

KEY NOTES

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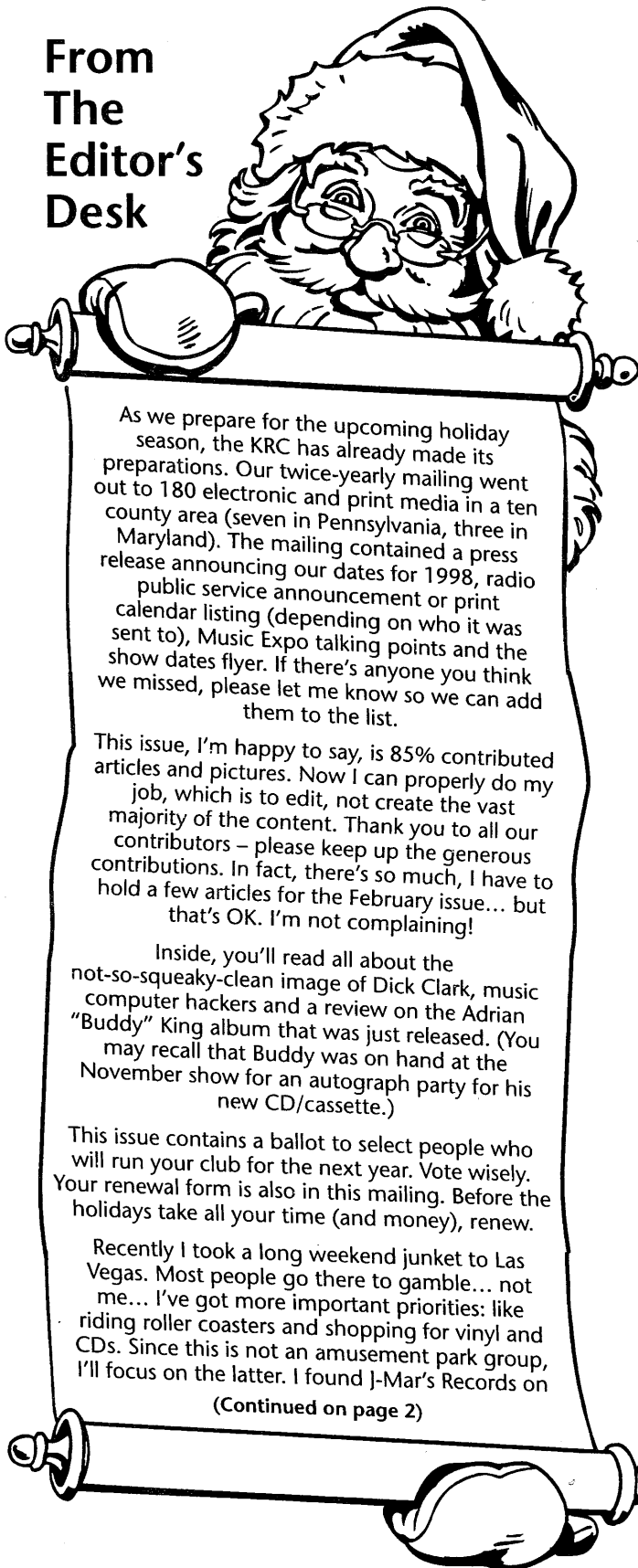
COLLECTORS, P.O. BOX 1516, LANCASTER, PA 17608

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From The Editor's Desk



As we prepare for the upcoming holiday season, the KRC has already made its preparations. Our twice-yearly mailing went out to 180 electronic and print media in a ten county area (seven in Pennsylvania, three in Maryland). The mailing contained a press release announcing our dates for 1998, radio public service announcement or print calendar listing (depending on who it was sent to), Music Expo talking points and the show dates flyer. If there's anyone you think we missed, please let me know so we can add them to the list.

This issue, I'm happy to say, is 85% contributed articles and pictures. Now I can properly do my job, which is to edit, not create the vast majority of the content. Thank you to all our contributors - please keep up the generous contributions. In fact, there's so much, I have to hold a few articles for the February issue... but that's OK. I'm not complaining!

Inside, you'll read all about the not-so-squeaky-clean image of Dick Clark, music computer hackers and a review on the Adrian "Buddy" King album that was just released. (You may recall that Buddy was on hand at the November show for an autograph party for his new CD/cassette.)

