedy Center Homocore Heritage	N/A	N/A

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File
 (Under ^{Billy} Graham)

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This marker identifies the original location of the transferred item listed above.

COLLECTION:
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 RECORDS:
 Ross, Karl - Subject Files
 FOLDER/TITLE:
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FOIA Request Reference
 2015-07567

**Document Originally
 Attached to
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Transferred Material Marker

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FORM	SUBJECT/TITLE	PAGES /UNITS	DATE	TRANSFERRED TO
Video Cassette	Kennedy Center Homecoming A Celebration of Our Faith and Heritage	1	N.D.	AV

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327

FOIA IDs and Segments:

2015-0036-F

Stacy - —

Here's the info
I put together on
the Gaither. Do
you mind passing
it along to
Israel. Thanks -
— Tracy



523 HEATHER PLACE • NASHVILLE, TN 37204-3113 • PO Box 150905 • NASHVILLE, TN 37215-0905
615.248.4444 • 615.248.4956 FAX

June 5, 2001

Israel,

The Gaither Vocal Band has been setting the standard for gospel music groups for almost 20 years. Performing more than sixty concerts a year to more than one million people, their success is somewhat of a phenomenon.

We are excited about the new Administration and the opportunities it will afford groups like the Gaithers whose music is tied to their faith. I would like to make the Gaither Vocal band available to participate at an event at the White House.

Here are a few ideas I have put together:

Movie Night: Former President George and Barbara Bush just taped a segment for the most recent Gaither Video honoring Rev. Billy Graham. Billy Graham was instrumental in President Bush's conversion to Christianity. The idea would be to have a Billy Graham Movie Night/Video Premier at the White House prior to its October release preceded by a Gaither Vocal Band performance.

July 4th: Enclosed is a video of the Gaither Vocal Band's National Anthem performance at the Kennedy Center. They would be honored to participate in July 4th festivities at the White House.

White House Christmas Concert: The Gaither Vocal Band could perform at a Christmas concert held at the White House. The concert could be a combination of musical performances and video shots of the White House decorated at Christmas.

Faith and Values: Another option would be for the Gaither Vocal band to appear or perform at an event that the Faith and Values committee may be planning.

I've enclosed a copy of the Gaither's *Kennedy Center Homecoming Special*, which aired on TNN and PAX TV, some background information on each of the vocal band members, as well as, a factsheet listing some of their accomplishments. I would love to discuss these ideas with you and hear any suggestions you may have. I will follow up with you next week.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Brenda'.

Brenda McClain



523 HEATHER PLACE • NASHVILLE, TN 37204-3113 • PO Box 150905 • NASHVILLE, TN 37215-0905
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FACTSHEET

SUMMARY: The Gaithers have revolutionized the Gospel Music Industry. Women between the ages of 25 and 45 years of age attend their concerts annually and have bought more than 8 million pieces of their product. Michael W. Smith emulates their work. The *Gaither Homecoming* videos are seen weekly on PAX and TNN, as well as, nine other Inspirational Television Networks. Their recent appearance on CBS' *Touched By An Angel* aired over two weeks in May during sweeps week. The Gaither catalogue is mailed to one million homes quarterly.

CONCERT SALES: Amusement Business Magazine tells us the Gaither Concerts have grossed more than Reba McIntire and Brooks and Dunn combined. They perform annually for more than one million people.

CD SALES: Sold more than 9 Million CD's.

VIDEO SALES: They have sold eight million video's, ranking their video company the #1 Music Video Sales Label according to Billboard Magazine – ahead of Zomba, Britney Spears label which is #2. In April 2001, the Gaither Vocal Band's baritone, comedian Mark Lowry, released his video *Mark Lowry LIVE! On Broadway*. The video debuted on Billboard at #1, ahead of Madonna's, which debuted at #2.

AWARDS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Multiple Grammy and Dove Awards
- Platinum selling CD's and videos.
- ASCAP honored Bill and Gloria Gaither as *Songwriters Of The Century* – the first award of its kind, given in 2000.
- They have written more than 600 songs, including "He Touched Me", the only song for which Elvis Presley received a Grammy.
- #1 Music Video Sales Label according to Billboard Magazine, January 2001.

RECENT SPECIAL APPEARANCES:

- May 13 and 20, 2001 appeared, performed on CBS' *Touched by an Angel*.
- May 22, 2001 Gaithers performed at the request of Elizabeth Dole.
- *Good Morning America*
Ongoing -- Billy Graham Crusades
- Ongoing - National Anthem for NBA and NASCAR events.

GAITHER VOCAL BAND

I Do Believe

GAITHER VOCAL BAND

Bill Gaither is one of the most respected men in gospel music, and his assemblage of some of the best singers in the business, who perform as the Gaither Vocal Band, is setting a standard for gospel music groups for many years to come.

