

Tenth Anniversary Celebration: Volume II  
Willie Nelson/Marty Robbins

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# COUNTRYMUSIC

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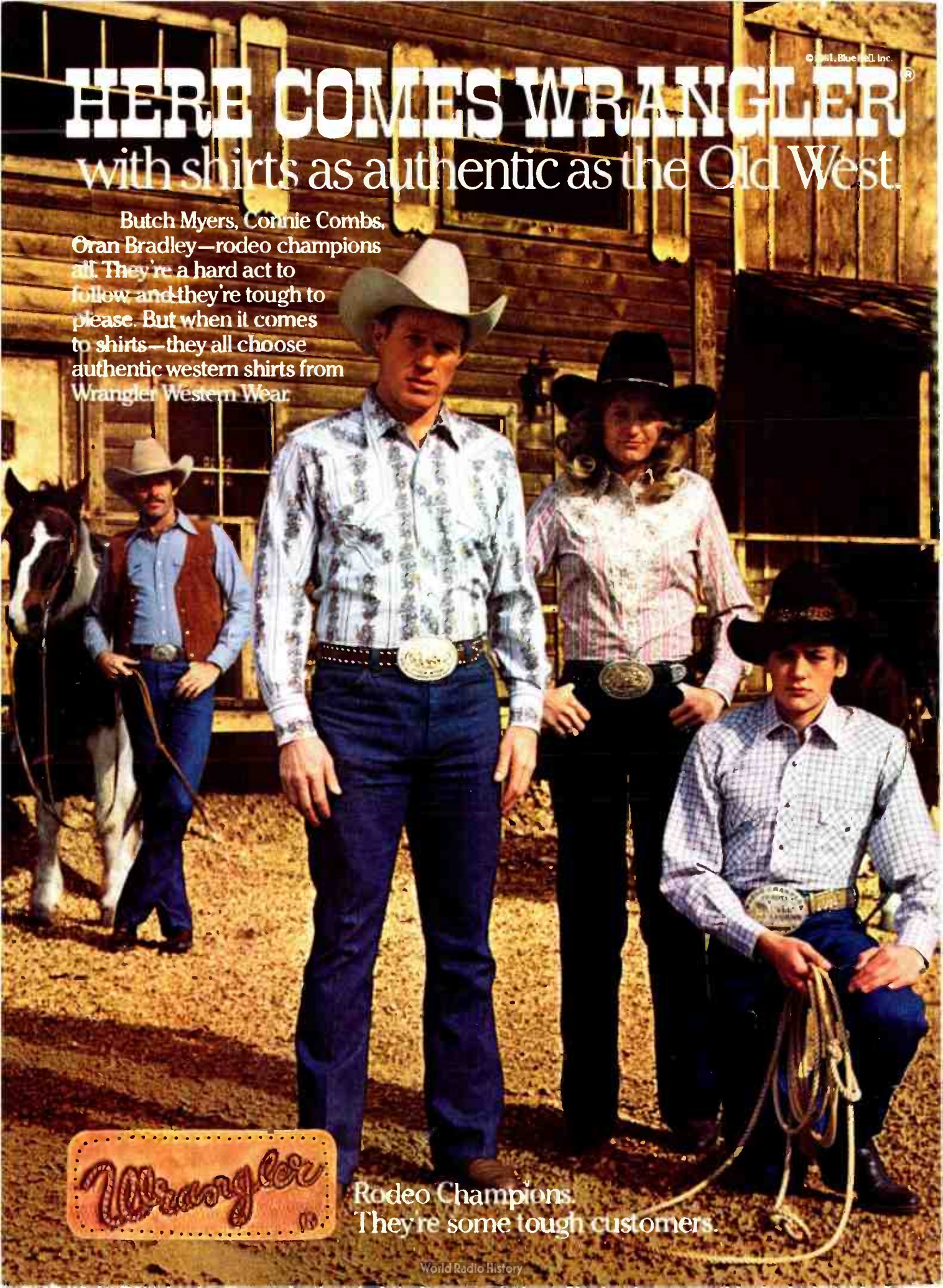




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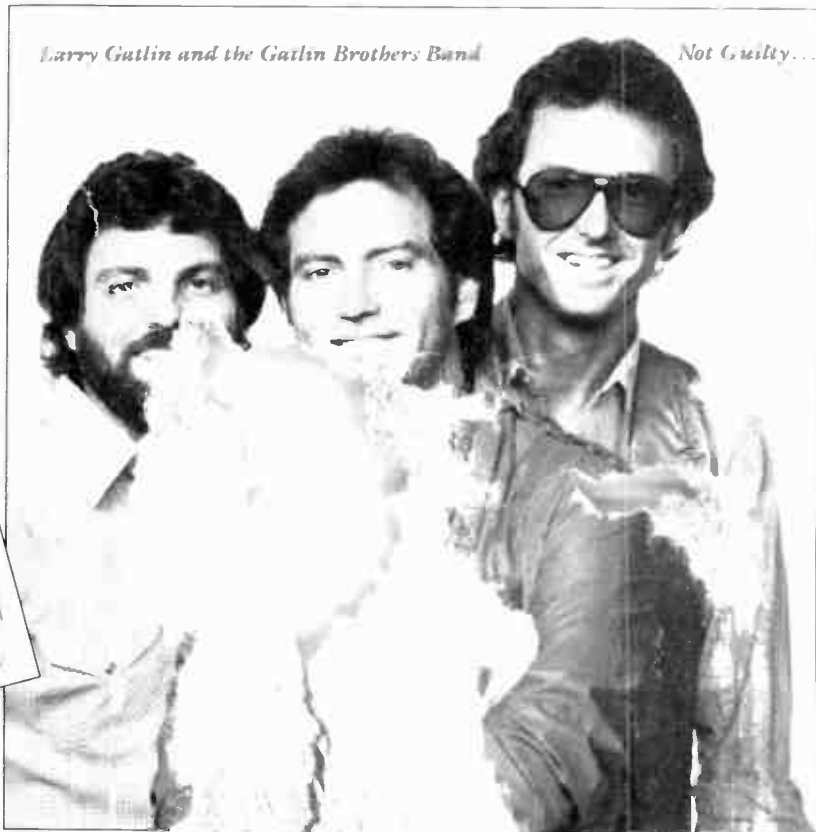
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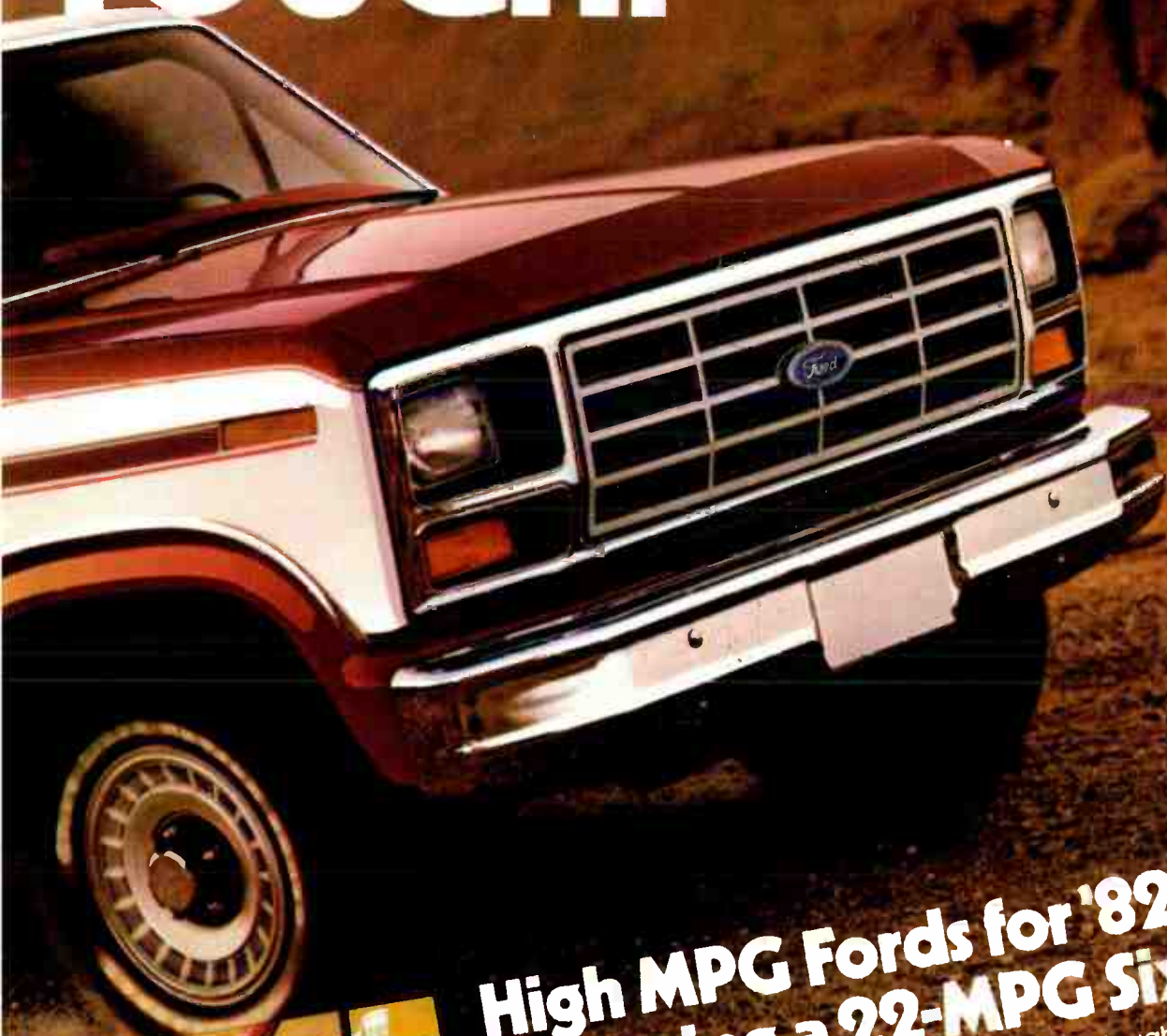
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# FORD

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# COUNTRY MUSIC<sup>TM</sup>

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## 7 Readers, Writers & Pickers:

We continue the celebration of our ten years in print. Readers, Writers and Pickers alike have answered our invitation to tell us what they think about country music and *Country Music*.

As promised we have reprinted Dave Hickey's brilliant article *In Defense of The Telecaster Cowboy Outlaws*, perhaps the definitive look at Willie and Waylon and the boys as it was in January 1974.

Joan Dew, author of *Singers & Sweethearts* and co-author of many books on country music, including Tammy Wynette's autobiography *Stand by Your Man*, and Minnie Pearl's autobiography, shares a sampling from her collection of favorite quotes from country music artists.

John Morthland takes a hard look at the country music industry and discovers that at a time when the rest of the music business was worried about its future, country music exploded into a boom industry. And now, for the first time ever, its influence is permeating other media and American pop culture in general.

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## 23 Double Headers

by MARY ELLEN MOORE

A slew of single artists are going double for reasons ranging from romance to revitalizing a career or two. You've heard Moe & Joe, George & Tammy, Dolly & Porter, Kenny & Dottie and Willie and almost everyone else. These are just a few. There's even a planned "death duet" with Jim Reeves and Patsy Cline. Are two heads really better than one?

---

## 26 Johnny Cash on Hank Williams and Will Shakespeare

Response of a country singer-writer after reading Chet Flippo's biography of Hank Williams, *Your Cheatin' Heart*.

---

## 30 Hank Williams, Jr.

by MICHAEL BANE

The Way Hank Done It (Revised)

At the start everyone wanted him to be a Junior Hank. Now, after great struggle, Hank, Jr. builds his own legend as a country bluesman. Still, no one sings a Hank song quite like he does.

---

## 35 Marty Robbins Doesn't Sweat the Small Stuff

by BOB ALLEN

A second heart attack didn't stop Marty Robbins, so why should he be nervous when he plays Saginaw Valley State College?

---

## 45 Record Reviews

Don King, Jerry Jeff Walker, Sleepy LaBeef, Jody Payne, T.G. Sheppard, Anne Murray, Ricky Skaggs, Riders In The Sky, Faron Young, Guy Clark & more.

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## 61 Willie At Austin City Limits

by BILL OAKEY

Memories of Paris in the 30s and Austin in the 70s.

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# COUNTRY MUSIC

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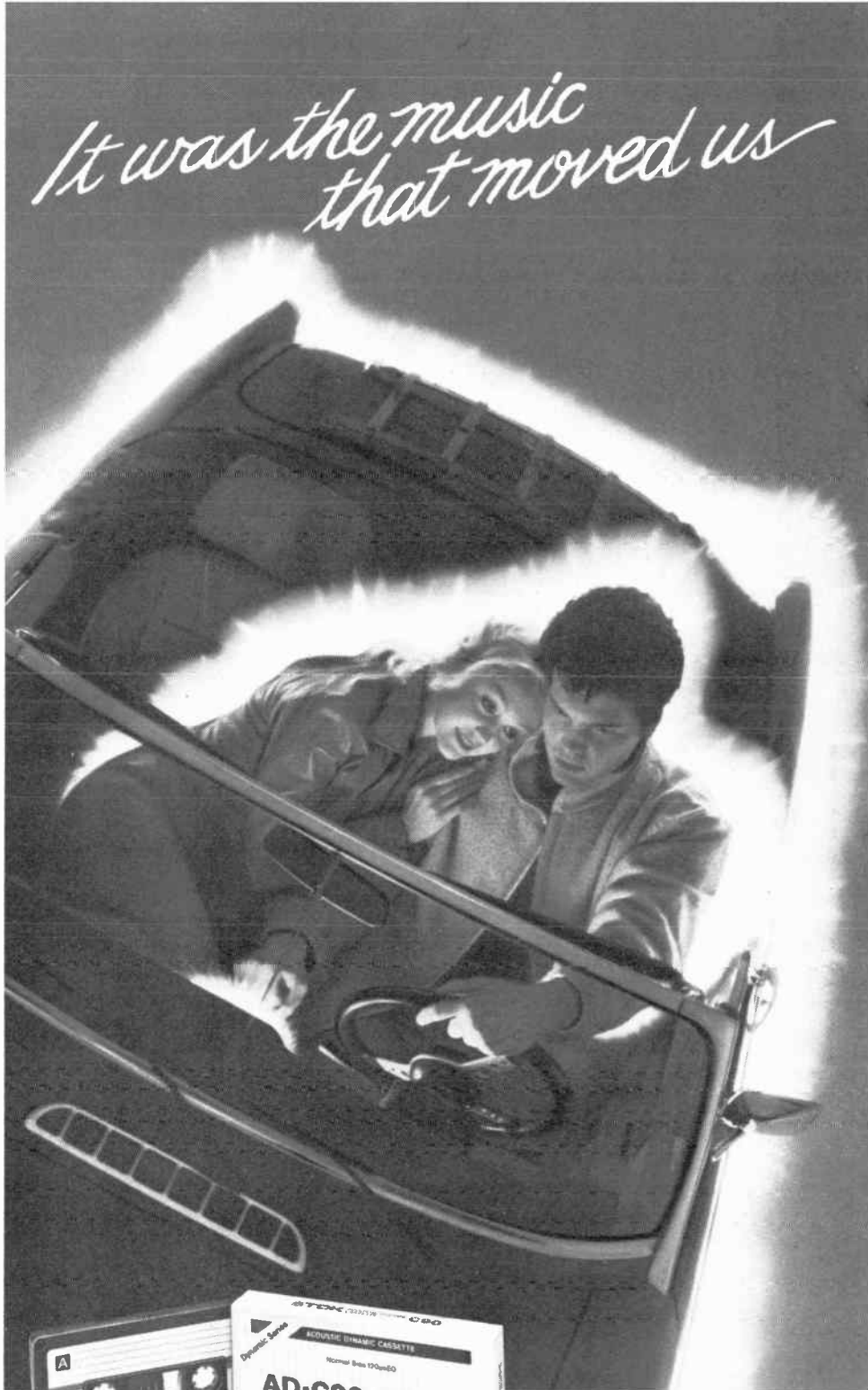
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# Readers Writers & Pickers

## 10th Anniversary Celebration Volume II:

*With our September 1981 issue, we began our year-long Tenth Anniversary Celebration. We had letters from the Pickers, essays from the Writers and happiness from the effort. Now, since the Readers have seen that issue, we are able to continue the celebration by publishing here the first letters from the Readers; Stay tuned for the ongoing celebration in following issues and join in by writing us, too.*

---

Dear *Country Music Magazine*:

*Country Music Magazine* has been an inspiration to me personally. I am a man who appreciates inspiration because that is something I need not only in my business, which is music, but also in my private life, which is not always as musical as I would want it to be.

Then there's friendship. That's real important to me also, maybe even more than music. *Country Music Magazine* has been a good friend to me, and I am a man who has some of the best friends in the world, some of whom are cantankerous but lovable and sincere.

I think the thing that has been most responsible for the success of *Country Music Magazine*, and certainly the thing which most endears it to me, is simply that the people who run it are people who love music, wherein truth becomes the norm.

Wherein behind the scenes of the editorials we have the editors, our musical Musketees, Russell, Patrick, and Michael, buddies of mine who like to hear a good country song sung right. When I sing, I sing for you.

Love your friend,  
PINEAPPLE JACK CLEMENT,  
FORMERLY KNOWN AS  
THE BOURBON COWBOY

I have just picked up the September issue of *Country Music Magazine*. I was very pleased with the articles and about the things you've said about Tammy Wynette. Tammy is the most beautiful singer in the world. I have been a great fan of hers since hearing her voice on *Apartment #9*. Each album that comes out, I feel, how can she top this one. Tammy always makes it though. I have seen Tammy perform several times and I have also seen her perform with George Jones. They are both the best. Tammy can sing a song and make it a piece of art. Tammy is truly The First Lady of Country Music.

DENNIS R. BROWN

P.S. Maybe there could be two desert islands. Also Tammy keep up the good work we love you.

Upon reading of Rodney Crowell's subscription cancellation, I decided to forego subscribing rather than support writers of "an unjust review" of one of my favorite albums. Thank you.

A loyal Cherry Bombe,  
MARIANNE ROSS  
SEBASTAPOL,  
CALIFORNIA

Dear Russ:

Congrats on 10 years in the business! Thanks for your continuous support.

My best,  
ROSANNE CASH

Congratulations! *Country Music* is now ten years old and getting better with age! I have been a reader for the last five years and I have enjoyed it greatly. Each issue is packed with interesting facts on the stars the people want to read about. Your writers are the "cream of the crop." The articles are written in a refreshing style unique to the author of each. There is never a boring minute when I read your fine magazine.

Also, I want to thank you for giving new singers space in your magazine. We, the readers, learn much about the stars of the future. You feature the older stars who are all but forgotten by most publications. You all are truly a beautiful bunch of people. Happy 10th Anniversary and wish for ten more!

KEVIN TURNER  
KEEZLETOWN, VA.

P.S. How about an article on two of my favorite ladies—Donna Fargo and Helen Cornelius?!