This issue contains a ballot to select people who will run your club for the next year. Vote wisely. Your renewal form is also in this mailing. Before the holidays take all your time (and money), renew.

Recently I took a long weekend junket to Las Vegas. Most people go there to gamble... not me... I've got more important priorities: like riding roller coasters and shopping for vinyl and CDs. Since this is not an amusement park group, I'll focus on the latter. I found J-Mar's Records on

(Continued on page 2)

View From The Top

"To all dealers: If you unload late (after 9 AM) or leave early (before 3:30 PM) you must use the front door. We must conserve the heat for the school and for the comfort of our shoppers and dealers. This policy will be strictly enforced and non-cooperation could jeopardize your future set up privileges.

Weather policy: The show will go on. Only a major storm could cause a cancellation. The conditions at the show site will be the determining factor. Each dealer must make their own assessment of conditions in their own area. Table rents will not be refunded unless the show is cancelled.

It is time for nomination and election of KRC officers. We need candidates for the office of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The incumbent team has been in awhile and is ready for the retirement home.

Renew your membership for 1998. Sign up friends and neighbors. We need new members.

Reserve your tables in advance. Pay at the show for the next month.

April 1998 show is on the first Sunday because of the Easter holiday.

The KRC spends a large amount each month for advertising. Table rent is our only source of income. KRC table rates are the lowest by far but we will continue to provide publicity as limited resources will allow."

- Jack Supplee, 1997 KRC President

Music Merchants Being Squeezed by Computer Hackers Swapping Digitally Compressed Sound

Tired of paying \$15.98 for new CDs at the local shopping mall? Perhaps \$5 a pop for used or promotional discs is still too much for your limited entertainment budget. Well, how would you like to pay nothing at all?

An underground community of college students and computer hackers has started swapping CD-quality music over the internet for "free" and you're invited to join them in cyberspace. Tuning in requires only the basics: a personal computer, a modem, a PC-based CD player, and browser software that lets you "surf the 'net" - the kind of system many people already use at home or work for business every day.

Technology has once again reshuffled the deck for the music business whose embrace of things digital has definitely emerged a mixed blessing. This time around the centerpiece is a little-known extension of an audio compression technique, MPEG-2 Audio Layer-3 (MP3), which is now being used at hundreds of Internet sites to swap large volumes of CD-quality music at (relatively) high speed. Because of the high compression ratios involved, MP3 allows a 28.8 kb/s modem to download in five minutes what used to take an hour and a half. MP3 audio works by using "psycho-acoustic" compression, which removes extraneous information from the signal that human ears can't pick up.

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EDITOR'S DESK continued from front page

South Baltimore Parkway to be a great source for promo 45s. Also the Record Town stores are great for used CDs and LPs. I hit five of the six locations and was quite impressed with each one. If other members are traveling and would like to share their music store finds, we'd be happy to let the rest of our members know about them.

Have a great holiday season – see you next year!

– B. Derek Shaw, Editor, Club Publications

A Message From the New Phone Guy...

Phone Reservation Proto-call

As you may or may not know, I have been asked to assume the responsibility of taking phone reservations for upcoming KRC shows. I have to say that it isn't as easy as Carol made it look, so I'm asking for everyone's help. The only way to be fair about booking tables is on a "first come first served" basis. Problems arise when the show is sold out and dealers who had wanted a table can't get one. Therefore, the following guidelines must be observed and remembered by all involved if you have any interest in setting up at one of our shows. Tables will be given in this fashion:

#1 Priority: You're set up and wish to set up again the following month. You pay BEFORE leaving the current show. You will definitely have a spot, not necessarily the same one, but one nonetheless.

#2 Priority: You've paid Steve Yohe at the current show to reserve for the following show. Or you've called me at 898-1246 and asked for table availability and sent your payment to the KRC address for reserving tables: KRC, PO Box 34, Landisville PA 17538. You must call. Don't just mail a check.

#3 Priority: You'd like a table but haven't sent payment or paid at a show. You must pay at the show when you arrive in order to set up. This, of course, is only if there are still tables available.

#2 Priority gets you on what we call the "prepaid" list. #3 Priority gets you on the "waiting" list. NOTE: If, at the end of the current show, every dealer chooses to set up again, you may actually be on the prepaid list and not get a table. This hasn't happened yet, but could in theory. We do not intentionally overbook the shows. We would like everyone who contacts either Steve or myself to get a table. Under no circumstances are tables "held" for anyone. Money talks, as they say, so by all means get yours speaking for you!

