

HAPPENINGS



Hot and rolling

John Cougar is what the *Illinois Entertainer* calls "a true rock populist" — an Indiana native whose songs encapsulate the experience of growing up in the American heartland. Cougar's articulation of the experience obviously hits home — *American Fool*, spurred by the Top 3 single "Hurts So Good," went gold within six weeks of its release. "Hurts So Good," *American Fool's* "Jack and Diane" and "I Need A Lover Who Won't Drive Me Crazy" (one of Pat Benatar's biggest AOR hits, as well as an FM favorite by Cougar himself) have proven John Cougar to be what the *Chicago Sun Times* calls "a breath of fresh air in a rock scene gone torpid."

At 18, Cougar moved out of home into an apartment in the tiny town of Valonia, "a shack that had a refrigerator on the front porch, outside plumbing, and cost \$10 a month rent." He worked pouring concrete and installing telephones. But he knew there was something more.

He had been playing guitar for a number of years, and had started a band at 22 that dressed so outrageously no one would hire it to play live. When he wrote his first song at 23 in an almost offhand, casual way, his friends were impressed. Nonetheless, when he said, "I'm gonna make a record," people said, "Ah, you can't do it."



John Cougar will be at the Memorial Coliseum May 23, 1983, along with special guest Scandal. Show time is 8:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10.50 and \$11.50.

So with a year's worth of unemployment benefits in hand from being laid-off by the telephone company, Cougar decided to do just what he'd said he would — go to New York and make a record. His credentials were hardly impressive: he had written two songs, and had only been on stage six times. When he arrived in New York, he ran across a shyster lawyer who convinced him to take out a \$2,000 bank loan, then bilked him out of the money by "helping" Cougar cut a demo that should have only cost \$1,000.

But demo in hand, Cougar started knocking on doors. Since he was a great admirer of David Bowie, Cougar stopped into the offices of Bowie's then-management firm, Main Man. "I was sitting there in the waiting room with 20 David Bowie lookalikes," he recalls. "With my hair fixed the way it is now and an earring, I was the only one who looked different." An assistant to Bowie's manager, Tony DeFries, noticed the one kid who looked different, and DeFries offered to record the aspiring Indiana musician.

Yet, for all the success and acclaim that John Cougar's music has earned him, he remains unfettered by the trappings of stardom, eschewing the fashionable rock 'n' roll centers of New York and L.A., still living in Central Indiana, the source of his inspiration. He even refused the lead role in the movie *The Idolmaker* because "I was afraid that if I made too much money, I'd have no motivation to make records anymore."

Concludes Cougar, "I feel comfortable singing things that the kid that pumps gas or works in the steel mill can relate to — basic human emotions." From the success of *American Fool*, it's obvious that Cougar has articulated the spirit of the Heartland's youth. If he's truly an *American Fool*, we should all be so crazy.

Muddy Waters, one of the most significant influences on modern music, died Saturday at the age of 68. He died in his sleep at his home of a cardiac arrest.

Waters was considered the King of Chicago-style blues. His style called for using a small number of musicians with maximum amplification. He led the first electric blues band, using Jimmy Rogers on guitar, Little Walter on harmonica and Otis Spann on piano.

Waters had planned to record another album this summer with Johnny Winter, his producer.

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May 2-8, 1983



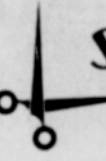
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The annual salmon bake and pow-wow of United Indian Students of Higher Education (UISHE) at PSU has been slated for May 13-14. Tickets (\$4 advance, \$5 at the door) are available from UISHE members and the PSU Box Office, 229-4440. Miss Indian Northwest 1983, Trudy Clements (Warm Springs), will crown the 1983 winner after the 7 p.m. grand entry in the PSU gym at S.W. 10th & College. For more info. about the pageant, call Barbara Farmer at 775-5520. During the pow-wow in the PSU gym, the Fancy Dance Championships will take place. American Indian artists and artisans will display their wares which will be available for purchase. Free parking is available in all PSU parking structures for all weekend activities. The Saturday events are free. For more info., call UISHE office 229-4447 at PSU.

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