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- Half As Much • Baby, We're Really in Love • Honky Tonk Blues • Jambalaya (On the Bayou) • Settin' the Woods on Fire
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- Take These Chains from My Heart • My Main Trial Is Yet to Come
- The Log Train

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- Lynn Anderson Rose Garden • The Carter Family Can the Circle Be Unbroken • Johnny Cash Folsom Prison Blues • Barbara Mandrell Midnight Oil • Louvin Brothers When I Stop Dreaming
- Patsy Cline Walking After Midnight • Hugh Cross—Riley Puckett Red River Valley • Delmore Brothers Blues Stay Away from Me
- Kitty Wells It Wasn't God Who Made Honky-Tonk Angels • Bob Wills San Antonio Rose

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A friend of mine turned me on to your 10th Anniversary issue and I was so intrigued, I finally (after 3 years of reading a few copies a year) subscribed.

Actually the reason I'm writing is because I want to say I'm sick and tired of watching all these commercial country shows and I think it's about time some of the "Outlaws"/"Rednecks"/and "Good Ole Boys" got together and put on their own TV show, even if it's an hour thing. I really can't handle watching shows like *George Burns in Nashville*. You call him a country singer? Come on, the guy records *I Wish I Was 18 Again* and the thing sells. Does that mean he's country? What happened to the killer's version? Now that was country! And what about Barbara Mandrell and the Mandrell Sisters show? Sure they're gorgeous and are all talented but their choice of song material and cornball humor reminds me of *Hee Haw* and still that don't make 'em country! She records *I Was Country When Country Wasn't Cool* and has everyone singing along. Sure the words are great and prob-

Someone please give J.R. Young a big kiss from me. "Yahoosers Fiddle As Country Burns" should be bronzed and hung in every building on Music Row. In fact the entire 10th Anniversary issue gave me the shivers. Thanks for not praising people who don't deserve it. I was beginning to think no one cared any more. You're right to look for quality in country music . . . you know what it means.

PAULA YOUNG  
 MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

With regard to your Tenth Year celebration, as a reader, I would like to see two things—more information on Delbert McClinton, and an article on Mr. Kenneth Threadgill of Austin, Texas. Mr. Threadgill has been in the business a long time. He is in his seventies and knew both Jimmie Rogers and Hank Williams. He has a lot of stories to tell. He was in Willie Nelson's movie, *Honeysuckle Rose*, and at least last summer, was singing on Wednesday nights at Threadgill's Service Station in Austin. It is restored in fine 1930's style and the black-eyed peas are wonderful. Mr. Threadgill sings a fine blues yodel and is ably accompanied by Mr. Bill Neely on guitar. With luck, you will get Sybil for your waitress—she is from Paris, France. The address for Threadgills is

Threadgills's Service Station  
 6416 North Lamar  
 Austin, Texas

I think it would be well worth your time to pay him a visit. He is living history and may not be around that much longer. Maybe you could devote an entire issue to old timers in the business.

SHANA WEEKS  
 BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON

ably true, but screw the music. The only reason I ever played the thing was because "the master" lends some vocals to it.

I don't mean to pick on these two shows and I personally have nothing against the artists, it's just that these shows bug me, and shows like it as well.

Maybe Bocephus had a lot of truth to his song *Dixie on My Mind*, but it's not always the fans you have to worry about, it's those "people" in charge of television programming.

Only two shows I've enjoyed on TV were *Hank Williams The Man and His Music* and a *Waylon Special*.

So come on Waylon and Hank, you guys did it once but now let's get the rest of 'em like ole George, Mr. Hag, John Austin, D.A.C., J.R. Cash, Lacy J., and the rest of the clan to put us together a show we'll never forget. New England sure needs it.

MIKE SOULOR  
 COUNTRY MUSIC PROGRAMMER  
 WGFP/AM 94  
 WEBSTER, MASSACHUSETTS



Hey Russ and *Country Music Magazine*:

Congratulations from us Good Ole Boys down here in Pigs Ears and Hawg Maws Country, Nashville, Tennessee. Hope you boys in the Big Apple can keep it together for another ten years 'cause its the only way I can keep track of what Waylee and Willin and Cash are up to. Everytime I had trouble getting my tonker to honk I pick up one of your rags to get the lowdown and pick-me-up that I need to keep me going.

I like to read your magazine by kerosene lamp while drinking a bottle of 1910 Coca-Cola and eating Hoppin' John on the side.

The real reason I'm writing this letter is because there's a rumor going round that I ain't Honky Tonkin' no more and I just wanted to let you know that if you're going to keep printing what you've been printing, I'm gonna keep doing what I been doing. And to all of the people on your staff, to the writers that make stories happen, to the guys that play the records on radio, to the promotion and record label people, and to all the fans that make this crazy and wonderful business keep going round—I hope you can keep getting it up when you're down.

Best wishes.  
 JOE SUN





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Dear Russ:

Congratulations on your 10th Anniversary. Hope you have many more years of success. You get better and better.

When I'm on the road, it's a good feeling to come across a new issue of *Country Music* on a newsstand. I'm sure a lot of country music fans feel the same way.

Anyway, thanks for being you and giving me many pleasurable moments.

A reader and friend,  
BILLY SWAN

I recently purchased your Tenth Anniversary issue. It was my first for your magazine. I must say I thoroughly enjoyed it. Congratulations on the issue and for the first ten years; may the next be equally as enjoyable!

I was more than excited to see Emmylou Harris voted into top artist and top album (*Roses in the Snow*) for the last ten years. I must admit, that I was surprised that *Roses* was the selection. The previous section (describing writers' favorites) mentioned *Pieces of the Sky* more than once. As a BIG fan of Emmy's I was more excited than words can say. What others in the store thought of my emotion I don't know, and I really don't care.

(P.S. I was very interested and excited to see that one writer considered Gram Parsons' *Grievous Angel* as one of the most outstanding. The album is dynamic in more than one way. He gave country music a new direction, later to be followed by the likes of Ronstadt, et al. Additionally, he gave us the pure voice of Emmy. God!!)

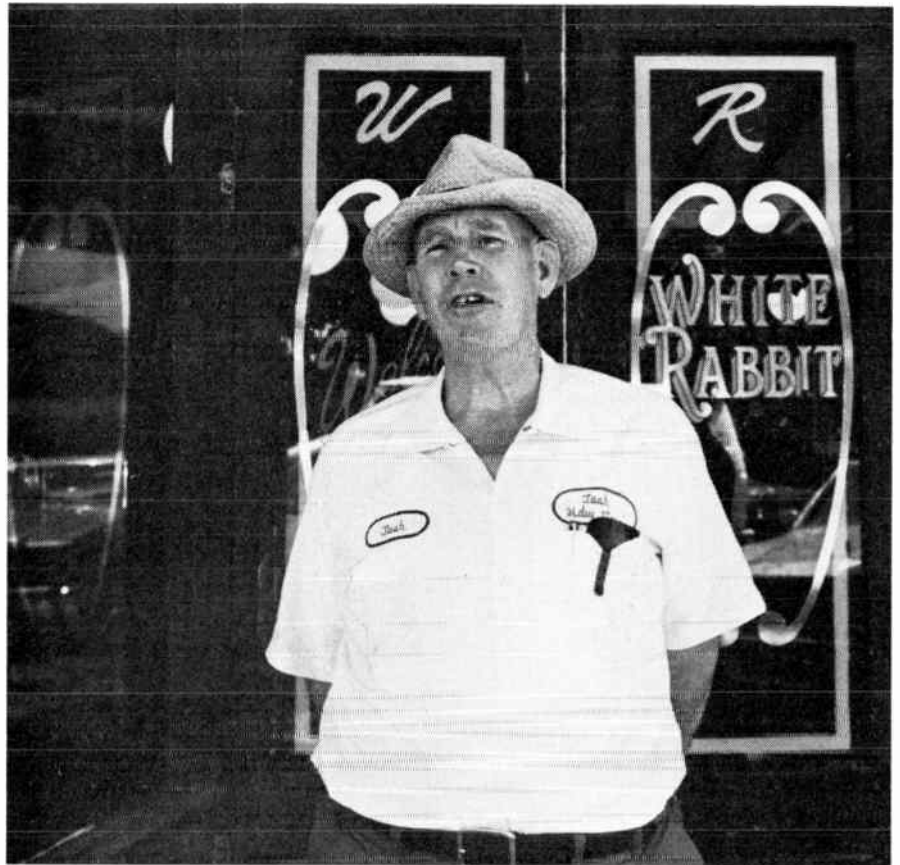
CAREY A. AHEARN  
DUBLIN, OHIO

P.S. Also noted (didn't think it would get past me, did you?) that Emmylou's one of the magazine's editorial advisors. What all does this entail for her? Thanks!

Congratulations from Johnny and myself on your ten years in print. You have contributed so greatly to further country music—from the first issue of *Country Music Magazine* on.

Here's wishing you ten more years! Your magazine is tremendous!

Sincerely,  
JIMMY CARTER  
MANAGER FOR JOHNNY DUNCAN



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Waylon Jennings



33231



34167



Dolly Parton



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[RCA]
- FLEETWOOD MAC 3 4 2 9 1  
\* TUSK [WARNER BROS.]
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[MOTOWN]
- BARRY MANILOW 2 3 2 9 5  
GREATEST HITS [ARISTA]
- BEACH BOYS 2 3 5 5 9  
ENDLESS SUMMER [CAPITOL]

- THE CARS 4 4 0 3 3  
[ELEKTRA]
- STYX: CORNERSTONE 4 2 4 0 6  
[A&M]
- THE B-52's 3 4 4 0 7  
WILD PLANET [WARNER BROS.]
- CRYSTAL GAYLE 4 3 2 5 9  
CLASSIC CRYSTAL [UNITED ARTISTS]
- EDDIE RABBITT 2 4 3 4 6  
HORIZON [ELEKTRA]
- HANK WILLIAMS 2 4 2 1 9  
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- THE WHO 3 3 7 6 5  
FACE DANCES [WARNER BROS.]
- TOM JONES 5 4 2 2 4  
DARLIN' [MERCURY]
- VAN HALEN 1 4 6 2 0  
[WARNER BROS.]
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A LEGENDARY PERFORMER [RCA]
- BLUES BROTHERS 3 3 7 4 4  
ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK [ATLANTIC]
- STEPHANIE MILLS 2 4 5 9 7  
SWEET SENSATION [20TH CENTURY]
- RONNIE MILSAP 1 0 2 4 3  
GREATEST HITS [RCA]
- HERB ALPERT 4 3 4 6 7  
BEYOND [A&M]
- BEST OF THE DOOBIES 4 3 7 3 8  
[WARNER BROS.]
- CHRISY LANE 4 3 8 9 8  
I HAVE A DREAM [LIBERTY]
- PHIL COLLINS 5 3 9 5 2  
FACE VALUE [ATLANTIC]
- WAYLON AND WILLIE 3 4 2 3 4  
[RCA]
- AC/DC 1 3 7 7 2  
BACK IN BLACK [ATLANTIC]
- RAZZY BAILEY 2 4 4 8  
RAZZY [RCA]

- PROFILE/BEST OF EMMYLOU HARRIS 1 3 0 7 6  
[WARNER BROS.]
- VAN HALEN 0 0 7 6 2  
WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST [WARNER BROS.]
- ROBBIE DUPKEE 2 3 7 5 3  
[ELEKTRA]
- COMMODORES 3 3 8 3 3  
HEROES [MOTOWN]
- CONWAY TWITTY'S 2 3 4 1 9  
GREATEST HITS [MGM]
- PETE TOWNSHEND 2 3 4 7 2  
EMPTY GLASS [ATCO]
- JACKSON BROWNE 2 4 0 1 2  
HOLD OUT [ASYLUM]
- NEIL DIAMOND 3 2 8 7 7  
THE JAZZ SINGER [CAPITOL]
- BEST OF DOLLY PARTON 3 3 5 0 8  
[RCA]
- EDDIE RABBITT 4 0 0 2 4  
STEP BY STEP [ELEKTRA]
- SUPERTRAMP 5 3 6 1 4  
BREAKFAST IN AMERICA [A&M]
- BARRY MANILOW 4 2 2 3 0  
BARRY [ARISTA]
- HANK WILLIAMS JR. 3 3 8 6 8  
ROWDY [ELEKTRA/CORB.]
- QUEEN 3 4 2 9 2  
THE GAME [ELEKTRA]
- KENNY ROGERS AND DOTIE WEST 3 2 8 6 4  
EVERY TIME TWO FOOLS COLLIDE [UNITED ARTISTS]
- PERRY COMO 5 3 4 1 1  
LIVE ON TOUR [RCA]
- STYX 3 0 4 5 3  
THE GRAND ILLUSION [A&M]
- ANNE MURRAY 3 1 1 7  
NEW KIND OF FEELING [CAPITOL]
- THE STATLER BROTHERS 3 2 2 6 2  
10th ANNIVERSARY [MERCURY]
- FOGHAT 3 4 0 2 9  
LIVE [BEARSVILLE]
- CRYSTAL GAYLE 4 3 3 6 5  
A WOMAN'S HEART [DOLBY/BEST]
- RONNIE MILSAP 3 3 1 9 2  
MILSAP MAGIC [RCA]
- CARLY SIMON 4 2 2 2 0  
COME UPSTAIRS [WARNER BROS.]
- QUINCY JONES 3 4 0 8 1  
THE DUDE [A&M]
- SYLVIA DRIFTER 5 4 0 7 1  
[RCA]
- KOOL & THE GANG 4 2 2 3 1  
CELEBRATE! [DE-LITE]

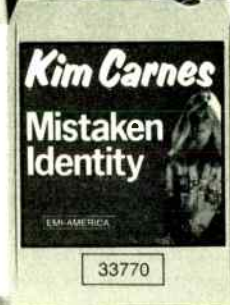
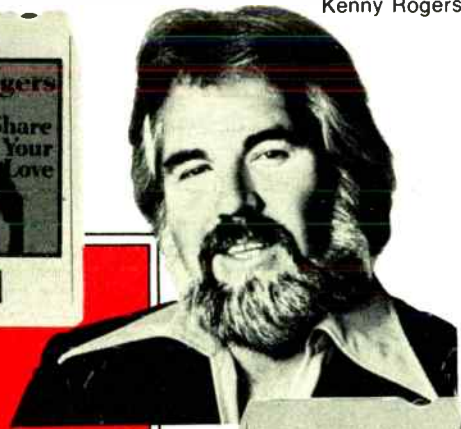
- GEORGE BENSON 5 2 4 8 6  
GIVE ME THE NIGHT [WARNER/BOWEN]
- ALABAMA 3 3 8 1 2  
MY HOMES IN ALABAMA [RCA]
- THE CARS 1 0 2 6 7  
PANORAMA [ELEKTRA]
- WILLIE NELSON 3 4 1 2 7  
SWEET MEMORIES [RCA]
- LARRY GRAHAM 3 3 8 9 1  
ONE IN A MILLION YOU [WARNER BROS.]
- THE BEST OF THE STATLER BROS. RIDES AGAIN VOL. 2 4 4 2 0 3  
[MERCURY]
- SMOKEY ROBINSON 3 3 9 3 2  
BEING WITH YOU [TAMLA]
- EAGLES 3 0 0 3 0  
HOTEL CALIFORNIA [ASYLUM]
- LAKE SIDE 4 3 3 6 3  
FANTASTIC VOYAGE [SOLAR]
- DIANA ROSS 3 3 9 3 1  
TO LOVE AGAIN [MOTOWN]
- RAZZY BAILEY 3 4 0 2 0  
MAKIN' FRIENDS [RCA]
- DAVE & SUGAR 3 3 5 2 9  
GREATEST HITS [RCA]
- EMMYLOU HARRIS 5 3 2 6 8  
EVANGELINE [WARNER BROS.]
- WAYLON JENNINGS 3 0 3 7 6  
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN CRAZY [RCA]
- ENDLESS LOVE 6 3 3 9 2  
SOUNDTRACK [MERCURY]
- THE BEST OF THE KENDALLS 4 3 4 7 7  
[OVATION]
- GARY STEWART 3 3 9 2  
CACTUS AND A ROSE [RCA]
- COMMODORES 1 3 9 4 5  
MIDNIGHT MAGIC [MOTOWN]
- THE MUPPET MOVIE 3 0 4 0 5  
ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK [ATLANTIC]
- ANNE MURRAY 2 3 6 6 3  
LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY [TAMLA]
- LINDA RONSTADT 2 4 6 0 1  
MAD LOVE [ASYLUM]
- SISTER SLEDGE 3 3 8 8 1  
WE ARE FAMILY [COTILLION]
- KENNY ROGERS 0 0 7 7 0  
GIDEON [UNITED ARTISTS]
- FLEETWOOD MAC 2 4 0 2 5  
RUMOURS [WARNER BROS.]
- STEVIE WONDER 5 2 8 5 3  
HOTTER THAN JULY [RCA]
- THE BEST OF EDDIE RABBITT 3 4 1 0 9  
[ELEKTRA]

- DIANA ROSS 2 4 3 6 0  
DIANA [MOTOWN]
- CHRISTOPHER CROSS 2 4 6 5 8  
[WARNER BROS.]
- CRYSTAL GAYLE 4 2 5 1 3  
WHEN I DREAM [UNITED ARTISTS]
- MEL TILLIS 1 3 8 6 5  
ME AND PEPPER [ELEKTRA]
- ANNE MURRAY 3 3 6 1 8  
I'LL ALWAYS LOVE YOU [CAPITOL]
- GENESIS 3 0 1 0 6  
DUKE [ATLANTIC]
- BEST OF THE BEACH BOYS 2 3 9 4 6  
[CAPITOL]
- DOOBIE BROTHERS 3 2 2 8 7  
ONE STEP CLOSER [WARNER BROS.]
- WAYLON 5 1 2 3 6  
MUSIC MAN [RCA]
- ROGER WHITTAKER 1 0 0 4 9  
WITH LOVE [RCA]
- BLACK SABBATH 2 2 5 2 8  
HEAVEN AND HELL [WARNER BROS.]
- JACK JONES 2 3 2 3 6  
NOBODY DOES IT BETTER [MGM]
- RONNIE MILSAP 3 3 7 3 5  
IMAGES [RCA]
- PORTER WAGONER 3 0 5 4 9  
& DOLLY PARTON [RCA]
- EDDIE RABBITT 3 3 2 9 8  
LOVELINE [ELEKTRA]
- MEL TILLIS 6 0 6 5 8  
SOUTHERN RAIN [ELEKTRA]
- ZZ TOP 2 3 8 6 3  
ZZ WUJELLO [WARNER BROS.]
- THE CARS 3 3 3 3 4  
CANDY-O [ELEKTRA]
- ANNE MURRAY 4 4 1 6 6  
COUNTRY [CAPITOL]
- SEALS & CROFTS 4 4 3 2 4  
THE LONGEST ROAD [WARNER BROS.]
- JULIE NEWTON 5 3 9 2 2  
JUICE [CAPITOL]
- JACKSON BROWNE 3 4 3 6 7  
RUNNING ON EMPTY [ASYLUM]
- RAY STEVENS 3 3 2 4  
SHRINER'S CONVENTION [RCA]
- DOTIE WEST 5 4 0 5 2  
WILD WEST [LIBERTY]
- CHUCK MANGIONE 3 3 8 7 9  
FEELS SO GOOD [A&M]
- SHEENA EASTON 3 3 9 0 2  
[EMP-AMERICA]





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Kim Carnes

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Going to New York for the 10th Anniversary Writer's Conference was an experience I won't soon forget (especially on 24 hours' notice . . .). And reading the 10th anniversary issue brought everything back in living color. Just one correction however. For the record, I never—I repeat *never*—worked on a daily newspaper, as the editing of my essay indicated I did. There are many fates one feels fortunate enough to have been saved from in life—and that fate is one I feel extremely lucky to have been spared from.

