

Eric Grays Tells Sentinel:

Hard For Vegas Acts To Get Music Recorded

By Joe Cross

It would seem logical, you would think, that once you made it as an individual or group in Las Vegas music circles, that the record companies would be happy to give you their ear and their consideration.

Not exactly. There are those who would go so far as to say just the opposite exists in the world of music. So much so, actually, that it is the old East is East and West is West story wrapped up in musical notes.

It's like Eric Grays, a member of the popular "Jones" group, which is appearing from 1:30 to 6:30, every morning in the Royal Americana's lounge, says:

"An act from Las Vegas finds it very hard to get into records," said Grays. "Very few ever do it."

His sentiments were echoed by "Jones"

singer Tom Allbert, who said the reason is "people in the record industry have already preconceived what kind of act you are if you've worked in Las Vegas."

These aren't a couple of guys from a brand-new band or one that only THINKS it has the talent to make it in the recording world. These are people with extensive backgrounds and proven ability.

How good is "Jones," a band which plays mainly contemporary sounds, but can do everything from jazz to country?

It is good enough that it is not unusual to find the lounge three-fourths filled at 5:30 in the morning. While Las Vegas is admittedly a 24-hour town, many of those who go to see "Jones" are locals — including a surprising number of entertainers — who have just gotten off work.

"Even the way you dress — like here in Las Vegas where you've got to wear a tux — figures in, Grays said. "If we had spent as much time working this hard in LA, we'd probably be in recording. But if we wore (Vegas) 'show clothes' over there, they'd run us out of town."

According to Allbert, "the recording people won't even come to Las Vegas to see an act — which is a shame, because there are a lot of commercially talented people here. If they (record firms) don't listen to something, they don't know what they are missing."

Don't get the idea these guys are talking sour grapes. No, they realize all this and yet they enjoy the Las Vegas picture for many reasons — including their love of performing before live audiences.

(See Jones page 6)



Mrs. Evelyn Lowery, Convenor—Coordinator of SCLC/Women (Women's Organization Movement For Equality Now) presents an award to Shelby L. Thurman the regional winner in the SCLC/Women's National Oratorical Contest, in which a high school graduate will receive a \$1,000 scholarship for college education. The award will be presented at the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's (SCLC) 23rd Annual Convention in Cleveland, Ohio. The Scholarship is the top award in the contest, based on the theme: "What The Civil Rights Movement Means To Youth Today, Your Role — Your Future." Local and regional winners have already been selected. In addition to the first place scholarship award, plaques and certificates will be presented to second and third place winners. Pictured in the second row are Octavia Vivian, Geneva Cole and Gwendolyn Campbell. In the back row are Vargie Watkins, Janis Alexander, Tandi Gcabashe, Juanita Love, Hazel Griffith and Barbara Woods (Photo by Elaine Tomlin.)

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The big NAACP held at the Aladdin Gala Fund-Raising Hotel.

Extravaganza, sponsored by the LAS VEGAS SENTINEL, will be held at a new date as requested by the many stars who wish to be on the show, but found the pre-set date of Sept. 19 as one in conflict with previously scheduled engagements.

The event will be

The actual date will be announced within the next few days through the daily and weekly newspapers, radio and TV stations. Members of the local chapter, NAACP anticipate that it will be one of the most exciting fund-raising shows ever produced in the area.

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