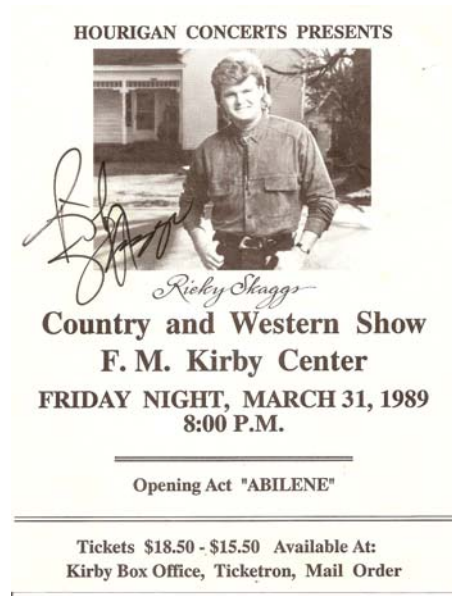


Skaggs Brings The Country To Kirby



(Excerpted from an article by Times Leader Arts Editor, Paul Gallagher, following a show at the F.M. Kirby Center March 31st, 1989 featuring Ricky Skaggs and Abilene.)

The F.M. Kirby Center for the Performing Arts went country on Friday night.

Big country; serious, foot-stompin', head-noddin', whoopin' and hollerin' country.

And that was just the way about 1,500 deliriously happy fans wanted it. They went to see country-bluegrass star Ricky Skaggs and the Ricky Skaggs Band, with opening act Abilene. What the fans ended up with was at least everything they could have hoped for.

The audience was shifting into third gear when Abilene took the stage. The band, which has been playing – off and on – for more than 10 years, has never lost its edge. If anything, they just get sharper.

“This is something like our 153rd reunion concert,” said guitar player Larry Zick, with a smile, to which the audience burst into applause.

They started their set with “Bayou Jubilee” and turned right into “Jambalaya”. Their set never stopped, and hardly slowed down to let anyone catch their breath.

Before performing “Mr. Bojangles”, Joe Pacuska, the extraordinary fiddle player, dedicated the number to his wife, Mary Beth.

Then, they launched into “Amie”, and had some of the audience singing along.

On electric guitar, Bob Bartoli is a master. He made the instrument sing, scream and purr.

The concert, which was presented by Hourigan Concerts, was as hot and as smooth as Southern Comfort.
