

It Fits Under a **Cowboy Hat**

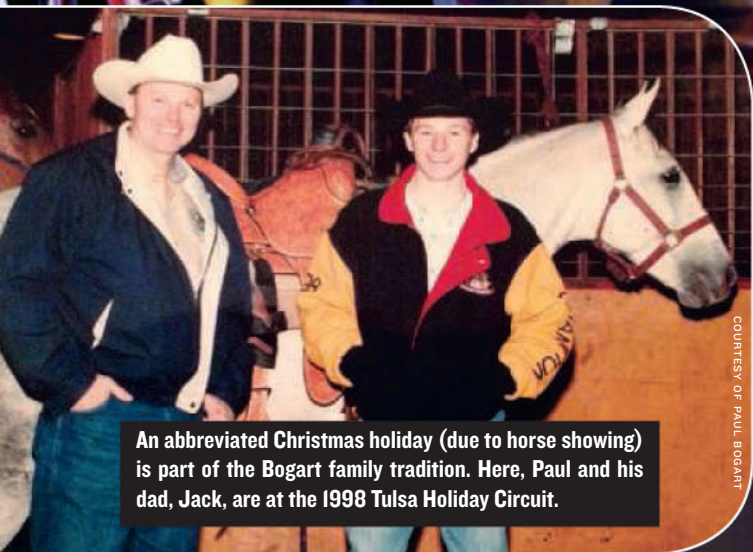


Music and horses have long been common denominators for singer-songwriter and AQHA world champion Paul Bogart.

By Holly Clanahan



PAUL BOGART MUSIC



COURTESY OF PAUL BOGART

An abbreviated Christmas holiday (due to horse showing) is part of the Bogart family tradition. Here, Paul and his dad, Jack, are at the 1998 Tulsa Holiday Circuit.

Paul Bogart has a classic country sound and look, but he is quite possibly the only country singer to wear an AQHA World Champion belt buckle. He earned two team-roping youth world championships and added to his buckle collection again in November.



Paul and CD Wooden Heart captured a world championship in amateur heading during the 2014 AQHA World Championship Show. The horse, bred by Paul's dad, Jack, also won junior heading with Brad Lund, and was in the top 10 of both amateur and junior heeling. "It's just a neat success story," Paul says.

LAST YEAR, COUNTRY SINGER PAUL BOGART PLAYED 80 GIGS on the road. He and his band have been from Wyoming to the Carolinas, and even to Italy to perform USO shows for the military.

"Can you imagine?" he says earnestly. "You're getting paid to go play music in Europe? Sometimes I think, 'Is this a dream?' This is just wild. To get to make a living playing music, goodness, I feel like I'm just a fortunate guy."

On stage and off, Paul looks the part. But if his fans look closely, underneath that neatly creased hat and sitting on top of those starched jeans is a belt buckle that can't be found in any western wear store. It says "AQHA World Champion."

"It brings some authenticity to me as an artist, as a singing cowboy," Paul says of his roping credentials. But, always humble, he's quick to point out that working ranch cowboys like the ones he met in Wyoming – the kind of people who inspired him to write the song "Cowboy Ride" – hold more of a claim to the title of "cowboy."

Still, it's nothing of a stretch to call this man a horseman. And both his talent in the saddle and behind a microphone are things he comes by honestly.

Paul, 32, says he grew up listening to his mom, Patti, play piano at the church house in his hometown of Oologah, Oklahoma, and he learned early on how to harmonize along with her. His dad, Jack, exerted his influence when he plopped young Paul on a horse and showed him how to swing a rope.

So the seeds were planted early, fertilized often by AQHA members who helped Paul develop his roping skills during high school, college and beyond ... and they've definitely blossomed.

Last November, Paul earned an amateur world championship in heading, riding CD Wooden Heart, a 2009 sorrel stallion bred and owned by Jack. ("Woodrow" also won a world championship in junior heading, shown by Brad Lund.)

"Man, what a cool horse!" Paul says.

In amateur heeling, Paul placed eighth with Woodrow and seventh with Bourbon Street Crome, a reining-bred gelding who also came out of Jack's breeding program.

"It was really exciting for a couple of small-town guys from Oologah," Paul says. "The neat thing about all of this, the

horses that I'm getting to show are horses that my dad raised. He's raising some really neat babies that are winning and developing show records. I told Dad, 'I don't really want to ride an "outside" horse. I just want to ride stuff that you raise.' "

Jack began breeding horses in 2000, hoping to raise some nice rope horses for himself and his son, as it was becoming clear that the addiction to team roping wasn't just a passing phase.

Paul spent summers during high school and college roping with AQHA Professional Horseman Rick Chayer of Sperry, Oklahoma. He earned two AQHYA world championships in 1999 and 2000 – one at each end of the team roping – as well as a number of year-end high points. Breakaway and tie-down roping were also successfully in his repertoire.

