

Singer Eddie Fisher takes verbal blast at Liz

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (UPI) — Singer Eddie Fisher opened his Christmas show Monday night before an enthusiastic audience without a trace of tension that earlier in the day precipitated a verbal blast at his wife, Elizabeth Taylor, and her lover. An overflow crowd loudly applauded the singer as he began a four-week stand, during which time his beautiful wife plans to obtain a Mexican divorce to marry Welsh actor Richard Burton.

Fisher sang 15 love songs during his show, but never made a comment about his estranged

wife, as he has often done during past shows.

Earlier, after apologizing for breaking his "gentleman's" silence, Fisher unleashed an angry denial that he was holding up the divorce with a demand for a million dollars.

Almost at the same time, Burton — who plans to play Santa Claus to the needy children of Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, Wednesday—told reporters during a four-hour drinking bout that he plans to marry Miss Taylor as soon after the middle of January as possible.

Burton said he will wear a Santa Claus suit when he and Miss Taylor distribute gifts at the town plaza.

The strikingly beautiful actress joined Burton at a bar overlooking the beach Monday where he told reporters they would not marry before Jan. 16 due to problems arising from her divorce with Eddie Fisher.

It was reports reaching Fisher about the problems over a divorce that apparently provoked the singer's outburst.

"I'm not holding things up," he said when asked about the reports from Miss Taylor that he was holding out for the million dollars.

"I haven't been offered any money. And I haven't asked for anything," he said. "I don't want anything from either of them."

Fisher said he wanted only to fulfill his responsibilities to his adopted daughters, Lisa Todd Fisher and Marie Fisher, and "whatever obligations I have to the two boys," Michael and Christopher by Miss Taylor's marriage to Michael Wilding.

Eastern Oregon child drowns

HOMEDALE, Idaho (UPI) — A six-year-old Eastern Oregon child drowned Monday when he plunged through ice on a pond near his home.

Dead was Rodney Cox, son of Mr. and Mrs. Darrel Cox of Homedale, Route 1. The Cox farm is in Malheur County, Ore.

The small boy had been playing on the ice with two younger brothers. He apparently went through the ice at a point that had been weakened by an air pocket. The child's body was recovered by two men who were working nearby.

HALF-POUND EGG
BIARRITZ, France (UPI)—A chicken which had strayed away came back to a farm here Monday and delighted its owners by laying a giant egg weighing eight ounces.

Grandson of Tom Mix to make his acting debut in TV

By Vernon Scott
UPI Staff Writer

HOLLYWOOD (UPI) —Here's a hick you've got to admire. His real name is Hickman Hill. He's the grandson of the great cowboy star Tom Mix.

He is in Hollywood to make his acting debut in a segment of television's "Gunsmoke."

Hick (that's his nickname) will play a cowboy, which is a good thing because that's what he is in real life down in Laredo, Texas.

Hick, 19, landed in Hollywood this week after his first (and last) — airplane ride. With his adam's apple jumping up and down like a yo-yo, Hick said he'd never get on another plane. "It was terrible," he said.

Albany to get freeze-dry plant

ALBANY (UPI) —Plans for a freeze-dry food processing plant here to begin operation next summer were announced by officials of Oregon Freeze Dry Foods Saturday.

Ellis Byer, manager of the project, said the facility will be one of the largest of its kind in the country.

The freeze-dry process involves freezing foods, then placing them in high vacuum chambers where water is evaporated directly from the ice surface. The finished product retains its original form and size but is porous.

Among the developers of the process is Prof. Robert L. Smith, a vice-president and director of the Albany firm. Smith is an associate professor in the department of food and science and technology at Oregon State University.

A member of the State Planning and Development Department, William Miller, said in Portland he was "excited about the tremendous future" of the undertaking.

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scuffing his cowboy boots against the table leg in fancy Scandia Restaurant. "We were up 31,000 feet and going 500 miles an hour. That's too high and fast for me. I'm going back by train."

Hick Hill is a tall, handsome kid in a raw-boned kind of way whose hands and feet seem too big for the rest of him.

He's clear-eyed, straight forward and knows nothing about acting.

Cynically or not, a public relations firm and CBS brought him to Hollywood essentially to plug "Gunsmoke." But Hick (and isn't it a good thing he didn't take his grandfather's name, winding up as Hick Mix?) will be paid \$1300 for his acting chores.

"That's a lotta money," he grinned.

Seven-Day Week
"As a cowboy on my father's ranch (6,000 acres) my wages are only \$5 a day — just like the other cowhands. 'Course, when we're irrigating I make \$6 a day, but we work seven days a week."

Hick's papa runs between 2,000 and 4,000 head of steer. Hick rides herd, mends fences, digs post holes, brands cattle and vaccinates the critters.

He never knew his famed

grandfather who died in a 1940 automobile crash. But he's seen some of his old movies and admires his mother's father as a fine actor. This opportunity to appear on television has ignited within Hick the hope of becoming an actor himself.

Sitting in the restaurant, his stetson stamper hat at his side, young Hick looked every inch a cowboy.

Acting Ambitions
"I'd like to become an actor and wear western clothes, just like we do down home," Hick said. "Ranching is a lot of fun but it sure isn't anything like you see in movies and TV."

"Out on the ranch we don't carry no guns or guitars, and there's no romance like galloping along on your pony and riding off with a girl. When I meet up with a girl I like to be afoot."

When Hick was approached for his small role a letter had to be dispatched to the ranch. There is no telephone.

"The nearest phone is 12 miles away," Hick explained. "But we don't miss it much. It'd cost us \$500 a mile to get a telephone strung out to us. And I don't know of anybody worth hearing from at those prices."

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SEA-GOING CAR
SAN DIEGO, Calif. (UPI) — The U.S. Coast Guard was on the lookout today for a sea-going car.

Dr. Donald R. Baults, 31, said he feared neighborhood teenagers had taken his "Amphicar," a foreign-built red convertible capable of traveling on land or water, for a nautical spin.

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