RICH KIENZLE  
LEMINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA

I sit here with many thoughts racing through my mind as I read your 10th Anniversary issue. First of all, your essays were tremendous, to say the least. They are everything I've always felt about country music, but didn't have a college degree to help me put down the words so eloquently.

Country music has meant a lot to me ever since I can remember. I have a sure-fire way to tell whether a song is pure country or not. If the song is so good that it brings a tear to my eye and a chill to my bones, well that is all it takes. Hank Williams does this, and sometimes I don't even have to hear his music just his name. Merle Haggard, Hank Williams, Junior, George Jones are also classic.

To end with I would like to say how much I enjoy your magazine. I've been reading it for about three years. But recently when I was over a neighbor's house I discovered that she had a complete collection of your magazine. So to say the least I was in country music heaven for a long while. Best wishes to all of you for the next ten.

DELLA CARVER  
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI



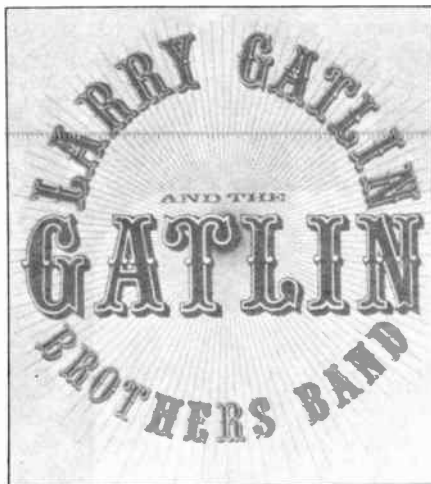
Dear Russ:

Please accept my sincere congratulations to you and your staff at *Country Music Magazine* for ten successful years in print!!

*Country Music Magazine* has been very supportive of my career with your wonderful reviews and stories of my albums and concerts and I sincerely appreciate it.

Here's to many more successful years!!

Sincerely,  
LACY J. DALTON



Dear Russ:

Congratulations to you and *Country Music Magazine's* entire staff on your 10th Anniversary!

Thank you for helping promote country music throughout the world with your in-depth articles about artists and keeping the country up to date with what's going on in country music.

Much continued success and if you ever need the Gatlin Boys, please give us a holler!

Sincerely,  
LARRY, STEVE & RUDY  
THE GATLIN BROTHERS

First of all, congratulations on 10 years of keeping us "Nuts" (as editor Russ Barnard calls us) informed about what's happening with the music we love. I've been an avid reader ever since the very first issue of *Country Music* and I have really enjoyed the last 10 years. One of the sections I enjoy is the Buried Treasures. I always read it to find good but basically unknown or hard to find records. Also, I would like to see you start having the poster centerfolds again. Lastly I would like to see Becky Hobbs in your Watch This Face column and I would love to see my favorite Charly McClain on the cover. She's fantastic!

MARK CLARK  
ROCKWOOD, MICHIGAN

P.S. It was great to see Patrick Carr mention Gram Parsons and the work he did. His own album *Grievous Angel* along with the Byrds' *Sweetheart of the Rodeo* and the Burritos' *Last of the Red Hot Flying Burrito Bros.* are classics.

Being a subscriber to your magazine, I must congratulate you on your Tenth Anniversary Edition. It was wonderful! I might also add, you have impeccable taste. I myself am an avid Tammy Wynette fan. I guess I will let you take her away to some desert island as long as you bring her back!

LORI KAARLELA  
CALMUT, MICHIGAN

Dear Russ:

On behalf of our artists and the staff at The Sound Seventy Corporation, including The Charlie Daniels Band, I would like to take this opportunity to say, "HAPPY 10TH ANNIVERSARY"!

Your success has been an aid to our entire industry and we wish you many more years of success.

Regards,  
THE SOUND SEVENTY CORPORATION  
RON HUNTSMAN  
VICE PRESIDENT/  
ARTIST PROMOTION & PUBLICITY

I hope you print this in your magazine. I have been receiving *Country Music* for three years now, and in all that time there has only been two or three articles on George Jones. I don't think that people should down Jones for his drinking, as if no one else had ever done that. He's real country and one of country music's best singers that there will ever be. He deserves all of his awards and then some. Please do more on George.

KATHY BROWN  
EUREKA, MISSOURI

I want to congratulate you on your 10th Anniversary. I've enjoyed your magazine very much. I only started just 13 issues ago of *Country Music Magazine*, but plan on keeping up my subscription.

Since getting *Country Music*, I have gotten to know about many artists, as Waylon Jennings, Eddie Rabbitt and the Oak Ridge Boys, etc. I am a very big fan of Waylon's. I read every article, every word about him in your magazine. I saw an ad in the magazine about Waylon fans, and since answering the ad, I met another Waylon fan, and we still correspond with each other.

So, as I had seen in your 10th Anniversary Issue, I am writing to let you and your other readers know how much I've enjoyed *Country Music Magazine*.

Well, keep up the good work. Again, congratulations, hope for another 10 years.  
MS. DEBRA K MORGAN  
DUNCANVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

I'm disappointed that *Country Music* had no congratulatory message from Dottie West in your 10th Anniversary Edition. I've been Dottie's fan since before *Country Music* existed, and I know Dottie is not the type of person who would fail to respond if invited to do so.

Also, on the page showing your miniaturized cover reproductions, it appears that Dottie West's picture has been on the *Country Music* cover only once—three years ago—whereas other top female singers have been on two to six times. Don't you think it's Dottie's turn for a cover picture?

Congratulations on your Tenth Anniversary!

WILLIAM ETHERIDGE  
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA





Whoever wrote 'not a creature was stirring' obviously never received a gift of Seagram's 7. It makes such a great gift because it makes so many great drinks. And give yourself a little gift—moderation.

# The Season stirs with

Seagram's



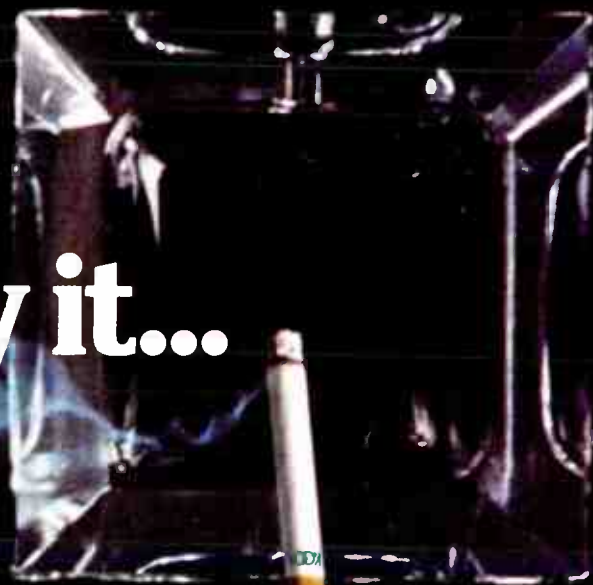
# There's only one way



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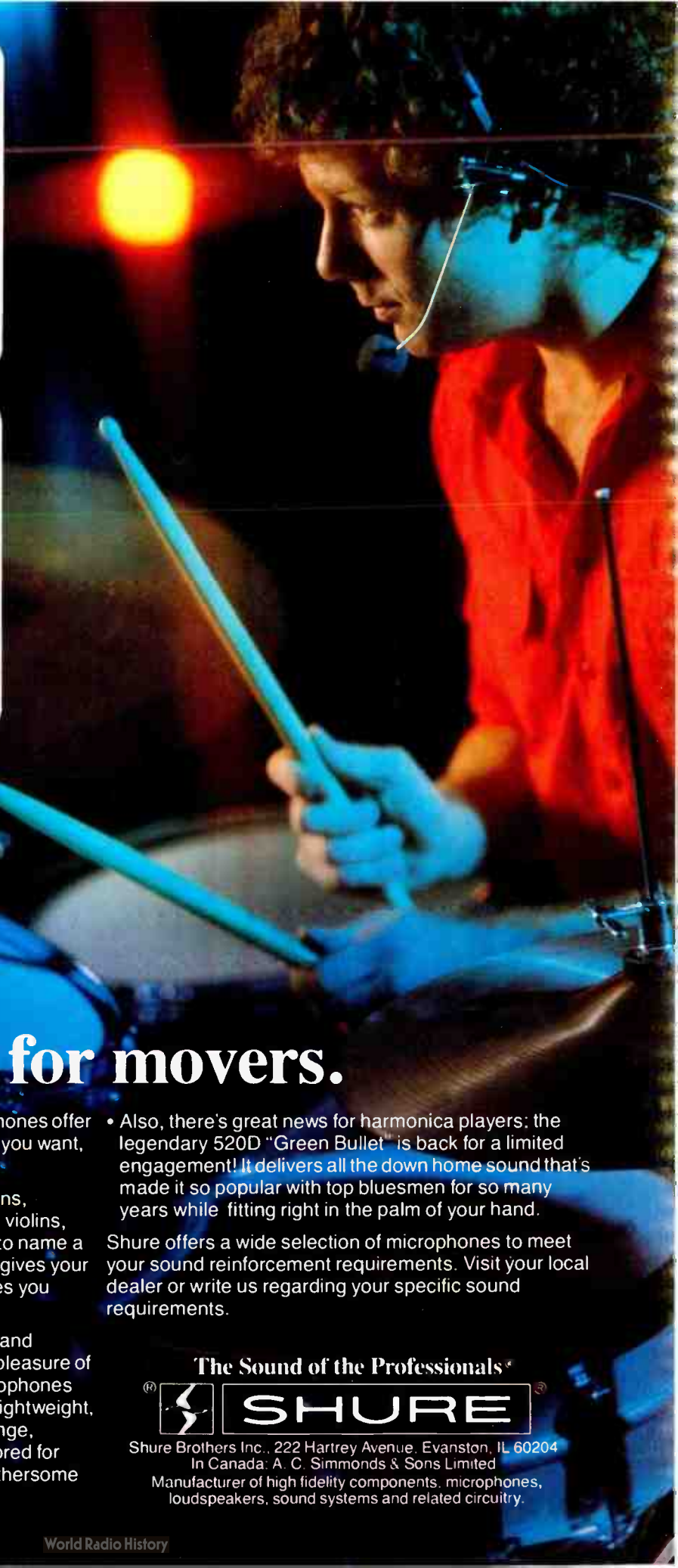
to play it...



Wherever the music is hot,  
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only one sensation this refreshing.



15 mg. "tar", 1.2 mg. nicotine av.  
per cigarette. FTC Report May '81.



## Microphones for movers.

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- Take the tiny SM17. It's a favorite of musicians, because it quickly attaches right on banjos, violins, mandolins, guitars, and the acoustic bass, to name a few. And, unlike contact pickups, the SM17 gives your instrument a super natural sound that makes you forget you're using a microphone at all!
- Or, you can join the hundreds of drummers and keyboard players who have discovered the pleasure of using the SM10A/12A/14A head-worn microphones (with or without monitor earphone). These lightweight, noise-canceling microphones offer a full range, smooth frequency response especially tailored for vocals so you can sing *and* play without bothersome booms getting in your way.

- Also, there's great news for harmonica players: the legendary 520D "Green Bullet" is back for a limited engagement! It delivers all the down home sound that's made it so popular with top bluesmen for so many years while fitting right in the palm of your hand.

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*A slew of single artists are going double for more reasons than one. Are two heads really better than one?*

# DOUBLE HEADERS

**By Mary Ellen Moore**

**O**ccasionally, as I ponder the meaning of a negative bank balance, I find myself wishing that somewhere along the road I'd removed a thorn from Willie Nelson's paw and that now, in return, he would sing a song with me.

George Burns must indeed be God, because from somewhere way, way over the hill, he divined my most innermost prayer and recorded it: *Willie, Won't You Sing a Song With Me?* is, of course, the stuff positive bank balances are made of.

But a country duo doesn't have to be Willie and Waylon or Willie and Ray or Willie and Leon to be successful. A slew of singles are going double for reasons ranging from romance to revitalizing a career or two.

The duo everybody thinks of first this year was relatively unknown last year; that is, their relatives were known, but who'd ever heard of David Frizzell (Lefty's brother) or Shelly West (Dottie's daughter) before they collaborated on the unforgettable *You're the Reason God Made Oklahoma?*

Although Frizzell had toured with his brother and continued touring and recording after his military duty, he admits, "I didn't have any success then. . . ." Tired of being on the road, he bought his own nightclub, "Frizzell's", in Lindsey, California, in order to give everybody a chance to work.

This is where it gets confusing. David's brother Allen was front guitarist for Dottie West. Shelly toured off and on as a backup singer with her mother in the late 70s. She met Allen, the two became "partners," they headed west and eventually hooked up with David. Although Allen and Shelly, now engaged, planned to record together, David noticed that he and Shelly "hit it off real well as far as our voices went. That's when the first idea came as far as doing a duet."

Everything clicked: the duo's unusual voices ("You don't sound like Linda Ronstadt," Shelly hears constantly), the great



**George Burns recorded *Willie Won't You Sing A Song With Me?* But a country duo doesn't have to be Willie & Waylon, or Willie & Leon, or Willie & Ray, or Willie and anyone else for that matter, to be successful.**

song and, of course, the marketing potential (Lefty's brother, Dottie's kid—great!). The two are very proud of the family connections, and their follow-up duet was even called *Carryin' on the Family Names*.

Had the title not already been taken by Hank Williams, Jr., they could easily have called their album *Family Tradition*.

Shelly's mother may well be responsible for the current trend of pairing two already established singers to gain an even bigger market or audience. The story is now legend: Dottie West and Kenny Rogers recorded a song together on a whim, then decided to make their relationship semi-permanent—Kenny because he admittedly wanted wider recognition in the country market, which "Sunshine Girl" Dottie could give him; and Dottie because her career needed a shot in the arm like Kenny

Rogers. The pairing far surpassed anyone's expectations, with both partners now having successful solo careers as well as winning the CMA's *Duo of the Year* award for two consecutive years in 1978 and 1979.

For Frizzell and West, the success of their duet was "kinda an accident all the way around; it just kinda snowballed." It's easy to understand why Shelly, only 23, walks around with a big smile on her face for everyone. She found her Willie.

For other duos, it's not so accidental. Oh, the idea may begin casually enough in a German bar:

"Hey, Joe, we really ought to cut a song together."

"Hey, Moe, ole buddy, that's a great idea!"

Thus, are legends born. That, by the way, is a true story, and when our two good ole boys got back to the States, they recorded an album by the same name.

"The duo," notes one observer, "has served to reinforce both solo careers instead of taking away from either." That may be the misstatement of the year, since even my mother's heard of Moe and Joe, but she wouldn't know a Moe Bandy or a Joe Stampley if he ran over her with his Evinrude.

Like the West-Frizzell promotion, the "Hey, Joe-Hey, Moe" idea was a natural. The fact that the publicity is supported by two excellent country singers, each with a string of hits to his (solo) credit, helped turn the "concept" into one of the biggest—and longest-running—of the contemporary duo success stories.

How do you explain how two above-average-but-not-superstar guys can suddenly become household names? Are two heads better than one? Is it true that the audience buys a concept, not the music?

"I think," says Woody Bowles, director of press and public information for CBS, Nashville, "that fans like to see two artists who are popular get together. It unites the fans of both artists. . . . There are a lot of Joe fans who've become Moe fans, and

# Johnny Cash

## On Hank Williams and Will Shakespeare

**Response of a country singer-writer after reading an attempted destruction of a legend and desecration of the remains of a powerful and important musical force.**

**I** was on tour in Europe and was reading two books. One was William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*; the other was Chet Flippo's *Your Cheatin' Heart*. In Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, when I got to the part about Antony's oration at Caesar's funeral, I had just finished Chet Flippo's *Your Cheatin' Heart*. So following is my response to Flippo's book. I seem to have gotten my zealous, rebellious reaction to the same mixed up with Marc Antony's defense of Caesar.

Here goes.

**Antony:** *Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.*  
**Cash:** Hello, I'm Johnny Cash.

**Antony:** *I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.*  
**Cash:** I'd like to let Hank Williams rest in his grave and say a few words in his defense.

**Antony:** *The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones.*

**Cash:** The weaker side of a public figure's character is illuminated by the media. Dirty deeds, especially, are told and re-told; written and re-written, until the market calls for a new book; a "biography" if you will, on their life.

**Antony:** *So let it be with Caesar.*  
**Cash:** So I don't let it go without saying something.

**Antony:** *The noble Brutus hath told you Caesar was ambitious.*

**Cash:** The literate, illustrious Chet Flippo has implied that Hank Williams was a simpleton, a woman brutalizer; a perpetual drunk and dope addict; incapable of composing the songs accredited to him, and a man who disliked most of his peers, having no friends.

**Antony:** *If it were so, it was a grievous fault, and grievously hath Caesar answered it.*  
**Cash:** It ain't so.

**Antony:** *Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest. . . .*  
**Cash:** Thanks to Country Music Magazine.

**Antony:** *(For Brutus is an honorable man, so are they all, all honorable men)*

**Cash:** (Now Chet Flippo can't be all right: Roy Orbison said in his song, *Best Friend*, "A diamond is a diamond and a stone is a stone, but no man is all good nor all bad.")

**Antony:** *Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.*  
**Cash:** I'd like to say a few things as a fan of Hank Williams, and a friend and admirer of Bocephus (Hank Williams, Jr.).

**Antony:** *He was my friend, faithful and just to me:*  
**Cash:** I never saw Hank Williams, but I have loved his songs and his singing for thirty years.

**Antony:** *But Brutus says he was ambitious, and Brutus is an honorable man.*

**Cash:** Chet Flippo's *Your Cheatin' Heart* is a cheap shot; and I didn't expect this of Chet. He has written kind words about many of us in country music in the past decade or more, myself included, and I haven't forgotten that, but *Your Cheatin' Heart* is a cheap shot.

**Antony:** *He hath brought many captives home to Rome, whose ransoms did the general coffers fill.*

**Cash:** Hank Williams made it the hard way. A poor Alabama farm boy who accomplished The American Dream. He filled many hearts with song and many pockets with money—his money.

**Antony:** *Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?*

**Cash:** Hank Williams loved his fellow man. He was not a bigot, not a hypocrite.

**Antony:** *When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept;*

**Cash:** He was a man of compassion.

**Antony:** *Ambition should be made of sterner stuff.*

**Cash:** He was a soft touch. He'd give you his shirt.

**Antony:** *Yet Brutus says he was, ambitious and Brutus is an honorable man.*

**Cash:** (See *Your Cheatin' Heart* is a cheap shot.)

**Antony:** *Oh judgment, thou art fled to brutish beasts, and men have lost their reason!*

**Cash:** The heart and soul of a man, dead thirty years, cannot be seen into and searched out by a pedestrian writer. With all the research Flippo put into this book, I would have loved to have read more of the good things about Hank Williams which I'm sure he found, yet cheated Hank's fans from reading them. Where's Flippo's head at?

