

BY JASON
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Ted Nugent. The Motor City Madman. The Nuge. Guitar Wizard. Songwriter. Magazine writer. Book writer. Radio host. Television host. Conservationist. Hunter. Political activist. Public speaker. Is there anything this guy doesn't do? I had the opportunity to meet Ted at his show with ZZ Top in San Bernadino, CA, and let me tell you: This guy is exactly the same whether the recorder is on or off. I don't think I've ever met anyone more enthusiastic or energetic, and he's 54-years-old! Originally, I thought it would be a great idea to interview him because on the surface we are incredibly different (see the photos, if you're not sure), but we actually have quite a lot in common. I knew that two people could find commonality no matter how different they appear to be.

Being a former vegetarian, I wanted to know more about Ted's eating habits and philosophies and how he could maintain these while traveling. I found that once going on the road, being a vegetarian was nearly impossible when all you have to eat is what the club will provide for you, or what might be available close to the venue. I figured the same would also be true for someone like Ted, a man who hunts his own food on his own land, tries to eat only that, and abhors fast food. I also wanted to learn about how Ted has become much more than just Ted Nugent the rock star—How he had become Ted Nugent the businessman and Ted Nugent the political icon. What I found out was that here is a man who doesn't just blindly go into a business venture or blindly believe in a tired political platform, but rather an incredibly intelligent, learned man who can back up anything he says or does with just plain old common sense. After hanging out with Ted for a day, I found myself questioning what I could do to better myself and my community. And I don't even own a Ted Nugent album... Well, I didn't *then*, at least—I do now!

JASON MILLER: What have you been up to since we met in California?

TED NUGENT: Well, I flew in here to Fort Bliss, in El Paso, TX, last night from a benefit that I had done in Colorado. I had done a children's charity benefit at the Sportsman's Warehouse, a big 'ol emporium where we had raised money for The Ted Nugent Kamp For Kids and a bunch of wildlife charities that safeguard habitat, save

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wetlands, and protect ecosystems. So I flew into Fort Bliss to do a benefit and I greeted the great warriors of the United States army, the 507th, that had just returned from a Prisoner Of War camp in Iraq—Jason, that kind of spirit and emotion that I get channeled into my soul from these warriors who watched our fellow Americans get blown away while putting their life on the line to stop evil and to try to bring freedom and liberty to otherwise oppressed peoples around the world. It was such an honor, was such a stirring and, well, I talked to you about primal screams and emotion in my music backstage at San Bernadino, well yesterday was a perfect example of where this comes from. I got to spend time with these soldiers, their families, and the families of dead soldiers and my God, my guitar is going to scream bloody murder tonight because of what these people provide for me. A lot of people go, "Well, wasn't that nice that Ted did that?" I'm not the giver, I'm the taker! They're the ones who are the givers. What I got out of it was power and energy and a reminder that freedom and an experiment in self-government do not come free. It's being cultivated and irrigated by the blood of the United States military and the United States law enforcement. These are the kinds of

things I do every day. Hey, just before I called you just now, I was on the phone with a police officer who was shot by an illegal alien crossing the border from Mexico, and I just talked to him, because he's now a quadriplegic. I understand why he got shot, and I talked to the officer who shot and killed this mother fucker, and I promised to send him an expensive weapon as a gift for killing bad guys. So this is the kind of stuff I do on a daily basis, which is why I've got this fuckin' attitude, which is why I've got this energy, and which is why I stand up for good and truth and the power and the positive forces of the American Dream everyday, instead of playing these stupid fuckin' lame ass spineless liberal cry-baby bloodsucking hippie games of so many other people in our industry. That's why I'm like I am! A-fuckin'-men!

JM: [Laughing] Well, I think that perpetuates itself.

TN: Absolutely, it's a power bigger than any of us, man. I just happen to be the two-legged, 185 pound, 6'2" numbnut that gets to bring it to *Metal Edge* magazine and bring it to the rock station I did this morning, bring it to the talk station I did this morning, bring it to the sports station that I brought it to this morning. This has become my job, and I take it with all my heart and soul, man.

JM: So here I am, I'm a musician, you're a musician... You've had a very long track record of success...

TN: Oh you noticed that?

JM: Yeah, I did!

TN: I'm not having any fun at all, am I? [Laughing]

TED NUGENT

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TED NUGENT:
RED, WHITE
& LIVE



JM: I just moved to Hollywood from Washington D.C., and it's not uncommon to see people who had success—even multi-platinum albums—who are broke now...

