

# Gene Autry: A Millionaire

By Bob Thomas  
Associated Press

**HOLLYWOOD**—Once he rode astride Champion, guitar in hand. Now Gene Autry sits behind a massive desk piled high with papers. He is 30 pounds heavier and a few million dollars richer, but the folksy touch remains.

Autry considers himself just a country boy still trying to make good in the big city, though to all appearances he has. He operates his baseball-hotel-broadcasting-real estate empire from the studio he owns in Hollywood, the same place where Al Jolson starred in the first talkie, "The Jazz Singer."

**THE AUTRY** saga can be learned in a new book, "Back in the Saddle Again" (Doubleday, \$8.95) which he wrote with Mickey Her-skowitz.

"I didn't tell all," the first of the singing cowboy stars admitted. "There are certain things you don't want to talk about, certain people you don't want to hurt."

"I don't think it's right for folks to write bad things about people they've worked with, the way (Jim) Bouton did. He and his fellow players were teammates together, and there should be a loyalty there. If a fellow starts throwing rocks, there are damn few that can't throw rocks back at him."

Autry even has kind words for Herbert J. Yates, his old boss at Republic Pictures:

"I always liked him. Herb had two personalities; you might say he was a real Jeckyll and Hyde. When he was host at a dinner party, he could be the most charming guy in the world. But if you negotiated with him across a



Gene Autry: There's nothing as sad to me as a former big star trying to come back after his prime... It's better to get into another business and forget the past.' Autry, left, at 66, is 30 pounds heavier and a few million dollars richer than he was above, when he was the singing cowboy.



Oct 9, 78 Star-Bulletin

# Country Boy

desk, he could be the roughest old bastard you ever met."

IN HIS BOOK, Autry writes about Yates' anger when his no. 1 box office draw enlisted in the Army Air Corps after Pearl Harbor.

"By the time you come back, you'll be forgotten," the studio boss ranted. "And it won't hurt us. No, sir. If we have to, we'll spend a million dollars to promote (Roy) Rogers. A million. And we'll make him bigger than you ever were."

Indeed, Autry returned from the war to find Rogers a big star. But Gene denied they ever feuded:

"That was just a publicity thing. Walter Winchell used to have a feud with Ben Bernie, and they'd exchange insults on radio. Later Jack Benny did the same thing with Fred Allen. The Republic publicity department thought it would be a good idea for Roy and me. But there was no personal feud whatsoever."

"I see Roy quite often. Just a few weeks ago he came to the studio, and we appeared in a television special, 'The Saga of the Singing Cowboy,' along with Jimmy Wakely and Rex Allen. Tex Ritter's son, John, emceed the show, and he did a fine job."

AUTRY'S wartime duty sparked his future financial empire. He recalled:

"When I went into the air force, I thought to myself, 'Last year'—it was 1941 or 1942—you made a half-million dollars out of six pictures, weekly radio for Wrigley's, personal appearances, records. Suddenly it all drops to a tech sergeant's pay of \$145 a month.'"

"If it hadn't been for royalties

from my records and endorsements, I couldn't have survived. That should teach a lesson not only to me but every performer and athlete. I was okay as long as I was performing. But supposing my voice went haywire, or I became ill and couldn't work? That's when I decided to get into some kind of business."

His business career blossomed in the postwar years, and in 1956 he quit performing. He says he doesn't miss it.

"I'll do an interview or talk show on TV, but I'd never make another picture. There's nothing as sad to me as a former big star trying to come back after his prime. The same with great football and baseball players. Times change. It's better to get into another business and forget the past."

AUTRY ADMITTED he had been "pretty fortunate in most of the business ventures I've gotten into." Some of his hotels didn't fulfill his hopes, but he eventually recouped. Patience seems to help. After his player-buying spree, the California Angels lost \$900,000 last year. But he expects the American League team to earn nearly \$1 million this season.

His business advice: "Stay in business with people who know what they're doing. Stay out of the kind of business you don't know. Every day I get propositions that 'will make you rich overnight.' They're from promoters that you shouldn't get involved with."

Is Gene Autry as rich as people think he is?

