

Entertainer promotes biography

Blind whistler has unusual talent

United Press International
TEXARKANA — Fred Lowry fought his way out of the ton fields of East Texas to form in Carnegie Hall and White House with one of the most unusual talents in the entertainment field — whistling. Lowry — who is in Texarkana visiting relatives, recuperating from a recent illness and promoting his new biography, "Whistling in the Dark" — was called "probably the finest whistler who ever puckered a lip" by the New York Times.

That's not quite right, though. Lowry never puckers. "That's one of the first things I learned when whistling, not to pucker," Lowry said. "Most people usually whistle out of their mouth. They're usually too loud, and I have a very piercing whistle, which I used to have before I got serious about whistling. There are a lot of chirpers, too."

Lowry, who doesn't like chirping and refuses to do bird imitations, has been whistling professionally for more than 50 years. He was the whistler on "Indian Love Call" and taught Mary Martin how to whistle when she played Peter Pan.

He performed in the White House was before President Franklin Roosevelt.

Lowry is blind, but he is proud that neither his blindness nor other people's skepticism about his becoming a professional whistler has ever stopped him from doing anything he wanted to do.

"My whole life has been like the title of the book, a whistle in the dark," he said. "I've taken some chances and pushed myself, and done pretty well, I think."

"Whistling in the Dark" is the title of a song he whistled on the Rudy Vallee Variety Hour back

in the early 1930s. He recently had come to New York from Dallas where he had worked at

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the new radio station, WFAA. He was trying to make a name for himself and get the \$300 appearance fee he needed to finance his fledgling career.

It was his first big national audience, and he was a hit. All it brought him, though, was trouble. A girl and a fake agent stole his \$300 and left him broke.

It wasn't until a banker befriended him and introduced him to Clara Bell Walsh, a wealthy New York socialite, that he got his first big break with the Vincent Lopez orchestra, one of the early big bands.

Lowry was born in Palestine, Texas, and raised by his grandmother. Like many East Texas families in the Piney Woods at that time, Lowry's family struggled as sharecroppers, moving from one farm to the next, picking cotton.

It was in those cotton fields that he found out he could whistle two notes at the same time. He has been listed in Ripley's Believe It Or Not column, and as far as he knows, is the only person who can whistle two notes simultaneously. He said he really doesn't know how he does it.

"As far as I can remember, when I was a kid I could whistle the two notes out in the cotton fields in East Texas. And the farm boys used to say, 'Hey boy, let me hear you whistle like two people.' They didn't know what I was doing and I didn't either. I think I just stumbled upon it."

Lowry got more ambitious about his whistling when he entered The Texas School for the Blind and the great Ernest Nichols gave a program at a student assembly.

"He was from California. There was a school out there.

Agnus Woodward Artistic School. That was all the bird imitators, bird chirpers who I couldn't stand."

After Nichols' program he gave the students an opportunity to whistle for the audience. Lowry had been practicing and finally, with the encouragement of his music teacher, agreed to perform.

Lowry announced he would whistle "To A Wild Rose," which he did despite the skepticism of the bird chirpers. He finished his performance with a lively rendition of the "William Tell Overture," which became one of his most impressive numbers.

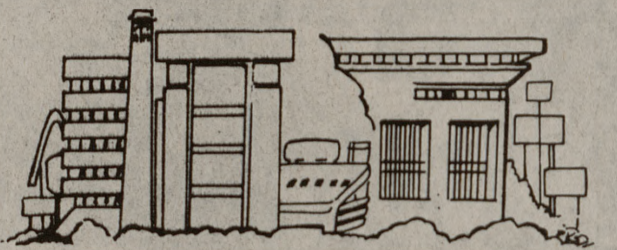
"Nichols was pretty impressed," he said. "He gave me some lessons and gave me encouragement, but it wasn't until my music teacher said that I should develop my talent for whistling that I decided that I wanted it as a career."

"The depression was just beginning and it wasn't a good time to be starting a career at all, much less a career as a blind whistler."

Lowry survived by selling can openers and whistling for Austin civic groups until he decided to move to Dallas in 1931. On the Early Birds Show at WFAA, where he started out at \$10 a week, he became a local celebrity with other future stars such as Dale Evans.

