

# Features

## Blues to explode in local bar

By Adrien Sanders  
Staff Writer

New York's Jon Spencer Blues Explosion are coming to Asheville for a live performance. The Blues Explosion will play at Be Here Now on Thursday, Feb. 13, at 10:00 p.m., with opening act Speed Ball Baby. The Feb. 13 show marks the Blues Explosion's first time in western North Carolina, but the band has played in Charlotte and Chapel Hill.

The trio formed in 1991 when Jon Spencer became friends with drummer Russell Simins and guitarist Judah Bauer. The band has drums and dual guitars, but the absence of bass defines the Blues Explosion sound.

The band does not describe its music as traditional blues. The Blues Explosion's music is a combination of many influences, from rock to country to rockabilly to blues.

"They've got a great new album," said James Barringer, the in-house agent at Be Here Now, in reference to the band's latest critically-acclaimed release, "Now I Got Worry."

The trio has recorded and toured with R.L. Burnside, a blues performer who also has a bassless trio. The two acts do not appear to be a likely match—the band is white and from New York, and Burnside is black and from Mississippi. Nevertheless, the combination has done well, especially with their recent col-

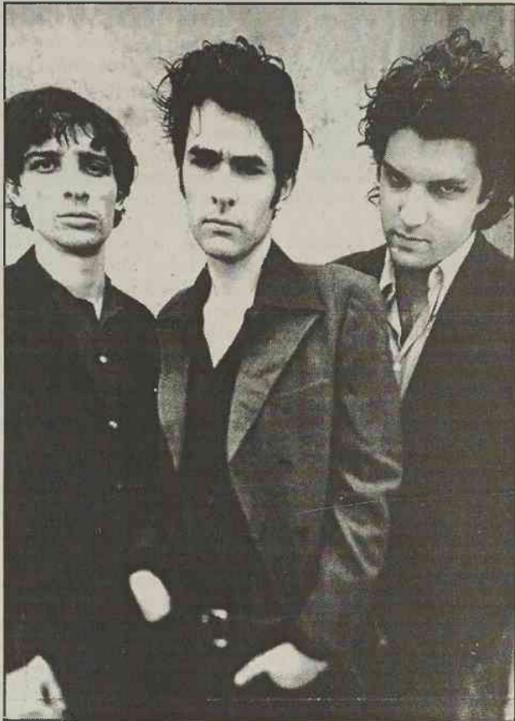


PHOTO COURTESY OF BRIAN VELENCHENKO

The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion: (From left to right) Judah Bauer, Jon Spencer, and Russell Simins. The Blues Explosion plays Be Here Now on Feb. 13.

laboration, *A As Pocket of Whiskey*.

Spencer started his musical career at Brown University playing bass and drums. He played with several groups in the 1980s, including punk band Pussy Galore

and the Honeymoon Killers. Spencer has also recorded with his wife, Cristina Martinez, under the name Boss Hogg.

Tickets to the Thursday night show are available at Be Here Now for \$10.

## Mother India serves Eastern treats

By Tracy Kelly  
Staff Writer

People with an appetite for Indian food or for something different should give Mother India Restaurant a try. Located at 1996 Hendersonville Rd. in Asheville, Mother India serves a wide variety of dishes, including chicken, lamb, vegetarian, and many other authen-

### Restaurant Review

tic specialties.

Housed in a small, old, pinkish-colored building, Mother India may not look like much from the outside, but waiting inside is a dining experience not commonly found in Asheville. With colored lights and balloons hanging from the ceiling, pictures and tokens hanging on the walls, and music playing in the background, the restaurant reveals northern Indian culture.

At lunch or dinner, there is certainly plenty to choose from on Mother India's extensive menu. The inexpensive prices will only complicate the decision making process. Lunch specials average around \$5 and dinner specials around \$8 or \$9. Appetizers, soups, desserts, and breads all average around \$2.

If Indian dining sounds like a daunting proposition, fear not. The staff is more than happy to help diners select from its complicated menu.

