

KENNY ROGERS

LUCK

OR SOMETHING

LIKE IT

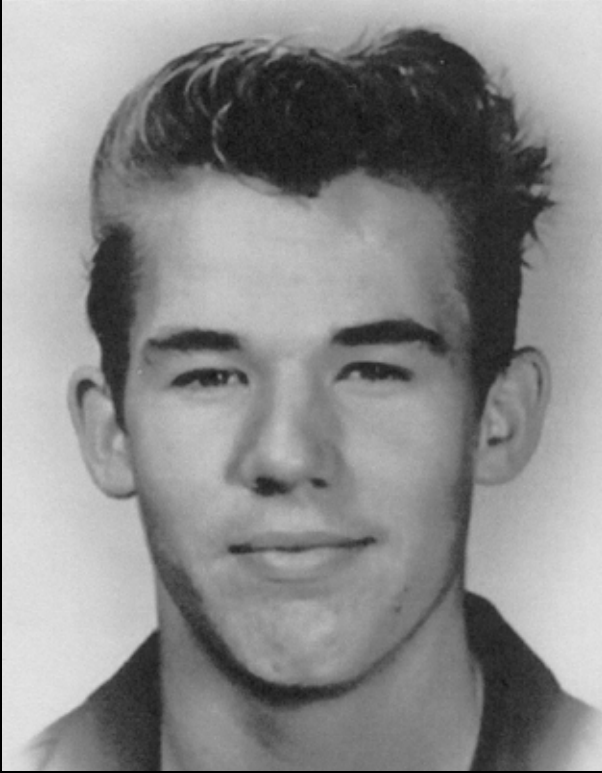
A MEMOIR



I love this early family photo. It takes me back to my family roots in Houston. I'm second from the left, with my father beside me and my mother leaning in front of me. You can see what a big family I came from and how it was always an adventure. *Courtesy of Sandy Rogers*



This picture from grade school is the one that Mary Gwynne Davidson Ridout mentioned in her very kind letter. I'm the one in the second row from the back, second from the right in the white shirt, and she's the brunette two people to my right. *Courtesy of Mary Gwynne Davidson Ridout*



I was proud to be the first person in my family to graduate from high school.
Courtesy of the author



The group I was a part of as a teenager, the Scholars, gave me my first taste of the music industry and helped me discover my passion for music. *Courtesy of the author*

Imperial Records sent the Scholars to Los Angeles to record, and our experience there turned out to be a major turning point for me. I realized that L.A. was where I needed to be to truly pursue my music career.

Courtesy of the author



I am particularly fond of my sisters' hair in this shot from a family reunion in the '70s, and my brother Billy's pants were always a big hit. In the photo are (from left to right) Billy Rogers, Randy Rogers, Geraldine Rogers Houston, Roy Rogers, Lucille Rogers, me, Edward Floyd Rogers, Leland Rogers, Barbara (Rogers) Thumann, and Sandy Rogers.

Courtesy of Sandy Rogers



The First Edition played our last scheduled shows in Las Vegas in the fall of 1975. The breakup was more of an evolution than a falling apart. At that time I never could have imagined the wild ride that awaited me as a solo artist. *Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images*



The First Edition was a big part of my life. The success we enjoyed for nearly a decade was a good thing, and so was the opportunity to grow as an artist, but what I cherish most from that time are the great laughs, good friendships, and incredible experiences we had together. *Dick Barnatt/Redferns/Getty Images*

Following the success of hits like “Something’s Burning” and “Tell It All Brother,” the First Edition performed live in 1971 on NBC’s *Make Your Own Kind of Music*, just one of the countless television performances we gave. *NBC/NBCUniversal/Getty Images*



I performed “The Gambler” on *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson* on November 16, 1978, the day after the song was released as a single. Soon after, it shot to the top of the charts. It was a thrill to receive a Grammy for Best Male Country Vocal Performance. “The Gambler” is more than just a song about gambling; it’s a philosophy of life, which I think we can all follow. *NBC/NBCUniversal/Getty Images*



I saw Ray Charles perform when I was twelve, and it changed my life. I knew then what I wanted to do. To meet him and perform together later in life was truly an honor, because I was such a big fan. Ray brought that “feel good” with him everywhere he went, and it was contagious.
CBS Photo Archive/CBS/ Getty Images



I love the character Brady Hawkes and enjoyed playing him in the *Gambler* movies.
Photo by Kelly Junkermann



Two women, Susan Bradley and Sharman Pirkle, have been to over one thousand of my shows and always hand me roses onstage. *Photo by Kelly Junkermann*



Lionel Richie is a master of making songs out of conversations, and “Lady” is no exception. Recording that song took things to a whole new level for me. *Photo by Kelly Junkermann*

My earliest exposure to music was to country, and I’ve always had an ear for it.