American Quarter Horse Foundation and college rodeo scholarships helped put Paul through college, where he earned a business management degree.

During those days, he got a taste of what his life's like today. "When I got into college," Paul says, "I started a little band, and on the weekends that I wasn't college rodeoing, I was trying to book gigs and play in these little venues all over Oklahoma. It all just kind of fit."

Today, it still does.

A month after graduation in 2005, Paul moved to Nashville, Tennessee, to get serious about the music business. He has three albums now, available on iTunes, and he's busy promoting his latest, "Oklahoma Wind."

But living in Nashville, it didn't take Paul long to start missing some of the things he'd left behind in Oklahoma.

"I'd been in town about a year, and during that year, I was continuing to date my high school sweetheart," Paul says. "I went back to Oklahoma and talked with Tanya's dad about marrying his daughter and moving her to Nashville. He gave his blessing, and we got married."

Horses, too, had to move east.

"I'd roped the majority of the days of my life in high school and college," Paul says. And now here he was in Nashville, living in town and horseless. "After about a month of not being horseback, I was craving it."



Two Eyed Meterman hasn't seen the inside of a show ring yet, but he's already a little bit famous. Paul asked his Facebook fans to suggest a barn name. "Gibson" – which is a brand of guitars – came out on top.

He had met AQHA member Kenny Beshears years before and renewed that acquaintance when he offered to provide some chute help at Kenny's place in nearby Burns, Tennessee. Kenny let him rope a couple of steers and, upon seeing that Paul knew what he was doing, asked him, "Man, what are you doing tomorrow?"

"It was just good to be horseback, good to be roping," Paul remembers.

Now, Paul boards his horses at Kenny's place, including one that might be the Bogarts' next showing star, Two Eyed Meterman.

The 3-year-old palomino stallion is already a little bit famous after Paul asked fans on his Facebook page (www.facebook.com/paulbogartmusic) for suggestions for a barn name. More than 2,000 people responded. "Gibson" – which is a brand of guitars – came out as the winner.

Gibson's dam, Jacks Royal Ginger, was a great horse for the Bogart family. Paul won a lot on her, including a reserve world championship in amateur heading in 2010 and a third place the year before. Jack had gotten several good babies out of her before selling her to a new owner in Brazil.

"She's one of the most athletic horses I'd been on," Paul says. He's excited now about her up-and-coming son.

"Kenny is starting him, and he's great. He's a real athlete," Paul says. "It's a neat situation because Kenny gets the music, he understands that I'm hustling out on the road and working, and then when I'm home, he frees up his schedule and I get to go over and rope.

"Running up and down the road playing music keeps me pretty busy."

Paul makes enough time in his schedule, though, to ensure that he gets qualified for the AQHA World Championship Show, and about a month before the show, he tries to practice as much as possible to sharpen up his skills.

Fitting horse shows into a busy schedule is something that the Bogart family has been used to for a long time.

"AQHA is like part of the family," Paul says. "So many Bogart family traditions wrap around AQHA events. Every Christmas, everybody comes back to Oklahoma, to Mom and Dad's."

Between his family and Tanya's, they do a lot of visiting, but it has to be wrapped up quickly. Just a few days after Christmas, "the Holiday Circuit in Tulsa happens, and for the last 20 years, it has interrupted the Bogart Christmas, and by golly, it's going to happen, because the Bogart boys are going to go rope in Tulsa." 📍

Go to www.paulbogartmusic.com to learn more about Paul, check out his touring schedule and find his other social media sites.



Paul, riding Bourbon Street Crome, with his wife, Tanya, on CD Wooden Heart, proudly carrying the AQHA World Show hardware.

More About the Music

AT THE 2014 AQHA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP Show, Paul Bogart brought more than just a couple of horses; he brought his whole band. They performed during the Farnam Superhorse Party in one of the barns, and Paul has also been the featured entertainment at other AQHA events, including a celebration at the 2010 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games in Lexington, Kentucky.



If you haven't been lucky enough to catch him in person, Paul's music can be found on iTunes (www.itunes.com). His latest album is "Oklahoma Wind."

So besides the occasional intersection at AQHA events, how do Paul's cowboy roots influence his music?

"I always want to write a good cowboy song," he says. "With showing horses and team roping and (tie-down) roping, it brings some authenticity to me as an artist."

And while many of his songs are more country than cowboy or western, they're all sung by someone who walks the walk, wearing cowboy boots that have seen plenty of arena dust.

Of "Oklahoma Wind," Paul says this: "It fits under a cowboy hat."

Access the digital edition of *America's Horse* (See Page 45 for instructions) to see a video off this album, as well as a video interview that was done with Paul during the World Show.