

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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