Gaither chose to use as his measuring stick the great Statesmen Quartet. "The Statesmen Quartet set a standard which everybody points back to," says Gaither. "The Statesmen knew how to execute, and they were good people individually."

Gaither could be talking about his own team. The songs that flow from the pens of Bill and Gloria Gaither and other talented songwriters, fused with the talents of the members of the Vocal Band, all work in unison with each man's personal love for the music and the message it brings to hundreds of thousands of people every year. It is obvious that Bill, Mark Lowry, Guy Penrod and David Phelps don't just sing the words to the songs; they believe in them and want to share those beliefs with each and every person who hears the music.

Never has that sincerity of belief been so apparent as it is in the Gaither Vocal Band's new release, *I Do Believe*. The cross-section of new songs mixed with gospel standards is one of the Vocal Band's best offerings. From the opening strains of "He's Watching Me" to the closing lines of "Something To Say," the project offers great insight into God's Word and its message to people today.

"We started working on this project in November of 1999, and it was released in October of 2000," says Gaither. "Because all of us have such busy schedules, we had to work on it when we could find time to get together in the studio. It's been a labor of love, and we are very proud of the results."

Gaither says he realizes that individuals have their own talents, but "it is when we put our gifts together we discover that we are stronger than what we can do individually. And maybe that's why one person doesn't end up with all the gifts. God wants us to work together in harmony, so each of us have a gift that we contribute to make a whole. We have to depend on other people to do what we do, and I think that is very good."

The Vocal Band has gone through many personnel changes in its almost 20 years of existence, but Gaither says that the current combination of men and voices is the one he is most happy about. "To have guys like Mark, David and Guy, who can sing the way they sing every night we go out on that stage, or every time we go in the studio, is just unbelievable. But the best thing of all is that we have a lot of fun doing it. I don't think there's ever been a Vocal Band that has had such camaraderie."

"Steel On Steel" from *I Do Believe* is a song that aptly describes the relationships in the Vocal Band. Its chorus reads: "I really need what you bring to the party... Differences here ain't no big deal... 'Cause all this rub just makes us better... We sharpen each other like steel on steel." And the last verse says it all: "When the smoke clears I know you're a brother... We'll follow this through to the bitter end... If we stick around we might learn something... Something about how to be a good friend."

The harmonies of the four men blend beautifully on this project, quiet in prayer one moment, as with "Where No One Stands Alone" and "More Than Ever," and soaring the next on "Oh, What A Time" or "On The Authority." In addition to the title cut, other new songs on the CD include "Make It Real" and "One Good Song." Among the standards are "Hide Thou Me" and "Where No One Stands Alone." Subjects range from the affirmation of "I Do Believe" to the realization of one's needs in "One Good Song."

Thoughts taken from the liner notes of the project seem to capture perfectly the emotions of the moment: "One might ask how in the world God can pull together four uniquely different, extremely opinionated, utterly imperfect characters and bring out of them beautiful harmonies that sing to the glory of God and minister to so many. Quite possibly the reason is simply that the message is bigger than the messenger, the song is bigger than the singer... Maybe when it's all said and done, all that we really need on this journey is Jesus in our hearts, a place to belong, a few close friends and one good song."

GAITHER VOCAL BAND

I Do Believe

Profile: Gaither Vocal Band

Beginnings: January 1981, Lakeland, Florida

Occasion: A Bill Gaither Trio concert

Original Members: Bill Gaither, Steve Green, Gary McSpadden, Lee Young

First Song Sung by the Gaither Vocal Band in Public: "First Day In Heaven"

Current Members: Bill Gaither, Guy Penrod, Mark Lowry, David Phelps

Personnel through the Years: Bill Gaither, Gary McSpadden, Steve Green, Lee Young, Jon Mohr, Larnelle Harris, Michael English, Jim Murray, Mark Lowry, Terry Franklin, Jonathan Pierce, Buddy Mullins, Guy Penrod, David Phelps

Artist Influences: The Statesmen Quartet

Musical Influences: Southern gospel, country, pop, rock, jazz and soul

Awards: One Grammy, several Dove Awards, and several fan awards

Discography: *The New Gaither Vocal Band, Passin' The Faith Along, New Point of View, One X 1, Wings, The Best From The Beginning, A Few Good Men, Homecoming, Peace Of The Rock, Southern Classics, Testify, Southern Classics: Volume II, Lovin' God & Lovin' Each Other, Still The Greatest Story Ever Told, God Is Good, I Do Believe*

Quotes:

"In my opinion the Gaither Vocal Band is the best quartet of the age." —*Jake Hess*

