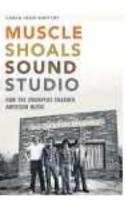
'Shoals Sound' author details favorite songs recorded there

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Carla Jean Whitley knows a lot about

For the past year or so, the managing editor of Birmingham magazine has been researching and writing her first book, "Muscle Shoals Sound Studio: How the Swampers Changed American

The book, a history of the famed recording studio in northwest Alabama, details the many superstars who have recorded there, the songs they sang,



the Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section, a group of studio musicians better known as the Swampers. In advance of

course,

her book's debut and her first booksigning July 21 at 4

p.m.at the Alabama Booksmith in Homewood, Whitley put together a list of her favorite songs that came out of Muscle Shoals Sound.

1. "Everlasting Light" by The Black Keys: I could choose any track from The Black Keys' Grammy award-winning album "Brothers" and call it a favorite. There was a fair bit of ruckus following the band's time in the Shoals; read the Rolling Stone piece "The Black Keys' Muscle Shoals Odyssey" for a look at why the band was disappointed in its recording experience in Sheffield. Even so, the work The Black Keys recorded in Alabama has been among their best, in my opinion.

2. "Wild Horses" by The Rolling Stones: The Stones recorded only three songs in the Shoals, and I could easily label "Brown Sugar" or "You've Got to Move" my favorite from the session. But



Carla Jean Whitley

TURN IT UP

Listen to these and other songs recorded at Muscle Shoals Sound Studio on Carla Jean Whitley's Spotify playlist. Connect with Whitley and learn more about the book at carlajeanwhitley.

"Wild Horses" captures my heart with Mick Jagger's gentle crooning, and earns bonus points for being partially composed in the bathroom at Muscle Shoals Sound. (My best creative work often comes when I'm isolated, too!) 3. "Free Bird"

by Lynyrd Skynyrd: The "Skynyrd's First and ... Last" version of the iconic rock song doesn't have the same drive as the single we've all come to know and love (or loathe). But I still dig it because of its place in music history. It's interesting to hear this earlier take on the famous song. I'm also biased toward Skynyrd as they hail from Jacksonville, Fla., where I was raised.

4. "For What It's Worth" by Cher: Cher was the first act to record at Muscle Shoals Sound after its 1969 opening. Although the resulting album, "3614 Jackson Highway," wasn't a hit, it was met with critical acclaim. There are several great covers on this record, but I favor her cover of "For What It's Worth," written by Stephen Stills and made most famous by Buffalo

5. "Take a Letter, Maria" by R.B. Greaves: Cher's album wasn't a hit, but the studio found its first big one shortly thereafter. R.B. Greaves' horn-flecked kiss-off song shot to No. 2 on the Billboard charts. It was Muscle Shoals Sound's first taste of hit making, and the song endures

6. "Careless Whisper" by George Michael: OK, I haven't actually heard the Muscle Shoals Sound Studio version of this song; it was released in Japan, and I haven't been able to track it down. But I thoroughly enjoy the Wham! interpretation we know so well stateside, and I walked around singing "Careless Whisper" for days after I realized George Michael had recorded in the Shoals.

GARDEN TALK

Home grown tomatoes: Dealing with blossom-end rot



An otherwise ripe tomato suffers from blossom-end rot. (Courtesy)

Bethany A. O'Rear

I'm having trouble with my tomatoes. I have noticed brown spots near the base of the fruit. They start out small but continue to increase in size. What is this disease and how can I get rid of it?

Well, if it's any consolation, you're not alone. We've been getting several calls from folks who appear to have the same tomato malady as you.

The culprit is blossomend rot, and is actually a physiological disorder, not a disease. It is easily identified as a brown, leathery rot developing on or near the blossom-end of the fruit.

It starts with a dry brown, dime-sized lesion, generally increasing in diameter as the condition worsens. In time, the lesions often become covered with a black mold.

BER occurs as a result of calcium deficiency within the plant. This deficiency is typically induced by fluctuations in the plant's water supply.

Due to the fact that calcium is not a highly "mobile" element in the plant, even brief changes in the water supply can cause BER. Droughty soil or damage to the roots from excessive or improper cultivation (severe root pruning) can restrict water intake, preventing the plant from getting the calcium that it needs.

Also, if plants are growing in highly acidic soil or are getting too much water from heavy rain, over-irrigation or high relative humidity, they can develop calcium deficiency and BER. To control BER, take the following

• Keep the pH of the soil at 6.0 to 6.5. Perform a soil test and apply the recommended rate of lime, using dolomitic or high-calcium limestone. This step should take place two to four months before planting tomatoes.

▶ Apply the required amount of fertilizer when necessary based on soil test results for tomato. Applying too much fertilizer at one time can induce BER. Following soil test recommendations is the surest way to fertilize properly.

Use mulches, such as pine straw, composted sawdust or newspapers, to conserve moisture.

• Give your plants adequate water. Tomato plants need about 1.5 inches of water per week during fruiting. Extreme fluctuations in soil moisture can result in a greater incidence of BER.

If your plants develop BER, drench the root zone with a calcium solution at the rate of 4 level tablespoons of calcium nitrate or calcium chloride per gallon of water. If day temperatures are greater than 85 to 90°F, do not use calcium chloride, as foliage burn can occur. Calcium nitrate is the better option for our hot summer days. (One note — applying calcium is not a substitute for proper irrigation and fertility management.)

Some varieties of tomato tend to be more sensitive to conditions that cause BER. Try growing several varieties and keep notes as to their performance.

▶ If you experience severe problems with BER, you should remove the infected fruits. Once a fruit develops BER, it will not grow or repair the infected area. In fact, the damaged area could serve as an entry point for diseasecausing bacteria or fungi.

In general, it's easier and neaper to take steps early to prevent blossom end rot in tomatoes than it is to treat the problem once it shows up.

Happy gardening!

Garden Talk is written by Bethany A. O'Rear of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, C. Beaty Hanna Horticulture & Environmental Center, which is based at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. Email questions to Bethany atbethany@aces. edu or call 205 879-6964



of Salem announce the en-

gagement of their daughter, Heather Ellen Duran, to Matthew Arlen Martin, son of the late Mr. Arlie Martin of Clay.

Heather is the granddaughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hudson of Jasper and the late Mr. and Mrs. Jose Duran of Shelbyville, KY. Miss Duran is a graduate of Lee-Scott Academy and a summa cum laude graduate of Auburn University where she received a BSBA in Economics and a MSBA in Fi-

nance and sang in the Auburn University Concert Choir. She is employed as a risk manager for BBVA Compass in Birmingham.

Mr. Martin is the nephew of Mrs. Martha Martin of Center Point and the cousin of Randyal, Saralyn, Ian and Julia Godwin of Roebuck. The bride-groom to be graduated from Cathedral Christian High School, attended The University of North Alabama and is employed as a network administrator for Hoffman Media in Hoover.

The wedding ceremony will be held November 1, 2014, at Auburn First Baptist Church, and the reception will follow at The Hotel at Auburn University.

