

Best Times Of Nightlife Have Been Tempered With Singing

The contemplation of night should lead to elevating rather than to depressing ideas. How can a mind be fixed on transitory and earthly things in the presence of those glittering myriads of worlds existing in Charlotte After Dark.

A wise man once said that the best days of church have always been the singing days. The best times of nightlife have also been tempered the singing nights. (I wonder did the same wise man make that last statement?)

Anyway, it was the same fantastic song, with the same soulful meaning, but the second verse was experienced last weekend at the Excelsior Club.

The Original Bluenotes, Lloyd Parks, Larry Brown, and Bernie Wilson along with newcomer Donnell Gillespie set the stage for two nights of unrestrained musical fancy.

The dynamic quartet continually pulled on the tender heartstrings of the many guests. They transported the attentive audience back to the beginning of their rise to stardom, deftly using the wings of "I Miss You" and "Be For Real" as major carriers. From the early years with



Teddy Pendergrass, the group smoothly shifted to their feature of Pendergrass songs popularized during his solo years. "Close the Door," one of the lady killer's biggest sellers, was a vaunted favorite among the many people who sang and clapped right along with Donnell Gillespie. Gillespie, the lead singer with the Bluenotes, has a voice that is a carbon copy of Teddy's. The "Let me make sweet love to you" kind of voice. "Wake up Everybody," another Pendergrass biggy, appropriately closed the evening's soul stirring performances.

Veronica Davis, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Hubbard, Susan Anthony, Curtis Shephard,

Steve Hayes, Julian McDowell, Dorothy Durante, Samuel Evans, Mr. and Mrs. Kelvin Funderburk, Mr. and Mrs. James Arrington, Sandra Sterling, Toni Brown, and Kitt Massey, were just a few of the satisfied patrons attending this musical experience.

The Pi Phi chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity is one of the largest Greek lettered fraternal organizations in the city. For 30 odd years, this group of progressive minded men have sponsored a fun-laced event they chose to call "Mardi Gras."

One highlight of the Mardi Gras is the crowning of a queen chosen from a body of industrious

ladies. Each lady is sponsored by one of the four divisions the group is sorted into. Brag rights for the most part is what the Qs will get out of this, along with a buffered bank account. The winning lady will receive a variety of amenities for the lofty title.

The curtain opens on a noteworthy happening, last Sunday, July 20. Group 3 and their contestant, Hazel Smith, have planned a stylish garment-related function, to help in their bidding for the number one spot at the Mardi Gras.

One thing among the many that Charlotte can boast, rather by birth or acquired circumstances, is an abundance of beautiful ladies. This fact was intensely reinforced when Hazel Smith unveiled a bevy of beauties at her "Summer Fashion Extravaganza."

The good-looking ladies who kept the men in the audience in awe, were: Deborah Knox, Hattie Dease, Loretta Leary, Michelle Thomas, Tracy Merritt, Fran Bradley, Alfreda Johnson, Samarial Hill, Deanie Maxwell, Betty Latta, Seretha Funderburke, Delores Gaston, and Shonda Sturdivant. Terrance Hunter and Ron Nelson were the men used as models. They also did more than their share to make this a successful venture.

The models enhanced clothes from Deanie's Boutique, Lucille's Vogue,

Pat's Unique Boutique, and other places. They showed off in a nuance of styles ranging from colorful casual to soft wedding attire.

Even though the show started late it moved along at a brisk pace. The short intermission time was spiritually consumed by members of the group Pizazz, featuring Lynetta Sowell-vocalist, Eric English-keyboards, and Ron Nelson (the three hat man, a Q, and a model) on keyboards. Pizazz, working in the studio on its first album, is a group destined for great things, as indicated by Sunday's brief performance.

The La Choice Club, which is fast becoming a favorite night spot for now people, housed this charismatic episode. Al Duncan (former owner of the Silver Dollar) and his associates have put a lot of work into creating an impressively intimate atmosphere there.

La Choice features live entertainment on Wednesdays and Thursdays that is free to ladies and members. And during the entertainer's break, old and gold tunes will be played on the disco sound machine. Mixed with the other credits that are natural elements of Al's establishment is Charlene Potts, the very personable weekend and special occasion's waitress.

The narrator for this rollicking adventure, who could have easily been one of the models, was Elaine Watson. Her fluid and oft times humorous commentary embraced the consistency of an evening that was very successful.

Men from group 3 of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, broad smiles on their faces, will also benefit from the evening's performances. These brothers are S. P. Woodard, Dr. Melvin Pinn, Rufus Spears, Alston Bellamy, Ron Nelson, Myron Williams, and Archie Haywood.

BET Signs New Agreement

New York - Black Entertainment Television (BET) and Cox Cable Communications, Inc. have signed a new and expanded multi-year agreement to carry the basic advertising supported BET service on 10 Cox Cable systems.

Announcing the agreement were Terry Freedman, director of programming, Cox Cable Communications, Inc., and Donald E. Anderson, senior vice president, Home Box Office, Inc., which owns an equity interest in BET and supports the service by performing selected sales and marketing functions.

Under the terms of the

new three-year agreement, BET will continue to be carried on Cox Cable systems in New Orleans, La.; Omaha, Neb.; Oklahoma City, Okla.; Gainesville and Ocala, Fla.; Park Forest, Ill.; Saginaw, Mich.; Lubbock, Tex.; and Roanoke, Va. The agreement also allowed for the recent launch of BET in Cox's 129,000-subscriber Tidewater, Va., system.

This new pact will give exposure of the BET service to over 600,000 cable subscribers in systems passing more than 1.2 million homes.


Commenting on the agreement, Freedman

said, "BET has always performed extremely well in our system. This new agreement reaffirms Cox's commitment to the service."

HBO's Anderson said, "It is vital to the continued growth of BET that major MSOs like Cox support and promote the service. We are delighted that they have chosen to continue and expand this mutually beneficial relationship."

Cox Cable Communications, Inc. is the nation's fourth largest multiple cable system operator and is headquartered in Atlanta, Ga.

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