"The Band's sound is reminiscent of the southern gospel music that Gaither listened to as a boy, when his favorite radio shows featured the music by artists who are now among his 'Homecoming Friends.'" —*The Saturday Evening Post*

"At a Trio concert one night Gaither spontaneously gathered male back-up singers and Trio vocalists together backstage around a piano to sing an old four-part harmony song. The quartet genre was reborn that night in the Gaither Vocal Band, now one of Christian music's most successful groups." —*Performance Magazine*

GAITHER VOCAL BAND

I Do Believe

Profile: Bill Gaither

Hometown: Alexandria, Indiana

Current Residence: Alexandria, Indiana

Family: Wife, Gloria; three children (Suzanne, Amy and Benjamin)

Interesting Fact: He lives just a few miles from the farm where he grew up listening to gospel music on the radio every morning while milking cows.

Background: Founded Bill Gaither Trio in 1956 while still a college student

Education: B.A., Anderson University; M.A., Ball State University

Former Occupation: English teacher

Other Jobs Now: Executive producer, Gaither Vocal Band; songwriter with wife, Gloria; head of music conglomerate that includes video production, music publishing, record company, booking agency and more

Formed Gaither Vocal Band: January, 1981

Songs Written: Bill and Gloria Gaither have written more than 600 songs. Among their best-known: "Because He Lives," "The King Is Coming," "There's Something About That Name," "He Touched Me," "It Is Finished," "Let's Just Praise The Lord"

Awards and Honors: Gaither Homecoming Videos Top Billboard Video charts; American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) named Bill and Gloria each individually as "Christian Songwriter of the Century" for their work in Christian music; Dove Awards and Grammy Awards

On the Vocal Band: Mark and Guy and David are all strong singers. I think that by myself, I'm not in that league. As Mark always tells me, "It's a good thing you own the bus, Bill." But I think that when we put our gifts together we can do more than we can individually. My conclusion is that God does not give everyone all the talent so that we are forced to work together to make it work.

On the Vocal Band: The Vocal Band is just four guys having a good time. Our sound is broadly based. It does have a country rhythm feel, a southern gospel rhythm feel and an inspirational flavor. It's pretty hard to pigeon-hole us. I prefer to describe ours as an 'Americana' sound. We've aimed for excellence with each quartet. But this one has a 'power sound' that sets it apart.

On four-part harmony: My first love was four-part male harmony. There's something special about the way male four-part harmonies pull people together.

On being a leader: I like drawing a wide circle and bringing everyone in. And I truly enjoy helping other people win—I like to create a "win-win" situation.

On David Phelps: David has an unbelievable voice. And he's well-rounded: he's a carpenter, an amateur scientist, and he has an infectious love for the Lord.

On Guy Penrod: Guy has a great deal of leadership qualities, whether it's spiritual or everyday life. His father was a pastor and he's got a pastor's heart.

On Mark Lowry: Mark is a delight to work with. The audience sees his craziness but they don't know he's got a very serious side. He's a reader and a thinker.

GAITHER VOCAL BAND

I Do Believe

Profile: Mark Lowry

Hometown: Houston, Texas

Current Residence: Nashville, Tennessee

Interesting Fact: His mother teaches psychology at Liberty University; his father is an attorney.

First Public Performance: Age 9, "The Music Man" for Houston Music Theatre

First Recording: At the ripe old age of 11, Mark recorded his first album

Education: B. A., Business, Liberty University

Former Occupations: Always worked in music and/or entertainment

Other Jobs Now: author, three "Piper The Hyper Mouse" books for children; *Out of Control*, the story of his life, plus other books including *Live Long And Die Laughing*; songwriter including "Mary Did You Know?" and author of a book illustrating this great Christmas classic

Joined Gaither Vocal Band: Spring, 1988

First Concert as a member of the Gaither Vocal Band: Knoxville, Tennessee

On Joining the Vocal Band: I went to the audition but I knew I wouldn't get the job. I just wanted to meet Bill Gaither.

On being a Christian comedian: I think of myself as a storyteller. I love it when a story takes a turn to connect with something eternal. When you've got the audience laughing and their arms are unfolded and their mouths are open, you can reach in, grab their hearts and take them to the cross because their defenses are down.

On setting goals: I've never set a lot of goals. If I set goals I usually set them too low. The Lord has blessed me more than I could ever have dreamed or imagined. I just let Him set the goals.

On ADHD: I had attention deficit hyperactivity disorder before people knew what it was. All I knew at the time was that there weren't enough trees to make enough paper for all the notes my teacher would have to send home with me when I couldn't sit still and pay attention in class.

On the Internet: I love doing my e-mail newsletter, *ReMarks*. I have more than 42,000 subscribers to the newsletter. I consider it my weekly job when I am home. I keep the people informed of what's going on with me and whatever's going on in my life. It gives me the opportunity to minister to people.