"Hell, no. I don't know anybody who can write a check for a million dollars, except Howard Hughes. And he's dead."



# SAVE YOUR FURNITURE



**RECOVER YOUR SOFA**  
**NOW ... \$150**  
*For as low as*

- Samples brought to your home
- Evening and weekend appointment welcome
- Free estimates • No obligation

**PARADISE UPHOLSTERY Inc.**  
 1363 Dillingham Blvd. Ph. 841-3341  
 since 1947 Sam Tobara



## YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND A SUPER EVENING AND SELF HELP WORKSHOP

conducted by  
**Dr. Gary L. Coature Ph.D.**  
ADDITIONAL CONSULTANT AND  
 AUTHOR OF BOOK "HOW TO WIN THE AGING GAME"

YOU WILL LEARN THE REVOLUTIONARY DISCOVERIES AND THE  
 KEYS TO THE CORRECTION AND CAUSES OF MANY CONDITIONS:

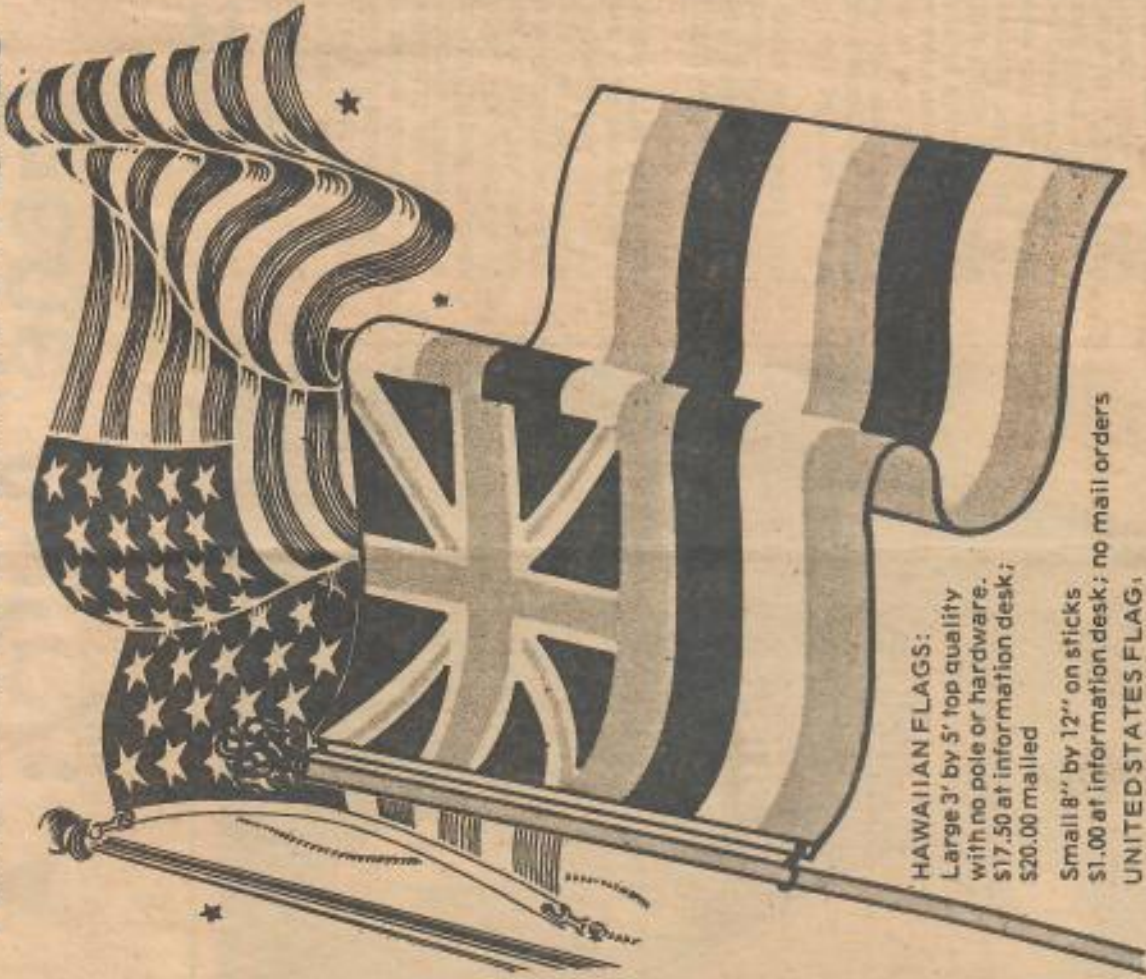
- ARTERIOSCLEROSIS
- ALLERGIES
- ASTHMA
- BLOOD PRESSURE
- CONSTIPATION
- COLITIS
- FATIGUE
- HEART TROUBLE
- HYPOGLYCEMIA
- IMPOTENCY
- PREMATURE AGING
- SKIN CONDITIONS (WRINKLES)
- STOMACH CONDITIONS
- CHRONIC PAIN

