

Guitar man delivers snacks by day, songs by night



“Tonight I’m going to break away…” Cordle’s next song began and the small audience of four turned so they could listen while they ate. Someone began to dance. Cordle’s voice was suited for country music and the songs kept coming without stop until he broke his guitar string and had to take a rest. He was billed to play from seven to eleven that night.

Cordle had been driving a snack truck all the day and here he was delivering songs most of the night. He said he used to play almost every night, but had to cut back to about twice a week because he missed his family. “I’ll play anywhere people pay me,” he said. “I just like entertaining people and if I played for just one person, I’d be happy,” he added, laughing easily with the admission.

Cordle, now 31, lives on Route 610 with his wife, Bonnie, and three children. He has been playing guitar and other instruments for 21 years. His father, a country/Western

singer, got him started. Cordle plays by ear. That means that he listens to a new song a few times and then he knows it, lyrics and chords.

Many musicians find themselves traveling the road Cordle finds himself on. They work whatever job they can during the day so they can play at night. And they share their dreams through the songs they sing. At night their souls find a voice.

Country music tell a story and that’s why he love it. “The songs I’ve written are about my own life,” he said. And man songs come while he’s driving his truck. His wife got him a tape recorder so he wouldn’t have a wreck trying to write lyrics and watch the road at the same time. “Some days tunes will fly through m head so fast I can’t write them down,” he said. Other days nothing comes and he just has to wait.

Cordle says his biggest fan is his wife. She is the first to hear what newsong he has brought home with him in his truck. Bonnie says it was his music that attracted her to him.



“There’s a log of working guys like me around here,” he said. “I could name 15 or 20 of them right now and good musicians too.” But some who drew so much attention when they were young faded out of sight as they got older. Cordle mentioned one singer he had admired but who had quit. “But I think I’ll always be doing it.” He said. “I dream about being on the road performing.”

And he dreams about finding a promoter. “If I keep playing, eventually something will happen,” he said with as much conviction as hope. And he dreams about getting his songs published and forming his own band.

“Guitar men” live with two roads always pulling at them and few are able to walk both at once, like Cordle has. One road, like his snack truck route, is circular and always ends up where it began. The other road is open and endless, stretching over the horizon. No two days are alike on this road and all you need is a guitar on your back and a song in your heart when you leave. This road is freedom. The other road is

responsibilities.

Through history poets and minstrels have been coming into small towns with their uplifting songs and then leaving before dawn’s light. Today these troubadours are often disguised.

Some night Cordle doesn’t put up his guitar before two a.m. Exhausted but satisfied, he gets a few hours sleep before he’s up at dawn. Then he’s gone, disappearing into a snack truck...where he gets his dreams ready for the next night.

“Tonight I’m going to break away...”