Lowry has worked with a lot of celebrities. He has roomed with Art Carney and danced with Judy Garland. He said he can't think of one he has worked with that he didn't like.

Around town



Bonfire cookie crew holds meeting

Anyone interested in working on the Student Y Bonfire Cookie Crew must attend a mandatory organizational meeting at 8 tonight in 225 Memorial Student Center. The meeting will feature a slide show, and everyone is welcome.

Iranian students to sponsor lecture

The Society of Iranian Students will present a lecture on the Middle East titled "The Other Side of the Coin," at 8 tonight in 701 Rudder Tower. A guest speaker from Washington, D.C., will discuss topics including Palestine and Lebanon, the war in Iran, and Russian aggression in Afghanistan. Admission is free, and everyone is welcome.

Aggieland photos taken at Pavilion

Individual pictures for the 1984 Aggieland are being taken at the Pavilion on campus, and at the Yearbook Associates office at 1700 S. Kyle behind Culpepper Plaza.

Dates to have photographs made are:

- Freshmen and sophomores — Oct. 10-14 at the Pavilion
- Juniors — Nov. 7-11, 14-18 at Yearbook Associates; and Nov. 28-Dec. 2, Dec. 5-9 at the Pavilion
- Seniors, graduate students, veterinary and medical school students — Oct. 10-14, 17-21, 24-28 at Yearbook Associates; and Oct. 31-Nov. 4 at the Pavilion.

Dance Arts weekly classes scheduled

Dance Arts Society offers weekly dance classes to its members. People interested in joining and taking classes should attend the class they want and bring \$20 for the semester membership fee. Classes are offered as follows:

- Beginning tap — Monday from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- Intermediate/advanced tap — Monday from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Aerobics — Tuesday and Thursday from 9 p.m. to 10 p.m.
- Intermediate jazz — Tuesday from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- Beginning jazz — Tuesday from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Dance technique — Wednesday from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- Beginning ballet — Wednesday from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
- Intermediate/advanced ballet — Monday from 9 p.m. to 10 p.m. and Wednesday from 8:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.
- Beginning modern — Thursday from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Intermediate modern — Thursday from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

All classes are in 268 E. Kyle, and anyone may join.

To submit an item for this column, come by The Battalion office in 216 Reed McDonald.

Minnesota bird trots to victory

United Press International
CUERO — The city of Worthington, Minn., once again rules the roost as the turkey capital of the world.

Texas turkey Ruby Begonia trotted in record time Sunday in the second heat of the Great Gobbler Gallop in Cuero, but it wasn't enough to keep Worthington's own "Paycheck" from winning the title.

The Minnesota bird reclaimed the traveling turkey trophy of tumultuous triumph, boosting Worthington into top turkey status for the seventh time in 11 years of competition between the two cities.

On Sunday, Ruby Begonia blistered the course on the state highway that runs through Cuero in a record time of 14.39 seconds. Paycheck was right behind in 15.62 seconds but the title is based on total cumulative time for both heats.

Paycheck had won last month's race in Worthington and finished with a total time of 41.82 seconds. Ruby was a distant second, totaling 1:09.49.

For a reprint of the da Vinci illustration and information on career opportunities with E-Systems in Texas, Florida, Indiana, Utah, and Virginia, write: Dr. Lloyd K. Lauderdale, Vice President Research and Engineering, E-Systems, Inc., Corporate Headquarters, P. O. Box 226030, Dallas, Texas 75266.

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sophisticated guidance and command and control systems, and has designed and built a system that greatly expands man's ability to study the universe.

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Leonardo da Vinci

armored car

helicopter

parachute design

horseman & three lances

scythed car

Vitruvian man

multi-barrelled gun

Our Garland Division will be on campus interviewing November 3-4, 1983

A Lecture on the Middle East

The Other Side of the Coin

by
 A Guest Speaker from Washington, D.C.

Topics include:

1. Palestine and Lebanon
2. The Imposed War on Iran
3. Russian Aggression in Afghanistan

Time: 8:00 p.m. - Monday, October 10, 1983
 Place: Rudder Tower - Room 701

Free Admission

Sponsored by:
 The Society of Iranian Students (MSA-PSG)