The house specials are available in vegetarian and non-vegetarian versions. Each includes a sample of

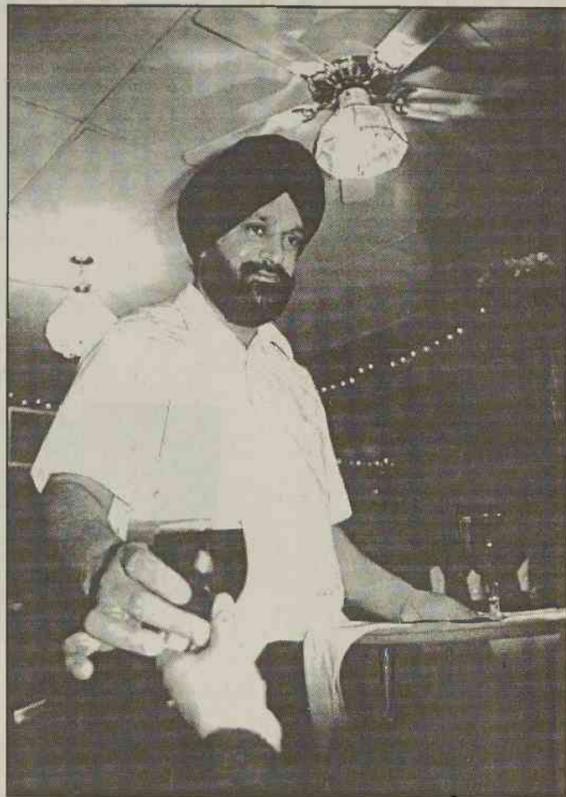


PHOTO BY ELISE FOX

Owner Jaqtar Singh serves up the beverages at Mother India Restaurant on Hendersonville Road in Asheville.

about four dishes, along with rice, dessert, and tea or coffee. Mother India has an incredible selection of breads to compliment their meals. Choose from white or whole wheat, mixed with potatoes, onions, garlic, peas, cauliflower, and spices.

The tandoori specialties feature chicken cooked in a charcoal-fired

clay oven (an old-fashioned style of Indian cooking). The desserts are the most exotic items on the menu. Aside from everyday soda, tea, and water, Mother India also serves a few authentic beverages, such as lassi, a yogurt shake.

Mother India is a wonderful dining option for those who want the best in authentic Indian food.

## Lexington Avenue offers shopping alternative

By Melinda Pierson  
Staff Writer

With all of the interesting shops of downtown Asheville, it's a wonder the shopping malls get any business. One afternoon of shopping reveals that sterile malls are poor replacements for the character of downtown shops.

Shopping on Lexington Avenue is a fine example of this alternative character. On Lexington, the clientele is a strange combination of hippies and tourists, each looking the other over with the same degree of skepticism as they walk the avenue's brick sidewalks.

The eclectic mix of people comes together to shop some of Asheville's most famous and most eccentric stores.

First and foremost on this list of unusual stores is T.S. Morrison. After browsing through the store, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly what kind of store T.S. Morrison is supposed to be. There is a little bit of everything, including sterling silver jewelry, wicker baskets, cookie cutters, and a huge selection of toys.

"It's primarily a kids store geared mostly towards tourists. It does have a wide variety of items, though," said Bratton Gelder, an employee at T.S. Morrison.

Just down the street is Downtown Books and News, which not only buys and sells used books, including fiction, non-fiction, kids books, and first edition books, but also houses a large selection of hard-to-find magazines and journals.

Although Downtown Books and News does sell magazines of general interest, such as *Rolling Stone* and *Newsweek*, they also have publications such as *Asian Martial Arts* on the shelves.

The store also carries the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*,

*The European*, and *The Village Voice*.

Downtown Books and News is a great place to earn a little extra cash (or store credit) by selling used books. Employee Gabrielle Johansen warns that they don't usually buy textbooks, unless they are novels or other books of general interest: "Your basic 101 psychology textbook we're not really interested in. Although anybody can come in. You don't need an appointment or anything, just walk in. It's a very subjective thing."

Lexington Avenue also houses more practical shops. The most visible example is Tops For Shoes, which is a staple of Lexington Avenue shopping. Tops For Shoes does an excellent job of combining old ideas with new merchandise, something its competitors in the large chain stores have failed to do. Tops offers new styles in shoes, belts, and purses, but still gives great attention to the individual customer. Salespeople at Tops will measure people's feet and look in the storeroom to find their sizes. Although the store itself is huge, Tops' attention to customer service gives the feeling that the store is nothing more than a friendly hometown shoe store.

