



Staff Photos by Akira Suwa

King of Rock 'n' Roll Waves to Some Fans as He Arrives in West Palm Beach in the Pre-Dawn Hours

Few Fans Get To See 'Beautiful' Elvis

By BUD NEWMAN

Post Staff Writer

Elvis Presley played hide-and-seek with his fans yesterday and it took the perseverance of a hound dog and a hefty helping of luck to catch a brief glimpse of the 42-year-old teen idol of the 1950s.

A couple dozen loyal fans — almost all of them women — kept an all-night vigil at the Sheraton Inn on Palm Beach Lakes Boulevard in the hopes of spotting him, touching him, getting an autograph or picture for their scrapbook.

After five hours of speculation on his arrival time, his private jet, with his daughter Lisa Marie's name painted on the side, finally landed at the Butler Aviation terminal about 5 a.m. and a few hearty fans waiting there did get a short, but distant peek at their heartthrob.

He arrived at the Sheraton about 5:40 a.m. As one decoy limousine deposited some of Elvis' entourage at the hotel's main entrance, Elvis was dropped off in the rear, a few feet from a stairway. He wore sunglasses, a broad-brimmed hat and a full length coat which only partially obscured his now jortly body.

When he stepped out of the limousine, Elvis said "Good morning, everybody" to the few fans and newsmen gathered by the rear stairs and brushed aside a request for an autograph, saying "Not, now, I don't have time."

When he arrived, most of the weary but determined fans were gathered around the hotel's main elevator, so they went away disappointed. But one fan lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time was Gloria Shipley of West Palm Beach.

"Oh, he was beautiful," said the 27-year-old fan, hardly able to believe she had actually seen him. "He was so pretty. He was just like I pictured him— just like I thought. I was just stunned. I just stood there and looked at him. He looked just like Elvis."

"It was worth it, it was very worth it," Mrs. Shipley said of her all-night wait. "It's kind of like a dream come true."

One die-hard fan whose dream didn't come true was Judy Schultheis, 31, who with a friend had made up a sign welcoming Elvis to West Palm Beach. He never saw it and she never saw him.

"I'm very disappointed," she sobbed quietly. "I'll tell you something, though. It was



Devoted Fans Wait Near Elevator; They Missed Seeing Elvis

worth it just to know he got here safe." Miss Schultheis said she waited in line for 24 hours when tickets to Elvis' Sunday night concert at the West Palm Beach Auditorium went on sale a few weeks ago and was able to get front row seats. She said she's going to bring him flowers "with a red ribbon around the box with his name on it" and she hopes he will take them.

After his arrival, Elvis went to his two-story suite, slept until mid-afternoon and didn't emerge again until about 7:45 p.m., when he left to perform at a sold-out show at the Hollywood Sportatorium.

Once again, most of the three dozen or so fans who waited much of the day to catch a peek were disappointed. With the two

limousines parked conspicuously in the front of the hotel, Elvis exited in the rear, emerging from the same staircase he had entered 14 hours earlier. He was wearing the same long coat but no hat this time. His hair, which had looked stringy and frazzled when he arrived, now had a blown dry look.

There were no disturbances or large crowds at the Sheraton during the day but the hotel has been swamped with hundreds of calls from people wanting to speak with Elvis or get a special message to him. In addition, about five dozen pieces of mail addressed to Elvis had arrived at the hotel.

Not everyone at the hotel was excited about seeing the king of rock 'n' roll, however. Some guests had no idea Elvis would be

staying there too and when told about it, they were hardly impressed.

Security was fairly tight at the hotel, but mostly on the fourth, fifth and sixth floors where the 70 rooms occupied by Elvis and his musicians, assistants and friends were staying. No effort was made to discourage spectators who waited in the hotel by doors and elevators in hopes of catching a glimpse of Elvis.

After the Sportatorium concert last night, Elvis returned to the Sheraton for what was believed to be his last night in town. After his West Palm Beach appearance tonight, he is expected to fly to St. Petersburg for appearances there and in Orlando.

'He Will Always Be The King'

Linda Sue Smith and Inis Waskom are Elvis Presley freaks, and plenty proud of it.

"To me, he is the king — he will always be the king," said Miss Waskom, 32, of West Palm Beach as she and Mrs. Smith sat in lounge chairs by the pool at the West Palm Beach Sheraton Inn. "I'd give anything just to talk with him. I don't want to go to bed with him. I just want to party with him."

A few minutes later, Miss Waskom amended that statement slightly. "If he wants to put his shoes underneath my bed, he's welcome," she said.

The two devoted Elvis fans were sitting by the pool because they had heard Elvis might decide to take a swim during the afternoon. So they sat patiently for hours, sipping drinks and talking about their hero.

Mrs. Smith, 30, of Indiantown, was wearing a bright red T-shirt with Elvis' name and picture on it. She said she has been a fan all her life and only wanted to look at him or maybe talk to him for a few minutes.

Asked what she would do if Elvis actually came down to the pool, Mrs. Smith said "If he looked at me, I'd say hi. If he sat down beside me, I know I'd be nervous."

Miss Waskom had a different idea. "I'll get naked," she said. "I'll go swimming with him."

In her pursuit of Elvis and a chance to meet him, Mrs. Smith has twice gone to Memphis on her vacations. Once, she said, she even got into Elvis' house there but she didn't see him. The following year, she did catch a quick glimpse as Elvis drove by to test drive a new pickup truck.

