




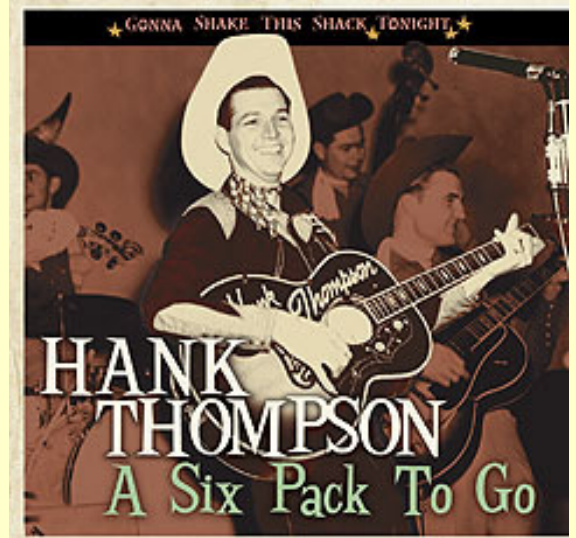
# BEAR FAMILY RECORDS

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SHIPPING DATE: JANUARY 14, 2008 (estimated)

STREET DATE: JANUARY 28, 2008

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| ARTIST       | HANK THOMPSON  |
| TITLE        | <b>A Six Pack To Go</b><br><b>Gonna Shake This Shack Tonight</b>                                     |
| LABEL        | Bear Family Records  |
| CATALOG #    | BCD 16803  |
| PRICE-CODE   | AH   |
| EAN-CODE     | <br>4 000127 168030 |
| ISBN-CODE    | 978-3-89916-371-1  |
| FORMAT       | CD with 36-page booklet  |
| GENRE        | Country / Rockabilly   |
| TRACKS       | 33   |
| PLAYING TIME | 79:39  |



## KEY SELLING POINTS

- Watch for renewed press attention for Hank Thompson following his death in November 2007.
- 33 of Hank's hottest honky tonkers from Capitol, inclusive *Rockin' In The Congo* !
- Seven songs from his greatest LP, 'Songs For Rounders!'
- Sidemen include hot shot country guitar country legends like Merle Travis and Joe Maphis!
- Hank's hits created the honky-tonk/western swing hybrid George Strait later rode to fame!

## SALES NOTES

Everything about Hank Thompson was modern. He was one of the first country singers to record on audio tape, the first to record a live album. For years, he flew his own plane to shows. Sick of dealing with crappy dancehall sound systems, he designed and built his own. Handed a coveted membership in the Grand Ole Opry in 1949, soured by the low pay and Nashville's musical conservatism, he quickly went back to his native Texas.

Actually, the Waco-born Thompson grew up favoring Gene Autry, the Carter Family, Vernon Dalhart, Jimmie Rodgers, Ernest Tubb and the Opry over the locally generated Western Swing of the Light Crust Doughboys and Milton Brown. After he got his first guitar in 1935 at age ten, his singing won so many amateur shows at the Waco Theater that by the time he was in high school, WACO gave him a Monday-Friday morning radio show as 'Hank The Hired Hand.' He did the final broadcast in January, 1943, the morning he left for the Navy. Home in 1946, studying toward a degree (and career) in electronics, he began playing Tubb-influenced honky tonk with his new band, the Brazos Valley Boys. By fall, he had his first regional hit, *Whoa Sailor*, on the local Globe label. A year later, after opening for Tex Ritter in Waco, Ritter recommended Hank to Capitol where *Humpty Dumpty Heart* became his first national hit in 1948.

Quick to adapt to changing realities, and aiming at the dancehall circuit, Hank directed guitarist Billy Gray to reinvent the Brazos Valley Boys as a danceable Western Swing-influenced outfit, minus the jazzy instrumental solos he never cared for. Dissatisfied with the small crowds he drew performing around Dallas, he relocated to Oklahoma City in 1951, by then boasting a sound as identifiable as Lefty Frizzell's or Ray Price's. He was blending his jovial honky tonk vocals with

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swing-flavored accompaniment. The band's high standards earned them awards for over a decade. From 1953 on, his buddy Merle Travis played on nearly all Hank's sessions and on a good many tours.

