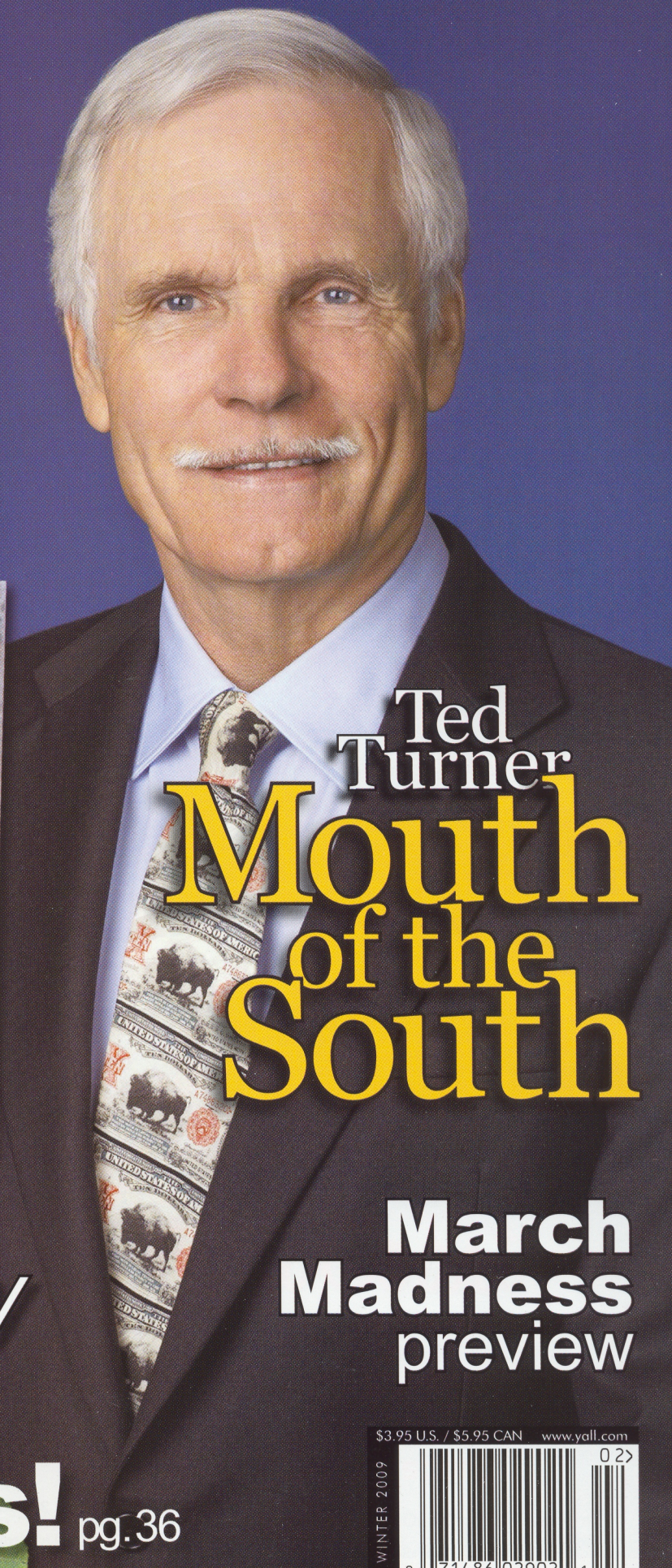


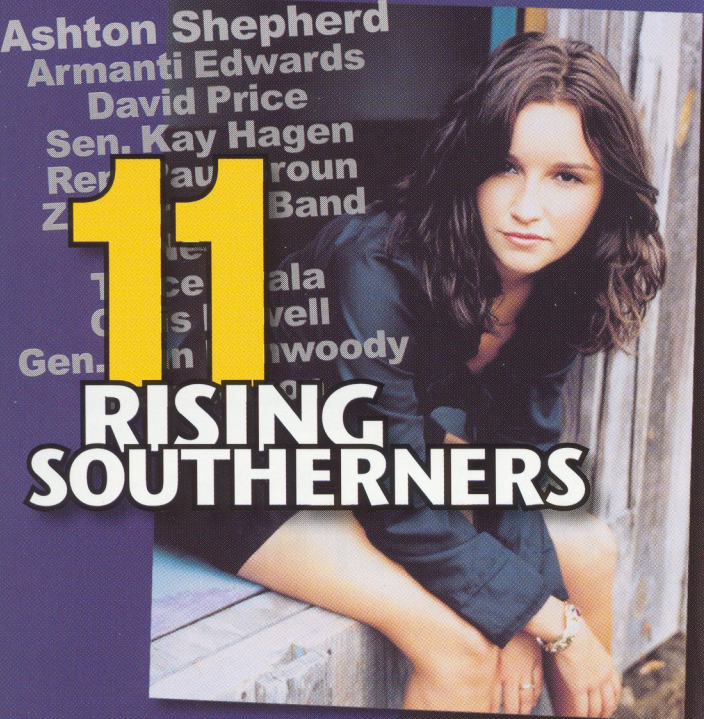
# y'all

THE MAGAZINE OF  
SOUTHERN PEOPLE



Ted Turner

# Mouth of the South



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Armanti Edwards  
David Price  
Sen. Kay Hagen  
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## RISING SOUTHERNERS

## Hootie

*gone country*

## March Madness

preview



# Collards!

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# Ted Turner: Mouth of the South

*by Jon Rowl*

Ted Turner is a Damn Yankee. But he is also a damn fine Southerner, living a life that's been full of unique, exciting, and profitable twists. From launching CNN in 1980, to owning the Atlanta Braves, to capturing America's Cup, to becoming the largest landowner in America (2 million