**Antony:** *Bear with me: my heart is in the coffin there with Caesar, and I must pause till it come back to me.*

**Cash:** I'd better stop. I haven't talked to Bocephus since I read the book, and I don't know if he plans to break somebody's jaw. Finally, a piece of my heart is in the coffin with Hank Williams there in Montgomery, Alabama, and another part with all of his fans, friends, family and loved ones.

**P.S.** A diamond is a diamond and a stone is a stone, but no man is all good nor all bad.

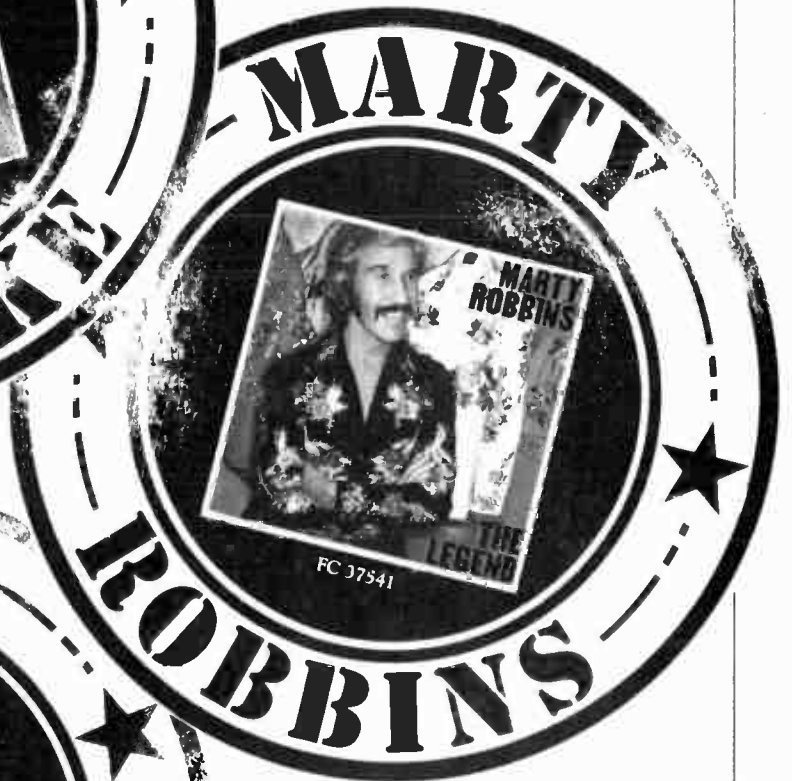




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# Hank



# Williams, Jr.

## The Way Hank Done It (Revised)

By Michael Bane

**T**here can be too much of any one kind of life," Hank Jr. says. "If I stay up here too long, I'm gonna want to go out and find me a honky-tonk. Really! Because I do that. . . . But I'm a Gemini, and I definitely have to have both lives."

It is morning, and Hank Jr. and I are the only ones up. What we are talking about is the two worlds of Hank Williams, Junior, the one that has to do with the high-pressure insanity of the music business and the other that deals with the whispers of the woods and the quiet of the lakes.

"People saying, 'Music is my life . . . singing is my life.' I don't really believe that. I really don't," he says. "I watch people on television, on talk shows, you know, and they're always saying, 'Oh Merv, oh Johnny . . . I live, eat, sleep, and breathe music. . . .' I think that's bullshit. I really do. I don't think those people eat, sleep,

breathe that at all. I think those people would like to be on the golf course or on the tennis court or in the bass boat or whatever. I think there's some things they'd rather be doing than waking up every morning and looking at the Los Angeles smog. Or 'New York, I love you.' That's *really* bullshit!"

We've already made a quick run to the Old Oak Tree for breakfast, where Hank Jr., on a diet in preparation for a long road trip and an African safari, stared balefully at my two homemade biscuits and grits. Afterwards, we ran around doing fishing errands, paying boat slips and discussing the delivery of Hank's new bass boat with the old timers. Had the new boat been there, all the fires of hell couldn't have kept Hank off the lake. But the boat is absent and the day is windy anyway, so we head back to the house to drink coffee and wait for the rest of the world to wake up.

Since he signed with Elektra Records in 1979, Hank Jr. has produced four albums—*Family Tradition*, *Whiskey Bent And Hell Bound*, *Habits Old And New*, and *Rowdy*. Taken together, those albums represent a remarkable body of work. It is the best music that Nashville has produced since the heyday of the "outlaw" movement. In fact, it's the natural outgrowth of that movement—a synthesis, if you will, of all the influences that can affect a young man during 20 incredible years on the road. Every performer I've ever met (and that's quite a few) has gone into great detail to explain how his music was unique, how it defied categories. A performer wants to believe in the miracle of creation, but the hard, cold fact is that the music business is the art of repetition. A career is based not on innovation but on the ability to milk the motherlode, and performers who refuse to toe the line find their path strewn with

broken glass and land mines—call *Waylon*, ask him.

But Hank Jr. has gone beyond even uniqueness. He has revived a category to call his own, and he is—to the best of my knowledge—its sole practitioner. Interestingly enough, it's his daddy's old category, that of bluesman.

"I'm a dinosaur," Hank says, "you know, like my song:

*You're singing a song about making love to your drummer,*

*Well, gay guitar pickers don't turn me on. And we don't all get into Donna Summer. Do you happen to know any old Hank Williams songs?*

*'Cause you see I'm a din-oooooooo-saur!*

"I've been writing a lot of songs lately. I watch TV and read newspapers and try to keep up with things, and I get mad a lot. And I try to put it out in a song.

"I usually don't write the country ballads, you know. 'I'm lonesome; my darling's gone; can't live without you'—some *hook*," he says, as if spitting out a dirty word. "Some catchy *hook*. I hate hooks! The real clever little hook turns me way off. We want the hook to be all the way through the song, and that's called quality."

He laughs. After *Living Proof* was published, which detailed several knock-down, drag-out battles with a bottle of Jim Beam, Hank Jr. was flooded with songs about Jim Beam. "No more Jim Beam songs!" he says, actually, he *shouts*. "Enough!"

"The way I look at it, I can see an old guy driving along in a pickup truck listening to that and saying, 'Gawd bang! That's right! I wanna hear that again!' Or, a little rich girl going along in a Porsche, saying, 'Yeah!' You've got to hit both sides."

How then, I ask, would he describe his own music these days? He pauses for a while; there are too many miles between us for a flip answer to even a trite question.

"Storytelling," he says. "To be sure. Matured—from a couple of years ago. Challenging, and I think that's important. My music is always challenging."

And he's right. Hank Williams, Junior's life is one totally committed to vinyl. Each little pin that pricks his mind finds its way into a song, and the results can be either achingly lonely, such as *Old Habits (Old habits like you are hard to break)* or outrageously rollicky, like *Women I've Never Had*, perhaps the most honest song ever to come out of country music (*I like to do things that make people mad/I like to have women I've never had*). His music can be about sour experiences in New York City (*If this is the promised land/Lord, I've had all I can stand*), the declining quality of modern courtship (*But all that I've heard is belt buckles hitting the floor/And you can't find many kissers anymore*), or the state of the modern pioneer (*I'm a country plowboy, not an urban cowboy*). Or his songs can touch on the general insanity of his life, as did his breakthrough song, *Fam-*







**Like the Pilgrim in Kris Kristofferson's classic song, Hank Williams, Jr. keeps right on a' changing', for the better or the worse, searchin' for a shrine he's never found.**

*ily Tradition:*

*Lordy, I have loved some ladies, and I have loved Jim Beam, And they both tried to kill me in 1973. When that doctor asked me, 'Son, how'd you get in this condition?' I said, 'Hey, saw bones, I'm just carryin' on an old family tradition . . .'*

His songs are intellectually challenging, pushing and shoving and moving your mind first in one direction, then the other. It is the mark of the bluesman to take his personal experiences and make them universal, to show us, the audience, that we are not alone in a world we apparently have no control over. A bluesman is special because he gives something of himself each time he sings. No song is ever the same twice, because no matter how much you'd like to hold up the clock, it keeps right on moving. Like the Pilgrim in Kris Kristofferson's classic song of the same name, Hank Williams, Junior *keeps right on a' changin', for the better or the worse, searchin' for a shrine he's never found. . . .* And we are lucky enough to be along for the ride.

In the years I've known him, I've seen him come to grips with both his own talent and with the legend of his father that's never very far away. He still sings his daddy's songs, but like any good bluesman, he's twisted them to mean something else again—a rock'n' roll *Kaw-Liga* or a haunting *Ramblin' Man* that ends up a defiant statement of his own individuality.

I confess I'm hardly impartial, but I've noticed that Hank's fans aren't impartial, either. His shows are mobbed, and his fans know all the words to his songs. One night, in fact, a cop stopped by my house in Tampa to tell me how much he enjoyed the book. "You know," he told me, "you just can't imagine how much Hank Jr.'s music means to me." I think, though, I know what he means. Perhaps Hank even sums it up best in a new song he's working out, titled, simply, *A Country Boy Can Survive*. That, I think, is good to know.

There's still time for a trip out into the woods, so Hank Jr., Becky, Hillary and I all load into a Chevy truck and head a few miles down the road to Hank's farm, 215 acres of up and down and deer stands and some of the most beautiful country this side of Montana.

As we work our way up and down the hills, we talk about an old subject of mutual interest, guns and hunting. It's a subject that is increasingly out of favor in these more liberal times, but the people around Paris, Tennessee, still contend that you can learn a lot about a person by the way that person acts around guns, the

dreaded handgun in particular.

Hank Jr. has shot all his life, and through hundreds upon hundreds of hours of work has become a master with a handgun. He hunts big game with a handgun, target shoots, and has even become a passably good gunsmith, working over an impressive collection of Ruger Super Blackhawks, his favorite gun.

The Hank Jr. behind the gun is meticulous and careful, just the opposite of the Hank Jr. on stage, just as the noises of the woods are understated, in contrast to the amplified thunder of the concert hall.

"You know, Merle [Kilgore, Hank's best friend] was saying the other day that it was weird, living two lives," Hank Jr. says. "I was at this little bitty gun store—actually, it was more of a general store—in south Alabama, talking to the old man who ran it, and when we came out Merle said, 'You were just in heaven in there, weren't you?' I told him I guessed I was. For just a few minutes there I was just Mr. Shepherd's grandson again."

**T**he airplane engines rev higher and higher until, with a brief lurch, the pilot releases the brakes and half-a-million dollars worth of twin-engined Beechcraft roars down the runway and claws for the sky. The plane begins to fade away. Hank Williams, Junior loosens his seat belt and slouches back in his seat, ignoring the tiny questing hands of daughter Hillary, who seems pretty determined to claim his cowboy hat as her own.

"Sure beats the heck out of the bus, don't it?" he asks me, grinning all the while as I turn pale and wonder where the parachute is hidden. "Now this, *this* is the only way to fly!"

This is a Cinderella story, really, and I wouldn't be fair if I didn't tell you right off that I have some personal involvement in it. It is the latest chapter in the continuing bizarre story of Hank Williams, Junior, the son of country music's most durable legend and, in his own way, country music's most relentless pilgrim. The title of this chapter is "Success, At Last, Again" which is how come Hank Jr. and I, daughter Hillary and wife Becky are tearing across the sky over north Alabama in Hank's private missile, heading for his retreat near Kentucky Lake in Paris, Tennessee.

"Rowdy (his latest album) surprised the hell out of me," he is saying as I tear my face away from the little window, where the ground is getting progressively farther away. "I like for my records to be good, good, good, *good*, and I thought Rowdy was just pretty good. You know, I didn't even like *Texas Women* at first. . . ."

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# Marty Robbins Doesn't Sweat the Small Stuff

By Bob Allen



The mood that early spring night in the basketball gymnasium of the Saginaw Valley State College, where Marty Robbins was to perform, was, if you could sum it up in a word, listless.

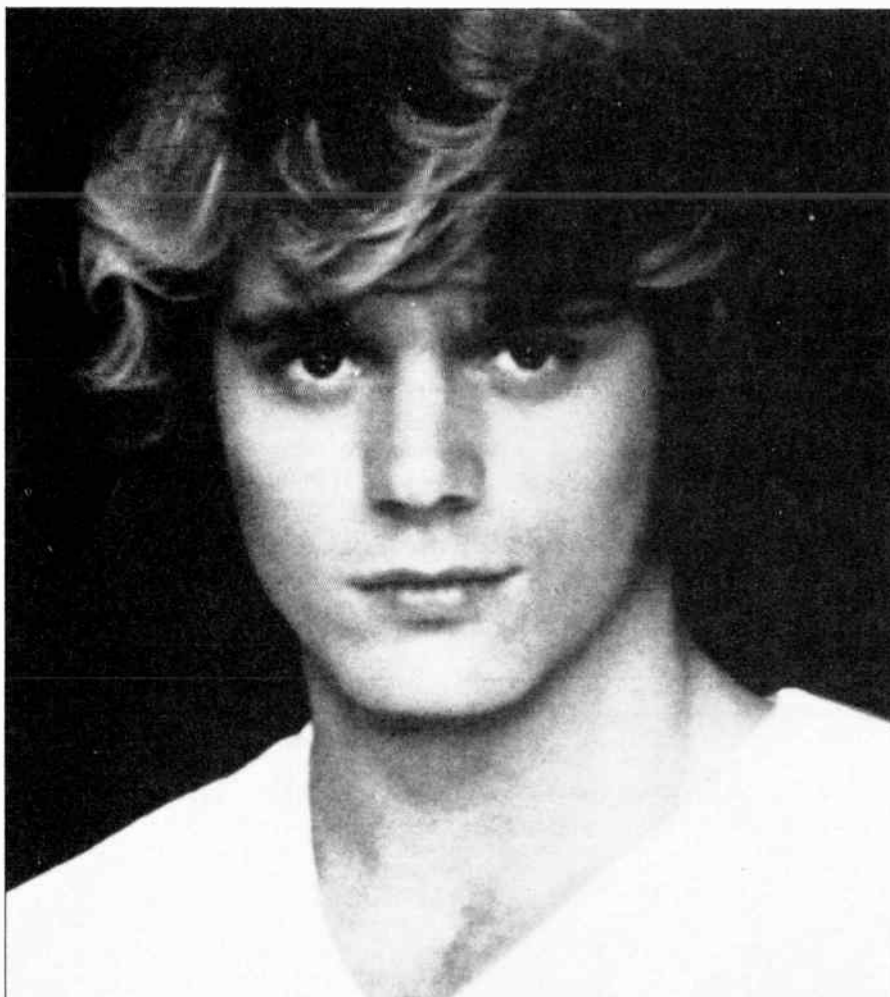
Local-yokel bands, with lead singers who sang flatter than a pancake, played overly-long sets from the make-shift stage, which, with its banks of unfocused flood lights, looked like a movie set from *Close Encounters*.

Many of those among the couple of thousand in attendance were, no doubt, victims of the depressed Central Michigan economy: laid-off workers from nearby auto parts factories and sugar mills. They sat sternly and quietly in the military-straight rows of stiff-backed metal chairs and the scuffed-up wooden bleachers. They yawned and talked and softly and wearily among themselves.

Somehow, the early spring chill and darkness seemed to have crept in off the surrounding expanses of flat, snow-covered corn and sugar beet fields and settled into the shadows and bleak expanses of the high-ceilinged auditorium. A gloom, as gray as the dirty piles of snow that still stood along the edge of the parking lots outside, seemed to build from the collective inertia of hard times, boredom and the ruminations of a long, Northern winter. The local-yokel bands fought against the odds and attempted to breathe life into the evening. They threw their scattered but sincere energies into half-baked renditions of *Good Hearted Woman* and *Rocky Top*. But their energy seemed merely to dissipate and fade in the empty darkness and space of the auditorium before it even reached the audience. Nothing seemed to connect. The people continued to sit inertly in their metal chairs, still yawning, still talking, still trying to figure out how to cope with this cold, dreary Saturday night.

But then, just about the time when it began to look like there was no help left for the evening, Marty Robbins, dressed in a blue Nudie stage outfit and flanked by two local security guards, bounded in through a fire exit from his bus outside, onto the stage and into the spotlight. Suddenly, it was as if some mysterious circuitry had been completed. The audience rose to its feet and granted Robbins an immediate standing ovation; a barrage of flash bulbs discharged; appreciative and affectionate cheers and shouts filled the air. A few people surged politely forward to the edge of the stage to shake his hand or get a close-up shot. One girl (who I found out later had driven seven hours from Ontario, Canada to be at tonight's show, and who has made similar pilgrimages to see Robbins perform at least seven other times) came quietly forward to leave a bouquet of pink carnations at his feet.

Robbins had, just a few minutes earlier, out on his bus, seemed to be in spirits similar to those of the audience. He had been



## John Schneider doesn't just act like a good ol' boy. He sings like one, too.

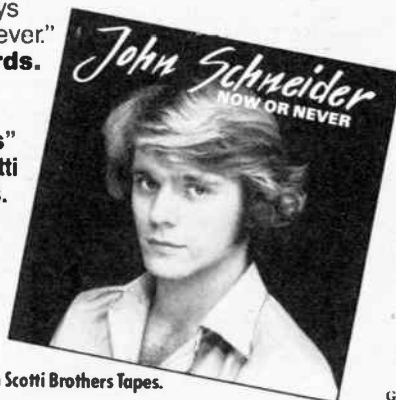
If you're one of the forty million people who spend Friday evenings with The Dukes, you know John Schneider as Hazzard's most lovable kid, Bo Duke.

His vocal performances on the series, as well as on TV's "Country Music Awards" and other variety programs, have had countless audiences cheering for more.

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**"Man, I'm glad to be back out here!" he told the audience. . . . I had a second heart attack. . . . But," he grinned, "I don't sweat the small stuff in life!"**

tense and slightly uneasy. Up until this evening, he had not given a live performance in more than two months. It was one of the longest stretches he'd been away from the stage in his entire career. But once on stage, he seemed immediately to come alive. As if spurred by waves of enthusiasm that rolled in from the crowd, he beamed widely, gestured expansively and moved agilely around the stage. As he launched into the familiar strains of songs like *Don't Worry 'Bout Me*, *El Paso*, *Singin' the Blues*, and *Lord You Gave Me a Mountain*, that clear, soaring tenor of his seemed to fill the dreary expanses of the gymnasium and roll back the gray shadows. Almost magically, the audience's listlessness was transformed into a warm spirit of light-hearted celebration.

There was, of course, on this particular evening, an added dimension at work that no doubt contributed to the crowd's boundless enthusiasm. This show, at this small rural college stuck out in the flat Central Michigan countryside, was Robbins's first since he'd suffered a mild heart attack on New Year's Day. And to these people, 55-year-old Robbins was a returned hero: a survivor with class who had once again bounced back against the odds, just as he's done so many times before.

"Man, I'm glad to be back out here!" he told the audience later in the show as a look of warmth and relief flooded over his face. "As you may know," he added, "I suffered a major heart attack and had open heart surgery back in 1969. Then, just this past New Year's, I had a second heart attack. But," he grinned, "I don't sweat the small stuff in life!"

"But I just wanted you to know how good you've made me feel tonight, and how much this has meant to me," he added to the cheering audience with an appreciative wave of his hand. "Now," he shook his head confidently, "I think I can make it for another 25 years!"

