

## BAND OF THE WEEK

# Proving it all night

## *The E Street Shuffle takes South Jersey by storm*

DANIELLE DAVIES  
AT THE SHORE

The E Street Shuffle is on a simple mission: To do justice and pay homage to “The Boss” with a seven-piece tribute band that singularly embodies the dynamic of the original.

“The Boss,” for those of you living in a perpetual state of cluelessness, is none other than legendary Jersey icon Bruce Springsteen.

Are they fanatics? That depends on which band member you talk to.

Singer Sean Loughlin has been a Bruce diehard for most of his life and happens to have a voice so eerily similar to Springsteen’s that it’s truly uncanny.

Other band members may or may not have grown up on Springsteen, but all understand their mission in the band.

“We’re not out to mimic per se,” pianist Dave Turner explains. “But we each try to represent the style and power of The E Street Band.”

The E Street Shuffle has been around for 10 years. That’s a full decade of traveling up and down the East



Singer Sean Loughlin, right, a diehard Bruce Springsteen fan, and pianist Dave Turner pay tribute to the ‘The Boss’ with passion and energy as members of The E Street Shuffle.

Coast, proving themselves to the crowds and each other. And playing more than 100 shows a year means they have taken the time to seriously perfect their craft. Other Springsteen tribute acts may have a few years on them, but none match the passion of The Shuffle (as they are known by their fans). While many of their competitors rest on name recognition alone, an E Street Shuffle show involves no resting of any kind — the live energy is based on the

intensity Springsteen brought to the stage in his prime.

Watching their show, it’s clear this is a group of guys who share a genuine camaraderie. “It seems to happen naturally ... very organically,” bassist Chris Rudo says. “All the guys seem to be on the same page.”

While the affability may be effortless, the quality of their sound couldn’t be produced without hard work. “We’re a conscientious bunch of guys,” Rudo says, adding, “Being in a

band is a serious commitment if you do it the way we do it.”

Part of the way they do it is by acknowledging that, as a tribute band, they have to take their cues from their counterparts in the original E Street Band.

“We try to be mindful,” Rudo says. “No one is doing a 64-bar solo if it’s not in the song.”

Turner adds, “We do a lot of things like Bruce did, but we also put our own twist to it. ... It’s still our show.”

Within that show, The

### THE E STREET SHUFFLE

**Who they are:** Sean Loughlin: lead vocals, guitar, harmonica; Ryan Loughlin: lead guitar, vocals; Rich Hodder: drums; David Turner: piano, background vocals; Chris Rudo: bass; Mark Bistis: organ; Dan Delaney: saxophones, percussion, vocals.

**Contact:**  
TheEStreetShuffle.com

**Coming Up:** 1 p.m., Saturday, May 28, Laguna Grill & Rum Bar, 1400 Ocean Ave., Brigantine

County, the demand for the band in South Jersey has led to a series of summer shows in our area. And a bit of travel never bothers them.

“Nah, ya gotta travel — that’s the way bands did it back in the ’80s and that’s the way we do it. We’ve got dates at Borgata, Kix McNutley’s, Margate Log Cabin, Harry’s in Cape May ... we will be all over South Jersey this summer and we can’t wait,” drummer Rich Hodder says. At 1 p.m. Saturday, May 28, the band begins a series of four, monthly shows at Brigantine’s Laguna Grill.

So how does a Springsteen tribute band fare in the state Bruce calls home?

Of course the shows are packed, but there’s more — not only have members of The Shuffle performed with Max Weinberg (of The E Street Band) during a 40th anniversary of “Born to Run,” but The E Street Shuffle has played everywhere from MetLife Stadium to the famed Stone Pony that launched Springsteen’s career.

“To live in New Jersey, to play ‘Born to Run’ at the Stone Pony,” Turner says, “is as good as it gets.”

E Street Shuffle plays from its vast repertoire of Springsteen songs, pulling out everything from the classics — “Born to Run,” “Rosalita” and “Born in the USA” — to favorites of the band members, from “Jungleland” and “Incident on 57th Street” to “Backstreets” and obscurities such as the Springsteen rarity “Wages of Sin.”

“God, I love that one. Great tune,” organist Mark Bistis says.

Although they are based in Monmouth