acres), to being the father of five, Turner could certainly never be labeled as "boring." And along the way he's told it like he thinks it is, earning the nickname "Mouth of the South."





**At 70,** the Ohio-born, Georgia-raised businessman (with an estimated net worth of \$2.3 billion) has just released *Call Me Ted*, an autobiography that documents his career and his personal accomplishments and failings.

## Southern By The Grace Of God

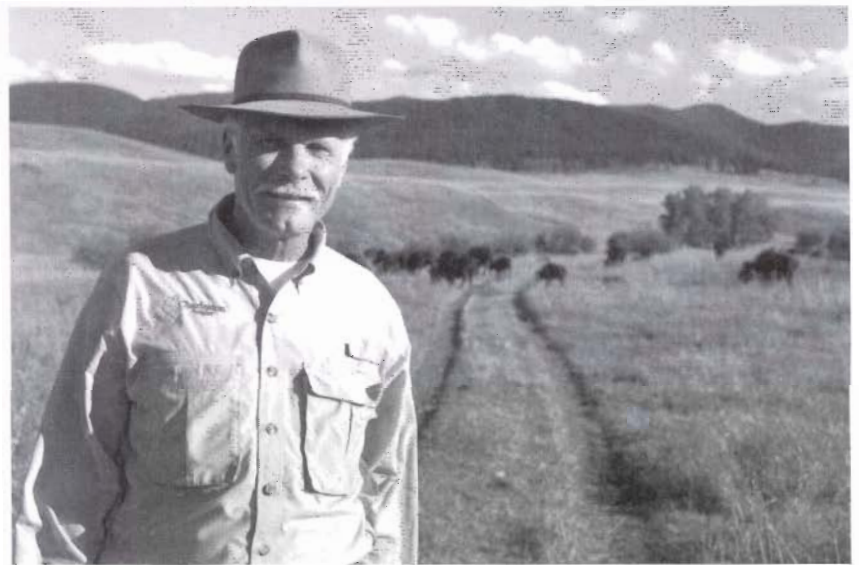
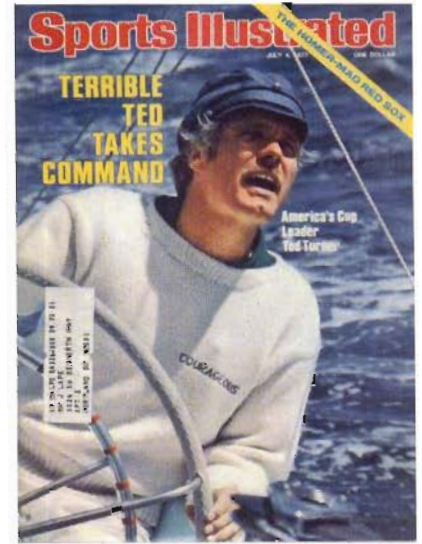
Robert Edward Turner III (his first and middle name comes from a revered Confederate general) was the first child born to Ed and Florence Turner. Ed was a native of Sumner, Miss., and went to Ohio just before World War II to work at a Cincinnati automobile dealer.