Photo by Kelly Junkermann



Here I am at a backstage rehearsal going over a song. *Photo by Kelly Junkermann*





I've grown to love large crowds like this one. When they cheer for every song and laugh at my jokes, I know I'm doing my job right. *Photo by Kelly Junkermann*



Embarking on a solo career was a new and exciting challenge for me. These gold and platinum albums represent some of my successes as a solo artist. I feel so fortunate to have enjoyed such a long and fulfilling career that continues today. *Photo by Kelly Junkermann*



I've known Dolly for the better part of forty years, and I have yet to see her when she hasn't been all dolled up. Even the one time I saw her dressed as an old lady so she could be incognito, she had a lot of makeup on. *Photo by Kelly Junkermann*



In my First Edition days I wore rose-tinted glasses and an earring, but here I'm back to being Kenny Rogers. *Photo by Kelly Junkermann*



I love to sing songs with lyrics that every man would like to say and every woman would like to hear. *Photo by Kelly Junkermann*



There is always the danger of being so closely associated with someone that you lose your own identity. If I'm going to lose mine, I want to lose it with Dolly. *Photo by Kelly Junkermann*



Here I am with my friends, Willie Nelson and Dolly, rehearsing for a show in 1989. *Photo by Kelly Junkermann*



Lionel Richie is like a brother to me. Our friendship goes way beyond music. When the two of us get together, you never know what is going to happen. *Photo by Kelly Junkermann*



I don't care how many people ask, "Where's Dolly?" I can only say, "Well, I don't know, but like you, I wish she was here!" *Photo by Kelly Junkermann*



I think downtime with family and friends is important. My brothers, Billy, Roy, and Randy, and my longtime friend Kelly Junkermann enjoyed this fishing outing with me. *Courtesy of Kelly Junkermann*



My mother, Lucille, has been a source of strength and wisdom for me throughout my life. *Courtesy of the author*



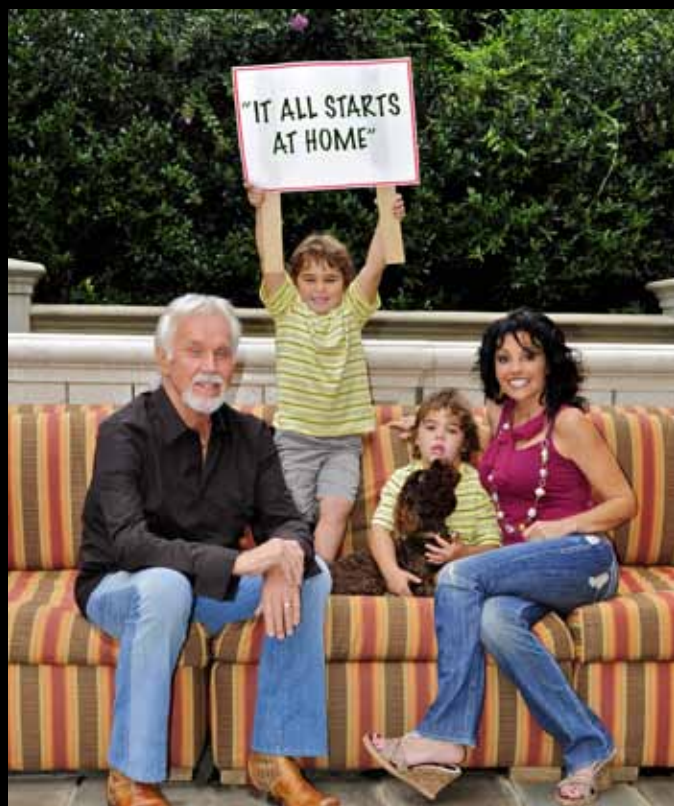
My mother always knew how to say a lot in a few words, and much of her wisdom was drawn from Biblical proverbs and everyday axioms. *Courtesy of the author*



I am so proud of the men my sons Kenny Jr. (*left*) and Chris (*right*) have become. *Photo by Randy Dorman*



A great shot with the one and only Lionel Richie from the Bonnaroo Music and Arts Festival in 2012. *Photo by Romero*



This is a family photo we took for Habitat for Humanity's project "It All Starts at Home." We loved the concept, we liked the picture, and we enjoyed being a part of this. There is nothing like spending quality time at home with Wanda, Justin, and Jordan. *Courtesy of the author*