On Bill Gaither: He's honest, good and ethical. He wants everyone to win.

On Guy Penrod: He sings with unbelievable passion.

On David Phelps: David is the greatest tenor I've ever heard.

GAITHER VOCAL BAND

I Do Believe

Profile: Guy Penrod

Hometown: Abilene, Texas

Current Residence: Nashville, Tennessee

Family: Wife, Angie; five children (Tyler, Logan, Joe, Jesse and Levi)

Interesting fact: Angie home schools the couple's children

Background: Father was a preacher in New Mexico

Education: B. A., Music, Liberty University

Former Occupation: Backup session vocals for Amy Grant, Michael W. Smith, Larnelle Harris, Garth Brooks, James Ingram, Steve Green, Phillips, Craig and Dean; music teacher in Atlanta, Ga.; singing jingles

First Public Appearance: Sang "Fill My Cup, Lord" at his father's church in New Mexico

Other jobs now: producer, Gaither Vocal Band

Joined Gaither Vocal Band: Spring, 1994

First Concert as member of Gaither Vocal Band: Oakland, California

On trying to be someone you are not: I feel like every part of what you are in front of people on stage should be the same as it is offstage. I try to be consistent.

On the Vocal Band: We get along wherever we are — on the road, in the studio, rehearsing. That's a good thing because we spend a lot of time together!

On Mark Lowry: He's naturally funny but very complex and very much a thinker. He is also a God-seeker. He loves sitting around the breakfast table discussing things of God. He is, like most of us, on a continuing quest to know more about God and I see that as a positive quality. He is a real pleasure to work with.

On Bill Gaither: Bill Gaither is a fun person to be around and easy to get along with. He enjoys life and those around him. I really respect Bill for the fact that he can be "just one of the guys." He's not pretentious. Even with all the success he's enjoyed in life, he is not the kind of person who reminds you of it constantly. He's down to earth and gives us good leadership. We all have our own ideas and opinions, but he's cool enough to let us go with it and flow with whatever happens to work for us. He is truly a blast to work with.

On David Phelps: He's a real asset to our group, both with that incredible voice and as a family man. He and his wife are great parents and a good example of a loving couple.

On his role as producer of the Gaither Vocal Band: I knew I had a knack for putting things together but it's just been in the last five years I've tried my hand at production. It's been a real pleasure.

On why the Vocal Band works: Our one common thread is that we have all agreed to be true to what we believe as far as what the Word of God says. We believe that this is the bottom line.

GAITHER VOCAL BAND

I Do Believe

Profile: David Phelps

Hometown: Tomball, Texas

Current Residence: Nashville, Tennessee

Family: Wife, Lori; three children (Callie, Maggie Beth and Grant)

Interesting Fact: On his first national television appearance, which happened when ABC News filmed his high school class trip to the White House, he was singing a Gaither song, "Let Freedom Ring."

Background: Grew up in rural Texas, about an hour outside of Houston

Education: B.A., Vocal Performance, Baylor University

Former Occupation: Directed Baylor University's Religious Hour Choir; artist in residence at First Baptist Church in Hurst, Texas

Other Jobs Now: Continues his work as a solo artist when not touring with the Vocal Band

Joined Gaither Vocal Band: July, 1997

First Concert as member of Gaither Vocal Band: Grand Ole Opry, Nashville, Tennessee

On Gospel Music: What unifies gospel music is the message, not a style. Our music is a mirror of our church units. Our churches are independent and diverse and made up of all age groups. They are all going to respond to different things and in order to reach out to all those people we (Gaither Vocal Band) perform in a wide range of styles.

On Joining the Vocal Band: It was a moment I wanted to savor. Being in the Vocal Band had been a dream of mine. I knew that even if it didn't work out, it had been a wonderful time. Being invited to join the Vocal Band is a story of God's grace and faithfulness.

On his Solo Career: The Vocal Band takes up most of my time, but when I'm not out with them I do as many solo dates as I can. Bill really encourages us to do our own thing. I like to take my wife and children with me when I can. And when I'm not on the road we remain very active in our church and devote as much time as we can to it. But my family is my most important legacy.

On Bill Gaither: He has so much integrity. He's very honest and down-to-earth.

On Guy Penrod: I think the best way to describe him is "servant." He gives a lot and that is a quality I admire very much. It is a very Christ-like quality.

On Mark Lowry: The first word I think of when I think of Mark is "brilliant." He is very funny... but to do comedy all the time you have to be really smart. He's very well read.



DAVID PHELPS

GUY PENROD

BILL GAITHER

MARK LOWRY

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Gaither Vocal Band

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