

STREET CRACKS

This comic's for women only

By Pat Schutte
staff writer

She's known as the only comic in America who shares the same birthplace as Jesus Christ... Bethlehem. Her tour is also one of the most controversial on the stand-up circuit — men are not allowed inside the club when she is appearing.

At a time when a high price is paid for innovation in stand-up comedy, Jenny Jones has struck it rich.

Jones' show, "Girls' Night Out," plays to sold-out audiences across the country and can best be described as a two-hour group therapy session that has evolved from a 25-minute stand-up routine.

Women are encouraged to participate, to open up and involve themselves in the act. Men have gone underground, dressed up in drag to review her show. They have surfaced not quite understanding what went on.

"We laugh at things inside of us, women of all ages," said Jones, who has been recovering from a bout with the measles. "The shows get very personal, but not dirty. Men may be curious about what goes on, but they wouldn't be comfortable there."

At just a few years of age, Jones (who's real name is Jenny Stronski) moved with her parents (who met in a bread line in Poland) and sister from Bethlehem to London, Ontario.

She first got into the business as a model, her face gracing the cover of a facial soap called Select. She also did what she believes to be the first topless bathing suit ad in Canada, for Catalina swimsuits.

Half-naked?

"YEAH, BUT I had long hair at the time," Jones said. (Hint: Picture Darryl Hannah in the movie "Splash.")

After a successful Las Vegas act, called "Jenny Jones and the Cover Girls" — the first all-girl act to do the Nevada circuit — in which Jones played the drums (after only three months of practice), she was spotted by Wayne Newton and worked for him as a backup singer with the Jive Sisters. She then dropped her musical career and took on stand-up comedy.

With less than five years of come-



Jenny Jones and her show "Girls' Night Out" will be in town tonight at the Comedy Castle. Sorry, guys, this one's for ladies only.

dy experience, Jones gave the stand-up comic portion of the TV show "Star Search" a shot. In the end, she was \$100,000 richer, and to this day, the only woman ever to win the comedy portion of the show.

Sheesh! A hundred grand? "What did you do with the money?"

"Oh, I bought cars for my parents... and I bought them a house," said Jones, whose parents were in the wedding gown business when Jenny was growing up.

Jenny Jones had arrived.

Within months, she was touring

'Men may be curious about what goes on, but they wouldn't be comfortable there.'

— Jenny Jones

mostly of young women — and an occasional cross dresser — older women seem to add the most to Jones' show.

"The ladies in their 60s to 80s really get into it," Jones said. "They've all done and seen so much more."

Mark Ridley, owner of the Comedy Castle, where Jones will be appearing tonight, couldn't be happier with the controversy surrounding the all-woman show. (Complaints of sex discrimination have been filed in Boston and Seattle and a Los Angeles agency refused to sell tickets to one of her performances.)

"I think it's fantastic what she does... just another way of taking talent and putting it to good use," Ridley said. "This is the kind of thing that can be around for a long time."

As for the sex discrimination charges, Jones files them under "whatever."

"Men are beginning to realize that this isn't a major event here. It's just a show. It's now being accepted pretty much."

A MONDAY night at the Comedy Castle will usually draw between 80 and 100 customers. Ridley expects 400 at Jones' show.

On the horizon for Jones are offers for her own TV show, a sitcom or talk show, a book, movies and even a lead in a Broadway musical, all of which stunned the newly famous Jones.

"Things have really caught me off guard," she said.

But, for now, it's "Girls' Night Out," audience input, laughs, sold-out shows and an occasional appearance on "Hollywood Squares."

When asked what she would if the show were canceled, she said, "Well, I guess I'd have to do it from the ladies' room."

Jenny Jones and her show "Girls' Night Out" will be appearing Monday, April 9, at the Comedy Castle, 269 E. Fourth, Royal Oak. Show time is 7:30 p.m. For more information or reservations, call 542-9900.

with such headline acts as Tony Bennett, Sammy Davis Jr. and the Pointer Sisters. She became a regular on "Hollywood Squares" and appeared on such stardom launch pads as "Arsenio Hall," "An Evening at the Improv" and the "Super Dave Osborn Show" on Showtime.

During this time, Jones came up with the concept for "Girls' Night Out."

"IT'S A LOT of fun," said Jones. "It moves so fast that the two hours seem like about 20 minutes. While the audience is made up

Escape to Bay Valley Hotel & Resort for a Murder Mystery! It starts as a seemingly simple situation, but the evening becomes much more intense as the plot unfolds. The murder entwines multiple motives including greed, blackmail, sibling rivalry, jealousy and envy.

May 11, 12 and 18, '95

Only \$199 per person, based on double occupancy. Includes tax and gratuity.

PACKAGE INCLUDES:
Two nights lodging
Two full breakfasts
Friday reception and dinner
Saturday night on-site
Prizes for the crime solvers

For information and reservations:

Bay Valley
Hotel & Resort

2470 Old Bridge Road
Bay City, Michigan 48076

Phone (517) 686-3500

Other weekend packages available:

Super Sunday Golf, Deluxe Breakaway, "Tree for Two" golf packages

Monday, April 9, 1995

COMEDY CLUBS

Here are some listings of comedy clubs in our area. To let us know who is appearing at your club, send the information to: Comedy Listings, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

● Chaplin's East

Jerry Elliott along with John Connel and Jennie McNulty will perform Wednesday through Saturday, April 11-14, at Chaplin's East, 34244 Groesbeck, Fraser. Show times are 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday, 8:30 and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 792-1902.