She also reserved a room for the entire weekend at the Sheraton, at a cost of \$132, in the hopes of seeing Elvis. And she purchased tickets to Elvis' shows in Hollywood last night, West Palm Beach tonight and St. Petersburg Monday night. She didn't know he was going to be in Orlando, too, or she said she would have gone there as well.

"I don't know a person who can make that many people happy at one time," she said, referring back to Elvis' concert last September in Lakeland, which she attended and at which she came close to getting one of the scarves Elvis usually throws to his female fans.

Mrs. Smith's husband Dan, 27, said he doesn't mind his wife's obsession with Elvis, though he doesn't share all her enthusiasm.

"I don't carry it as far, but I'd love to meet him myself," he said. "I think he's phenomenal."

Mrs. Smith was among those who waited for Elvis to arrive at the Sheraton early yesterday morning. But she said she missed him because someone told her he wouldn't be coming in until later in the morning and she went to bed about 3:30 a.m., about two hours before he arrived.

Asked exactly what it was about Elvis that attracted her so, Mrs. Smith said, "When you really ask yourself why, you don't know."

Miss Waskom also had trouble describing her attraction, except to say that wanting to be near Elvis is "an itch in your heart that you can't get up and scratch."

"All I want to do is see him," she said.

— BUD NEWMAN



Steve Mitchell

Social Security: The Best Solution?

Joseph Blumenthal of West Palm Beach has the answer to Thomas Deady's question: Is the Social Security deduction a tax or an insurance premium?

It is the latter, Blumenthal says. "Even though the IRS collects the money, it is turned over to the Social Security Trust Fund to provide benefits against death, disability, retirement, hospitalization, etc."

Blumenthal, an estate planner, does not think Social Security is a very good deal for the following reason:

"Every person not participating in a 'qualified' pension plan by an employer may establish an 'Individual Retirement Account' (IRA) of up to \$1,500 per year without paying income tax on such amount, nor on its earnings," Blumenthal said.

Insofar as Social Security takes \$2,000 per year (divided equally from employer and employee), might it not be better to abolish Social Security and give the employee \$1,500 additional salary which he could apply, without paying income taxes on it, for an IRA plan to be used for

life and disability insurance and \$1,000 for retirement?

"The latter, at 8 per cent compound interest (conservative these days) for 35 years (ages 30 to 65) would be worth close to \$150,000 and at 6 per cent would pay him \$9,000 per year for life... then to his wife for life... then \$150,000 to his children."

"The employer would save \$500 per year; the employee would save taxes on \$1,000 per year; he would receive more income, his wife would get more income and his children would get a windfall."

I have heard this before — that a private insurance plan is a much better investment than Social Security because the money is used to build up an investment. The only problem with it is that people who end up needing Social Security the most probably are the ones who would not participate in any kind of voluntary system of saving for the future.

Even so, there is no denying that the present Social Security system is in poor financial health, mostly be-

Turn to MITCHELL, B2



Staff Photo by J. Scott Applewhite

Airboat Races Through the Sawgrass ... at Youth Camp northwest of West Palm Beach

WHOOSH! Airboat Noise Unmistakable

By BOB BRINK

Just sitting there in the bog, it looks something like an aquatic rickshaw. But the comparison ends when it hurtles through the sawgrass at 80 m.p.h. or more.

It's the airboat, an ungainly looking contraption powered by an airplane engine, and yesterday about 15 of them shattered the stillness of a swampy area 20 miles northwest of West Palm Beach SR 710.

The event was the second annual airboat races sponsored by the Airboat and Haltrack Conservation Club of Palm Beach County. Boats from throughout the state competed in what are labeled "amateur boat" races, with the "hunt boat" and "race boat" races to be held today, drawing about 40 racers.

The boats are raced two at a time, side by side, on a circular "track" marked off in the swampy sawgrass at the Everglades Youth Camp. The winner of a heat races additional competitors until he is defeated, and that winner then takes on other racers. The boat still in the running when all have raced is the winner of the competition. There were six categories of competition based on engine size.

The engines are from single-engine planes and are mounted at the back of the boat a few feet above the water level. A propeller thrusts the boat forward, and the driver turns an air rudder near the motor with a lever to steer the boat.

"When your motor dies on you, this thing won't turn," said Fred Woodall of Seffner, putting his hand on the rudder. "That's when you're in trouble."

Amateur boats and hunt boats have seats that are up to about 8 feet above the water level, mounted in front of and above the propeller, which is enclosed, along with the motor, by a sort of cage.

With the sound of the motor splitting the air, the boat shoots through the sawgrass swamp at a fearsome speed. Race boats sometimes reach speeds of 100 m.p.h., according to Skip Tassin of Hobe Sound, secretary of the airboat club.

Most airboating is done in Florida, and Tassin said there were no accidents at last year's race, but "I have been at races where there have been accidents." For that reason, most racers don't wear seat belts, they don't want to be pinned under the boat — he said.

It, of course, would be calamitous for a boat to hit a hard object, but Tassin said, "There's nothing out there to hit. We spent considerable time out there picking out rocks and logs." The track is about a half-mile.

Driving down the rough dirt road off SR 710 and entering the race grounds at the camp is like leaving the Florida of tourism and entering the Deep South.

Spectators and racers alike wear boots, shirts, wide-brimmed hats, and scruffy beards.