Nothing here is really "new". It is just a reinforcement of policy that has always been in place. So please help yourself and me to avoid any problems in the future. Thanks for your cooperation.

– Rich McLenson, Phone Reservationist

MUSIC HACKERS continued from front page

The fact that people can now download CD-quality audio in a reasonable time period could revolutionize the media distribution process. The basic software components needed – MP3 players, encoders, and "rippers" that snatch a digital audio stream from a PC-based CD audio player – are all readily available free on the Internet. Those who want to permanently save their musical "acquisitions" in a form compatible with any consumer CD player will also need a CD writer and a supply of recordable CDs (called CD-R). Such equipment is already in wide use by radio stations and recording studios. Combining the free MP3 software with a CD-R investment, digital "greatest hits" packages tailored to any desired musical preference can be assembled in less than an hour. (You will probably need to surf several MP3 sites first to find specific musical selections).

Watchdogs from the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), once the bane of weekend record conventions, are reportedly turning up the heat to close down MP3 sites that they claim are engaging in music piracy. But the battle is probably lost this time around because new sites come on line faster than old ones can be unplugged – and of course the RIAA's reach only extends to *domestic* MP3 sites, a crucial detail. Downloading music from MP3 sites outside the USA cannot be prevented.

One software-engineering student who runs a web site called MP3.net at the University of Washington summarizes the ongoing MP3 craze as simple economics. MP3 appeals to teenagers and college students who don't have much money. If they can get the music they like for free, then they are going to do it.

(Based on an article by Larry Lange in the July 21, 1997 issue of *Electronic Engineering Times*)

– Don Mennie

Love Will Live... Will Carry On

by Adrian • A CD Review by Steve Yohe

This November release is the long-awaited solo effort by Adrian "Buddy" King, one of the featured performers of the Magnificent Men, one of South Central Pennsylvania's legendary soul bands.

Billed as a "torch" album, it is an intensely personal, introspective exploration of the emotions involved with the breakup of a personal relationship. It is another fine release by 60 Second Street Productions, the company that brought us the outstanding Class of '60 Something series. It has been meticulously produced by long-time colleague Dave Bupp to add a contemporary feel to Adrian's songs.

Love Will Live... is a pleasing blend of mellow soul, soft rock, jazz and pop. It combines the catchy phrasing and rhythms of Billy Joel and the thematic and vocal power of Richard Harris' *MacArthur Park* with Adrian's personal soulful style.

Although he is ably assisted instrumentally at times by some fine musicians and on one cut vocally by his sister Diane King Susek and David Rhen, this is primarily Buddy King's show. The lead vocals reflect his gospel/soul roots; his own overdubbed background vocals feature subtle, smooth harmonies; and his keyboard work is outstanding.

I like this CD more each time I play it, and I've already played it five or six times. My only difficulty is to recommend individual cuts since they each have a lot to offer. If pressed, I'd have to mention that I like both the sound of and the idea behind *Discipline My Heart* – punishing a heart for the pain it inflicts for the agony of a failed relationship; *The Promise*, the first single from the album, is a touching love song with the narrator vowing to wait as long as needed; the instrumental version of *The Spirit* is lush and beautiful; and I found *The Lucky Ones*, *Calm*, and *Problem Child* to be memorable as well.

Listeners who are expecting a Magnificent Men-revisited experience may be a bit taken aback at first; however this CD is well worth a closer listen.

KEY NOTES

Issue #104, December 1997

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All offers and contests are open to current KRC members only.

Names in bold type are members of the Keystone Record Collectors

(Deadline for #105 is January 11)

Those Old Payola Roll Blues

by Philip K. Eberly

Seldom has there been a more fruitful year than 1997 for editors – mainstream and tabloid/print and electronic – to feature anniversary articles. Consider: Jackie Robinson's breaking the major league baseball color line (50th); the Watergate break-in (25th); Lindbergh's historic flight and the arrival of sound movies (70th); George Gershwin's death (60th); Elvis Presley's death (20th) – and the vehicle that brought forth one Dick Clark, *American Bandstand* (40th).

As 1997 winds down, however, our focus here is not *American Bandstand*, but the colossus it hatched: Mr. Clark. More specifically, how he dodged a volley of bullets, otherwise known as the Payola Scandals of 1959-60. Clark's command performance before a Congressional committee was an escape act worthy of Houdini.

