

# Joe Bob thinks Ron's found his true calling

## Funnyman Reagan proves he chose the wrong profession

You've probably heard that Ron and Nancy moved into the house next door to the Beverly Hillbillies, even though their cement pond is not half as nice. This makes sense to me, especially since Jethro and Ronnie Jr. will have so much in common. It's your typical suburban \$4 million starter home, right down the street from Merv Griffin and, of course, Pia Zadora.

You might be under the impression that they don't have much to do anymore. All Ronnie's been able to drum up is a couple of speeches in Japan. His agent got him \$2 million, but he has to fly coach. Nancy, on the other hand, spends most of her days waxing her face.

But this won't last long. Ronnie didn't move back to El Lay for nothing. He's done what every red-blooded American wants to do. He's pursuing the new American dream.

He's polishing his stand-up act.

His first video, "Stand-Up Reagan," was supposed to be a knock-off job by some of his White House buddies. They spliced together a bunch of old tape from his speeches over the last eight years. They figured Ron and Nancy would enjoy playing it for the grandkids, maybe

### Joe Bob Briggs Wisdom on Parade

entertain the housecat with it. Instead, this little video company called J2 Communications has been shipping hundreds of thousands of these babies. "Stand-Up Reagan: The Wit, Warmth and Humor of One of America's Most Beloved Presidents" is about to go triple reverse platinum, and the rumor on the street is Ron's about to hire Bernie Brillstein to manage him. "I talked Belushi into wearing the killer-bee costume," Bernie was quoted as saying, "and I think Reagan in drag could be just as funny. Maybe funnier."

Normally, I don't do video. Indoor teensy-weensy-screen bullstuff. Who needs it? But for Ron, I made an exception. He was, after all, our first drive-in president.

The verdict: he's got the timing, he's got the delivery and he's got the material. In fact, he tells one joke about a three-legged chicken doing 60 on the interstate that ranks right up there with Jackie Vernon in his

prime. The only drawback: he FORGETS parts of the jokes. He kind of mumbles through the middle parts. Then I realized what he was doing: THIS IS PART OF THE ACT! He HAS to forget part of the joke or else the audience would be upset.

Why? Because it's like your Grandpa telling you a joke. It's not HOW he tells it. It's the fact that Grandpa is telling a joke at all that makes you feel good. And when Grandpa starts mumbling in the middle of it, it's THAT MUCH FUNNIER. The man's a genius.

Ronnie's best material is his old-age jokes. Just like Grandpa ("I'm so old that...," "Why I can remember...").

"When I go in for a physical," Ron says, "they carbon-date me."

Parump-pump. "I'll never forget my first Republican Convention, and that great speech by Abraham Lincoln."

Parump-pump. His favorite sets are all Communist Russia material. Long, long jokes about Russians trying to buy cars, Russians trying to get plumber service, or this one:

"Three dogs were talking — an



The star of 'Stand-Up Reagan': 'Take my wife, please.'

American dog, a Polish dog and a Russian dog. The American dog said 'In my country, you just bark as loud and as long as you want to, and eventually someone will give you some meat.' The Polish dog said, 'What's meat?' The Russian dog said, 'What's bark?'"

But his very best routines — the ones he uses for big finishes — are when he brings Nancy up on stage.

"Nancy, would you come up here a moment? Before we go, I thought you might have some kind of parting words for the members of the Washington press corps."

Nancy has a glazed deadpan look, lips pursed tightly.

"Surely you have something kind to say to our friends in the media."

Nancy remains mum, staring into space.

"Not even one kind word?"

"I'm thinking!" she screams. "I'm thinking!"

Georgie and Gracie never did it better.

Drive-in totals: 40 dead bodies (White House staff). One motor vehicle sequence (Ronnie's limo, copter and plane). Drive-in Academy Award nominations for Nancy, the first straight woman First Lady; and Ronnie, for saying "Excuse me if you've heard me tell this story before, but after age 40 you have the tendency to tell the same story over and over" — over and over and over again. He's a natural comic; he never changes an act that delivers.

Four stars.  
Joe Bob says check it out.

### JOE BOB'S ADVICE TO THE HOPELESS

Communist Alert! I keep getting reports that a) they've ripped down the eight-screen Union City Drive-In in Union City, Calif. or b) they're thinking about ripping it down, or c) it's for sale. Chris Clark of Fremont started sending alerts last November, but lately there's been a strange forbidding silence surrounding the last

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