When Ed left to serve in the Navy during the war, young Ted was sent below the Mason-Dixon line to live with his grandparents in their Mississippi Delta town of 200. This experience provided Turner with his first love of nature, as he spent the summer fishing and catching turtles.

After his father came back from the war, the Turners reunited in Cincinnati, but ultimately Ed decided to move the family to Savannah, Ga., where he launched a billboard business, Turner Advertising.

“It was now the late 1940s but I’d swear some of those kids thought they were still fighting the Civil War,” Turner writes about his southward move in the book. “They wanted nothing more than to make a little ‘Yankee’ like me miserable.”

Turner would ultimately enroll at McCallie, a Christian military academy in Chattanooga, Tenn. He admits he wasn’t



short-lived. He left school early for three reasons: finances, burning down a homecoming display, and having a woman in his dorm room. Turner clearly points out in the book that today Brown allows women in men’s dorm rooms: “I was ahead of my time on this one!”

Going south once again, Turner would leave the North for good as he went back to Savannah to help his dad take the billboard business to unprecedented levels.

## Businessman and Buoys

The South in the early ‘60s was ripe for business. Turner Billboards was booming in Savannah and Charleston, S.C., and would expand to Atlanta, Macon, and Columbus, Ga.

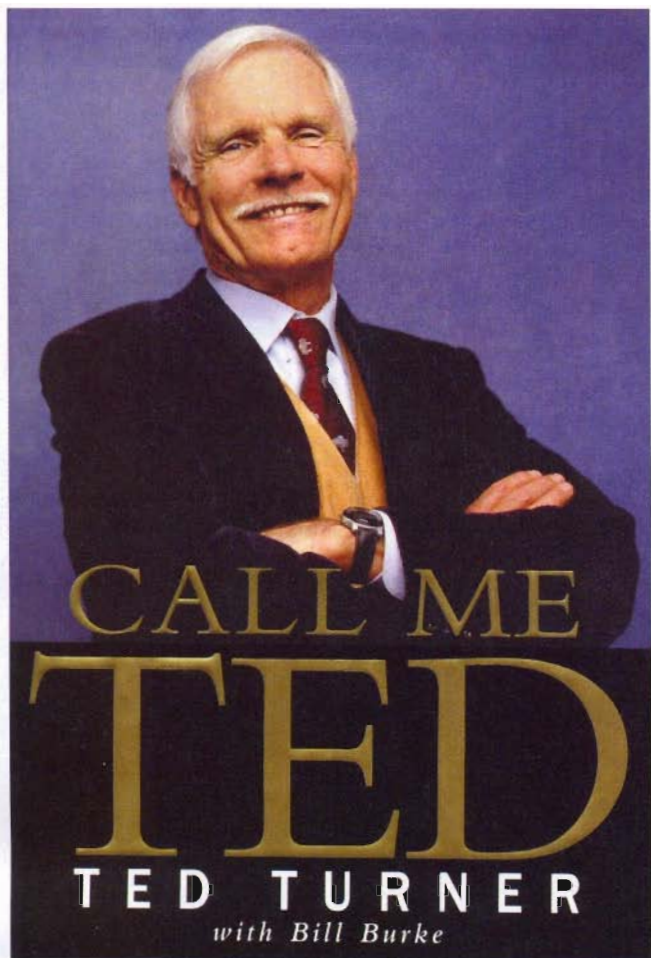
A merger in 1962 propelled the company to great success, and a lot of debt. Ed had dramatic mood swings—and he hit the bottle hard—and this didn’t help. He committed suicide on March 5, 1963.

Now in his mid-20s, a newlywed and young father, Turner inherited the company and sought to be “on my own.”

