

LEROY VAN DYKE

Biographical Information (2014)

Leroy Van Dyke, of “Auctioneer” and “Walk On By” fame, star of the movie, “What Am I Bid?” is known around the world as an entertainer, recording artist, radio and television star, actor, auctioneer and veteran of the Nevada circuit. He has recorded over 500 songs, and probably holds the record for most repeat-performance bookings of any working, name country music entertainer. He has worked 40 to 70 fairs and livestock events per year for over five decades, in addition to a great variety of other engagements.

He was born on a farm (not in a hospital) in rural Pettis County, Missouri, without the amenities of running water and electricity. He was reared on a 3,000-acre ranch southeast of Sedalia and became fully conversant in all aspects of farm/ranch operations. His father was also the pioneer truck line operator in central Missouri, and Leroy became an expert over-the-road driver, hauling furniture, livestock, freight and farm commodities. This early training developed in Leroy diverse occupational abilities and a work ethic that has served him well in every aspect of his life.

Elementary schooling for Leroy was in one-room country schools, then to high school at Sedalia, where he ranked third in a class of 180 graduates.

Leroy is a graduate of the University of Missouri with a dual major: Animal Husbandry and Journalism, with a minor in Speech. He received a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, did one semester of graduate work, and was a member of both the junior and senior University of Missouri intercollegiate livestock judging teams. Between his junior and senior years at the University of Missouri, Leroy attended and graduated from Reppert’s School of Auctioneering in Decatur, Indiana.

After serving as a special agent, U. S. Army Counter-Intelligence Corps, in Korea, Leroy was catapulted into show business while working as a fieldman in the purebred livestock advertising department of the Cornbelt Farm Dailies, a chain of livestock newspapers, when his self-penned “Auctioneer” recording went a million-plus just weeks after its release. He then joined Red Foley’s ABC-TV Network “Ozark Jubilee” in Springfield, Missouri, as a regular member, and continued in that position for three years until the show left the air.

He again had a multi-million seller with “Walk On By,” a record that stayed in the charts an incredible 42 weeks, nineteen in the number one position, and was later named by Billboard Magazine as the biggest country music record in history! In 1961, Leroy moved to Nashville, Tennessee, then, in 1962, became a regular member of the world-famous Grand Ole Opry.

Music industry experts named Leroy Van Dyke as the Country Music Entertainer of the Decade for the 1960s. He had the starring role in the 1967 movie “What Am I Bid?.”

Leroy was a founding co-host of “Country Crossroads,” the most widely syndicated show in radio history; he hosted his own syndicated television series, “The Leroy Van Dyke Show;” he hosted the 1965 Country Music Association Awards Show at which Ernest Tubb was inducted into the Hall of Fame; he was the first entertainer to receive the prestigious Country Music Association Founding President’s Award for contributing to the advancement and improved image of country music; he served on the board of directors of the Country Music Association, and on the board of the International Entertainment Buyers Association.

He was selected by the Country Music Association to represent it in showcase situations at the Waldorf in New York, The Monteleone in New Orleans, The Edgewater Beach and the Conrad Hilton in Chicago, The Ambassador in Los Angeles and numerous Country Music Association functions in Nashville.

Van Dyke is considered by industry moguls and by his peers to be the entertainer who put professionalism in country music. He was the first to blaze a trail and take a staged, produced, choreographed, self-contained country music show to the “Strip” in Las Vegas. He was the first to take country music to Bourbon Street in New Orleans’ famed French Quarter. He was the only country music performer ever to open a show for Marilyn Monroe.

Leroy is a 2001 inductee into the North American Country Music Association, International, Hall of Fame, and is a member of the Missouri Country Music Hall of Fame. In 2007, Leroy was the recipient of the Missouri Country Music Association Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2011, Leroy was inducted into the International Entertainment Buyers Association’s Hall of Fame.

Also, in 2008, Leroy was named the Alumnus of the Year by the University of Missouri (Columbia) College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources.

After more than five decades as an entertainer, Leroy has not missed a performance, and still travels in excess of a hundred thousand miles yearly around the world . . . he performs in all facets of show business, including fairs, festivals, concerts, rodeos, supper clubs, conventions, radio, television, recordings, the Nevada circuit, livestock events, agricultural shows and private functions.

On a personal note, should you ask, Leroy will tell you that there are only four things he ever wanted to do: sing, sell, write, and raise livestock. He is living his dream. His name is a household word in country music circles around the world. He is an auctioneering Hall of Fame member. He was a successful journalist, and is the author of “Auctioneering, Motivation, Success,” a work that is rapidly becoming the textbook of the auction profession. His Arabian mules are developing a reputation from New England to California and from Canada to the Deep South.

For more information:

1.800.316.1236