

# THE JUDSON JOURNAL

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## "SPRINGTIME IN SWAMP POODLE"

Saturday, the fourth week in Lent, Circa 1955. The window is open only a crack, but I can smell the outside air very distinctly. I immediately jump out of bed, raise the window, and pop my head outside my second story bedroom window. Looking down on Indiana Avenue, I can see Jules Capriotti opening crates of fresh vegetables and preparing them for sale today. Ronny Tucci and Lenny Antonocci are debating the future of this years Phillies Baseball Team. The cleaning lady at Dr. Madonna's is hosing down the pavement outside his office on the corner of 24th and Indiana. The smell of the wet concrete is rising in the air and mixing with the aroma coming from the ovens at "Mele's Bakery"; add to this the horse odor, caused by the wake of a passing junk wagon, and one is sure, that it is definitely "Springtime In Swamp Poodle".

Uncle Al is calling me from his tailor shop, located on the first floor in the front of our house, "Aron time to get up." He knows that the guys are having a "chooseup" baseball game at "Collins Field" today and he does not want me to be late.

Santa Claus was good to me this past Christmas. He brought me a 27 inch "Roadmaster Bike" and today I am finally allowed to take it out of the cellar and ride it. Riding on Indiana Avenue, passing the corner at 23rd, Leon the butcher smiles at me and Cesto Laurenzi shouts, "Nice Bike Aaron." Seconds later I see Nancy Gangi talking to Mary and

Joe Vitale near Croskey Street. Waving to Mrs. Betacchi as she is sweeping her pavement, I almost run into Frankie Felice, while he is loading one of Deodatti's trucks. I hear Al Donato, (in front of his furniture store), say to Frankie, "These kids", as he shakes his head back and forth. This did not slow me down, however and in no time I was passing by Van Pelt St. I wave to Uncle Mike and Aunt Zundiniel Citro who are sitting on their front porch. Across the street Nicky Bello is talking with his mother and gives me a big, "Hello Aron". Skippy Viola hops on his bike and challenges me to beat him to the field. Arriving near the corner of 21st Street, the squeal of the pigs being slaughtered at "Crescenzo's Meat Market" distracts me, as I notice Ambrose about to open his club. Demo smiles and waves to me from the step of "Paioni's Grocery Store".

I turn left at 21st Street and see Lucy Magee talking to Hairs Parise. Pat Navara sees me and asks me for a ride to the field. Now I'm peddling as fast as possible with Pat on my bike and I can smell the bread baking at "Frihoffer's". Approaching Collins Field we can see milk-box scooters, bikes and wagons thrown everywhere. At a quick glance, I count about 30 kids. Bony shouts to me, "Aron, where you been? We gotta choose up sides." After much deliberation, Paul Blasetti and Frank Sciarra finally choose up the sides. With the talent somewhat evenly distributed, we start to play ball. The

only problems we have are; there are too many guys, not enough gloves to go around and one girl "Annie" who insists on playing. The game lasts about 3 hours before we all make a mass exodus.

Jules, Delarso, Santo, Lavanga, Nanni, Bobby, and I head for "64's", for a soda. We can't buy candy, (we all gave it up for Lent), but the red licorice looks delicious. Riding home I cut over Toronto St. passing "The Son's Of Castle Noble Hall", the doors are opened and the people are preparing the hall for the upcoming \$2.00 nights. Across the street I see Lucille and Theresa Grasso playing hopscotch. At the corner of 22nd St. outside of "Corso Importer's", I hear my Uncle Hatch Vassallo, Cely Palmer and Frank Nicastro, Sr. debating with Louie DiGiacomo about a very uninteresting political issue.

I must be at St. Mary's for the end of the 40 hours devotion to the "Blessed Sacrament", but first I have to ride home and get my altar boy cassock and surplus.

I can't wait until after the Benediction is over, because my Aunt Martha, Aunt Anna, my Mother (Mary) and Cousin Maryann are going to South Street to get our Easter clothes. I always enjoy getting my Easter outfit at "Big Hearted Jim's" or "Boy's Town". Most of the fun is getting there on the "PTC's 33 Trolley", and listening to my family talk about how the city is changing.

