



# BRWW2021

Okay..... Sit back..... take a d-e-e-p breath..... hold it for a few seconds.... then s-l-o-w-l-y let it out. Well - - - it may not provide a lot of relief. But in the tumultuous world and times we're living in right now, every little bit can help.

You'll recall that we had a "**Rock** Away the Winter **Blues**" gathering planned for the first day of Spring --- Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup> --- at the *Iron Hill Brewery & Restaurant* at Wilmington's *Riverfront*. But with the growing and real threat of "the virus", the event was cancelled for all the right reasons. And with the pandemic in full force not long thereafter, our Wildwood Weekend on June 5-7 was also cancelled. Not only did the Elks cancel their annual convention, but New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy shut down Wildwood, along with other gathering places statewide. And more than that --- the entire Drum Corps competition season was also cancelled. Needless to say, these cancellations were disappointing --- but just a fragment of the other shutdowns and shocking events and disruptions in our lives that will make 2020 a stand-alone chapter in history.

So what happens now? Well --- there's certainly more to come in so many aspects of our lives; the Covid-19 resurgence, National Elections, continued social unrest, economic struggles, and more. It's a lot to bear-up to for all of us --- but we will bear-up to it.

And what happens in our Blue Rock world? At the top of this page you see **BRWW2021**. That's code for "Blue Rock – Wildwood – 2021". A handful of us have been having conference calls (via Zoom) every few weeks since mid-Summer to kick around ideas for getting back on track with a Wildwood Reunion Weekend. Something else to consider... Given age and infirmity --- and so many other challenges --- there may not be many more opportunities when we can get together like this.

The first step was to poll BR Alumni via email and / or website to see if you were interested, and the response was a definite "YES"! The second step was to search for a hotel / motel where we could hold it --- and hopefully improve upon the circumstances of our last few gatherings at the Cape Cod Inn. Janet McCrosson has been non-stop in her efforts to find a suitable place --- and let me tell you --- it's getting harder to find a place that isn't already booked by one of the many Elks Lodges across the state. We've also considered other ideas, such as a VFW Post, or a Fire Company Meeting Hall, or other such place, most likely requiring rental costs. But given that at least half of you would spend the weekend, a hotel / motel is still the best option. We're still searching, so we'll see what happens.

The Elks' Convention for 2021 is scheduled for June 4-6, with Saturday June 5<sup>th</sup> being the big day of activities, including gathering at Kelly's to enjoy a few cold brews while watching the parade of Drum Corps, Marching Bands and other groups down Atlantic Avenue. And after that, of course, would be our Blue Rock party at our hotel.

Keep in mind that we HOPE all this will happen. Just like this year, the decision is not entirely up to us. It depends on the situation with the pandemic, and what the Elks, the City of Wildwood, and the State of New Jersey decide to do. As things develop, we'll keep you informed.

A few other related things.... For the last few years, Steve Riccelli and Mike Batten, along with a crew of helpers, have put together some excellent Wildwood Weekends for us. Mike has moved to South Carolina, and with having to look after his mom, his participation is very limited. And most sadly, with Steve's untimely passing in January, there's a void in the continuity of our BR Alumni efforts. We're doing what we can to make this happen, and some good progress is being made. There are a couple things where we're reaching out to you for some help. In particular, we've lost track of our "Blue Rock Reunion" banner that we've displayed for the last six years. It's nowhere to be found, including after having the Riccelli family doing an exhaustive search at their home. We've also lost track of the Championship flag from the 1971 CYO Nationals. What we don't know is if Steve asked someone else to take them home for safe keeping after Wildwood in 2019. If anyone can shed light on these items, we'd appreciate hearing about it so we can be sure they're back on display at our next BR Reunion. Thank you for whatever assistance you can provide. And keep in mind.... we're seeking volunteers and helpers for this event.

So... we'll keep pressing on in hopes our Wildwood Weekend will happen in June, and we'll certainly keep you informed of the situation.

Yours in the Bond...

Your BRWW2021 Team:

Harry Jenkins, Bob McLaughlin, Janet McCrosson, Martine Ireland, Joe Flynn, John & Deb Palm