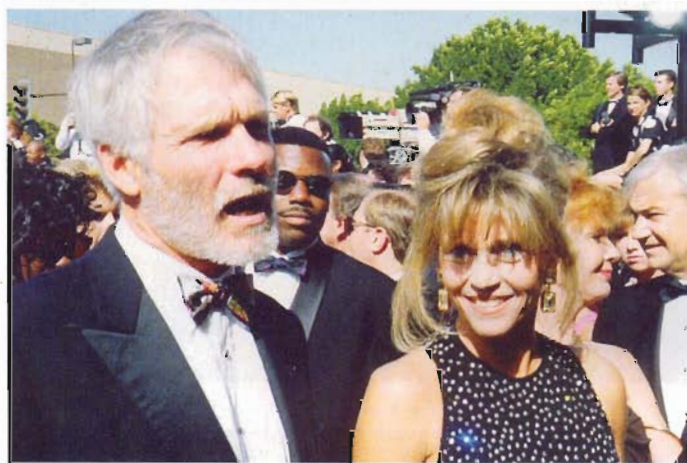
**“It was now the late 1940s but I’d swear some of those kids thought they were still fighting the Civil War,” Turner writes about his southward move in the book. “They wanted nothing more than to make a little ‘Yankee’ like me miserable.”**

the perfect cadet, but his experience there was key to his development as a person and leader. It helped square him away, which would lead him to attend college at Brown University.

His time at the Ivy League school in Rhode Island was fun, but



*Ted Turner's first autobiography, Call Me Ted, reviews his extraordinary career and personal life. He's come a long way from his days as a cadet in the 1950s at McCallie in Chattanooga, Tenn. (far left). He captained the America's Cup winner in 1977, married actress Jane Fonda in 1991 (below), and along the way became the largest landowner in the United States.*



As the 1960s rolled along, Turner cut some great deals and propelled the company to millions. He also segued into broadcasting, owning several radio stations and in 1970, he launched Channel 17, WTCG-TV. This would ultimately become the SuperStation.

Turner convinced the Atlanta Braves to move their games to his station, which provided a much-needed revenue boost.

Now remarried with five kids under the age of eight, you would think that'd be enough for the rising Southerner. But remember, Ted Turner knows no boredom.

Growing up in the coastal waters of Savannah, Turner had a passion for sailing, and he was good at it. He performed in sailing competitions around the world, and would lead his country to victory skippering *Courageous* in the 1977 America's Cup.

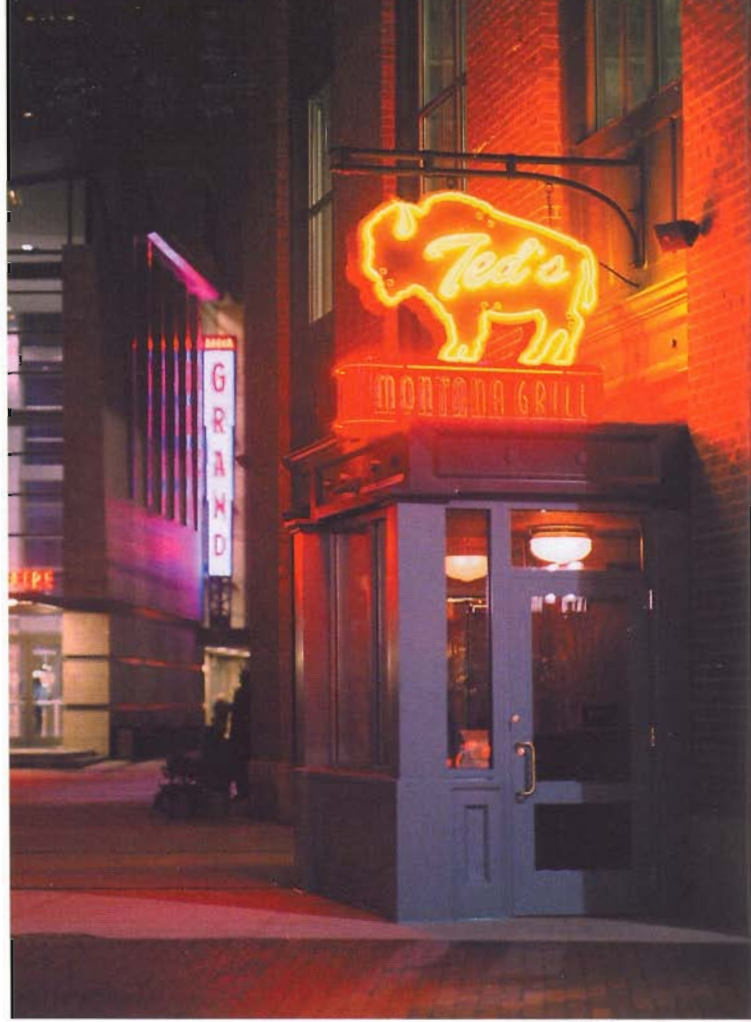
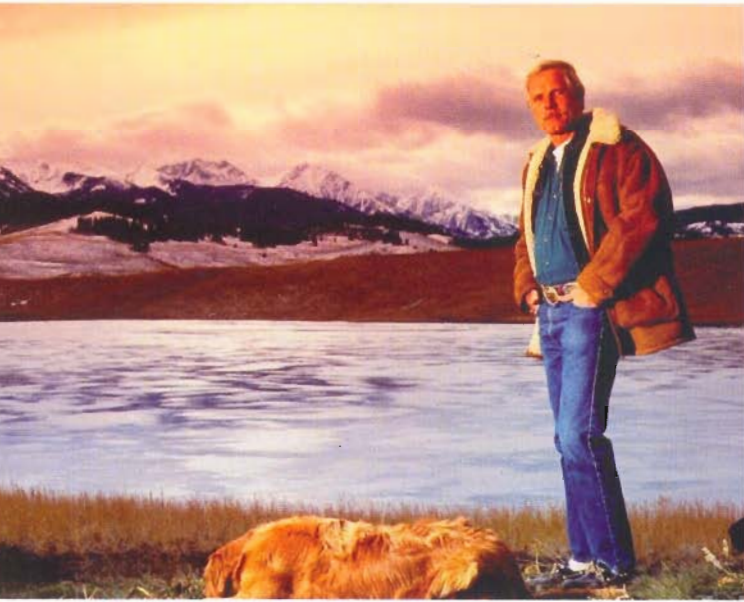
"I was 39-years-old when I won the America's Cup," Turner recalls. "My life had been exciting up to this point but this was by far my most exhilarating victory. Our crew had performed brilliantly and I enjoyed the hard work, the success, and the recognition. As I flew home to Atlanta, and prepared to go back to work, my thoughts turned to what would come next.