Several weeks earlier, however, as Robbins whiled away an afternoon casually surveying his 240-acre farm, located about 25 miles south of Nashville, his spirits had not been nearly so high. At the time, he was still in the midst of the 60-day rest period that his doctor had imposed on him in the aftermath of his second attack. He was feeling cooped up and restless from the inactivity, and he was fretting under the uncertainty as to how his recurring heart trouble would affect his future.

Thick gray clouds hung in a low ceiling over the green, rolling farmland, and a



Take The Music Where You're Playing On Scotti Brothers Tapes.

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**"I've never felt like I was on top of the world, because I always had the feeling it could all change tomorrow."**

light rain fell as Robbins, dressed in blue jeans and a sheepskin jacket, guided his four-wheel drive Chevrolet pickup down a steep embankment and into a shallow stream bed. Shifting into low range, he headed the truck under a railroad trestle that crossed the stream, then back up another embankment and through the oozing mud along the edge of a pasture where a small herd of dreary-looking rain-soaked cattle grazed. Driving on, along a hedge-row, he finally parked near the large bass lake on one corner of the farm. Getting out, he walked slowly and thoughtfully along the grassy edge of the lake, watching the small beads of spring rain make patterns on its still surface.

"I've been traveling for so long that when I get off the road, I get a little nervous," he explains softly. "I can't be still. Maybe I need this rest. I don't know. But I sure didn't want it."

Indeed, in the years since 1952, when Robbins had his first chart record and launched his first national tour, precious little dust has gathered on his suitcase. That remarkable voice of his, along with his enduring enthusiasm for performing, has kept him at the forefront of the country field for nearly three decades. He has distinguished himself in numerous musical styles, from teen-age hearthrob ballads of the 1950s (*A White Sport Coat and a Pink Carnation*, and *Singin' the Blues*) to contemporary songs of the West (*El Paso* and *Big Iron*). His career accomplishments include more than 70 albums, 18 Number One records (12 of which he wrote himself), and two Grammy Awards, including the first one ever to go to a country artist. The more than 500 original songs he has written over the years have earned him a place in the Nashville Songwriters' Association's Hall of Fame, and won him the Trustees' Gold Medal Award from the National Cowboy Hall of Fame. With the exception of only one year, Robbins has managed to land at least one song in the Top Ten every year from 1959 until 1980. He is now going into his 28th year as one of the Grand Ole Opry's most loyal and popular members.

As a tribute to his contributions to modern American music, President Reagan extended a special invitation for Robbins to perform at this year's annual July 4th celebration on the south lawn of the White House. The only other entertainer who performed at the ceremony was Frank Sinatra. "I knew Republicans had class," Robbins quipped, "but I never knew they had that much class!"



101 Lord it's hard to be humble



102 A legend in my time



104 Nothin' but good ole boys



106 Liar...1 Believer...0



107 Faster horses, younger women, older whiskey, more money



108 Take this job and shove it!



109 Lovers live longer



113 You can eat crackers in my bed anytime



114 The only hell my momma ever raised



117 Lookin' for love



119 Help me make it thru the night



120 If you got 10 minutes let's fall in love!



121 Not heaven but damn close



127 Honky-tonk angel



130 Love that honky-tonk stuff



133 We all grew up to be cowboys



134 Nobody does it better



135 Any which way you can



136 I was country when country wasn't cool



137 7 year ache



138 39 and holding



139 Rednecks, white sax & blue ribbon beer

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**"Racing is still show business, because there's still people there lookin'. It's still a performance."**

A man of boundless energy, Robbins even today has trouble sleeping more than a few hours a night (something which, the doctors have told him, might have contributed to his heart problems).

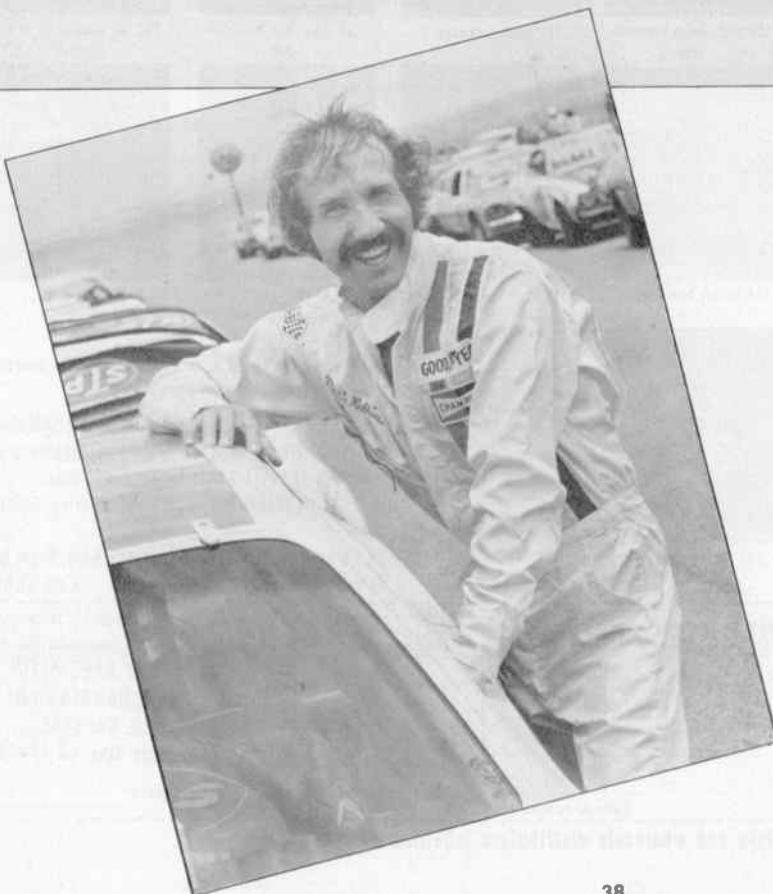
"I don't let what I've already done affect me," he explained of his restlessness. "I've never felt like I was on top of the world because I always had the feeling it could all change tomorrow. I still have that feeling. It doesn't scare me. I just feel like I still have a long way to go before I can even feel safe."

Perhaps this is part of the reason that, over the years, Robbins has also thrown his energies into literally dozens of diverse projects and pursuits. Like his television show, which ran for several years during the late 1970s and was syndicated in more than 100 different markets. "It was a good show," he explained of this particular project's demise, "but it was not country enough. Plus, when we taped it, they'd always make us do retake after retake. And if you said anything funny and got any kind of response from the audience, they'd make you do it over again. I'm not going to repeat a joke."

Throughout his career—even, in fact, right up to the present—Robbins has found release and satisfaction in the thrills and dangers of high-speed stock car racing on the Grand National Circuit, where he has competed with champions like Richard Petty and Bobby Allison. Amazingly, even after recovering from his second and most recent heart attack, Robbins has had the courage to return once again to the world of professional auto racing. As recently as this past August, he qualified for the starting position of 19th, out of a field of 33 drivers, in the sixth annual ARKA 200 race at the Alabama International Speedway at Talladega. Mechanical difficulties with his #6 Chevrolet, however, kept him from finishing.

"Just to be free, that's what I like about it most," he explained. "It is like walking a tightrope. Nowadays, I can't even stand to watch the races on TV, I just want to be there so bad."

"Racing is still show business," he added, "because there's still people there lookin'. It's still a performance. I'm so high with excitement before I start a race—just like I am before I go on stage. The only difference is, as a race goes on, you have a particular spot in the race and you settle down. But on stage, it's *there* for the whole hour and fifteen minutes. That excitement *stays* there. That's why I have problems sleeping. After I've done a good show, I get so





# *KENNY ROGERS*

---

## *SHARE YOUR LOVE*



*THE NEW ALBUM FEATURES THE HITS:*

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**"I've been traveling for so long that when I get off the road, I get a little nervous," he explains softly. "I can't be still. Maybe I need this rest. I don't know. But I sure didn't want it."**

excited, I often can't get to sleep until three or four in the morning."

**I**t is one of those supreme ironies of life that a man like Robbins who, for most of his life, has thrived on the adrenalized intensity and physical demands of such varied activities as auto racing and performing; and who neither smokes nor drinks; and who, for years, has kept his five-foot nine-inch frame around an athletically trim 155 pounds, should be done in by a mere defect in his body's metabolism.

But, as Robbins explained, the cause of both his heart attacks was not a congenitally weak heart. Rather, it was his body's unnaturally high tendency to retain cholesterol. Before he underwent open heart surgery in 1970 at age 44, he was near death, due to an almost total blockage of the three main arteries leading from his heart.

As Robbins headed his pickup back out toward the narrow paved country road that cuts through the center of his farm, he recalled last New Year's Day, when he suf-

fered his second attack. He interrupted his narrative for a moment to stop in a small country store just up the tree-lined road. There, after talking land prices and the weather with the elderly proprietor, he bought a Snickers Bar. "I'm not s'posed to eat sweets anymore," he explained sheepishly as he climbed back in the truck and took a big bite. "I'm on a real strict low-fat, low-salt diet. . . but," he insisted, "this is the first candy bar I've had in months."

As he headed on up the road toward the quaint, historic town of Franklin, Tennessee, he explained that when his chest pains hit him this last time, he had no idea he was suffering another heart attack. He'd been sitting at home, quietly watching football games on television. He had gotten in at 6:00 a.m. that morning from Evansville, Indiana, where he'd done three New Year's Eve performances. He had gotten little sleep and was extremely fatigued. At first, he'd just assumed his discomfort was the result of some of the junk food he'd eaten on the return trip.

Robbins was aware, however, that in the

past couple of years he'd slipped badly from the strict diet on which he'd been placed after his open heart surgery in 1970. He'd been eating all the wrong foods. Breakfast would often consist of six or even eight eggs, and he'd sometimes put away five or six bowls of cereal topped with a syrupy mixture of whipping cream, milk and sugar for a late-night snack. So it was easy to write off the gnawing pain he felt as indigestion.

"Then I got a bad headache," he recalled.

"In fact, it was the worst one I'd ever had in my life! I thought my eyes were going to pop out of my head! I took about six aspirin and some painkiller I had for something else, and it relieved it."

Instead of going to his doctor, however, Robbins merely went on with business as usual. Two days later, he even taped an appearance at Opryland on Barbara Mandrell's NBC-TV show. In fact, it was almost as an afterthought that he called his doctor five days later. But when he described his symptoms over the phone, he was ordered to come in at once.

"It was really kind of embarrassing," he laughed. "I just went on down to the doctor's, thinking he'd just give me a routine check-up. I was dressed about like I am now: cowboy boots, blue jeans, and this big ol' straw cowboy hat. But as soon as I got down there, he make me lie down, and he called the ambulance to rush me to intensive care. When the ambulance got

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**"If I had been the type of person who was always drinking and throwing parties, I wouldn't have the things I have today."**

to his office, they put me on a stretcher and wheeled me right out past all these people in the waiting room. And me, with my cowboy boots still on, and still holdin' on to this big ol' straw cowboy hat!"

At first, there was speculation that Robbins would have to undergo surgery once again. But it was finally revealed that the damage sustained by his heart this time was relatively mild; and given the proper diet and the right amount of rest, it would eventually heal itself.

"I don't know why God lets me go on living, but he has," Robbins mused not long after the attack. "The truth is, I've experienced death so many times, I should be dead. I've had auto wrecks at 160 miles an hour, I had the heart operation where I technically died on the operating table. And in my past, I've had other experiences . . . but always, there has been just a fraction of a second when it all went through my mind. And I always had time to say, 'Not yet, God!'"

**M**arty's a personal type person," observed one of Robbins's long-time employees. "He's a prince, but he keeps his distance. He only tells you what he wants you to know. He'll joke with you for hours, but when it gets serious, he'll shut you off."

"It's funny," he added. "We're out here travelin' with him for days on end sometimes, but often, we actually find out more about what's goin' on with him from readin' a magazine or somethin'."

Robbins's quiet, self-contained offstage reserve is, in fact, a marked contrast to his ebullient and extroverted public personality. In his day-to-day life away from the spotlight, he comes across as a sort of straight-arrow Gary Cooper kind of man whose natural tendency is to keep to himself. He's been married to the same woman for 32 years. He is deeply religious and intensely guarded about his private life.

"If I had been the type of person who was always drinking and throwing parties, I wouldn't have the things I have today," said Robbins, whose present holdings include his farm, at least three houses, a recording studio, several publishing companies and some valuable Music Row real estate (not to mention the three \$30,000 racing cars that he once totalled in three consecutive races).

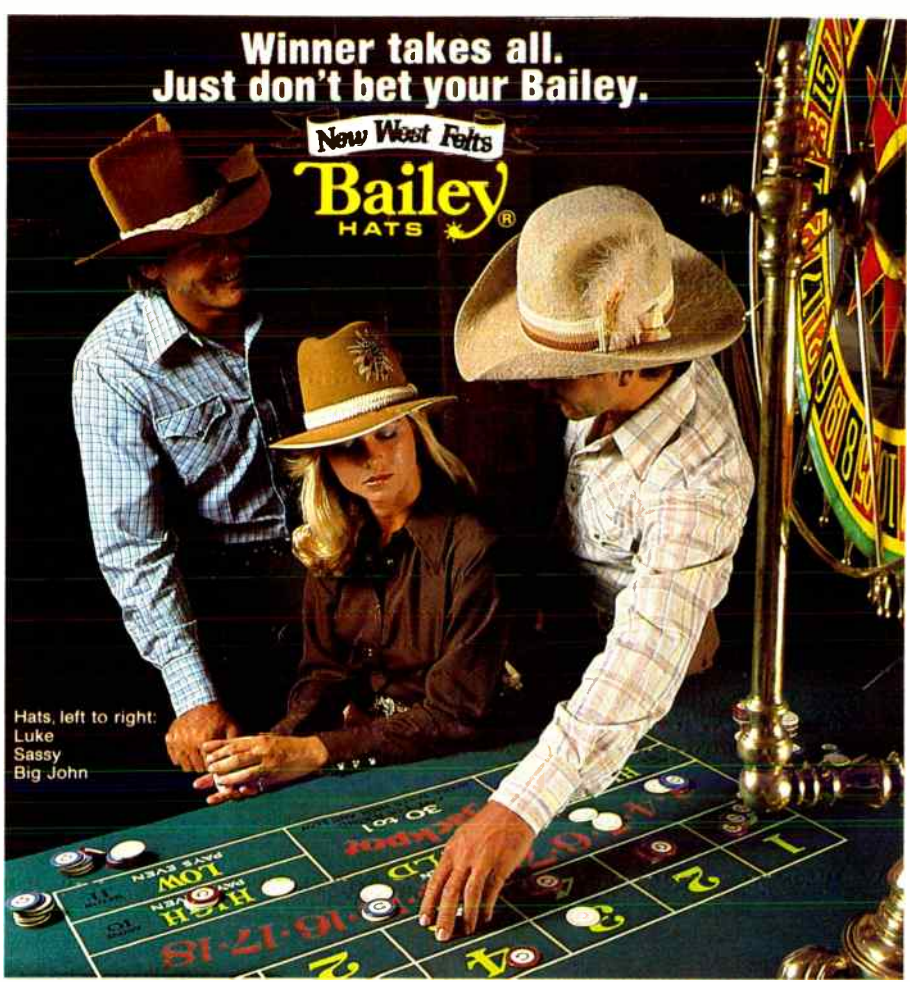
"In twenty years, I've only had two people over to my house, besides my relatives," he admitted. "That was Eddy Arnold and Roy Wiggins, the steel guitar player. I'm just not much for parties and that sort of thing."

Robbins is even, to some extent, reticent

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Just don't bet your Bailey.**

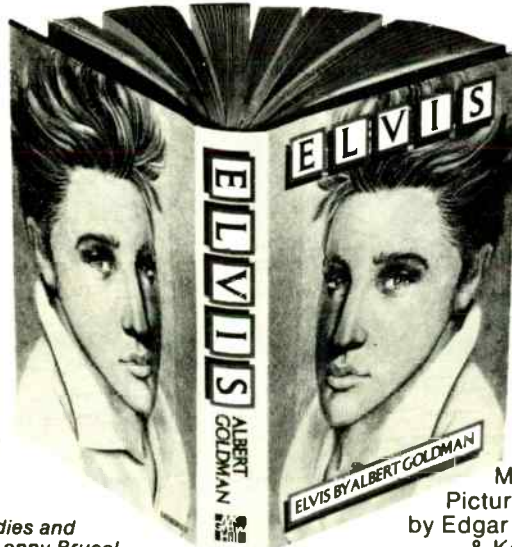
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# GEORGE STRAIT

When he was first called to the West Coast to do his initial session [at Columbia Records West Coast Studio], "I almost didn't go. . . I mean, I was making about \$750 a month in Phoenix, between the radio and television shows and the club dates. And I seriously thought, 'How in the world could it possibly get any better than this?!' "

about revealing certain aspects of his own past. But what emerges from the information that he does volunteer is the portrait of a man who used his God-given talents to overcome just about every possible obstacle that stood between the poverty he knew as a child and the success he enjoys today. It is also clear that he found in music a sense of direction that allowed him to make the sometimes difficult maturation from a shy, troubled youth into one of country music's most confident and outgoing stage personalities.

Martin David Robinson (his given name) is of mixed Polish and Indian descent, with a trace of Mexican thrown in for good measure. He was one of nine children (including a couple of stepbrothers and sisters). His father was an itinerant worker who raised his family in the Arizona desert near the small town of Glendale. When his father couldn't find work, the family often lived in a tent. "We were about as poor as you can get," Robbins admits.

Robbins's parents separated when he was 12. When he last saw his father a few years later, there was no love lost. "I'm not even sure what ever became of him," he says, a steely edge creeping into his voice. "I lost track of him when I was about 15, and after that, I never did check into it "

His mother moved the family to Glendale where she supported her children by doing wash for the neighbors. As Robbins entered his teens, he seemed to be going nowhere fast. He flunked every subject in high school repeatedly until he finally dropped out. He dabbled in petty crime (everything from selling day-old newspapers and pilfering coin boxes to rigging pay-off pinball machines). After he and a friend beat another boy so badly he had to be hospitalized, he fled Glendale, just one step ahead of the law.

Eventually he enlisted in the Navy where he saw action in the South Pacific during World War II. After the service, he returned to Glendale and worked half-heartedly at a series of unskilled jobs. "I tried everything," he recalled. "At one point, I had eight jobs in six months and quit them all. So many people hate their jobs. . . ." He shook his head. "It's sad. After you reach a certain age, all the parties have been had, and all you have to look forward to is getting up at the same time every day. I think that's why so many people are alcoholics or commit suicide."

Robbins's escape from the working

world came in the form of a \$10-a-night job as a guitar player in a local band. Then one night, when the lead singer didn't show up, he reluctantly got a chance to try his hand at the front of the bandstand. "At first, I used to hold my head down and not even look at the people, because I thought they were all laughing at me," he recalled.