● Chaplin's West

Willie Farrell, along with Bill Hutson and Steve Blitzer, will perform Tuesday-Saturday, April 10-14, at Chaplin's West, 16890 Telegraph, south of Six Mile, Detroit. Show times are 8:30 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday, 8 and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 533-8866.

● Chaplin's Plymouth

Kirk Nolan will perform Wednesday-Saturday, April 11-14, at Chaplin's Plymouth in the Radisson, 14707 Northville Road, Plymouth. Showtimes are 8:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, 8:30 and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 454-4680.

● Comedy Castle

Jenny Jones will perform 8 p.m. Monday, April 9. Diane Ford and The Saint Johnson Theater will perform 8 and 10:45 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday, April 10-14, at the Comedy Castle, 269 E. Fourth, Royal Oak. For reservations, call 542-9900.

● Joey's Allen Park

Chad Elstner will perform Wednesday-Saturday, April 11-14, at Joey's Comedy Club and Sports Emporium, Southfield Road, Allen Park. Show times are 8:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday and 8 and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 382-7041.

● Joey's Livonia

Jef Brannan will perform Wednesday-Saturday, April 11-14, at Joey's Comedy Club, 36071 Plymouth Road, east of Levan, Livonia. Show times are 9 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 8:30 and 10:30 p.m. Saturday. For reservations, call 261-0555.

● Holly Hotel

Peter Berman Thursday-Saturday, April 12-14, at Holly Hotel, 110 Battle Alley, Holly. Show times are 8:30 p.m. Thursday and 8:30 (no smoking show Friday only) and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 634-1891.

● Miss Kitty's

Tim Lilly and Brent Albison will perform Thursday-Saturday, April 12-14, at Miss Kitty's Comedy Club, Long Branch Restaurant, 595 N. Lapeer Road, Oxford. Show times are 8 p.m. Thursday, 8 and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 628-6500.

● Looney Bin

Joe Denckle will perform with Jim Melean and Steve Bills Friday and Saturday, April 13-14, at the Wolverine and Looney Bin Restaurant and Comedy Club, 1655 Cleary, Walled Lake. Show times are 9 p.m. Friday, and 8 and 10:15 p.m. Saturday. For more information, call 669-9374.

● Ben's Comedy Kitchen

Downtown Tony Brown with Skeeter Murray and Marv Welch will perform Friday and Saturday, April 13-14, at Ben's Comedy Kitchen, 541 Larned, Detroit. Show times are 8:30 and 11 p.m. For information, call 961-2581.

● Mainstreet

Rob Schneider will perform Friday-Saturday, April 13-14, at Mainstreet Comedy Showcase, 314 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Show times are 8:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, 8:30 and 11 p.m. Friday and 7, 9 and 11 p.m. Saturday. For information, call 996-9080.

Our Easter Sunday Brunch Will be Very Eggciting

reservations required
Brunch is from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Easter Sunday
Adults \$14.95 Children \$7.95 Children 5 & Under 14.11
(6-12 Years old)

For your table, please call
(313) 462-3100, ext. 7735 Monday thru Saturday
Marriott People know how.

LIVONIA **Marriott** 1700 Laurel Park Dr.
Livonia, MI 48150
462-3100



SOMETHING GREAT IS WAITING FOR YOU

BUY ONE SANDWICH GET ONE FREE!

Present this coupon and receive a free sandwich when you purchase another sandwich of equal or greater value at **Max & Erma's**, Monday through Thursday until May 3, 1990 (Of course, our hand-patted hamburgers are included)

AT
Max & Erma's
RESTAURANT • BAKERY • CATERING • PIZZA

Easter Sunday
at **Michael's**
at the corners
Easter Brunch Served From 10:00-2:30 P.M.
Adults...\$9.95
Children 10 & under...\$3.95
Children under three...Free
Easter Dinner Served From 4:00-8:00 P.M.
Regular Menu & Specials Like...
Broiled Salmon
Roasted Leg of Lamb
Grilled Brace of Quail
Reservations Recommended
Michael's
at the corners
Southfield and 13 Mile Rd. at The Corners Shopping Center 540-4444

● O&E Sports—more than just the scores

NORMAN'S
R.E.S.T.A.U.R.A.N.T.S.
join us
EASTER SUNDAY
NORMAN'S
ETON STREET STATION
Birmingham
647-7774
Brunch 10:30-2:30
Dinner 3-9
NORMAN'S
OYSTER BAR & GRILL
Franklin & Northwestern
357-4442
Dinner 3-9
NIFTY NORMAN'S
Walled Lake
624-6666
Brunch 10:30-2:30, Dinner 4-9

Easter
CELEBRATE IN BIRMINGHAM'S MOST ELEGANT SETTING
REGENCY ROOM
Easter Buffet Brunch served from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. Eat, Drink, Photograph and Piano Accompaniment. Delicacies include Eggs Benedict, Steak au Poivre, Lobster and Asparagus Risotto, fresh fruits, salads and our exceptional pastry table. No charge for children under 5 and special pricing for children up to 12.
RUGBY GRILLE & GALLERY
Easter Brunch Entrees served from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. Traditional favorites include Honey Baked Ham, Char grilled Rack of Lamb and Chicken Piccata complimented by delightful appetizers and a fresh pastry presentation. Children's menu provided.
SPECIAL EASTER WEEKEND RATES
Our sumptuous guest rooms and suites are specially priced for the Easter weekend.
Deluxe Room \$100 □ Luxury Suite \$120
Friday, Sunday and Tuesday. Single occupancy—based on availability. Taxes not included.
Easter Brunch Priced From \$16-\$28.
Call Beverly or Vera for Reservations: 642-7900
The Townsend Hotel
100 Townsend Street at Pierce, Birmingham
Pierced Hotels