

This column, which was printed the Springfield, MA "Republican" is also available to more than 30 newspapers through Advance Publications.

The potential audience represents a total circulation of approximately 3 million with a total readership of 7 million.

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Advance Publications (Newhouse News Service)

DVD Spotlight

Johnny Winter, "Live Through the '70s" (MVD) 3 stars.

Texas blues guitar great Johnny Winter was at his commercial peak toward the end of the 1960s and throughout the '70s, and this nearly two-hour DVD of rarely-seen footage finds him tearing it up on stage in a variety of settings during the '70s.

Though the liner notes questioning whether this compilation is somehow equivalent to finding shots of Robert Johnson on film are ridiculously overblown and the sound and video quality fluctuates considerably, there's no shortage of material for Winter's fans to get excited about.

The intrigue ranges from a 1970 Danish TV broadcast that also features Winter's brother Edgar Winter on keyboards and drums (an early version of "Frankenstein" is performed) to a washed out but fiery outing at Royal Albert Hall in London in 1970. "Rock and Roll Hoochie Koo," and "Stone Country," both culled from a show at the Palace Theater in Waterbury, Conn. in 1973, are first rate, as is the 1974 "blues summit" version of "Walking Through the Park," which finds Winter teamed with such greats as Junior Wells on harp; Buddy Miles on drums; Mike Bloomfield on guitar; and Dr. John on piano, among others. It's a must have for any rock 'n' blues collector.

Rating Scale: One Star (poor) to Five Stars (a classic)