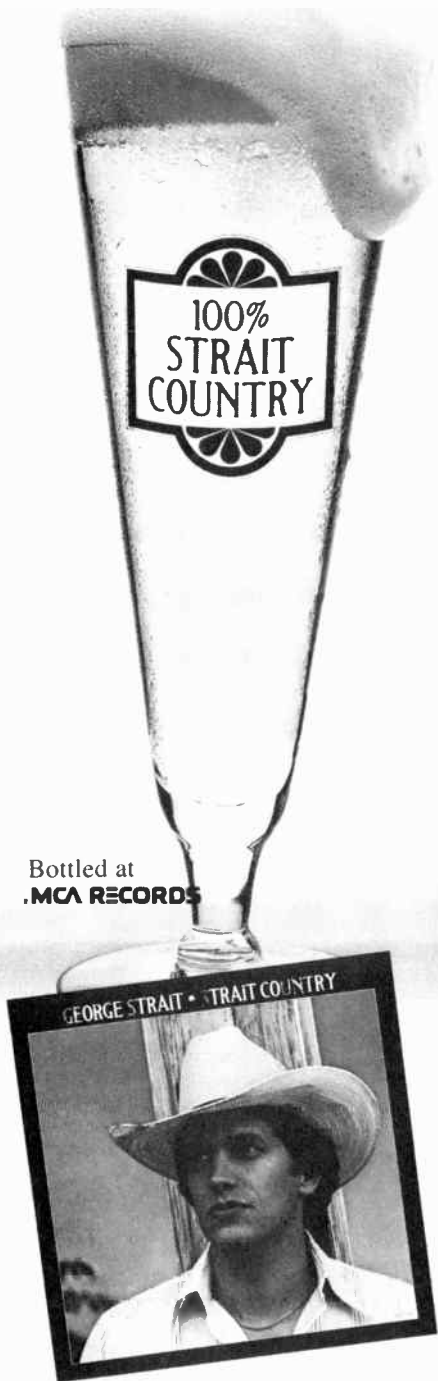
But as recognition of Robbins's extraordinary vocal talents began to grow around Phoenix and Glendale, so did his confidence. He began getting more club work, then got his own radio program, and finally his own 15-minute-a-week TV show. "I dreaded that TV show!" he recalled. "I still can't stand live TV. I only did the show because the station manager threatened to fire me from my radio show if I didn't. Sometimes I was so scared right before I'd go on that I'd throw up."

Ironically, it was the once-a-week TV show that ultimately afforded Robbins entry into the national spotlight. When Little Jimmie Dickens, an Opry star of that era, dropped by the station one day to promote a personal appearance he was making nearby, he overheard Robbins singing. He was so impressed that he passed the word on to Columbia Records' West Coast offices. After sending some of their own representatives out to hear him, they offered Robbins a contract. With the exception of two years during the 1970s, when he went over to MCA Records, he's been with Columbia ever since.

Still, he recalled, when he was first called to the West Coast to do his initial session, "I almost didn't go, because at the time, it just didn't mean anything to me to record. I mean, I was making about \$750 a month in Phoenix, between the radio and television shows and the club dates. And I seriously thought, 'How in the world could it possibly get any better than this!?' "

**F**or all his longevity in the music business, and despite the fact that his heart has already mended to the point where he can once again resume his normally fast-paced schedule, there are some who would argue that the shadows of time may be starting to fall across the career of 55-year-old Marty Robbins.

No doubt, he could—as he told the audience that night in the college gymnasium near Saginaw, Michigan—go on performing for the next 25 years. And surely, he could, like his friends Roy Acuff and Hank Snow, spend his twilight years bask-

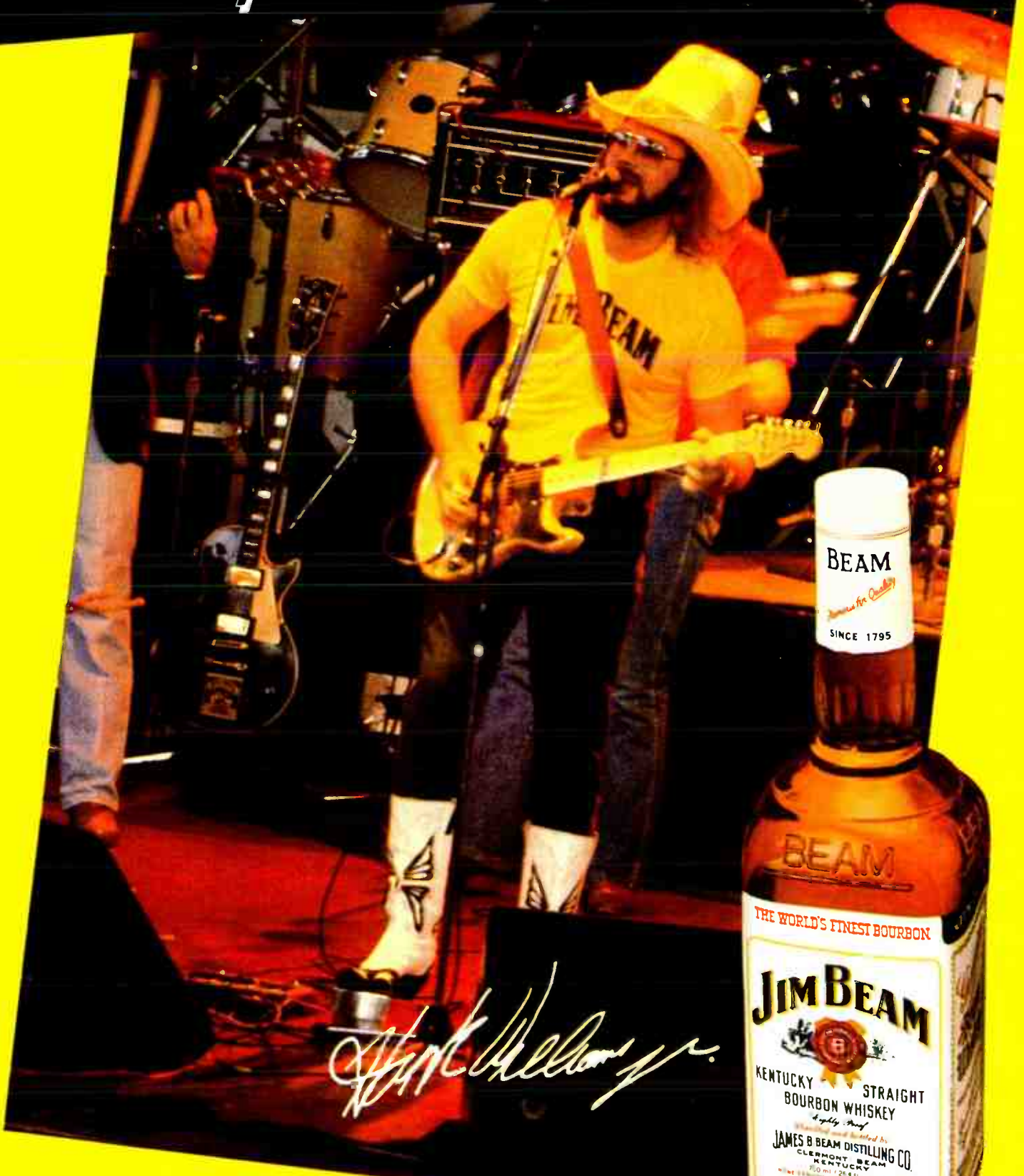


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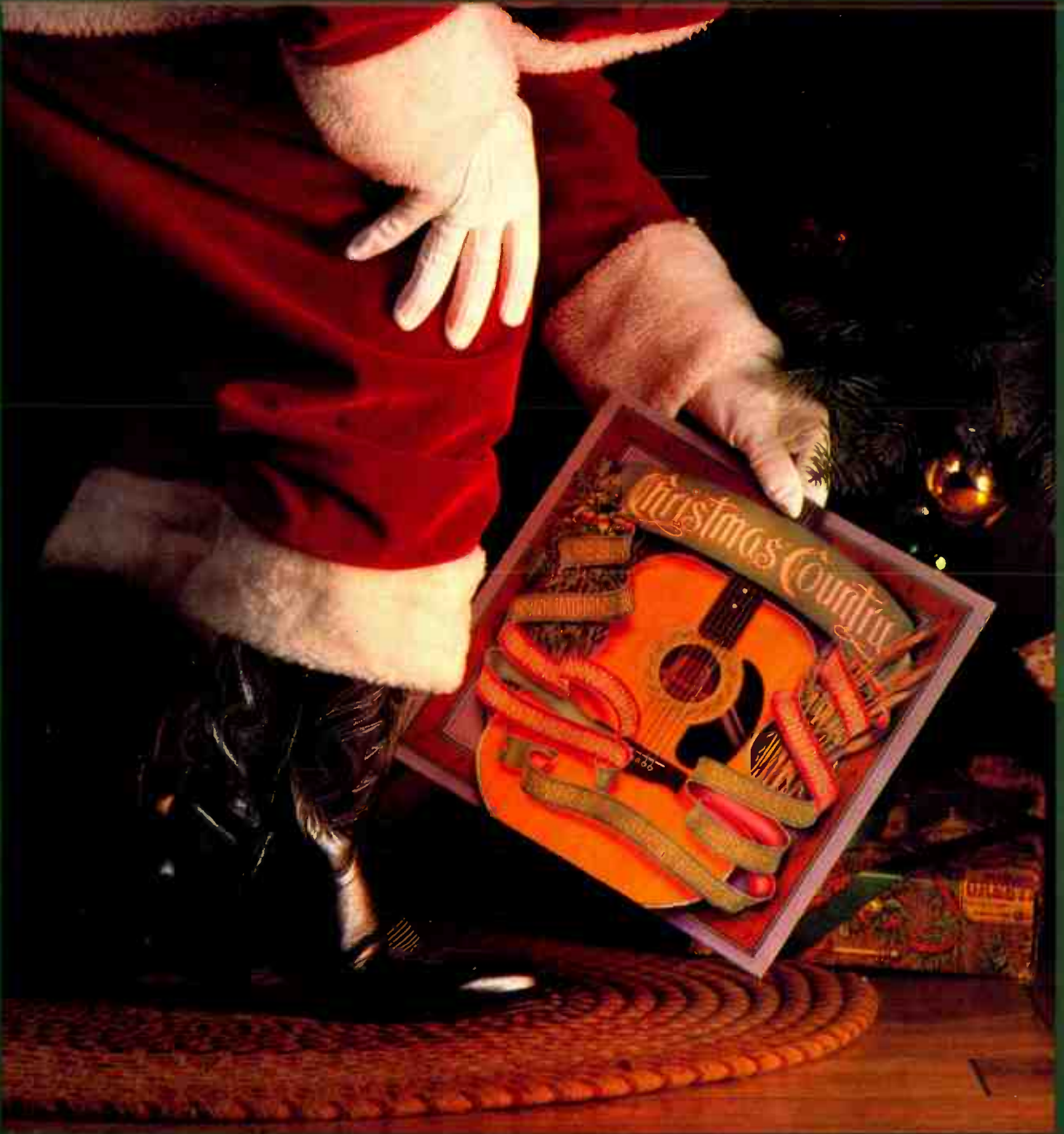


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# Record Reviews

## Ricky Skaggs Waitin' For the Sun to Shine

Epic FE 37193

Last June in this magazine, Ricky Skaggs stated clearly and firmly his intentions to make it by performing the sort of grass roots country music he grew up with, interjecting enough commerciality in the right places to sell it to a mass audience. That isn't really too surprising, considering that *Sweet Temptation*, his previous effort on Sugar Hill Records, had just such overtones, with its variety of earthier, classic country styles. And his stint recording and performing with Emmylou, who made a similar direction work for her, had to have taught him the ins and outs.

*Waitin' For the Sun to Shine* proves that he wasn't kidding, that he learned those lessons well. As producer he's created a solid traditional album within a polished, contemporary frame-



work that should, if they pick the right singles, be *the* album for Ricky. The material is rich in its heritage, coming from folks like Johnny Bond, Merle Travis, Flatt & Scruggs, Carl Butler, Webb Pierce and Fred

Rose (under his "Floyd Jenkins" pseudonym). The musicians include old friends Jerry Douglas on dobro and Buck White playing piano with daughters Sharon and Cheryl (The Down Home Folks) sing-

ing backup, as well as members of his new band, such as the legendary fiddler Bobby Hicks.

The sound is basic and consistent, yet Ricky takes only token liberties with the original arrangements of many tunes. Flatt & Scruggs's *Don't Get Above Your Raisin'* is much like the 1951 original, with only Jerry Kroon's drums moving it from straight Fifties bluegrass into acoustic Eighties rockabilly. Ditto for Merle Travis's 1947 hit *So Round, So Firm, So Fully Packed*, which retains all the jauntiness of the original. Pierce's 1955 hit *I Don't Care* gets a similar treatment, while Fred Rose's *Low and Lonely* becomes sparkling Western swing. The title track, a Sonny Throckmorton original and the only real "contemporary" number, is treated with the same basic sound as the older songs.

Frankly, these are good times for traditional sounds (ask Slim Whitman) and Ricky has a flawless effort here; he deserves to succeed with it.

RICH KIENZLE

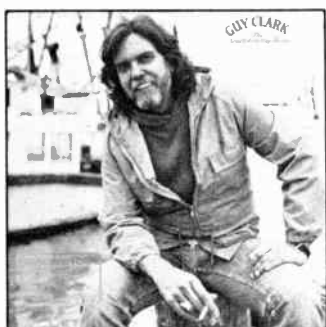
## Guy Clark The South Coast of Texas

Warner Bros. BSK 3381

**T**he *South Coast of Texas*, Guy Clark's fourth album (and his second for Warner Bros.) is certainly a step up from his last Warner Bros. album, *Guy Clark*.

Clark's distinctive voice, even with its limitations, always seems to serve him best on his own material, and part of the problem with *Guy Clark* was the fact that only about half the songs were originals, and many of them were overly obscure in their meanings.

Thankfully, on *The South Coast of Texas*, Clark has come through with all original songs



(two of them co-written with his producer, friend and fellow songwriter Rodney Crowell).

Overall, the songs on *The South Coast of Texas* lack the cohesive dramatic power and the perfect fusion of lyric and melody of those on his first two albums, *Old Number One* and *Texas Cookin'*. I just don't hear anything here that's nearly as gripping as his *Desperados*

*Waiting for a Train, Texas 1949*, or *The Last Gunfighter Ballad* (the latter two of which were hits for Johnny Cash). These songs demonstrated the stunning use of lyrics and meter to build and sustain tension and suspense as well as any songs that have been written.

However, Clark—who is unsurpassed as a lyricist even though his melodies often aren't so startling—does come close with *Crystelle*, where the glistening images just seem to tumble out at the listener, line after line. He similarly connects with the title song, and about this song I'd like to add that now that we've heard all the cowboy clichés, it's good to hear someone finally write a song about another Texas sub-culture. *New Cut Road*, a rousing fiddle tune (though not quite as powerful

as Clark's earlier *Virginia's Real*), is another high point.

Rodney Crowell's production is another plus for *The South Coast of Texas*. His touch is most obvious on the tasteful, understated rhythm and lead guitar tracks heard throughout. The arrangements are, in fact, consistently uncluttered, drawing attention to, rather than detracting from, Clark's intricate lyrics and unusual vocal style.

A frightening number of the truly gifted singer/songwriters who were starting to make their marks in Nashville five or six years ago have already faded from sight in an industry that has become increasingly obsessed with lightweight heavies 1, for one, am glad that Guy Clark is still coming on strong.

BOB ALLEN

## ... T.G. Sheppard ... Jerry Jeff Walker

### T.G. Sheppard I Love 'Em All

Warner Bros. BSK 3528

I've given this a lot of thought, and I've reached an inescapable solution: There are two T.G. Sheppards, and one of them is being held prisoner. You want proof, you say? Well, check out his newest album, *I Love 'Em All*, as clear a cry for help as I've ever heard.

T.G. #1 is one hell of a tough singer, a macho bad boy who knows the underside of every bedroom between here and White Plains. He opens his mouth to sing and high school cheerleaders begin squirming in their seats during English class; housewives dry their sweaty



palms on yesterday's rumpled bedsheets and hope their fantasies don't show over the supper table. But T.G. #1 don't care even a bit—he may love 'em every one, but he sure don't want to see 'em around under foot all the time. T.G. #1 sings *I Loved 'Em Every One* with its bad-ass guitars and ominous feeling that belies the kindly lyrics

of the song. T.G. #1 knows a big secret, which is that it's possible to love a woman without particularly liking her or without particularly liking women in general, which is also what gives his song its unsettling air. It is also why T.G. #1 is being held prisoner.

T.G. #2 is a wimp, pure and simple. He blathers endlessly about True Love, Getting Over the Wrong Girl, Love Lifting Him, and Being Alone. He reminds me of the kind of guy you're likely to run into in a singles bar, his shirt open to his navel, five gold chains, and new Gucci cowboy boots. His opening line is always, "What's your sign? I'm a Gemini." If he takes a girl home, he always cries afterwards and says it was never like this before. Then he wants

to get married. T.G. #2 sings all the rest of the songs on this album, including a particularly repulsive number written by Sterling (*The Blind Man In the Bleachers*) Whipple about a crippled-up cowboy who can't go home to his woman 'cause all she wants him for is doin' the chores and stuff, which requires a real man. T.G. #1 would chew up drivels like that and spit it out slicker than deer guts on a door-knob.

Which is why I figure T.G. #1 is being held against his will. He's too bad a dude to willingly sing only one song on this album, so I figure all those pretty girls on the cover are holding a gun to his ribs or sumthin'. Come to think of it, his smile looks forced. Free T.G.!

MICHAEL BANE

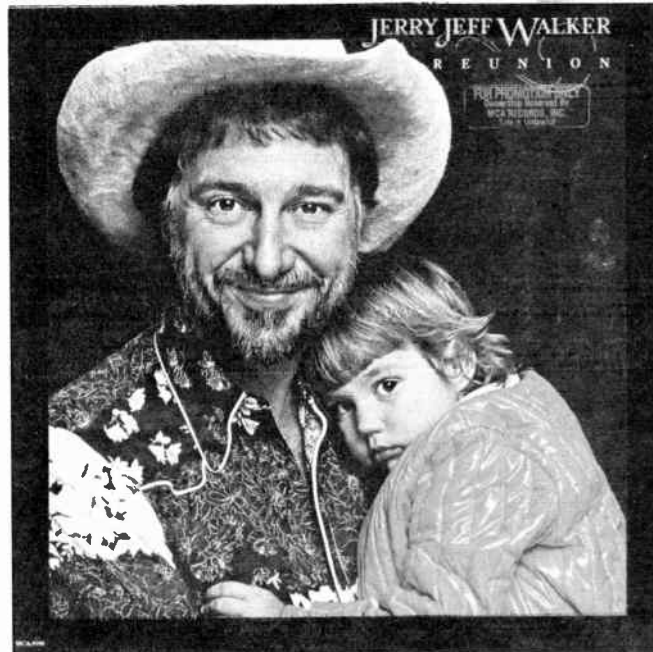
### Jerry Jeff Walker Reunion

MCA — 5199

Two years ago, Jerry Jeff Walker—that great post-Beat-Poet, Bob-Dylan-contemporary New York street singer, that great repatriated-Texan practitioner of the Austin rowdy-blucs, that great culture hero of the nation's drugging-and-drinking cow-hippies—was in deep and perhaps even (as some people suggested) terminal trouble. The drinking and drugging had become, according to this gossip, too much for him, and both the man and his career were falling apart.

Today, that situation no longer holds true. Jerry Jeff has ceased his spectacular abuse of liquid and solid intoxicants, gotten back together with his wife, whipped himself into shape (it is rumored—my God!—that he jogs two or three miles a day), and recorded an album which sounds positively professional.