## The World Tunes-In To Dixie

In the late '70s, Turner made a pioneering move by putting his fledgling Atlanta TV station on satellite. Cable programming was getting ready to skyrocket, and he envisioned that his programming would be a hit on cable systems across the nation. Ted was right.

*With over 50,000 head of bison, Turner uses his ranches in Montana and other western states to provide the main dish at his own buffalo-themed restaurant, Ted's Montana Grill. Y'all can find Ted's in Atlanta, Birmingham, Nashville, Raleigh, Durham, Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Kansas City, Lexington, Ky., Alexandria, Va., and several other locations across the South.*



He also felt that cable TV needed news, and he launched Cable News Network (CNN) on June 1, 1980, live from Atlanta.

SuperStation TBS, CNN, even the Atlanta Braves all had incredible years in the 1980s. And Turner's fame rose to new heights around the globe.

In 1986, he launched the Goodwill Games, with Moscow hosting the inaugural world sports competition. The event attracted over 3,000 athletes from 79 countries—and was held four more times—but was ultimately nixed due to millions of dollars of losses.

"The Goodwill Games may have lost some money, but

in my mind, they were an investment toward peace that was worth every penny," he declares. Ted was right.

## Y'all In The Family

After 23 years of marriage, Turner and his second wife, Jane Shirley Smith, divorced in 1988. A few years later Ted would marry actress Jane Fonda, a marriage that would last a decade.

