



Lakeview patrons dancing the "Schottische" to the sounds of Ivey's band

Photo by Dave Einsel

# Dennis Ivey loves his music

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said he plays at other clubs in town, but likes the atmosphere at Lakeview better than anywhere else.

Ivey was playing there the night 1,874 drinking, dancing Aggies jammed into the 1,200-capacity club, setting a record.

He has played at most of the major clubs around Texas, he said.

"It's the only state I care about playing in," Ivey said.

He likes to refer to the clubs he plays in as "honky tonks," and the music he plays in the honky tonks is "dance music."

"We don't play anything that people can't dance to," Ivey said.

A typical evening's of Ivey's music includes "Amarillo by Morning," the "Cotton Eyed Joe"/"Schottische" combination twice, "Happy Birthday," Ivey's version of "The Aggie War Hymn, and "lots and lots of polkas."

"Amarillo by Morning" usually comes along early in the evening, and twice again before the lights come up at the end of the dance.

"When you first start, and there's not that many people here, you just pull things out of the hat to try and get 'em to dance," Ivey said.

And it works. The opening notes of "Amarillo by Morning" produce a mass exodus to the dance floor.

Ivey said he and his five-member band have released two albums and eight singles. The most popular, he said, was the "Amarillo by Morning" single. The studio that recorded the albums went bankrupt, he said, and the master tapes of the records were lost, so the records are no longer available.

Ivey said he has written some songs for a planned album, but will not perform them on stage until the album is completed.

Ivey said none of his four children like country music. Instead, they listen to groups like Kiss and Pink Floyd.

Ivey said his own favorites are Ray Price, Bob Wills and Ronnie Milsap.

He grew up listening to people like Hank Williams and Lefty Frizzell, but now, he said, "people get tired of Hank Williams."

Ivey said he caught the music "bug" in the first grade, when his classmates applauded his rendition of Marty Robbins' "White Sport Coat."

"This is what I've always wanted to do," he said.

Ivey, who plays guitar, bass and "a little fiddle," was offered a basketball scholarship to Southwest Texas State University, but passed it up to concentrate on music.

"I'm not the tallest guy around," Ivey said, "and I knew I couldn't go any further (in basketball)." Ivey is 5 feet 6 inches tall.

Ivey said he and his fiddle player "just got a little band together" to play at civic centers and talent shows around Huntsville, which is near his hometown of Midway. He described Midway as being about the size of the Lakeview dressing room.

Ivey said he thinks today's country music is "selling out" by becoming too commercial with "crossover hits" aimed at wider audiences than traditional country music is.

"We do a lot of the old songs, and that's what we enjoy doing," Ivey said.

"I love it."

Dennis Ivey sings at the Lakeview Club. Ivey said he got his start singing Marty Robbins' "White Sport Coat" in first grade.

Photo by Bob Sebree