TN: Oh, let me tell you! I've got the answer, and it's so simple it's insane! And here it is for *Metal Edge*—I hope everybody reading this article writes this down: The American Dream is simply being the best that you can be. Digging into your intellect, digging into your heart, soul, mind, body and spirit and really challenging yourself to discipline yourself to really be the best that you can be. And each and every person you're talking about, who thought they were trying to be the big time, who had a piece of the big time and let go, you will find in those lives drugs, alcohol, tobacco and failed discipline so that they could simply excuse themselves from being the best that they could be. So that they could sleep in, and not practice their instruments enough and not challenge their creative juices to represent the dreams of the potential excellence within them. Every time you find a guy like me who is still celebrating the American Dream... Even those that celebrate it bigger on a financial level than I do will never, I don't believe, celebrate it on as high a spiritual level as I do. And I'm talking about my blood brothers in Aerosmith and ZZ Top who are still making more money, maybe, than

I am—I guarantee they don't have the net income or the spiritual income that I do, because I turn down millions and millions of dollars every year to go back to Mother Earth to ground myself to never, never forget that I am part of the overall creation of a tooth, fang and claw planet that I must never ever lose touch with. That's the truth of what the American Dream can produce for you as I epitomize it, or there's the Kurt Cobains, or the Jerry Garcias, or whoever this Tom Petty bass player who just died of heroin abuse is. Do you understand how insipid, how brain dead, how fuckin' spiritually vacuous those miscalculations and intentionally stupid decisions result in? Every time, Jason, if you really challenge yourself not to party the best you can, not to puke and stumble around the best you can, not to look as cool as you can, but to really put your heart and soul into representing a musical statement based on a higher level of awareness—that includes sexuality and sensuality and sexiness and primal throbbing rhythms and power chord extremes or grunting, grinding humorous song lyrics or song content—good, bad and ugly it's all real, it's all part of our existence. But to fail to maximize the good while you stumble along with the bad and the ugly, you'll end up like Kurt Cobain! Case closed. That's not an opinion. The evidence is inescapable.

JM: I'm a lot like you in a lot of respects—I don't do drugs, I don't drink, don't smoke, I never did...

TN: Because you're smart. Why would you want to poison your system? When I see amazing talents like Bob Seger and Kid Rock backstage... Here's guys who are savoring the American Dream based on their vocal tools, and they're both chain smokers, Jason! That's like being a gigolo and stabbing yourself in the dick with an ice pick! I mean, come on! Your going to need those tools, you don't want to poison them and destroy them! I mean, who doesn't know that? Isn't that amazing?

JM: Some people seem to get away with it, but eventually it's going to catch up with them.

TN: I give you Keith Richards. [Laughing] I mean, it *can* be done, but why roll the dice? There are too many dead bodies that prove that the dangers are overwhelming! Nobody can out party uncle Ted, nobody! But I don't party with men or poisons. [Laughing]

JM: At what point did you decide to start branching out from just being a rock 'n' roll musician, to starting up all of your other businesses? I'm assuming it happened gradually?

TN: Well, I've been spoiled rotten with my American Dream. It revolves around my cravings, my dreams, my favorite things in life. I made my living with music, which I absolutely crave. But I also crave the primality of self-sufficiency and true hands-on predatorship. So I like to feed myself and handle my own food and handle my own sources of fuel. I learned early on that the hunting, outdoor lifestyle is very stimulating, very enjoyable, very gratifying, very exciting, very challenging, and I think that every man is equipped with the same psyche to be rugged and individual and to be ultimately accountable for their own existence. That's the true gratification of independence—Learning to save yourself. That's the hunting, outdoor lifestyle. So I thought people were always fasci-

nated by it. It's like somebody who just likes a good apple, so they grow a couple of trees so that they can have their favorite breed of apples, and all of a sudden the neighbors got wind of an apple, because you invited them over one day and said, "That's the best fucking apple I've ever eaten." Then the word got out that these apples are so fucking good that the guy goes, "Well I think I'll plant some more trees and give some more to my neighbors." All of a sudden people went, "Oh my God, I've got a taste of Ted Nugent's intense outdoor lifestyle, and I've shared it with my brother and my co-worker, now they want a piece of it..." It became overwhelming. I had to plant more apple trees and all of a sudden I've got so many fucking apples I've got to get people to help me cultivate them the way that I do. So now I can't just give them away, I've got to start a business. Aha! That's the American Dream. So now I write for fifty publications, I write *New York Times* best sellers, I could do a hundred, probably more, speaking engagements a year—and for quite a handsome fee—but I only do maybe a dozen or so, because that's all I have time for because I have too much fun going to the swamps and chasing beavers.