Fortunately for his fans, however, the aptly-titled *Reunion* (recorded, unlike many of his previous records, in a real studio with a real producer—



Muscle Shoals and its distinguished bossman, Barry Beckett) is by no means the kind of entirely boring work often produced by newly-reformed bad boys. Although lacking the technological crudity and vocal incoherence so admired by his cult following in the past, it nevertheless offers enough rowdy sentiment to keep the cow-hippies happy. At times, Jerry

Jeff still sounds like a tipsy-tired hip poet singing through about half a pound of phlegm. It is to everybody's credit that, under more-or-less disciplined conditions, such a sound was achieved.

The rowdy tracks (well supported by Beckett's use of un-Walkerish items like horns and female backup singers) take up most of Side One, and they're

very engaging, nicely loose and funny and ironic, with oblique hints and direct statements about their author's previous condition and current reformation woven through the funk. In *Bittersweet*, for example, he sings about hanging out with fallen angels and getting burned, while in *Sailing*, perhaps the best and certainly the catchiest of these songs, he admits that "Well, hell, I know where there's a ship in a bottle, a schooner with a worm on board." At no point does the personal/confessional nature of the material intrude unnecessarily; the irony and the funk come through loud and fuzzy, and that's a neat songwriter's trick.

Side Two of *Reunion*, no less engaging, is very different. Quieter and more complex, it includes songs like *Morning Song for Sally* and *For Little Jessie (She Knows Her Daddy Sings)* which remind you that behind all the hoopla of his public persona, Jerry Jeff has always been one of the more genuinely sensitive personal songwriters of our time.

It's a pleasure to have him back among us, and a relief to know that he's returned with an album worthy of his talent.

PATRICK CARR



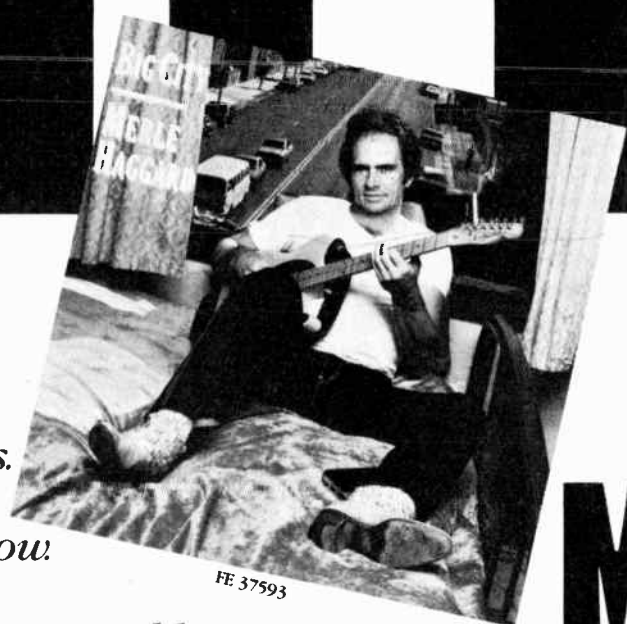
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*"ANGEL FLYING TOO CLOSE TO THE GROUND"*

**"ON THE ROAD AGAIN"**

*"HEARTBREAK HOTEL"/WITH LEON RUSSELL*

**"MY HEROES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN COWBOYS"**

*"WHISKEY RIVER"*

**"RAILROAD LADY"**

*"HEARTACHES OF A FOOL"*

**"GOOD HEARTED WOMAN"**

*"LOOK WHAT THOUGHTS WILL DO"*

**"UNCLOUDY DAY"**

*"HELP ME MAKE IT THROUGH THE NIGHT"*

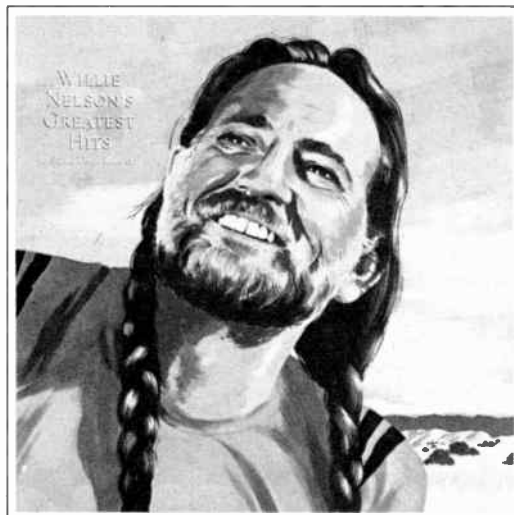
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## Sleepy LaBeef

### Sleepy LaBeef

It Ain't What You Eat  
It's The Way How You  
Chew It

Rounder 3052

Maybe a stylist like Willie Nelson could have pulled all these tunes into a coherent work of art—but probably not. Certainly LaBeef doesn't, despite his strong, spirited voice and irreproachable instrumental backing. To pick up the food metaphor of the title, not everything you like to eat is going to like you.

According to the liner notes, LaBeef selected the songs here—so there's no one else to blame for such gratuitous misfits as *The Roosters Are Crowing*, which has the profound rural insights one might expect from *Hee Haw*, and *I'm Ready*, a bit of teen froth which sounds especially ludicrous in LaBeef's adult and cavernous bass. *I Got It* and *Shake A Hand* are similarly forced. None of these is painful to listen to. It's just that

### SLEEPY LaBEEF

It Ain't What You Eat, The Way How You Chew It



they aren't strong enough to do justice to their admirer.

Most of the other songs are artfully chosen and imaginatively done. *Lost Highway* is forged into a fusion of believable blues and ministerial moralizing. *If I Ever Had A Good Thing* strikes just the right balance between toughness and tenderness. The Louvin Brothers' standard, *I Don't Believe You've Met My Baby*, is stripped of its dirge-like quality and up-tempoed (with some compelling guitar work) to foreshadow the drama's happy ending.

And LaBeef shows a real feel for gospel music in *Satisfied*

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## Jody Payne . . Riders in the Sky

and *Wonderful Time Up There*. Martha Carson, who wrote *Satisfied*, sings harmony with LaBeef on that number, and LaBeef responds with a warmth and dignity reminiscent of Red Foley. *Wonderful Time Up There* is a natural showcase for LaBeef's powerful bass vocals.

Additional bright spots throughout the album are Earle Poole Ball's jumping piano riffs and Jo-El Sonnier's accordion touches. EDWARD MORRIS

### Jody Payne My First Album Kari Records No. 5000

I suppose there is a certain appeal to this first album by Willie Nelson's favorite guitar player, Jody Payne. On the plus side of the record is the clean simplicity of the production, a hangover, I guess, from spending all that time with Willie. There are also Willie's harmonies here and there, which can raise the level of any record—possibly even one by George Burns—by several notches, and some excellent pickin'. The song choice is also excellent, an eclectic blend that ranges from Hank, Jr.'s *O'D in Denver* to Merle Haggard's *Working Man Blues* to Lennon and McCartney's *We Can Work It Out* to Bill Monroe's *Uncle Pen*.

Payne's voice is rough and gravelly, and therein lies the problem. To me, the only way that particular kind of voice works is with all the edges knocked off, a la Tompall Glaser. Tompall's voice (or, for another example, rock singer Tom Waits) is rough without rough edges—the closest comparison is whiskey. "Smooth," you say, as you gag. Even Kenny Rogers's voice concentrates on that smooth, flowing quality. Jody Payne's voice lacks that smooth quality, but I think I hear it developing.

He does better on the up-tempo numbers—*Uncle Pen*, *Working Man Blues* and *Sweet Country Red*—but on the whole, this is a pretty nondescript record. Maybe next time.

MICHAEL BANE

### Riders in the Sky Cowboy Jubilee

Rounder 0147

My fears about this group before hearing their first album pretty much echoed my friend Michael Bane's. I grew up not giving a damn for singing cowboys or their romanticism: cop shows were more fun (and nobody broke into song every 15 minutes). But there was something refreshing about that album (*Three on the Trail*) that made it successful: a sincere love of the music, flawless musicianship, and a real attempt to avoid treating the songs like museum pieces while retaining the original spirit.

*Cowboy Jubilee* follows the same direction as its predecessor. Doug Green's Gibson archtop still drives the band: Woody Paul's fiddle, with a bit more swing than the last time, coasts in and around the exquisite vocal harmonies; and Fred "Too Slim" LaBour provides real solid bass (and occasional accordion backing). There are the Western standards, of course, such as a heart-tugging version of *Red River Valley*, and a straightforward, yet



sparkling version of Gene Autry's longtime theme song *Back In the Saddle Again*, with some nonpedal steel guitar from Kayton Roberts (of Hank Snow's band) that recalls Autry's longtime steel player Frankie Marvin. The late Bob Nolan's *On the Rhythm Range* combines equal parts of Western and swing (something the original Sons of the Pioneers could do with a vengeance) to come up with an authentic 1940s sound.



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# GEORGE JONES

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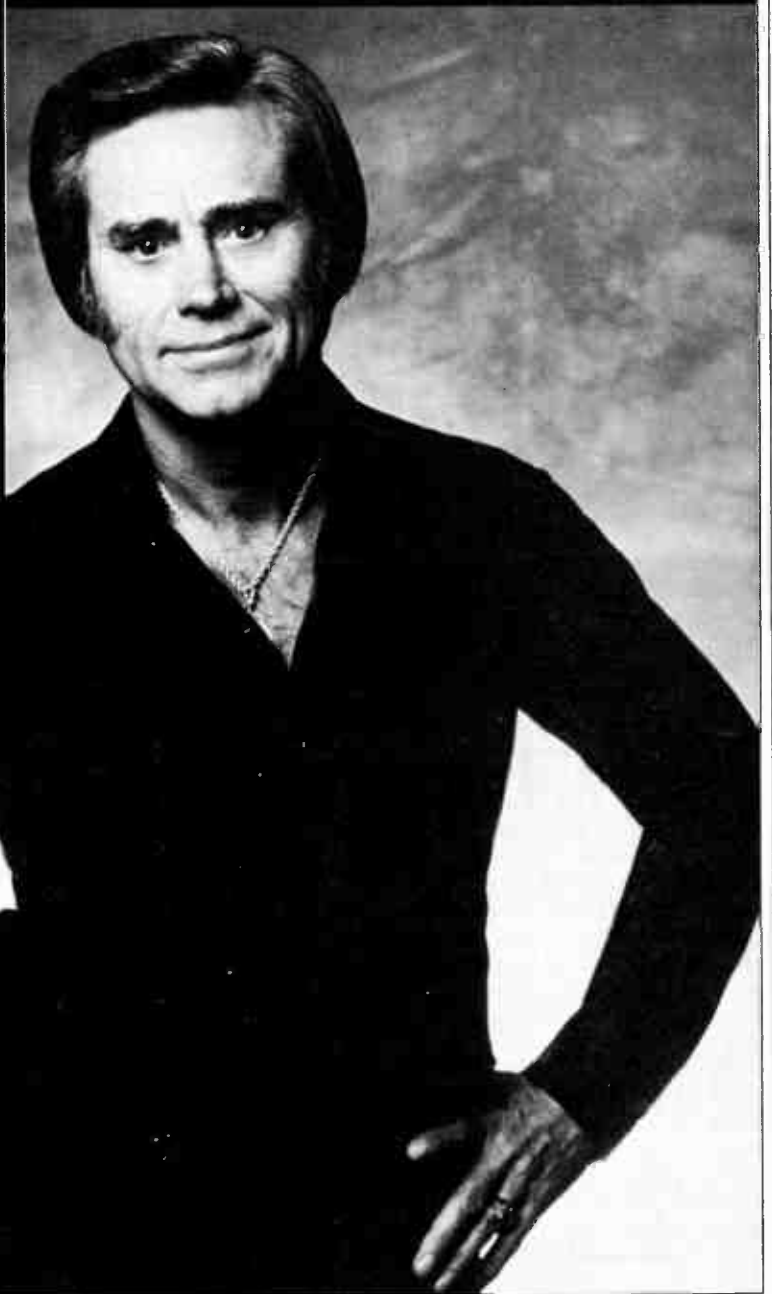
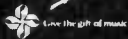
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## Anne Murray . . . Faron Young

And the original numbers fit perfectly. Woody Paul's *Compadres in the Old Sierra Madres* has a jazzy, Cole Porter-like sophistication to it, while his *Desperado Trail* has the right sense of foreboding and danger. Doug's *Ride With The Wind* has some brilliant Western imagery as does *Riding Alone*, along with a heart-tugging vocal.

Other groups have tried to revive rockabilly and Western swing and have always wound up sounding like every other dumb country-rock band. But knowing Doug, Woody and Slim, I doubt that'll happen. They're not just reviving the music; they're taking it into an era without one cowboy show on TV. *Cowboy Jubilee* proves it's working.

RICH KIENZLE

### Anne Murray Where Do You Go When You Dream

EMI S00 12144

I know what you're all thinking out there. How can *anyone* say anything bad about that nice Anne Murray girl? Isn't she just as cute as a button and sweeter than a ripe South Carolina peach, and doesn't she sing prettier than just about anybody you know? Yes, yes, and yes to all of the above, and I do truly love to hear her sing. I thought *Can I Have This Dance* was just about the greatest thing since sliced bread, and it still chokes me up. Ol' Burt Reynolds told me once that Anne Murray could sing just about anything and it would sound good, and this record is proof of Ol' Burt's prowess as a music critic. Like a whole spate of records to come out of the Music City gristmill lately (although this one was recorded in Canada, it bears the marks), *Where Do You Go When You Dream* suffers from a fierce case of the wimps. I mean, there's nothing really wrong with the bulk of this record (with a voice like hers, nothing could be *100* wrong), except that it's totally forgettable—almost. The record has three

saving graces, the first being the cover, which is cute and wasn't photographed by Scavullo and doesn't look like a Brooke Shields ad. It looks sort of Anne Murray-ish. The other two saving graces are Ms. Murray's present hit, *Blessed Are the Believers*, which is a very good and very moving song, and Larry Gatlin's *Bitter They Are, Harder They Fall*, done up in powerful style by Ms. Murray. I think the problem may be that with somebody as good as Anne Murray, the tendency is maybe not to look as hard for *the* song as a less accomplished singer might do. I played this record for a friend of mine who's a real Anne Murray fanatic, and my friend said this: "You know, when she's singing, it sounds real good, but if you stop to listen to it, it's repetitious and boring." Or something like that. In any case, an Anne Murray album deserves more than two outstanding cuts and a good cover. I always thought, by the way, that when I dreamed, I went to Cleveland, which in itself is enough to keep you from dreaming.

MICHAEL BANE

### Faron Young Over the Years

Faron Young Records LP-001

You can count on one hand the country crooners who equal Faron Young in artistic consistency and longevity. There's Eddy Arnold—the grand prototype—Ray Price, Marty Robbins... and that's about it. All are characterized by a "hickless" diction, a smooth delivery, and the ability to impart a feeling of intimacy no matter how trite the lyrics.

Young has some superb lyrics to work with, though, in this impressive collection of 20 hits and near hits. Although Young now records for MCA, this album is on his own label and is apparently available only through mail and at his concerts. No matter how you get it, it's a real bargain. But because the songs here are from the 1954-1971 period, there's a sizable gap in the Young canon.



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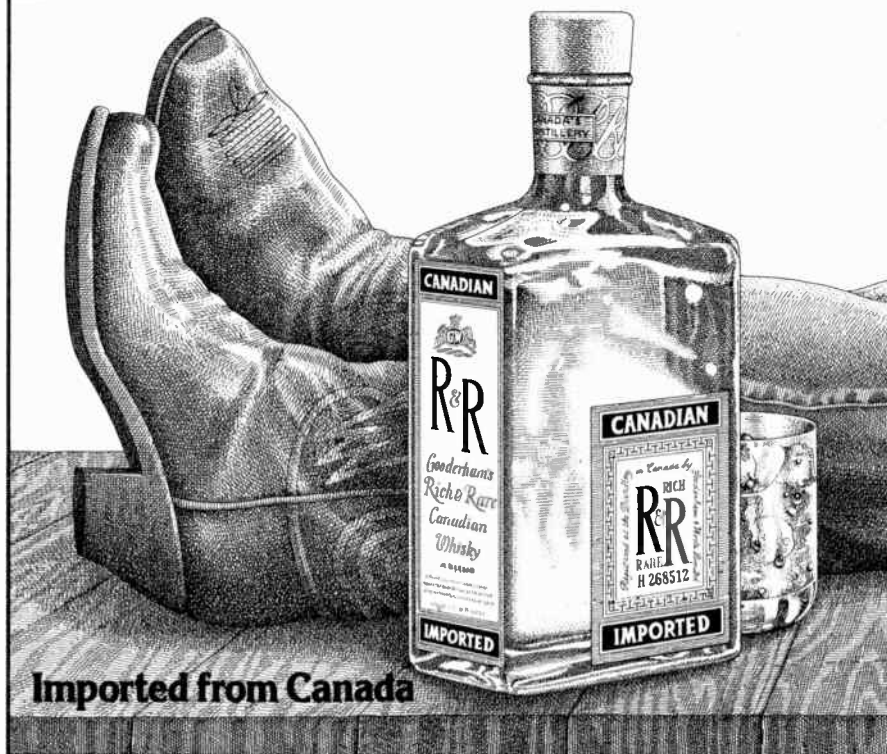
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# Time for a little R&R



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most soft-rock almost-country albums features excellent production values (courtesy, this time, of Steve Gibson and Quadrafonic Studios), the worst is exemplified by tracks like *Over My Head* and *Lean On Jesus*, which rock but don't quite rock with conviction; the combination of King's light and highly appealing tenor and those tasteful production values reduces the tracks to sopor state, and all you can really say about them is that they probably work a lot better in concert.

The reverse might be true of the really great tracks, Johnny Cash's *I Still Miss Someone* and King's own '59 *Was A Very Good Year*. Here, King's highly developed melodic instinct, unimpaired by the need to (sort of) boogie, is revealed in all its great delicacy and considerable depth. In his hands (and with Rosanne Cash adding lovely harmony), *I Still Miss Someone* is transformed into a beautifully gentle lament just as powerful as Cash's own sternly magnificent original. '59 *Was A Very Good Year* is good news, too, for it reveals the quality of King the songwriter at his best.

It's a shame, in fact, that most of the tracks on *Whirlwind* don't measure up to this quite evidently high standard; that's the album's failing as a whole, but it does at least indicate what the man has in him.

PATRICK CARR

## ... Don King ... Hank

Nearly as impressive as Young's ageless voice is his eye for the right material and the rising songwriter. Among such gems are three of Willie Nelson's early, but enduring, efforts: *Hello Walls*, *Three Days*, and *Congratulations*. In the same league are Tom T. Hall's *If I Ever Fall In Love With a Honky Tonk Girl*, Ray Griff's *Step Aside*, Jeannie Seely's *Leaving and Saying Goodbye*, Mel Tillis's meter-stretching *Unmitigated Gall*.

Young himself co-wrote two of the best cuts, *Wine Me Up* and *I Guess I Had Too Much To Dream Last Night*.

Since Young has so many top records to choose from, this album doesn't suffer from a single bad cut.