### OAHU WORKSHOPS PUBLIC INVITED NO CHARGE

<b>MONDAY, OCT. 29</b> WAIKIKI KAPAHULU LIBRARY 400 KAPAHULU AVENUE 7:30 P.M.	<b>TUESDAY, OCT. 30</b> WAIKIKI LIBRARY 820 CALIFORNIA AVENUE 7:30 P.M.
<b>WEDNESDAY, OCT. 31</b> KAILUA LIBRARY 329 KULEI ROAD 7:30 P.M.	<b>THURSDAY, OCT. 1</b> AIEA HAINA LIBRARY 3244 KALANIMAOLE HIGHWAY 7:30 P.M.

NOTE: THESE ARE TENTATIVE DATES. SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.

# AMERICAN & HAWAIIAN FLAGS



### HAWAIIAN FLAGS:

Large 3' by 5' top quality  
 with no pole or hardware.  
 \$17.50 at information desk;  
 \$20.00 mailed

Small 8" by 12" on sticks  
 \$1.00 at information desk; no mail orders

### UNITED STATES FLAG:

Large 3' by 5' top quality  
 with no pole or hardware.  
 \$15.00 at information desk;  
 \$17.50 mailed

Pick up at

## Hawaii Newspaper Agency

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays  
 or write

Hawaii Newspaper Agency, P.O. Box 3350, Honolulu, Hawaii 96801



# "MAHALO

to all who have supported me.

## And MAHALO

to all who voted in this election."

—Norman Mizuguchi

**Mizuguchi Means  
A Young, Aggressive  
Force Working  
For Us.**

**STATE SENATE  
(D) Fourth District**

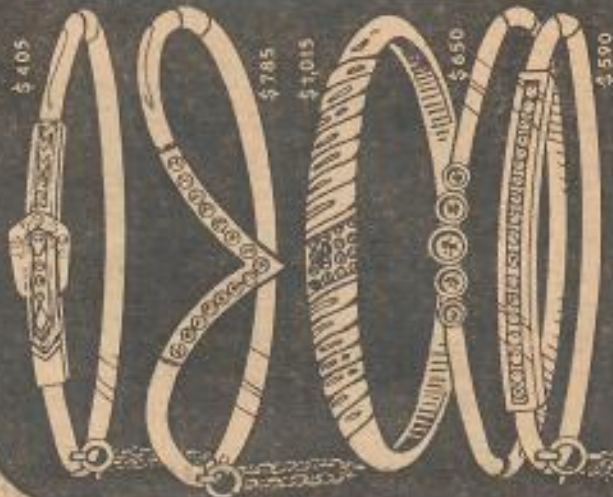
PAID FOR BY: MIZUGUCHI FOR SENATE COMMITTEE, P.O. BOX 452, PEARL CITY 96782



## BEAUTIFUL BANGLES

Of gleaming 14K gold and studded with lots of little diamonds for extra sparkle and shine! Perfect for the dance floor when you want your "disco look" to be complete all over. Several styles. Come in and see them all today.

- convenient credit terms
- revolving charge plan
- all major credit cards



**SECURITY  
DIAMOND**



**CONRAD  
JEWELERS**

OUR 42nd YEAR AS HAWAII'S LEADING JEWELERS  
ALA MOANA CENTER