The Soundtrack of My Life

BY JOE RUSSO

A couple of weeks ago my computer became the victim of a virus, forcing me to erase my hard drive and start all over again. And, that meant rebuilding my iPod as well. Fortunately, I backed up all of my files on an external drive and when I was digging around in there looking for my music I remembered reading about ‘The Ultimate Playlist’ on the website of Philadelphia comedian and radio personality Big Daddy Graham. It gave me an idea: Why don’t I create a Wildwood playlist? Immediately I started to categorize certain songs already in my collection into the various stages of my life - childhood, adolescence, teenager, young adult and my current level of rapidly graying middle age. There are so many which hold a place in my heart for one reason or another, whether it be a song I heard on my new transistor radio that my dad bought for me when I was a boy, a high school party, a night in a nightclub, or one which reminded me of summer. On that note, I will open with the song that will lead off my playlist, the song that brings me back to the carefree summer days of my boyhood: ‘Higher and Higher’ by Jackie Wilson. Every time I listen to it I hear the captain of the ‘Vamp’ blowing the air horn to signal the start of another morning of sport fishing, my aunt declaring that the town is “packed” and the restaurant is going to be “really busy tonight,” and the smell of suntan oil mixing in the salty air down on the beach. All of a sudden I am ten years old again with three month’s to kill doing absolutely nothing.

Another song to be included is ‘This Magic Moment’ by Jay and The Americans, which sends me to the musty auditorium at the old Philip Baker School in Wildwood Crest on a Friday night dance where the girls sat along the wall on one side and the boys directly opposite.

The DJ would announce, “Girls choice,” or, “Boys choice,” and we would shuffle across the room in search of a partner. Our principal required us to dance at arm’s length and once in a while she would turn the lights on just to make sure.

Or, play me some ‘Down on the Corner’ by Creedence Clearwater Revival and I am back in Snuffy’s Luncheonette with my buddies wolfing down corn dogs and cheese fries and playing pinball while the girls are up front line dancing by the juke box.

Certain songs by Earth Wind and Fire conjure up the nights I spent at The Stardust nightclub during the Disco days listening to one of my favorite cover groups ‘Wildflower.’ And, I would remiss if I failed to mention any song from Deep Purple’s ‘Machine Head’ (many of you know why) or the torch songs favored by a number of custemers that I listened to night after night at Russo’s bar. And, what about the music that guided me through the years of teenage angst?

If you wish to contribute a song to Joe Russo’s Wildwood Playlist, swim by his hook at joe.russo75@yahoo.com. Submit your song and explain why it reminds you of Wildwood.

My Wildwood Playlist Update

BY JOE RUSSO

My Wildwood Playlist, swim by his hook at joe.russo75@yahoo.com. Submit your song and explain why it reminds you of Wildwood.

If you wish to invite contributions that will change my Wildwood Playlist into the Sun-By-The-Sea Wildwood Playlist. If you wish to participate, please submit your song nominations to joe.russo75@yahoo.com along with the memories attached to them.

Therefore I’ve decided to invite contributions that will change my Wildwood Playlist into the Sun-By-The-Sea Wildwood Playlist. If you wish to participate, please submit your song nominations to joe.russo75@yahoo.com along with the memories attached to them. I want to traverse the different eras of the Wildwoods; from the Starlight Ballroom to wherever it is that kids go today. All generations, both local and out-of-towners, are encouraged to respond. The results will be published in a later edition of The Sun.

So, good luck and happy listening!