EDWARD MORRIS

**Don King**  
**Whirlwind**  
Epic FE 37105

**D**on King's official record company biography states it

nicely. His music, says the bio, mixes "feelings of country with the smooth contemporary appeal of pop." Now, that could mean all kinds of things, some of them suggestive of serious yawn potential, but in King's case it probably means that at some point he's quite likely to hit it big.

The reasons behind this prediction are as follows: Firstly, he's cute (as cute as Lief Garrett, says the bio, and you know what that means); secondly, by all accounts he's dynamite on stage (which means even *more* girl-power); and thirdly, he happens to write and sing his kind of music very well indeed. For all these reasons, he's getting Epic Records' top-grade first-album push, and that more or less cinches the matter.

So, his kind of music. At its worst it resembles outtakes from over-mellow Eagles sessions (*very* serious yawn potential here, but nothing in the least offensive or unprofessional), while in its average state it's as good as most material by Jim

Croce or Cat Stevens or Eric Anderson, and at its best it hits the very peak of the soft-rock (almost country) genre.

On *Whirlwind*, which like





# BURIED TREASURES

By Rich Kienzle

Capitol Records has been responsible for many great recordings over the years. Names like Buck Owens, Merle Haggard, Merle Travis, Ernie Ford, Hank Thompson and Tex Ritter became household words when they recorded for Capitol. Some classic Capitol recordings are in print on budget albums, but not very many. That makes Japanese Capitol's Call of the Country series all the more welcome. These single LPs boast 12 songs apiece, including much choice material, popular and obscure. Remember Merle Haggard's *Leonard*? That was, of course, his old Bakersfield, California cohort Tommy Collins (real name Leonard Sipes). The Collins LP (ECS 50058) contains a dozen of his hits from the 50s and 60s, including the classic *I Guess I'm Crazy* (which he wrote), *You Gotta Have A License* and some of his novelty numbers. Collins was an enormous influence on Hag and Buck Owens, and was the first true country star to emerge from that area.

**Hank Thompson** (ECS 50054) brings together hits like *Wild Side of Life* and *Humpty Dumpty Heart*, but also more obscure numbers like *Letter Edged in Black*. **Merle Travis** (ECS 50059) is a mix of material, including one original 40s hit, *Sweet Temptation*, re-recordings of his 40s hits like *Divorce Me COD* (with Curly Chalker on steel), out of print acoustic recordings of *Barbara Allen*, and *Muskrat* from his early Capitol days and oddities like the stomping *Louisiana Boogie* and *Re-Enlistment Blues*, the song he sang in the film *From Here to Eternity*.

The **Louvin Brothers** (ECS 50055) compiles a dozen of their finest performances, in the spare guitar-mandolin and close harmony style they helped to preserve, including *When I Stop Dreaming*, *Knoxville Girl* and *Alabama*. There are also two anthologies in the series. One, inexplicably titled **Wanted** (ECS 50062), consists of some of Capitol's earlier recordings, including Gene O'Quinn's infectious *Texas Boogie*, the delightfully bizarre *Hitler Lives* by Herman The Hermit, Jimmy

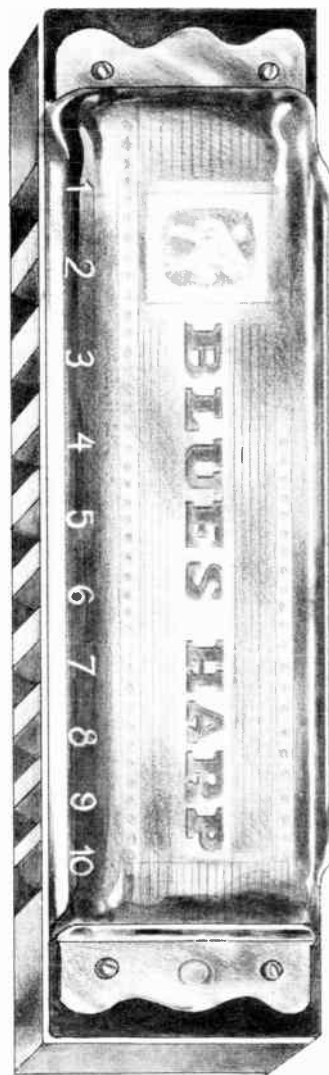
Wakely's spirited *Oklahoma Blues* and *Tennessee Border* by Tennessee Ernie Ford, done in a raw hillbilly arrangement. **Country Instrumental** (ECS 50061) combines obscure and well-known instrumental recordings by Merle Haggard's Strangers and Hank Thompson's Brazos Valley Boys with Roy Clark's hot *Alabama Jubilee* and some burning tracks by guitarist Jimmy Bryant and steel guitarist Speedy West, including one, done with Merle Travis. The latter, titled *Comin' On*, is one of the most blazing, exciting instrumentals ever recorded. All albums but the latter feature song lyrics in English, extensive notes in Japanese (unfortunately) and sound in pristine mono.

A fine German Red Foley reissue has also surfaced in the form of **Hillbilly Fever's Goin' 'Round** (Castle 8101), featuring 16 songs from radio transcriptions. The numbers are mostly uptempo, ranging from *Fireball Mail* to Foley's hit *Pinball Boogie*, all performed with a superlative studio band including Grady Martin on guitar.

Peter Wade is one of Nashville's finest studio guitarists, and his **Country Guitar Hits** (Boot BDS 7208) shows him to be a flawless player, both on country standards and several original tunes. Buddy Spicher and Lloyd Green, themselves studio legends, are among the backup players.

Six years after he died, Lefty Frizzell's music is undergoing a long-overdue revival (witness John Anderson's success). His earliest records had a power and effect that few others have realized. *Untold* (Rounder Special series 11) includes some of his finest early work, much of it unavailable in any form. *How Long Will It Take* and *Look What Thoughts Will Do* in particular are as compelling as the day he recorded them.

A correction: Maverick Records, mentioned in June, is at 808 West 10th Street, Austin TX 78704. The Japanese LPs are available for \$12.98 each, the Foley for \$10.98, plus \$2.20 postage from Down Home Music, 10341 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530. The Frizzell's available in many larger stores.



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ing in the familiar warmth of the faithful Saturday night Opry audiences—although one ingredient in Marty Robbins's career longevity has been the fact that he has not stopped growing, unlike his two aforementioned Opry colleagues who have become as unchanged in their music as statues in a wax museum.

The shadows lie in the area of record sales. Marty openly admits that his records are not selling like they used to. He complains that it costs too much to record an album the way they do it these days. "I don't believe in real expensive albums. I don't believe in a lot of overdubbing and stuff that the producer does when it's not his money." He even speculates as to just how much longer he'll be with his current label, Columbia. "They don't worry about people like Marty Robbins anymore," he says matter-of-factly, without any apparent bitterness. "They're worried about the Willie Nelsons and the Crystal Gayles. But I don't hold that against them. That's just the way this business works."

Some would even argue that Robbins no longer has either the desire or the flexibility necessary to stay at the top of today's record charts. "If he would just give up a little bit of creative control [Robbins has produced most of his own albums in recent years], he could maybe come back with another big hit," says one of his former associates. "He's got the money, and he knows what you need to do: get a flashy producer who's successful in today's market—like Larry Butler or somebody. Then find some good songs and spend the money it takes to make a hit: spread it around with the music trade magazines, with the record charts. He knows what it takes. He just doesn't want to do it."

Robbins does indeed know this, and at times he seems to agonize over it. On the one hand, he'd like to have better record sales, he'd like to experiment with his music. . . . But on the other hand, he's comfortable with what he's doing, and he knows he's got this loyal following out there that likes him just the way he is. . . .

"If I never made another record in my life, I could go on what I've already done for the next fifteen years," he explains. "And who knows, maybe I have seen my best years already, or maybe I haven't even peaked yet. I know I'm still way more interested in looking ahead than I am at looking back at what I've already done."

"If I was certain I could sell a half a million albums by cutting the kind of music they're cutting today, I might try it," he admits uneasily. "But there is no guarantee. And why change? Because there is a guarantee that when I cut an album the way I'm used to, I can continue to satisfy the people who put me where I am. And that is my main goal."

"I don't know," he laughs softly and shrugs, a trace of quiet pride coming into his voice. "Maybe I've just been Marty Robbins too long to change." ■



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# Willie at Austin City Limits



## Memories of Paris in the 30's and Austin in the 70's By Bill Oakey

Once hailed as the country music capitol of the Southwest, Austin, Texas has changed quite a bit since the PBS-TV series *Austin City Limits* began here, with its Willie Nelson pilot, in the early Seventies. Many of the funky nightspots which characterized the town's laid back musical climate are gone. The Split Rail burned down, a highway runs through the original location of the Soap Creek Saloon, and soon a towering hotel and office complex will emerge from the bulldozed plot of rubble where the celebrated Armadillo World Headquarters stood.

Somehow the forced nasal tones of a homegrown tune about longnecks and rednecks sound hackneyed when they are delivered across a carpeted room full of cosmopolitan cowfolks decked out in designer duds. But clubs with that kind of atmosphere are on the rise. Willie's Austin Opry House is still here, but is only booked for special shows, which don't come very often.

There are occasional country concerts at the University of Texas Frank Erwin Center, where you can snack on a small hot dog and a large coke for two dollars and eighty cents. The best night out is at one of the two Silver Dollar dancehalls, or the KLRU studio where *Austin City Limits* is taped.

At the studio, everything is like it is supposed to be. Dress is casual, the cover charge is zero, and the beer is still free. Coach Darrell Royal still sits up there in his regular spot, and Johnny Gimble walks onstage with his usual pleased-as-punch smile. Even the "no smoking" and "leave for the restroom quietly" speeches are delivered in Terry Lickona's same smooth, apologetic manner.

On the night of taping for the new Willie Nelson special, an elaborate press reception was held. But it was elaborate in a traditional Austin sense. There was enough food for a feast. We all pigged out and sat around waiting for something to happen. In one corner of the room was a TV monitor, nostalgically transmitting scenes from Willie's rare beardless performance of the entire *Red Headed Stranger* album.

I boldly walked over and interrupted somebody to ask if there would be a question and answer press conference. "Oh no!" the lady said, "but we were told that Willie would try to be here." A *PM Magazine* camera sat and waited with us. A flash went off, and I turned around to see a short character in pigtailed and tennis shoes next to a seven-foot lanky giant. Willie and Ray Benson of *Asleep at the Wheel* had made their unannounced entrance.

Willie said he remembered me from the

*Honeysuckle Rose* interview. He remembered a woman from an autograph he gave her last year in another state. He beamed at everybody and then disappeared as quickly as he had arrived. I remembered that I had forgotten to ask him when he was gonna release a Bob Wills tribute album. The photographer next to me put away his celebrity golf tournament photos of Larry Gatlin frowns and Willie Nelson twinkly smiles. It was off to the studio for the *Rainbow* show.

The program is a salute to swing music and the influence of 1930s era French jazz guitarist, Django Reinhardt. It was a project conceived and developed by Ray Benson and Willie Nelson, as part of their continuing efforts to expose contemporary audiences to cultural music of the past. Reinhardt could be called the Chet Atkins of jazz guitarists. Among other things, he pioneered the method of using the fleshy part of the thumb to strike two strings simultaneously.

The configuration of Reinhardt's group, The Hot Club of France—three guitars, fiddle, and bass—is represented in Willie's *Over the Rainbow* Band. Musicians include Paul Buskirk, Freddie Powers, Johnny Gimble, and Dean Reynolds. Many of the selections on the program were composed by Reinhardt, who grew up in a



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"Oh, I did," interrupts Becky, who is beautiful. "I loved that song!"

"... But the more I thought, 'You know, that's a pretty good old album. . . ."

"I went to the photo session for the cover," Becky says, actually blushing. The cover photo features Hank Jr. with two lovely young things pawing away at him. He looks contented.

"Unfortunately," says a grinning Hank.

"He was really nervous. . . ." says Becky.

"They had their hands all over me. . . . It didn't bother me a bit. . . . One of the girls whispered in my ear, 'You love it, don't you?'"

And, damn it all, he *does* love it—*Texas Women* a Number One song, albums going gold like clockwork, wild concerts across the country, all standing room only, even a movie on his life, based on our book, *Living Proof*, scheduled for television this fall with Richard Thomas from the *Waltons* in the starring role. But more than the success, which he has, after all, seen before, there is the irrefutable proof that he was *right*, that in between his daddy's ballads and the current run of Nashville schlock, there really is a place for the unique music of Hank Williams, Junior.

"Remember we used to sit around and talk about how I was going to do this and I was going to do that," he says, sober now. "Well, it all happened, Michael. It all came true. Everything we talked about came true."

**W**hen you agree to write somebody's life story, you are, in effect, agreeing to become a part of the life story you are writing about. Hank Jr. and I spent a year on putting together *Living Proof*, drifting from Cullman to Panama City, Florida, to the Continental Divide in Montana and back again. We honky-tonked and hunted moose, wandered to some pretty strange

places, and, every once in a while, got on each other's nerves (Becky once suggested that they adopt me, since I was apparently going to be around all the time anyway). We watched football games, shot tin cans, worried about the state of the world, and exchanged slanderous gossip about everyone we knew in Nashville. One memorable night I drove his truck into a muddy ditch and had to be dragged out by a 4X4, immediately after having a big laugh about a New York writer who did the same thing the week before—with the same truck, even. And I heard some great songs just about the time they were being born—an embryonic *Family Tradition*, for example.

What I learned about performers in general and Hank Jr. specifically could probably fill another book, but a couple of things do stick out. For a start, I discovered that people who make their living by walking out on stage night after night after night are basically different from you or me, and it's not enough just to say they have a bigger ego. There's some drive mechanism there that most people don't have, a drive to be *understood* that can, at times, override every single other emotion. The result is that performers are, by necessity, two different people, and sometimes the two people are fighting with each other.

I eventually came to realize that Hank Jr. has so brilliantly come to grips with those two people that the folks around him have forgotten what a battle he's fought and sometimes is still fighting. Over the months I came to see him as a very smart person walking on the edge of a razor blade, and for that I came to respect him a great deal.

**W**ait'll you see the place," Hank Jr. is saying as the Beechcraft circles for a landing in Paris. Below, the land is almost breathtakingly beautiful. Spring has come

to Tennessee, and there is no place in that magnificent state to compare with the lush land around Kentucky Lake. For Hank Jr., Paris, Tennessee, has always been "home free," a place beyond the tentacles of the country music business.

He first came to Paris as a teenager, to hook up with a fishing guide named Bill Dyer. He arrived in Paris with bodyguards, helpers, exhortations to be careful, and rueful comments on the dangers of fishing on a lake. Bill Dyer took one look at the whole entourage, shrugged his shoulders, and sent them all scurrying back to Nashville. Then he and Hank Jr. went fishing.

Since then, they've gone fishing and hunting just about all over the place, from Alaska to Africa. Along the way, Bill Dyer has grown from a fishing guide to a diversified industry.

"The best thing about it," Hank Jr. says. "is that nobody in Paris gives a damn about the music business. Never have. Never, I hope, will. It's nice to know that."

What we've come to see is Hank Jr.'s "little cabin," which, as Hank says somewhat embarrassedly, got out of hand. Instead of a little hunting cabin, the house in Paris grew to a three bedroom stone-and-wood hideaway, complete with jacuzzi and microwave oven.

"You're really gonna love it," he says, and Becky echoes his feelings.

"It's the kind of house we always wanted to build," she says. "So we did."

After a bumpy 20 mile trip in a Toyota Land Cruiser ("Sorta reminds you of being in Montana don't it?" Hank says, where we traveled mountain paths so steep and so narrow that a mountain goat would have blanched) and a detour to Bill Dyer's store, which covers about one city block and probably stocks one of everything, we eventually end up at the house, which is indeed beautiful. And understated—all cedar and stone and tile, with a few hunting trophies, including a cougar perched on an overhead beam, and a lot of comfortable furniture, not to mention a wonderful deck overlooking four hilly acres.

"Well," he asks. "Well?"

When, I ask, can I move in?

He laughs, and after a quick tour we head off in search of supper.

What we find is a place called the Old Oak Tree Inn, so named because of a huge oak growing in the lobby and through the roof. At the entrance to the old restaurant is a montage of fishing photos, now yellowed and cracked with age. Hank Jr. tows me over to the montage and studiously works his way across the four-foot length of the bulletin board.

"Here it is," he says, pointing to a yellowed photo of a chubby-faced youth with an impressive string of fish. "That's me." And it is, right up there with visitors long since forgotten and fish long since a fond memory. ■



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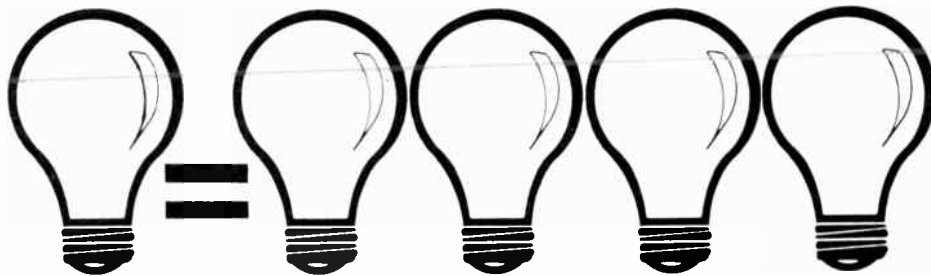
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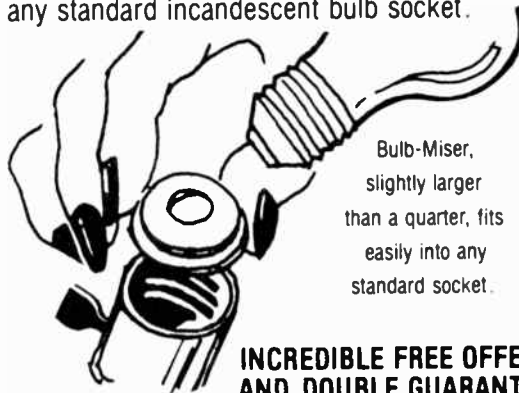
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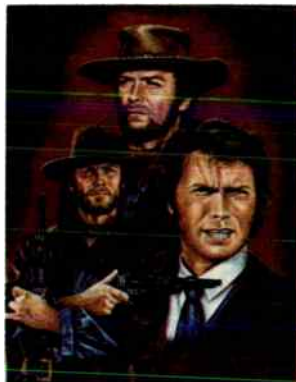
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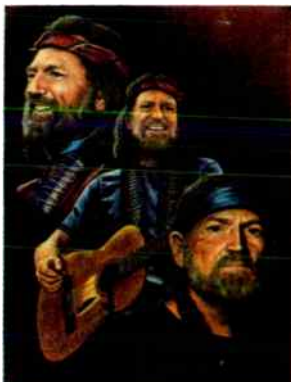
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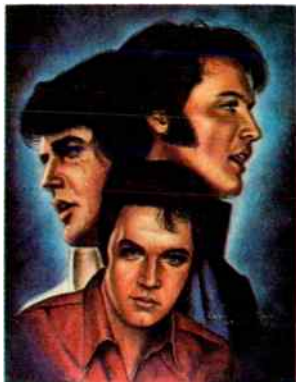
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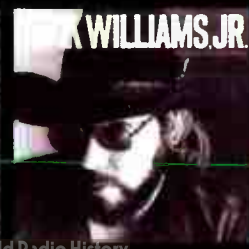
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