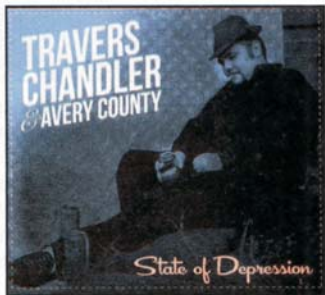


## TRIVERS CHANDLER AND AVERY COUNTY *STATE OF DEPRESSION*

Patuxent Music  
Patuxent CD-212



Travers Chandler and Patuxent Music head Tom Mindte make a great match. Both have a passion not just for traditional bluegrass of the '40s to '60s, but also for mining material of that era from deep in the catalogues of performers such as Charlie Monroe and Charlie Moore or from performers not as oft-remembered as they should be or from performers downright obscure.

Chandler's Patuxent debut attests to that. Alongside Monroe's "Nobody Cares For Me," and Moore's "Cotton Farmer" are selections written or once covered by Vernon Oxford ("Little Sister Throw Your Red Shoes Away"), the Bowes Brothers ("Too Deep In Heartaches"), Claude Boone ("Have You Come To Say Goodbye?"), Larry Richardson ("Let Me Fall") and Dewey Farmer (the instrumental "Lonesome Smokey"). The recording opens with "Black Dust Fever," a gem of a slow-to-medium 3/4 lament by Marvin Davis that sympathetically depicts the dilemma of coal miners (or anyone faced with limited options). Ultimately, you do what you have to do. In this case, the man works out his life in the mine, but, to his satisfaction, realizes his family could eat.

That sets the mood and underscores the album's theme. These are hard-living songs, portraying tough situations. You can picture southern migrants listening to them in far away

bars and taverns. In "Little Sister..." the singer pleads with a sibling, urging her to give up the dancing and honky-tonking that is bringing her ill repute. "Cotton Farmer" gives us the classic giving-up-the-farm song, with the farmer taking a job in town. "Too Deep In Heartaches" describes itself, while Hank Williams, Jr.'s "Stoned At The Jukebox" perfectly sums the conditions suggested by the album's title cut.

To this material, Chandler brings a flexible lead voice somewhat reminiscent of Dudley Connell and Chris Brashear and brings a direct and unadulterated mandolin style full of blue notes and equal parts terse phrasing and tremelo passages. Backing him on this all-around quality debut are guitarist/vocalist Adam Poindexter, bassist/vocalist Blake Johnson, banjoist Mark Delaney, and fiddler Nate Leath. (Patuxent Music, P.O. Box 572, Rockville, MD 20848, [www.pxrec.com](http://www.pxrec.com).)JBW