Hank's way with a ballad was apparent on his biggest hit, his 1952 cover of Jimmie Heap's *The Wild Side Of Life*, which inspired the answer song, *It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels* (Kitty Wells's first hit). He further demonstrated his ballad skills on *I'll Sign My Heart Away* and other numbers. Nonetheless, he made his reputation on upbeat bounces like *Wake Up Irene*, *Rub-A-Dub-Dub*, *A Fooler A Faker*, *Honky Tonk Girl* and *A Six Pack To Go*. His hits helped keep the Western Swing sound alive during the '50s and '60s when it was largely out of favor.

Jim Halsey, who became Hank's manager in 1952, brought new ideas to the table like Hank's longtime relationship with Falstaff Beer in a day when corporate sponsorship of country acts was rare. Halsey suggested Capitol record Hank onstage at the Golden Nugget in Vegas in 1961—making him the first country artist to record a live album. Hank parted ways with Capitol in 1964. After two years with Warner Bros., he spent 13 years with Dot/MCA, recording in Nashville. The Dot era brought a few major hits. Nonetheless, while reflecting on his recording career in the book accompanying Bear Family's Thompson box set, he concluded, "*I'd play one of those Dot records then drop one of those old Capitols on, and it was all the difference in the world between the presence and quality of the Capitols and what Dot put out.*" The Country Music Hall Of Fame inducted him in 1989.

Hank, who settled in Keller, Texas, northwest of Dallas, remained on the road, performing with local bands after dissolving the Brazos Valley Boys. His later albums included 1997's 'Hank Thompson And Friends,' an underpromoted all-star effort on Curb, and HighTone's far superior 'Seven Decades,' released in 2000. Like fellow Hall of Famer Porter Wagoner, he literally continued until the end. At times, he'd appear with the Brazos Valley Boys, who'd reformed as an independent band, and billed more recent shows as part of his 'Sunset Tour.' He headlined a show back in Waco on October 8, 2007, proclaimed by Texas' governor as 'Hank Thompson Day.' Late that month, doctors discovered fast-moving, terminal lung cancer. He announced his retirement November 4; two days later, he was gone. In lieu of a funeral, friends and fans assembled at Billy Bob's Texas in Fort Worth on November 14 to celebrate his remarkable life and career.

The late Hank Thompson didn't play rock 'n' roll (although one of his last appearances was at a British rockabilly fest), but he didn't play straight-ahead Western Swing, either. His trademark was top-poppin', boot-scootin' honky tonk vocals framed by the powerful, buoyant and danceable sound of his Brazos Valley Boys, who hit Southwest dancehalls like a sequin-suited tsunami!!! Hank's bouncing upbeat songs, as bubbly and full-bodied as a rich Texas lager, stood out. He recorded steadily from 1946 until shortly before his death, and Bear Family has selected the jumping'est and rockin'est titles. This set slides 33 of his best down the bar, along with a Rich Kienzle essay featuring extensive song comments and insights from Hank himself.

## TRACK LISTING

### CD

1. How Cold Hearted Can You Get
2. John Henry
3. No Help Wanted
4. If Lovin' You Is Wrong
5. This Train
6. The New Green Light
7. Red Skin Girl
8. Don't Flirt With Me
9. Whoa Sailor
10. The Grass Looks Greener Over Yonder
11. Rockin' In The Congo
12. Drivin' Nails In My Coffin
13. Klishama Klingo
14. If I'm Not Too Late
15. Deep Elem
16. Rovin' Gambler
17. I'll Be A Bachelor Till I Die
18. Three Times Seven
19. I Left My Gal In The Mountains
20. Dry Bread
21. Lost John
22. Cryin' In The Deep Blue Sea
23. A Fooler, A Faker
24. A Six Pack To Go
25. Too In Love
26. It's Got To Be A Habit
27. Nine Pound Hammer
28. I Cast A Lonesome Shadow
29. Shot-Gun Boogie
30. You Nearly Lose Your Mind
31. I Wasn't Even In The Running
32. How Many Teardrops Will It Take
33. Drunkard's Blues (Bonus Track)

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