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## **JERSEY TO BRUCE: KEEP ROCKING!**

Bruce Springsteen's glory days have not passed him by according to his fellow New Jerseyans. The latest **Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll** found that "The Boss" ties with "The King" for the Garden State's all-time favorite rocker. And the vast majority of residents say Springsteen, who turns 60 years old today, should keep making music as long as he is able.

When asked to name their favorite rock performer of all time, New Jerseyans – being the diverse bunch that we are – name nearly 150 different performers. However, two luminaries top the list – Elvis Presley and Bruce Springsteen. Each is named by 8% of state residents.

Other names near the top include the recently departed Michael Jackson (5%) and Sayreville's own Jon Bon Jovi (3%). The Beatles as a group are named by 4%, while frontmen John Lennon and Paul McCartney individually earn 2% of the vote each. Others who gain at least 2% of the vote include Eric Clapton, Mick Jagger, Bono/U2, Axl Rose/Guns N' Roses, and Led Zeppelin. Interestingly, no female rockers make it into the top 25.

Both women and men place Bruce and Elvis in their top two slots. However, there are some differences by age. The Boss is #1 among New Jerseyans age 35 to 54 years old, garnering 11% of the vote from this age group, compared to 7% for runner-up Michael Jackson and 5% for Jon Bon Jovi.

Among older residents – those age 55 and over – Elvis is still The King at 17%, but Springsteen places a respectable second at 11%.

There is no clear winner among younger New Jerseyans. Those under age 35 split their vote among the Beatles at 5% and Elvis, Jon Bon Jovi, Michael Jackson, Axl Rose/Guns N'

Roses, and Green Day/Billie Joe Armstrong at 4% each. Springsteen ties for 9<sup>th</sup> place among this age group at 2%.

The poll also found that 31% of all New Jersey adults own at least one Springsteen record or CD. This is down slightly from the 36% who said the same four years ago. However, among Garden State residents in the 35 to 54 age group, the current number of Springsteen music owners stands at nearly half (44%). Just under 1-in-3 (29%) of the 55 and older set boast a Springsteen disc in their music collection, while only 16% of those under age 35 say the same.

Springsteen's broadest appeal is to middle age residents, but few New Jerseyans of any age feel the sexagenarian troubadour should just sit around getting older. An overwhelming 86% say the Boss should keep rocking as long as he wants. Only 4% say he is probably getting too old to rock at age 60 and just 3% say he is definitely too old.

"No question about it. His fellow New Jerseyans do not expect the Boss to sit around counting the wrinkles and the grays, to borrow a phrase from one of Springsteen's own lyrics," said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

Katherine Parkin, associate professor of History at Monmouth University, added, "In a state where people define themselves by their exit on the New Jersey Turnpike or Garden State Parkway, it's no surprise that they identify with a rocker whose music reflects a love of cars and driving." Dr. Parkin will be giving a presentation titled "Bound for Glory: Springsteen and the Car" at the upcoming *Glory Days* symposium.

Monmouth University will be hosting *Glory Days: A Bruce Springsteen Symposium* at its campus in West Long Branch, New Jersey on September 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>. The event will bring together educators, journalists, historians, musicologists, and fans interested in Bruce Springsteen and his influence on American culture. It will also include musical performances and tours of important Springsteen sites. Tickets for the symposium and the performances are available to the public. For more information, please visit: [www.cpe.vt.edu/glorydays](http://www.cpe.vt.edu/glorydays).

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* was conducted by telephone with 902 New Jersey adults from September 8 to 10, 2009. This sample has a margin of error of  $\pm 3.3$  percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute and originally published by the Gannett New Jersey newspaper group (Asbury Park Press, Courier-Post, Courier News, Daily Journal, Daily Record, and Home News Tribune).

**DATA TABLES**

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:  
 (\* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1. Who is your favorite rock music performer of all time?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			RACE	
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Black & Hispanic
Elvis Presley	8%	8%	8%	4%	3%	17%	9%	7%
Bruce Springsteen	8%	7%	9%	2%	11%	11%	11%	4%
Michael Jackson	5%	3%	6%	4%	7%	3%	3%	7%
The Beatles	4%	4%	3%	5%	4%	2%	4%	3%
Jon Bon Jovi	3%	3%	4%	4%	5%	1%	5%	1%
John Lennon	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%	4%	3%	3%
Paul McCartney	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	3%	0%
Mick Jagger	2%	1%	2%	0%	3%	1%	2%	1%
Bono/U2	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Axl Rose/Guns N' Roses	2%	1%	2%	4%	1%	0%	0%	3%
Eric Clapton	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	0%	2%	1%
Led Zeppelin	2%	3%	1%	1%	3%	1%	2%	2%
Jimi Hendrix	1%	3%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Bob Dylan	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Billy Joel	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	0%	2%	0%
Steven Tyler/Aerosmith	1%	1%	2%	3%	1%	0%	2%	0%
Dave Matthews	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Elton John	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Green Day/Billie Joe Armstrong	1%	0%	2%	4%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Jim Morrison/The Doors	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%	1%	2%
Rolling Stones	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Van Halen	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Rod Stewart	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Freddie Mercury/Queen	1%	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%	1%	2%
Ozzy Osbourne	1%	2%	0%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%
James Hetfield/Metallica	1%	2%	1%	3%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Other	16%	20%	13%	20%	15%	14%	17%	16%
No one, don't like rock music	20%	18%	21%	18%	16%	26%	17%	24%
No opinion/Don't know	11%	10%	12%	15%	7%	12%	12%	9%
Unwtd N	902	433	469	168	347	379	739	119

2. Do you own any Bruce Springsteen records or C.D.s?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			RACE		TREND Dec. 2005
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Black & Hispanic	
Yes	31%	33%	28%	16%	44%	29%	36%	18%	36%
No	69%	66%	71%	83%	57%	71%	63%	82%	64%
Unwtd N	902	433	469	168	347	379	739	119	800

3. Bruce Springsteen turns sixty years old this month. Do you think that definitely makes him too old to rock, probably makes him too old but he may still have a few years left in him, or he should keep rocking as long as he wants?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			RACE	
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Black & Hispanic
Definitely too old	<b>3%</b>	4%	2%	3%	4%	2%	3%	2%
Probably too old	<b>4%</b>	4%	5%	3%	4%	6%	6%	2%
Keep rocking	<b>86%</b>	84%	88%	86%	87%	84%	86%	89%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>7%</b>	9%	6%	9%	5%	8%	5%	8%
Unwtd N	<b>902</b>	433	469	168	347	379	739	119

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* was conducted and analyzed by the Monmouth University Polling Institute research staff. The telephone interviews were collected by Braun Research on September 8-10, 2009 with a statewide random sample of 902 adult residents. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.3 percentage points. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported by gender or party identification, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

*It is the Monmouth University Polling Institute's policy to conduct surveys of all adult New Jersey residents, including voters and non-voters, on issues which affect the state. Specific voter surveys are conducted when appropriate during election cycles.*

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