

THE PLAIN DEALER



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City's rockers howl

. . . but Middies nip CSU



The crowd goes crazy on Public Square as "The Wild Horses" play some of that old time rock 'n' roll.

PD/DAVID I. ANDERSEN

THE ROCK KEEPS ROLLIN'

❑ If Alan Freed was, as someone said, watching from On High yesterday at noon, he must have been amazed at the spectacle he saw on Public Square, **Page 2-C.**

❑ Rockin' at the Palace with Chubby Checker, and the Brooklyn Hop revisited, **Page 1-C.**

❑ Rick Sklar, once the guru of Top 40 radio, remembers his old friend, Alan Freed, **Page 1-C.**

❑ Rock 'n' roll tidbits, **Page 2-C.**

NAVY BLUES

❑ David Robinson of Navy sinks Cleveland State, **Page 1-D.**

❑ No Viking funerals for the team that came so far so fast, comments Bill Livingston, **Page 1-D.**

❑ Coach Kevin Mackey thought a foul should have been called instead of a jump ball, **Page 2-D.**

Berry the past? Never: It was a Moon Dog ball

By **ALFRED LUBRANO**

STAFF WRITER

Yesterday, Cleveland celebrated the anniversary of a riot.

Thirty-four years ago, the world's first rock 'n' roll concert exploded in chaos and craziness as people first tried to reckon with a new form of musical energy.

But at the Moon Dog Coronation Ball II at Tower City Center last night, people were well-behaved, as though tamed by the years since that raucous beginning.

Although the star was wildman Chuck Berry, he was brought on by a politician, Gov. Richard F. Celeste, and a businessman, John Gorman, program director of WHK/WMS Radio.

The crowd wasn't wild enough for a die-hard rock fan who would identify himself only as Danny from Brooklyn. He remembers a near-frothing reaction from a Cleveland audience that saw Berry perform in 1954.

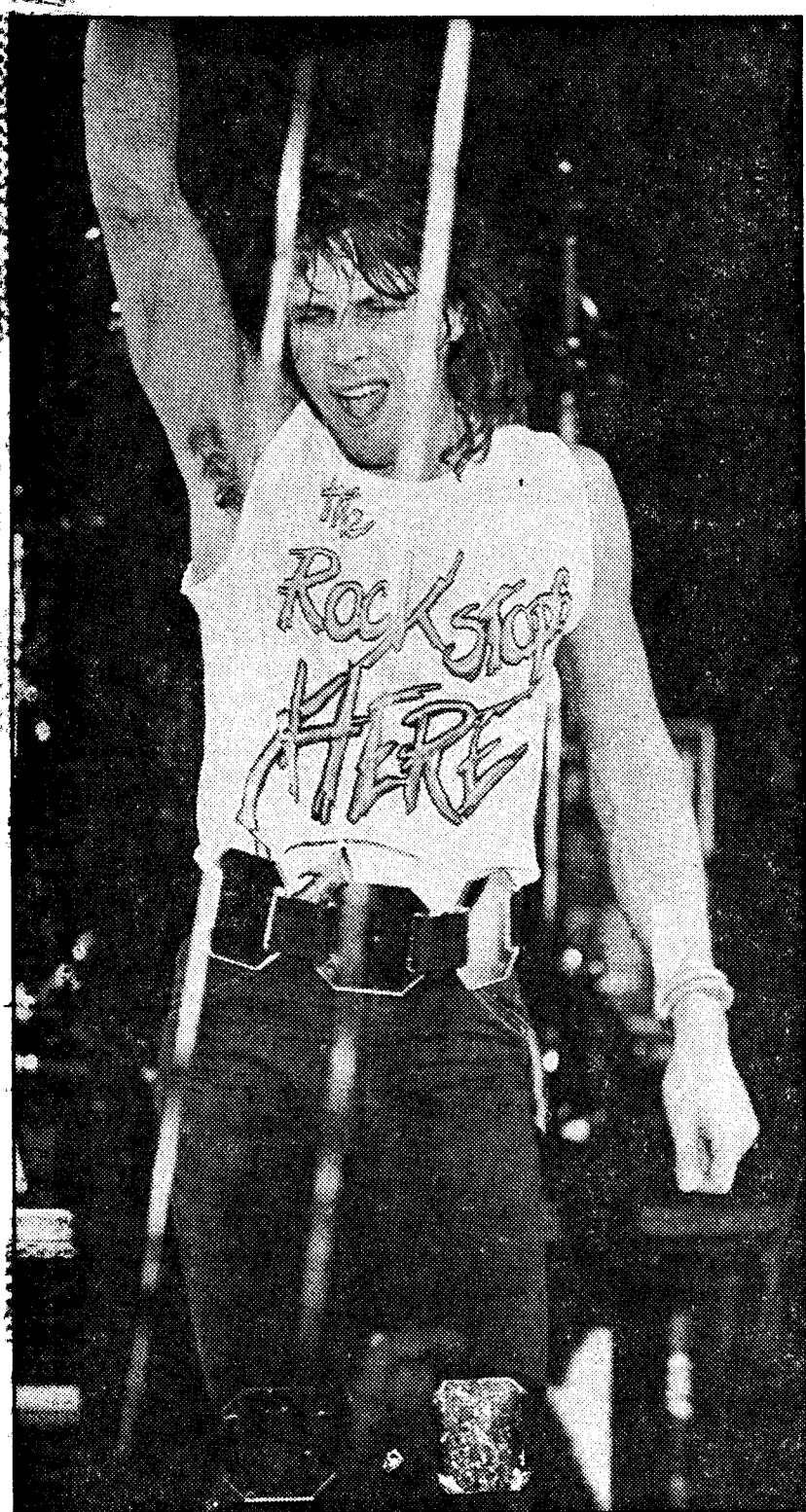
"These people tonight were too young," Danny, 40, said in the middle of Old River Rd. among thousands of revelers watching a fireworks display after the concert. "They didn't realize what rock 'n' roll was all about. They didn't know what was going on."