Our tale begins in 1958 in a TV show "isolation booth," a prop used by the cluster of big-money quiz shows which drew big ratings on the television networks between the mid- and late-1950s. Inside the booth on a show called *Twenty One*, a young, attractive Columbia University professor, Charles Van Doren, mowed down challengers week after week accumulating fame (and fortune) with his seemingly endless flow of knowledge on a wide variety of subjects. A disgruntled challenger named Herbert Stemple claimed *Twenty One* was rigged, since those contestants the producers wanted to keep coming back were fed the answers behind the scenes. Stemple's charges were substantiated. And Congress, always ready to latch on to a show biz-flavored event, convened (what else?) hearings.

By 1959, the House Committee on Legislative Oversight, chaired by Representative Oren Harris (D-Arkansas) investigated the big-money TV quiz shows. Careers were ruined and the programs disappeared from the air.

Next, the Harris Committee turned its attention to the payola allegedly flowing through radioland. If the Committee expected to find a flood of "pay for play" action, it had to be satisfied with a trickle. The investigators discovered \$263,245 in payola doled out to 207 disc jockeys and other radio personnel – a miniscule figure considering there were 4,086 AM and FM stations on the air at the time.

Had these numbers been the principle upshot of the probe, the hearings might be said to have ended with a whimper rather than a bang. Thanks, however, to Dick Clark, there was a big finish, when the Committee turned to looking into his "cottage industries." (It should be noted that Dick Clark did not consider himself part of the record-spinning fraternity, writing as follows in *Rock, Roll and Remember*: "Next to a used car dealer or politician, [disc jockeys on Top 40 stations] had to be the world's least valuable animal.")

This was the same Dick Clark who, between 1957 (when he took over *American Bandstand*) and 1959, was involved in an array of industry-connected companies: Swan Records (50%); Jamie Records (25%); Chips Record Distributing Corp. (33-1/3%); Globe Record Manufacturing (100%) – in addition to 100 percent ownership in various music publishing enterprises. Between 1957 and 1959, Clark raked in \$516,000 from various off-the-tube sources.

So now sitting before the Committee was the star witness, ready to testify on the subject of payola, a term that by now had become a household word. Dick Clark's opening statement telegraphed to the investigators what kind of witness he would be: "...The conflict between my position as a performer and my record interests never clearly presented itself until this Committee raised the questions of payola and conflicts of interest."

After denying any payola implications in his testimony, Clark participated in the following priceless dialogue:

Questioner: "Do you know of your own knowledge that other companies have engaged in payola to pay someone to play their records?"

Clark: "Of direct, first-hand knowledge?"

Questioner: "Yes, sir"

Clark: "I've only read about it in the paper."

The Committee Chairman seemed to enjoy sharing the spotlight with a celebrity. "Mr. Clark," Oren Harris said near the end of one day's questioning, "I do not intend to detain you any further, except to ask you: What do you do... that causes all these fine young people to squeal so loud at a particular time? Do you have some kind of cue? Or is that one of your trade secrets?"

Clark found "the twinkle in the Chairman's eye as a signal we were coming down the home stretch."

Dick Clark ultimately divested himself of his "outside interests"; *American Bandstand* became a once-a-week show before it left the air; and Congress passed legislation making payola a criminal offense, punishable by a \$10,000 fine or a year in jail.

There undoubtedly would have been no "twinkle in the Chairman's eye" if later he were to have read Clark's autobiography, *Rock, Roll and Remember*. "The government put me out of the music business," he wrote, "I estimate that I lost more than \$8 million. The hearings taught me a lot about business and politics. I learned not just to make money, but to protect my ass at all times."

Editor's Note: Phil Eberly, an honorary KRC member, is author of *Music in the Air: America's Changing Tastes in Popular Music*. His articles have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Variety*, and other general and trade publications. Phil is a retired General Manager of WSBA/WARM 103.



Lenny "Mr. Groove Machine" Borkin is an occasional dealer and regular customer at our shows. Lenny, a popular Lancaster-area mobile DJ, specializes in the liquidation of 12" dance singles. (He's a pretty good DJ, too!)

GREATEST HITS? continued from back page

I hope someday the major labels will learn from the masters of the oldies greatest hits packagers, Rhino and Collectibles – they are out to capture what the artist did, and not short the collector by not including a few pieces of the puzzle.