**HAPPY EASTER!!!**



**EVENTS 1996****Mark your calendar!!!!!!**

- May 6: Benifit for "Frank"  
Call Madden 610-394  
9540. Tickets \$2.00
- May 18: Bowling Party. See info in  
this issue.
- June 15: Annual Picnic (details to  
follow).
- Sept 15: Golf Outing (details to  
follow).
- Oct 18: Dee Marino Benefit  
Scholarship Fund. (call  
Tino at 215-338-1559).
- Nov 14: Murphy's Bar 7:00 pm  
(Henry & Roxborough  
Ave.).
- Dec 19: Christmas Dance  
(details to follow).

**MIND TEASERS:**

- 1.) Who is the real "Pat Astair"??
- 2.) Who was the Principal before  
Mother Ursala??
- 3.) What was the official name of  
"Cat's Club"??

Answers to the last publications  
Mind Teasers. 1. 1957, Two-Tone  
Blue & Black, Mercury. 2. Harry.  
3. Tommy Torzone.

**Lost:**

WE NEED THE ENTIRE LIST OF  
NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF  
BOTH GRADUATING CLASSES  
FOR THE YEAR 1957!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**Tino Expresses His Thanks:**

During a recent telephone conversation with Clem (Tino-Tino) he asked me to convey the following to all of you; "I was able to raise at least \$3500 and hopefully more, as the final tally is yet to be completed. Thanks to all of you who participated in the Fund Raiser for my late wife Dee's Scholarship Fund. I am also looking forward to your continued support. It was great of the "Old Neighborhood Crowd" to attend."

**Pat Nicastro Recommends Book About "Shibe Park":**

"TO EVERYTHING A SEASON  
SHIBE PARK AND URBAN  
PHILADELPHIA 1909--1976",  
BY BRUCE KURLICK.

According to Pat, the book mentions some familiar names and places from the "Old Neighborhood".

**Second Annual Bowling Tournament**

**Saturday, May 18, 1996  
7:45 P.M. SHARP**

Playdrome Recreation Center- Cherry Hill, Next to Ellisburg Shopping Center Between Route 70 and Chapel Avenue, 1536 North Kings Highway Cherry Hill, NJ, 609-429-0672.

**We need your money NOW!**

Make your check payable to: Pat Domenico and mail it to PO Box 58 Haddon Heights, NJ. 08034.  
\$ 20.00 includes bowling, shoes, food, drinks, DJ(oldies).

**ST. RITA of Cascia**

BORN NEAR SPOLETO, ITALY, IN 1381, OF ELDERLY PARENTS, SHE WAS MARRIED AGAINST HER WILL WHEN ONLY 12. THEY HAD TWO SONS AND AFTER 18 YEARS OF AN UNHAPPY MARRIAGE, HER HUSBAND, WHO HAD TREATED HER CRUELLY, WAS KILLED IN A BRAWL. WHEN HER TWO SONS DIED, SHE TRIED TO ENTER THE AUGUSTINIANS AT CASCIA THREE TIMES BUT WAS REFUSED EACH TIME, AS ITS RULE PERMITTED ONLY VIRGINS, BUT WAS FINALLY ALLOWED TO BECOME A NUN THERE IN 1413. SHE WAS KNOWN FOR HER PENANCES AND HER CONCERN FOR OTHERS, AND BROUGHT MANY BACK TO GOD WITH HER PRAYERS. SHE HAD A VERY DEEP DEVOTION TO JESUS' PASSION.

SHE EXPERIENCED VISIONS AND IN 1441 RECEIVED A THORN WOUND ON HER FOREHEAD, WHICH SHE SUFFERED TO THE END OF HER LIFE.

AFTER HER DEATH IN 1457, MANY MIRACLES WERE ATTRIBUTED TO HER. RITA WAS CANONIZED IN 1900 AND IS VENERATED AS PATRONESS OF IMPOSSIBLE AND DESPERATE CAUSES. HER FEAST IS MAY 22.

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PO Box 58  
Haddon Heights N. J.  
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