Berry, old but able, took the stage in tight yellow pants and kind of geometric/psychedelic red and black shirt. His first song was a rock standard, "Roll Over, Beethoven."

The acoustics in the faded hall were "not the best," Gorman said. "But about the same as they were in 1952, I guess."

The hall, all hard-surface, gave the rock 'n' roll the primitive sound purists like, as the notes bounced from marble wall to

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PD/DIANA McNEES

Above, Chuck Berry opened with "Roll Over, Beethoven" at the Moondog Coronation Ball II at the Terminal Tower last night. The drummer from the band the Innocent, left, gets in the spirit of things.

Rockers

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marble wall. It was reminiscent of the tones do-wop singers worked to attain as they practiced in high school bathrooms so many years ago.

It was especially ironic to see politicians such as Celeste and Rep. Mary Rose Oakar, D-20, of Cleveland get on stage before Berry and lend an "establishment" sanction of rock 'n' roll.

Condemned in disc jockey Alan Freed's time as the devil's own music, rock 'n' roll in recent times has become politically correct.

Oakar reminded the crowd of about 3,500 that she talks up Cleveland on the floor of the House while Celeste, enthusiastically primed for the event, pointed out that he helped set aside \$4 million to bring the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame to Cleveland.

Celeste led the crowd in chanting "The Rock Stops Here," the title of an Eric Carmen song about this city's place in music history.

New York City disc jockey Norm N. Nite, a Cleveland native and member of the search committee for the Rock

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— Norm N. Nite, New York disc jockey

'n' Roll Hall of Fame, was exuberant about the event. "If I've seen one Chuck Berry concert, I've seen 60. If you get 30 minutes from him, you're lucky. Chuck Berry did an hour and 20 minutes."

To further whet the appetites of Clevelanders hungry for the hall of fame, Nite said there would be a decision on the home of the hall within three weeks.

"If I were a betting man," Nite said, "I'd put my money on Cleveland."

At the concert's conclusion, people invaded the Flats, filling local night spots. Had Cleveland State University won its game against Navy, observers believed the party would have been a lot crazier.

As it was, things were rowdy enough for police who estimated about 50,000 people were downtown last night.

If rock 'n' roll was not technically born here, Cleveland is the place where it learned how to talk.

The crowd seemed to agree. Stacey Sanner, 25, of Cleveland Heights, said Cleveland would only be exercising its birthright in getting the hall of fame.

"No other city would give it the support and enthusiasm that we would," Sanner said. "The other cities wanting it is like saying you want a kid and not take care of it. We'll have the kid and love it for the rest of its life."

Gerard Mospack, 30, of Lakewood, said such support for an event like the Coronation Ball indicated that Cleveland was coming into its own.

"I'm a displaced Baltimorean," he said. "And I can see this city's gonna move like Baltimore did. It's starting to come alive and the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame should be here."