OK, big guys, if you won't become consistent, follow the lead that WEA did with the recent Joni Mitchell compirations: *Hits* and *Misses*. Let's hope the labels or stores don't have to start stickering these packages with "Buyer Beware". I rest my case.

Greatest Hits Compilations: How Great Are They?

An Editorial by B. Derek Shaw

I like some artists better than others, as I'm sure most of us do. We all have our preferences in type and style of music. I want everything some artists have ever recorded, while others I'm happy just to have their biggest charted hits.

"Best of", "Greatest Hits", and "Anthology" packages have been around for quite some time. The profit-centered labels quickly found out that they could keep generating revenue by repackaging the hits of a particular artist. This would serve a few purposes: appeal to the peripheral fans, and the diehard follower that has to have everything put out by their favorite artist/group. The packages could also be released when there was a lull in album releases by that artist, keeping public interest up.

As I'm sure most of you know, I'm not 100 percent sold on the CD format – a format the industry has forced down our throats as a way to kill (or attempt to kill) vinyl. On a bright note in favor of CDs, is their storage capacity: 74 minutes at a shot (some up to 78 minutes, but no guarantee that upper length discs will properly track all cuts). After 40 years, labels could break away from the 12-song/six-a-side formula that was the standard since the beginning of the rock era - 18 to 24 minutes a side. As the years went on, tracks got longer, creating an 11-, then ten-or-less- track album.

It took awhile, but eventually labels got the message and learned to fill up more of the space available in the CD format – sometimes double the amount of time available as their 12" vinyl counterpart. I question what the labels many times choose to fill that extra time with, is a service or hindrance to the collector.

At a recent CD/record show, I picked up three "greatest hits" packages, one from a group that just released one for the first time, and the other two as upgrades of previous greatest hits packages I had from them that were less than full, taking up valuable space on my collection wall. Now they could take up a slot, with more music at the same time – now that makes sense.

Upon closer examination, the group that just released their package (Boston), had tracks from both labels they are/were on. However, one of their four albums (the latest one) was absent from the greatest hits configuration. On top of that, a few charted singles weren't even included. Adding insult to injury, new tracks were added.

Earlier this last half century, an artist might release three to four albums a year, each with two or maybe three singles from it. In the late 90s, the trend is to record fewer albums with more single releases from each one.

I can understand the labels and their ploy to continue a practice that started in the 1980s of adding two or three new tracks to a greatest hits package. Call it a marketing technique to stretch artist appeal and increase sales, assertiveness that the new tunes will be hits (whether they are or not), or filler to fatten up the total time, I can accept that, in part.

I can't accept the label skipping over hit material for unproven marketing hype. When I purchase a greatest hits package, I expect just that. Use whatever criteria you feel necessary (songs that placed in the Top 40 or Top 100 or whatever), from whatever chart source you want (*Billboard*, *Radio & Records*, *Soundscan*, etc.), but deliver a greatest hits package to the consumer – not a "greatest hits and future hits, maybe" product.

Some labels are getting clever disguising what they call these artist showcase discs: "The Essence of", "Legendary Masters" series, etc.

Now the plot thickens. In an effort to maximize space and get the most for my money (call me thrifty, conservative, practical or sensible). I'm looking for packages that cover all the artists' charted music, preferably mastered chronologically from release date (although now I'm sure I'm probably asking for too much).

Continuing with my CD show story, I brought the discs home to compare with other compilation packages I have of those artists. The first one was easy. The original greatest hits had 12 tunes. The import I picked up has those same 12, plus two newer hits. That comparison is a no brainer.

The other compilation was different. The original one contained a chintzy ten tracks, the new one has 19 – so far, so good. The first one had one hit not on the new one, plus one track that was never released as a single or on any album. The new disc features tunes from newer albums by this artist – none that broke into the Top 100. The new package is also missing at least four songs that made the Top 100, but didn't make this so-called "definitive" collection. What a bunch of crap! Now what do I do? Keep both sets, or get rid of which one?

I propose keeping a simple concept simple. If it's a greatest hits package, do just that. Stick with those tunes that made the charts. If the marketing department forces whoever is overseeing the project to add some new material, fine... provided it doesn't replace music that charted earlier in the artist's career.

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RECORD COLLECTORS

KEY NOTES

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KRC INFO LINE



CALL ANYTIME!
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Happy Holidays from Your KRC Officers and Key Notes Production Team