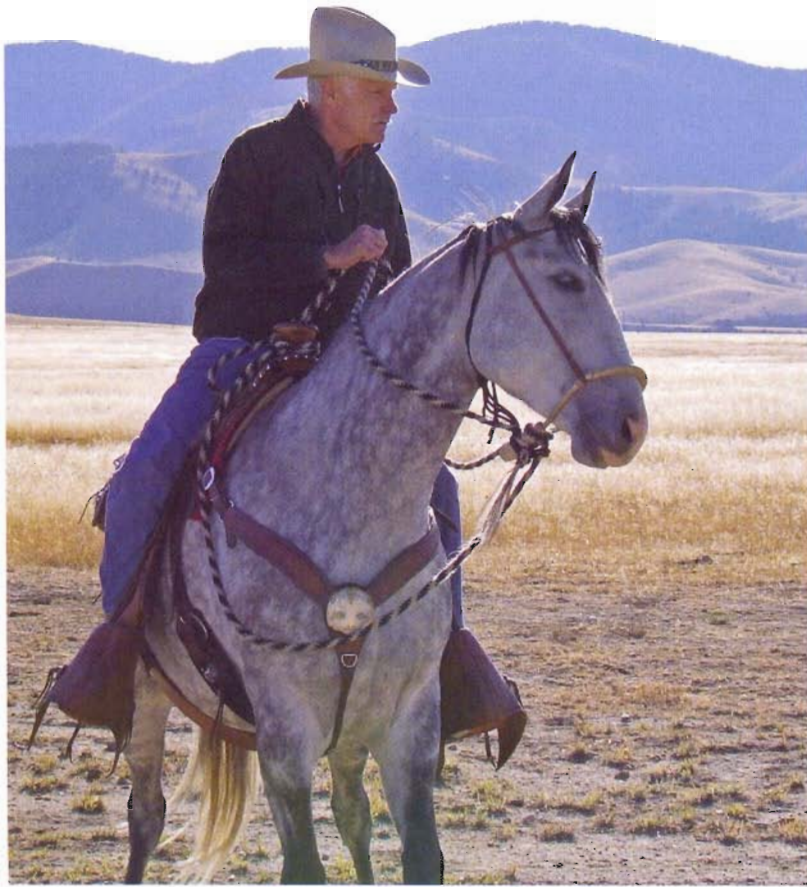
A business marriage with Time Warner in 1996 led Turner to unprecedented wealth, but it essentially stripped him from any power (not good for a man like Ted Turner). He walked away from Time Warner in 2006.

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**"The Goodwill Games may have lost some money, but in my mind, they were an investment toward peace that was worth every penny," he declares. Ted was right.**

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He admits that what helps keep him grounded is his family, and his love of the land. His ranches in Montana and several other Western states are gorgeous, and he raises 50,000 head



# TEDisms

“One of the reasons I think I’ve been able to accomplish as much as I have is because I prefer to live in the present while spending my spare moments thinking about the future. But since stepping away from my company I’ve had the opportunity to reflect. I realize that my life has been an amazing ride and that now might be a good time to finally work on a book about it.”

“We’re not losing, we’re just learning how to win.”

“If you’re in the sand trap, you gotta hit the ball ‘til you get it out. You gotta keep on going.”

“Early to bed, early to rise, work like hell and advertise!

“I’d like to see the world without land mines, with kids out playing. I’d like to see us act like highly educated, civilized human beings.”

“Either lead, follow or get out of the way.”

“Let’s stop the dumb things and start doing the smart things.”

of bison on them, some of which are served-up at his Ted’s Montana Grill restaurants.

He continues to own Hope Plantation, a 5,000-acre slice of heaven in Jacksonboro, S.C. He’s declared his permanent residence at Avalon, a 31,000-acre plantation near Tallahassee, Fla.

Despite the great wealth, fame, and accomplishments, Turner humbly admits his greatest accomplishment in the intro to *Call Me Ted*: “This book is dedicated to my children. Of all my accomplishments, they’re still the ones of which I’m most proud.”

Despite the great wealth, fame, and accomplishments, Turner humbly admits his greatest accomplishment in the intro to *Call Me Ted*: “This book is dedicated to my children. Of all my accomplishments, they’re still the ones of which I’m most proud.”

His children are: Laura Lee, Teddy, Rhett, Beau, and Jennie.

All three Turner boys graduated from The Citadel – The Military College of South Carolina. “When people sometimes say to me, ‘I can’t believe your dad made you go to The Citadel,’ I say, ‘You’ve got it a little wrong; I can’t believe my dad sent me to college!’ He was so cheap I actually wasn’t sure if he’d pay my tuition,” Teddy shares.

And now with a litter of grandchildren, you’ll find Ted bouncing around his estates, catching a good view of the western sky, or a good wind on the high seas.

Knowing that he is the anti-boredom guy, Turner keeps busy working on various charitable efforts, including the Turner Foundation, Captain Planet Foundation, and the Energy Future Coalition. He made headlines a few years back when he pledged \$1 billion to the United Nations.

In a nutshell, we’ll be hearing from Ted Turner for a long time. But if and when the end comes, the self-deprecating Southerner already has his headstone picked out, as he writes in the book. “‘You Can’t Interview Me Here,’ was a leading candidate. In the middle of my career I considered, ‘Here Lies Ted Turner. He Never Owned A Broadcast Network.’ These days, I’m leaning toward ‘I Have Nothing More to Say.’” 