

Beat: Music

Portrait of AMERICAN ICON WILLIE NELSON In June/July Issue of AARP The Magazine

- AMERICAN ICON - Series

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USPA NEWS - The First in a Series of "American Icon" Exclusive Interviews, Willie Nelson reflects on his Life's Trajectory from Small-Town Texas to the Country Music Mecca of Nashville, the Friends he made along the Way and his Focus on only the Essential Things in Life. With a Rich, Varied, Textured Life Well-Lived and Career spanning over 50 Years, he is one of the Biggest Stars in Country Music.

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When questioned about his Secret to Life in an Intimate Interview with AARP The Magazine (ATM), Nelson says, "It's Simple. Do what you want to do. If I don't want to do it, forget it. But if I do want to do it, get out of my goddamn way."

Nelson's Words are a Testament to such a Life that includes smoking a Joint on the White House Roof during the Carter Administration, organizing the Farm Aid Benefit Concert and winning the Admiration and Respect of luminaries, including Bob Dylan.

In a Fitting Tribute, Dylan recalled, "Willie played some of his Songs: 'Night Life,' 'Hello Walls,' 'Crazy,'" I thought these were the most Perfect Songs that ever had a Right to be written. I thought he was a Genius then, and I think the Same Thing now."

Nelson continues to write and perform. His Latest Album, 'Last Man Standing,' features all New Original Songs. He's presently at work on a Collection of Sinatra Tunes, including 'My Way.'

When questioned about getting Old in AARP The Magazine (ATM), Nelson says, "I don't think my Attitude has changed. I'm still doing what I want to do, and I suggest Everybody do the Same."

- Selections from the Willie Nelson Cover Story in AARP The Magazine's June/July Issue:

* On Creative Influences :

"He (Hank Williams) was an Incredible Writer, sang with so much Feeling" and he had a Hard Life. Died at 29. But Nobody wrote better Songs than Hank. It was the Simplicity, Melody and a Line Anybody could understand."

* On working with Frank Sinatra :

"I learned a lot about Phrasing Listening to Frank. He didn't worry about Behind the Beat or in Front of the Beat, or whatever " he could sing it either way, and that's the Feel you have to have."

* On Life with his Wife, Ann Marie D'Angelo :

"Annie and I have been married since 1991 and found a Way to make it work." "Through thick and thin. You can't ask for anything more than that!"

* On his Beginnings with Music :

"I started when I was 5 or 6. I had one of those old Sears & Roebuck Guitars with the Strings high off the Neck "" your Fingers literally would bleed. When they healed up, though, they were pretty tough."

Source : AARP

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