Buying items for the home on Lexington Avenue will lead not only to the street's many antique shops, but into stores such as Throwing Clay Pottery and The Natural Home. In Throwing Clay Pottery, artist Julie Payne makes works of art right in the store window, while her customers browse through the pottery within the store. The Natural Home is like Pier 1, only not nearly as mass-marketed, with functional and decorative objects for the home that are unlike any other.

For a quick bite to eat, stop at Max and Rosie's Cafe. Max and Rosie's serves nine varieties of both vegetable and fruit juices, as well

as natural fruit smoothies to drink while eating such items as the It Takes Tuna Tango dolphin-safe tuna salad, all for around \$6. On Saturdays the deli offers live piano music, although in the spring and summer there is live music daily.

"On Sundays we have psychic readings. We have three readers and its called Psychic Sunday. It's really great," said Max and Rosie's owner Deborah Beeby.

For a little spiritual upliftment drop into Just As You Are, Asheville's Christian coffeehouse. Just as You Are offers run-of-the-mill deli food in an alcohol and smoke free environment. In addition, the coffeehouse offers an

open mike night on Thursdays, booked engagements on weekend nights, and a non-denominational worship service on Sunday evenings.

"Our purpose here was to have a presence of Jesus Christ here in Asheville. We didn't pick Lexington Avenue, God picked it. We just sort of followed suit," said Just As You Are manager Stuart Robbins.

Lexington Avenue offers such a wide array of stores that carry a smorgasbord of merchandise, all in a two block stretch. With stores like T. S. Morrison and eateries like Max and Rosie's, Lexington Avenue is the place for a one-of-a-kind shopping experience.

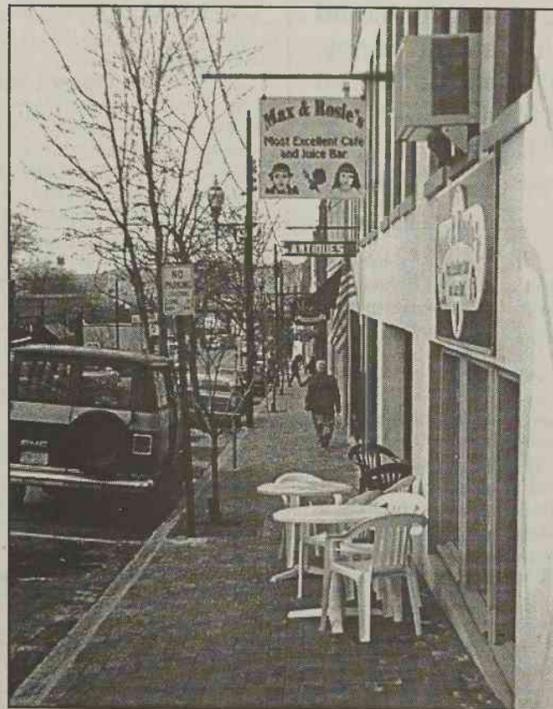


PHOTO BY BONNER BUTLER

Max and Rosie's: a place to eat before buying antiques



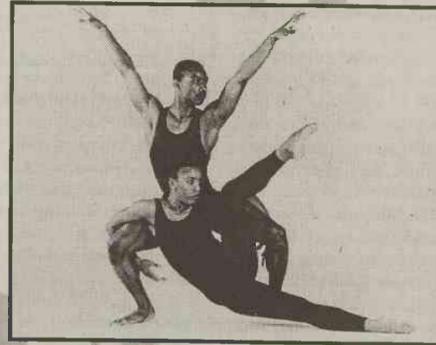
PHOTO BY BONNER BUTLER

T. S. Morrison's stock runs the gamut, from candles to doilies.

The UNCA Cultural & Special Events Committee  
presents

**PHILADANCO!**  
THE PHILADELPHIA DANCE COMPANY

"The dancers are a miracle of skill and energy."



Tuesday, February 25 • 8 p.m.  
Diana Wortham Theatre at Pack Place

\$4 UNCA students  
\$12 Faculty and staff, College for Seniors members, alumni  
For ticket information and to charge by phone,  
call 704/251-6584. Tickets available at UNCA  
Highsmith Center.

WCCQS sponsor  
A member of the  
ASSOCIATION OF PERFORMING  
ARTS  
PRESENTERS

UNCA  
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE