

breakers



Laura Hals

IF THE SHOW FITS: As newcomers to the Sunday evening time slot at the Surf City Hotel Beach Club this summer, the fun-lovingest duo around is making quite the first impression.

Bill and Andy Hit It Off With Beach Club Crowd

No one is ever too old to hum a tune on a kazoo.

The proof was written all over the smiling faces of willing participants lining the perimeter of the rectangular bar inside the Surf City Hotel's Beach Club on Sunday. It was in the way revelers sang, danced and played along with the Bill and Andy Show, which takes place every week from 5 to 9 p.m.

Hotel general manager Tom Gentry specially selected and invited the duo, guitarists and vocalists Bill Hadam and Andy Hladek, to fill the time slot that had famously belonged to the now-retired Jackie Vee and Paul Presto, whose regular Sunday performances there were a tradition that spanned decades and whose intensely devout fan base spanned generations.

Though it is almost three years now since Jackie and Paul retired, the indelible mark they made on the Hotel remains, in people's minds and in conversations Bill and Andy find themselves having on a weekly basis at the Hotel.

To pay tribute to the Jackie Vee and Paul Presto legacy, Bill and Andy have integrated into their show two of their predecessors' signature songs, "Wild Rover" and the interactive crowd favorite, "The Unicorn," (a.k.a. "The Alligator Song"). Both are seamless additions to the Hawaiian shirt-clad pair's existing act, which is characterized by plenty of antics and audience participation.

The Bill and Andy Show is a colorful spectacle of entertainment and feel-good contagion. The duo's bag of tricks spilleth over onstage, where one of them might at any time pick up the mandolin, a tambourine, a cowbell, a rhythm board, a pair of maracas, even a slide whistle. There are also Hawaiian leis and promotional T-shirts to be given away to those who can correctly "Name That Artist," and of course the aforementioned kazooes, which are handed out to helpers on "Centerfold" and "Me and Julio."

Hadam and Hladek both own homes in Beach Haven West and Mystic Island, respectively, prior to coming to Surf City, their show had become a frequent attraction at such local venues as the Grapevine Restaurant and Doyle's Pour House, both in Tuckerton.

After being alerted to a newspaper article about the duo, Gentry made a special point to

attend a show and see the act for himself, which convinced him the pair would be a great fit for the Beach Club. The men were honored to (ahem) cross that bridge when it came to them, eager as they were to play Island venues. Their first Hotel gig was July 8, and they continue to play each Sunday through the end of August.

The word on all sides is so far, so good. A small following of regulars has already begun to form; Gentry is happy with the arrangement, and bartender Mike Henry is such a big fan of the show, he said, he requests the Sunday afternoon shift. The setup, with the musicians in the center of the bar, puts the bartenders right in the middle of the action, so they, too, can "goof around and have a good time."

"Every week we've been getting more and more people in here," he said. "Last week it was two deep (at the bar). ... Everyone that comes in here enjoys it - it's a lot of fun," he added. "It's definitely an interesting time."

Henry described the Bill and Andy show vibe as "Jimmy Buffett meets karaoke." Buffett is, indeed, likely to turn up on the set list, which is comprised largely of requests. He's in good company with artists like the Grateful Dead, Tom Petty, Simon and Garfunkel, AC/DC (no sweat, with Hladek's rock 'n' roll roots) and Sublime.

Hadam and Hladek, naturally, are loving every minute of their summer in Surf City. One of the great things about performing at the Hotel, they said, is the large proportion of people in the crowd who are on vacation. They're in good spirits and ready to party even before the show starts, Hadam explained, and Hladek agreed.

"Getting a conga line going in here? Not a problem," he said.

Hadam and Hladek described the Beach Club crowd as both very appreciative and very forgiving.

Though they have extensive backgrounds in music and formerly played in bands, nowadays, the guys are finding their music schedule keeps them busier than ever, which can prove tiring (especially when a Sunday afternoon gig follows a late Saturday night); the men added they are indebted to their wives and families for their understanding and support.

What makes it worthwhile, they explained,



Supplied Photo

ODD COUPLE: Chris Capp (left) and Ted Paul, d.b.a. Col. Parker and The King, took different paths but arrived at similar conclusions about how to treat people and be happy.

Friends Through Thick and Thin Carefree Local Characters Dispense Words of Wisdom

By KELLY JACKSON

While one man believes all the world's problems stem from overpopulation, the other feels the lack of national health care remains this country's biggest problem. While one wrestled a serious drug problem during his life, the other fought a heavy drinking battle. Yet successfully beating those substances, these two have been friends for more than 25 years, independently facing their own challenges, but never losing touch with one another - and especially never giving up through any of their hardships.

With opposing political and religious views, Islanders Chris Capp and Ted Paul continue to live extraordinary but entirely different lives, yet these friends share an outlook on life that perhaps more people should follow.

"The love you take is equal to the love you make," said Capp, 56, quoting the Beatles.

Capp, a firm believer in karma, grew up in Cherry Hill. He's a writer, not only a contributing one for magazines such as *Urban Moto* and *Cycle Dreams*, but also a playwright. He put together the 2½-act play *Antagony* in 2001, based on his own life experiences.

Before turning 22, Capp had already managed to join the Army then quit, travel across the country from east to west, rejoin the Army but after three months get kicked out on an "undesirable discharge," and fall in love. Since then he has raised two kids, had rumors about him spread up and down the Island, had residents of his rental homes leave them in shambles, and has lost some of his closest family and friends to death, including, when he was just 28, his younger sister.

Yet despite all these distractions and obstacles, Capp said, he avoids focusing on the negative.

is the fun they still have every time they play and those smiling faces they always see around them.

"We wouldn't be doing it if it weren't for that," Hadam said.

When a captain of a fishing crew completely trashed the house Capp leased to him before the man took off out of town, Capp was furious. But instead of stressing out over the place now resembling an end-of-the-year fraternity house, holes in the walls included, he focused only on the fact that the sun was out that day.

When his elderly neighbor Roslyn Podalski passed away leaving Capp her entire bay estate and personal belongings, gossip spread like a forest fire on the Island on why she had done that. While some people believed he and Podalski had a sexual relationship, he was actually caring for her to help keep her out of nursing homes, having been trained by doctors to catheterize her.

But Capp ignored these fabrications, not wasting any time worrying about them.

"Truth and bullshit all floats in time," he said.

"The people I meet treat me with dignity and respect, so I do the same for them."

Though according to Capp, he has been capable of telling the truth only for the past 25 to 30 years, now "I'm an exceedingly honest person. I saw

errors in my own life that I began to recognize in other people," he said, then admitted he had lied to judges, the IRS and police. Minor details.

Part of Capp's admirable outlook on life revolves around his ability to live in the now.

"Everyone lives like this is a dress rehearsal for tomorrow," he said. "I like to apply the KY to life - you know, smooth things out."

Though his attitude may sound like a sexual innuendo, the deeper meaning really makes sense. He rarely runs into confrontations with people, following a modified golden rule.

"The people I meet treat me with dignity and respect, so I do the same for them," he said.

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To stay connected to the Bill and Andy Show and to see pictures from previous shows, visit www.billandandyshow.com.

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