

Texas A&M The Battalion

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Jerry Jeff converts to relaxed lifestyle

United Press International
AUSTIN — Jerry Jeff Walker, the "Mr. Bojangles" composer whose songs glorified sangria wine and redneck others, now praises the wonders of vegetarianism and exercise that have taken the 40-year-old singer full-circle from a life of drugs, booze and non-stop chaos.

"I was a regular rolling party," said Walker, a tall and lanky composer-singer who describes his rowdy and sometimes bawdy music as "cow-jazz."

Walker's sprawling ranch-style home in Austin's hill country now shows little sign of the fast life he spurned Jan. 3, 1980 — the date he says he gave up whiskey, red meat, cigarettes, speed and cocaine on the same day.

A live-in helper prepares vegetable pie in a kitchen with cupboards overflowing with health foods. Walker's wife, Susan, is on a 9-day juice fast and rests in a bedroom while 11-year-old daughter Jesse gives backyard tours of an In-Indian teepee where she says her dad "likes to sleep and listen to critters."

"It was costing me a lot to be high and I was still bored," Walker says of the years which culminated with him downing a fifth of whiskey and snorting large amounts of cocaine every day.

"I was consuming a lot and nothing was happening. Anytime you find yourself not completely contented with what you're doing, you need to make a change. I think

that's where I was. This was getting old. I'd just about drunk every place and been every place, with everybody there was to do it with."

Walker, who added beer and wine to his list of taboos a month ago, runs five miles every day and has cut back on his traveling schedule to spend more time with Susan, Jesse and his 14-month-old son, Django Cody.

The role of family man and health fanatic was slow in coming to the boy from upstate New York who began his singing career as a street musician in New Orleans' French Quarter.

Fueled by a yearning for great adventures, Walker worked at odd jobs on his way from city to city in the 1960s, eventually mastering a picking guitar style. He played clubs in Austin, Kansas City and many small towns.

After a disastrous trip with a new band to seek his fortune in New York City, Walker returned to Austin and wrote his first hit, "Mr. Bojangles," a much-recorded folk tune that spelled success for the composer.

"I'm not really a country musician, but people got to call you something," Walker said. "That's why the new album is called 'Cow Jazz.'"

"After 'Bojangles' was a hit, I was supposed to be a great pop singer. They billed me in one club in New York as 'the rich Gordon Lightfoot.' Then I met Gordon and we went to his house (in Canada) and it was this big castle, and I was

still living in a cockroach-infested apartment in New York."

Walker did a bit more traveling before settling down in his hillside Austin home in the early 1970s. He avoided pressure by music studios to make his songs more commercial and started recording live at Texas honky-tonks in towns like Luckenbach, where his big-selling "Viva Terlingua" album was made.

Songs like "Redneck Mother," "Sangria Wine" and "London Homesick Blues" became staples on barroom jukeboxes as Walker joined the ranks of successful Texas musicians like Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings.

But the booze, drugs and fast living seemed to catch up to him when he found himself only a few years away from his 40th birthday.

"Some of it has to do with age," he said. "We used to be able to drink all night and crash for three hours and then bound out the door. Now if we drink all night we don't make it up until sunset, and even then we can't bound."

"It's taken me a longer time to find out what's right to do. I'm in a creative position to be able to effect change in my life, and that's what I'm doing."

He says most of his fans seem to like the new Jerry Jeff, whose diet and exercise regime results in more energetic and personal performances.

Prophecy brings bucks

United Press International
NEW YORK — Prophecies are a lot safer in this age of electronic computers than they once were.

It still pays to hedge one's prophecies somewhat, said Fern Pomerantz, vice president of Predicasts, Inc., of Cleveland, which does the broadest line of business prophesying in America today.

"We're rather shy about saying just how soon our prophecies will come true," she conceded.

Prophecy always has been profitable. Sophocles, the Greek poet and dramatist, said "Prophets are all a money-getting tribe," and Saint Matthew said a prophet need never lack for success and honor save in his own country.

But it was a hazardous business. Prophets who told people things they didn't want to hear stood to be beaten and if a soothsayer's pleasing prophecies didn't come true, he was in danger of being beheaded by the ruler or stoned to death by the mob.

Since Predicasts' just released annual volume of forecasts contains 50,000 long- and short-term predictions, a little hedging may be wise.

Pomerantz said Predicasts' re-

cord for calling the shots well ahead of time in the business world has been "as good or better than that of the econometric forecasters who build computer models." Predicasts uses the computer but doesn't build models. She said inflation and high interest rates have played havoc with some of the company's dollar volume forecasts but unit volume predictions have been quite successful.

Predicasts was founded 23 years ago by Sam Wolpert, who sold it a few years ago to the Indian Head division of the Dutch Thyssen-Bornemisza Group. It has 200 employees and earns about \$10 million per year.

The bundle of 50,000 forecasts, made up of three quarterly editions and an annual summary, sells for \$575. Among its more startling conclusions this year, Predicasts says the market for voice recognition equipment, now used in many computer-controlled warehouses and in other businesses, will grow by about 78 percent a year in this decade from \$15 million to \$150 million.

The study also envisions a 70 percent annual increase in this decade in selenium micronutrients, a 55 percent annual growth in the production of shrimp in fish farms and 47 percent a year for plasma proces-

sing equipment. Big gains are seen for robots, intrusion detection devices and for such prosaic things as radial truck tires, other fish culture and polystyrene insulation.

But Predicasts forecasts aren't all rosy. It sees a continuing drop in demand for combustion turbine power, exports of lead, coal, polyethylene and many other commodities and a drop in labor demand by the railroads and some other industries.

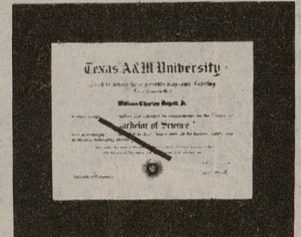
Predicasts also puts out an annual volume called the U.S. Economy Outlook. In the 1983 edition, economist and editor T. Kevin Swift is on the optimistic side compared with most current prognosticators.

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