

Greetings From Asbury Park

By JONATHAN PHILLIPS

The best thing about leaving New Jersey is leaving New Jersey. Yes, it is now official. Late this summer I will cross the Delaware River, pay my 60-cent toll for the bridge, and head back to North Carolina. I will not be looking back, except for an occasional glance in the rear-view-mirror for state troopers.

Yet, lest you think this is going to be 30 column inches of cheap Jersey jokes, let me point out that the Garden State does have its advantages. It just ain't my style.

Before leaving N.J., Lynn and I had one more task to perform; one more experience to experience:

Asbury Park and the Stone Pony.

Just as the Carolina coast has its own special brand of music, beach music, the Jersey Shore has also spawned a distinctive brand of rock and roll.

You've heard of some of the more famous products of the Jersey Shore rock scene: Bruce Springsteen, George Thorogood and the Destroyers, Gary "U.S." Bonds, Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes.

Like the Southern beach music, Jersey Shore music is rooted in sixties rhythm and blues. But whereas beach music favors a smooth, laid-back r&b rith vocal harmonies, Jersey Shore music has a grittier feel, with pounding rhythms and wailing saxophones.

This kind of music is heard from North Jersey to Delaware, and Atlantic City to Philly, but the heart and soul is Asbury Park.

And the cradle of Jersey Shore music within Asbury Park is a dive called the Stone Pony. Springsteen got his start there, and still hangs out there, along with the other Pony alumni like Southside Johnny and Miami Steve Van Zandt (of Little Steven and the Disciples of Soul).

The Stone Pony is the focal point for the not-yet-famous practitioners of Jersey Shore Music, like John Eddie and the Front Street Runners, The Cruisers, Backstreets, the Diamonds, and Clarence Clemons and the Red Bank Rockers.

While a few of the genre make their headquarters elsewhere—the Hub City All-Stars in New Brunswick, and 14-Carat Soul in

North Jersey—the Stone Pony is the place to be.

There was nothing else to do but go to the Stone Pony at least once before making that last turn down the Turnpike. It had to be on a summer Friday night, so we could get the full flavor of an evening by the beach at Asbury Park.

Less adventuresome souls advised against it.

"I've never been there, but I've heard the place is a real sleazy dive," said John.

"We like sleazy dives," we said.

"I ain't going with you. I don't want to get knifed," said Rich.

"What are you, a wimp?" we said.

"You're kidding me. What a dump. Take your brass knuckles," said Jim.

"You're no fun," we said.

"Why not? We're up for it," said Kathy and David, who were visiting from Wilmington, N.C., and had never heard of Asbury Park.

"Get in the car," we said.

While the joints either side of the Stone Pony, Mrs. Jay's Beer Garden and The Quack Quack Bar, looked like meeting halls for the east coast chapters of Hell's Angels, the overall FPI (Fight Potential Index) for downtown Asbury Park did not seem to be any higher than for some eastern N.C. honky-tonk areas, such as Downtown Greenville or the Circle at Atlantic Beach.

The FPI was, in fact, probably lower than you'd find at Court Street or Second Front in Jacksonville, N.C.

Of course, the FPI in Beirut is not much higher than in Jacksonville.

John Eddie and the Front Street Runners and The Cruisers put on a heck of a good show, the crowd was pleasant, the Stone Pony had just the right touch of decrepitness (let's face it, Jersey Shore music just wouldn't be the same in a fern bar), and we all had a great time.

But I'm glad its over. Now we can leave.

Is There Really A Need?

This question enters our minds with each issue of this community newspaper. We know the employees of the firm need the newspaper because they need the job and they do a marvelous job with what they have to do with.

Is there really a need for this newspaper? You answer the question with these items in mind . . . people are reluctant to give news . . . most people today are not interested in doing something for nothing . . . no one wants people outside their community to know what a fine job they are doing . . . most people say that's not news, it's bragging. . . most small communities don't want their kids, adults, or grandparents recognized for anything they accomplish but let them get into trouble then everyone wants to know why didn't I see that in your newspaper . . . let your community get a good sports program, everyone wants to keep it a secret because it might bring in a bad element and rock the boat . . . have a league of sports minded players and no one knows who is leading the league in wins or losses - because no one keeps any records that can be publicized - the community stores stock all types of merchandise but can't figure why so few ever come in to purchase . . . reason: the people do not know what is available to them in their own community . . . church people say we are suppose to spread the "good news" but there are so many people we never reach. . . reason: no one has time enough to notify this community newspaper that services are being held or a special meeting is being held. . . sponsor pages are used to let the community know who is interested in happenings in the community, but many businesses feel it is just for the newspaper's benefit . . . "advertising pays" has always been a known fact by most businessmen, but many merchants today take the attitude that it only pays the newspaper or magazine that publishes.

The reason for a newspaper is to publicize your community and its products - it can't be done without revenue, and subscriptions, sponsor pages, and advertising foot the bill - what is the return on your dollars when you spend it with your community newspaper? It brings your children, grandchildren and posterity a written history of what you and your friends have done on this earth for the short time you are here.

Public Service Announcements

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Lower Neuse, Inc. will hold orientation meetings on Thursday, July 26, 1984 at 7:00 p.m. and on Saturday, July 28th, 1984 at 10:00 a.m. Both meetings will be held in the auditorium of the New Bern-Craven County Library. The public is invited to attend either of these sessions which will feature a film and discussion of the program. Big Brothers/Big Sisters matches school-age children from single parent families with responsible adults who spend three to five hours a week together in activities both enjoy.

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Trifles - Little Things

By LELA BARROW

Little words are the sweetest to hear. Nature would make everything, especially rare and beautiful; she makes it little; little pearls, little diamonds, little dews; day is made up of little beams, and night of glorious little stars. Webster says "Trifles are things of little value or importance," something you may throw away and never miss. "Trifle away your time" means talking for no good purpose, or indulging in light amusements.

Have courage for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones. People start out in life full of vigor and expectancy to attain wealth. Some succeed—but others are not so fortunate and have serious disappointments. Trifles can be a spark of fire left in ashes hot enough to set a piece of trash paper into a flame. I have known this to happen with much smoke damage to the home. Remember the Chicago Fire many years ago—also the New Bern fire—just a little bit of fire can consume a life time of hard work. A rudder is a small thing compared to the ship which it steers.

Think of your home—it may be small and humble, but would you be willing to exchange it for a mansion in the city? Or the White House?

Christ praised the widow who gave the mite offering—which was of little value, but she gave it freely and Christ accepted it lovingly. Christ's ministry from Baptism to Ascension is mostly made up of little words, little deeds, little prayers and little sermons.

The completed beauty of Christ's life is only the added beauty of little inconspicuous acts of beauty, shedding a tear at the grave of Lazarus. Preaching the Gospel to two of the disciples on the

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P.O. Box 404/711, Main Street
Across from Post Office
Vanceboro,
North Carolina 28586

Phone (919) 244-0780,
(919) 244-0508

R.L. Cannon, Jr
Publisher &
Business Manager

Christine Hill
Office Manager

Sharon Buck
Production Manager

Edith Hodges
Circulation Manager

Michael Hodges
Circulation

Zeno Everette, III
Paste Up

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