JM: [Laughing]

TN: [Laughing] But do you understand? That is branching out from sheer demand. Even though I was born when Les Paul just electrified the damn guitar, I was moved by the power of the musical throb. So I just started playing for my own satisfaction, and then a couple buddies loved the way I did it and word got out and all of a sudden my little basement wasn't big enough to hold 'em, so a guy would hire me. Understand how easy it is? That's how that works. So my apples became really desirable. My musical apples, my hunting apples, my writing apples, my speaking apples, my charity activities, are all revolving around the elements that make my music powerful. That is independence, defiance of stupid status quo policies, and now I've become an activist just absolutely around the clock, because in the '60s I saw that

the things that I craved—individuality, independence, resource stewardship—had become demonized in what was developing as a cultural war against the basic rights of self defense, the 2nd Amendment. A cultural war of political correctness against true individuality, true independence, your right to defend yourself, your right to get your own wood from your own private forest that you planted yourself! I had a forester tell me that I can't cut my tress down! I planted the fucking trees! So I'm fighting for these things. And conservation is epitomized by the unprecedented success of deer and turkey and waterfowl and bear and cougar management. There are more of those animals now than ever in recorded history! Why? Because hunters demanded the scientific policy of sustained yield management. Duh! That's not too tough to figure out. If you want to cut down three trees a year, you've got to plant 3,000. Duh. I didn't have to go to timber school, I didn't have to go to botany school to figure that shit out. So I turned it into what has become such a passion, and the passion is contagious. The fun factor of the outdoor lifestyle has become contagious so my apples are highly desirable. And that's what I tell every kid. I did a radio show yesterday and all these little boys and girls were calling in who wanted to be musicians. Eleven, twelve, thirteen, fifteen, eighteen-year-old boys and girls who were calling in going, "How'd you make it? Where'd you get your break?" I go, "I didn't get no break. I practiced my guitar until I knew how. I got my guitar when I was ten-years-old, I found the life of rock 'n' roll, now I'm on the verge of a nervous breakdown, I've got to cure my body and soul. I jammed everyday, I jammed every night, practiced until I knew all the licks, now I'm on the verge of a nervous breakdown and I don't know the meaning of quit, but I like it." It's just what the doctor ordered! You know what I mean? That wasn't so fucking tough to figure out. With your heart and soul, if you want to be what turns you on, if creating practical products out of wood turns you on, become a fucking woodsmith! So that's what I do, it's not rocket science! Know what I mean? So that's what drove me to publish my own magazine, my own books, and to be on every fucking radio show and every fucking TV show. We did an analysis one week Jason where I was on the BBC in London for three special programs, one about conservation, one about gun ownership, and one about rock 'n' roll. That same week I was on Letterman, Conan, Hannity And Colmes, Bill O'Reilly, Bill Maher, CNBC, MSNBC, A&E *Biography*, MTV *Cribs*, VH1 *Behind The Music*, and National Geographic Base Cam. We analyzed it, and the absolute minimum number of people that heard my story about the 2nd Amendment and conservation was over two billion people. In *one fucking week*, Jason!

JM: Did you have time to sleep that week?

TN: I sleep well every night. I slept knowing that I slapped the beast into submission. I slapped the toxic, three-legged, dickless piece of political correctness into a pool of his own snot and hair, bringing the truth to an otherwise denial-ridden politically correct media system. And I'm so fucking proud my dick glows!

JM: [Laughing] You talked about providing for yourself, which seems to be something that's easier to do at home. What do you eat while you're on the road?

TN: In every city I go to, I have a network of blood brothers. These are my hunting buddies, my fishing buddies, my trapping buddies, my shooting buddies, my cop buddies, my military buddies, just people from every imaginable walk of life. For example, today I met with a rancher out here, a city cop, two men from the army, and a Texas ranger. They all had venison chili and venison kabobs on the grill. They brought me over some bass and some fish that they caught. In every city, I have a member of our Ted Nugent's United Sports Club Of America,

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or one of my NRA buddies, or somebody who just shares the common sense self evident truth that I promote all the time. In every city, I just meet up with one of my buddies and there's a buddy grill going with my name on it everywhere, man. Plus, you know there are times when I don't have time to go to a buddy or they just don't have the convenience to bring it over, so I've discovered some great soul food restaurants and some mom and pop seafood and local indigenous chow places. For example, we ate at a local Mexican restaurant here in El Paso, and the whole family came out, it was like old home week with Uncle Ted, and we just had a greasy Mexican dinner and it was quality, good family food, home cooking. So I'm real quality control conscious with the food that goes into my gut.

JM: I know a few days ago we were talking about how you hate fast food...

TN: My idea of fast food is an antelope! [Laughing] I mean, it's been proven that the food at McDonald's and Burger King, they're handled by people who could give a rat's ass about it's quality or freshness or whether it's diseased, which by the way, if it has a USDA stamp on it, that's 99% probable—This isn't my statistic, it's from the Center Of Disease Control: If the USDA has

anything to do with it, it's almost guaranteed to have ecoli, salmonella or some dangerous illness causing bacteria or failed quality control. And I say, "Eat shit and die!" And if you eat shit, you will die! All that stranger-handled processed stuff is shit, and I won't touch it. I have interviewers say, "Well not everyone can hunt..." Why not? Why can't you go hunting? "Well, there's not enough for everybody..." Of course there is! I killed 72 fucking deer with my bow last year. That could have been 72 deer for 72 other people, because I ended up giving them away to soup kitchens and homeless shelters and to my neighbors and farmer buddies of mine because the deer needed to be killed because there is such overpopulation. Right now there is an overpopulation in America. A dangerous overpopulation of deer, elk, turkey, geese, mountain lion and bear. The list just goes on. Those are opportunities to give back to the land. Those are opportunities to buy licenses and permits and to generate billions of dollars for conservation and habitat restoration programs. Enough for everybody! But first you have to get your little cry baby, girly, dependant blood sucking hand out of the big government pussy. All you have to do is start thinking independently and go for it. There are so many game animals out there, it's like I'm cleaning up for all the pussies out there. There are plenty of opportunities. So when I was raised in this hunting environment, it was so gratifying... And remember, I didn't kill anything for almost twenty years—Twenty fucking years, Jason, to kill a deer with my bow! Because I don't know if you noticed this about me, but I'm an uppity, impatient mother-fucker. For me to become quiet, attuned, relaxed, and patient is almost impossible. So that's the challenge of discipline which has gratified me all those years before I killed a deer. But then once I learned that control factor, it helped my guitar playing, it helped my health, it helped my calmness, it helped my intensity, it

helped my energy, and I'm able to channel that by knowing that I protect the habitat through my conservation activities. The soulful, spiritual productivity is a higher level of awareness and calming, and perfect protein for the barbeque. So I learned to not only protect the habitat, but to hunt the productivity of that habitat, to butcher it, handle it, process it, cook it all myself. And boy, talk about Jeremiah Johnson with a loud guitar? That's the ultimate cocky attitude. It's like, "Yeah I don't need any of you for anything?" Isn't that the American Dream? Self-sufficiency. You want to rely on other people because it's a collaborative effort, but you also want to know that if the chips are down, I can take care of myself!

JM: Before you go out on the road, do you freeze food at home that you caught?

TN: Oh yeah, every year there is quite a process of preparing and safeguarding our kills from the fall, the natural season of the fall death of nature—Because that's what's happening, the leaves are beautiful, but they're beautiful because they are dying. The reservation is dying, and it will not be there to feed the animals by December or January, so what you have to do is intelligently and compassionately harvest. A lot of people will read this magazine and go, "Intelligent? Compassionate? You call killing animals intelligent and compassionate?" And I say, "Shut the fuck up LSD breath, that's exactly what that is!" Because you bring the animals back into the balance that the land can support. Duh! And by utilizing these renewable resources, we have to harvest them basically in October, November, December, and January. Which means you can't eat them all! You kill hundreds and hundreds of animals—between rabbits and squirrels and ducks, geese and grouse and dove and wood duck and deer and antelope and cougar and turkey—and all the different game that you kill you have to process. So we do a lot of smoking. We smoke a lot of the meat, which cures it, it'll last a whole year. Most of the meat I butcher myself, I age and then I wrap it and freeze it. So we have a

number of chest freezers at home. Plus, my organizations, the Ted Nugent's United Sports Club Of America, the Ted Nugent Kamp For Kids, Safari Club International and all kinds of different hunting organizations, every year we process and provide tens of millions of hot, high protein, perfect meals for the Salvation Army, homeless shelters, soup kitchens and needy families across the country with the surplus wild game that we kill and process. How beautiful is that? It's the greatest thing in the world! We don't have to suck tax dollars and have a bunch of bureaucrats at Meals On Wheels, where they're paying \$100 for .20 cents worth of bad beef! So what we do is we provide all these meals, and I process all my own meat, and then it's good for many years. But we usually gobble it up before the next hunting season and start over again. It's a fucking riot. Jason your spirit has not soared to it's potential heights until you've gone with me hunting. You would just about blow up. It is so physically, intellectually, spiritually, and sensually stimulating it makes your radar just pulsate with observations reading the world around you. I'm telling you, when you get done hunting, with the proper attitude, your music will have smoke and horns and piss and vinegar beyond your wildest dreams. I'd love to have you man, I start in September and I don't stop till March, come on baby!

If you told me when I was 18 and a member of PETA [People For The Ethical Treatment Of Animals], that years later I'd be talking to Ted Nugent about going bow hunting with him, I'd say you were crazy, but I guess we all change. No matter how different your views may differ from Ted Nugent's, you have to admire the way he has completely modified his world, from accommodating his very primal urges to satisfying the most intricate places in his mind. You also have to tip your hunting cap to how much he and his organizations give back to the community. The human community, as well as the environment. No wonder he's so excited about life. If you were Ted, wouldn't you be? Look for me in the bushes! •