

10 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT:

TED LEO

Ted Leo is New Jersey's answer to Joe Strummer and Billy Bragg. His latest album, *Living with the Living* (Touch & Go), is a high-energy dose of left-wing punk and power pop. A 10-year veteran of the East Coast indie scene, Leo and his tight combo, the Pharmacists, sprinkle in liberal doses of reggae, soul and '70s arena rock into their ear-tweaking ditties. It sure beats bashing out Bon Jovi covers at a bar off the Turnpike.

1) I'm never happy with the way pants fit me.

2) My mom's side of the family is supposedly descended from a pirate named John Kelley, who operated in the Gulf of Maine in the 1600s.

3) In high school, I was the third leg on a state champion hurdle relay team, and an all-state qualifier in the individual 400m hurdles. I only joined the track team because I got cut from the freshman soccer team despite playing soccer for eight years in grammar school.

4) Both my brothers also play music, and though we've all been in bands with one another, we've never all been onstage at the same time.

5) I saw Run-DMC twice at the Ritz in Elizabeth, N.J.: once in 1984 and again in 1985. The '84 show was headlined by New Edition.

6) My high school, Seton Hall Prep in West Orange, N.J., was musically prolific. I went there with Matt Sweeney from Skunk and Chavez, J. Colangelo from American Standard and Murphy's Law, and Chris Infante, the first bass

player for my old band Chisel. Other notable alumni include Bill Bellamy and, supposedly, Pancho Villa.

7) The worst show I ever played was at last year's Tribeca Film Festival at an event sponsored by Jameson, which means they were giving it away for free. We had a 4 p.m. load-in and a 1 a.m. set time, with nothing to do in between but drink a lot of whiskey.

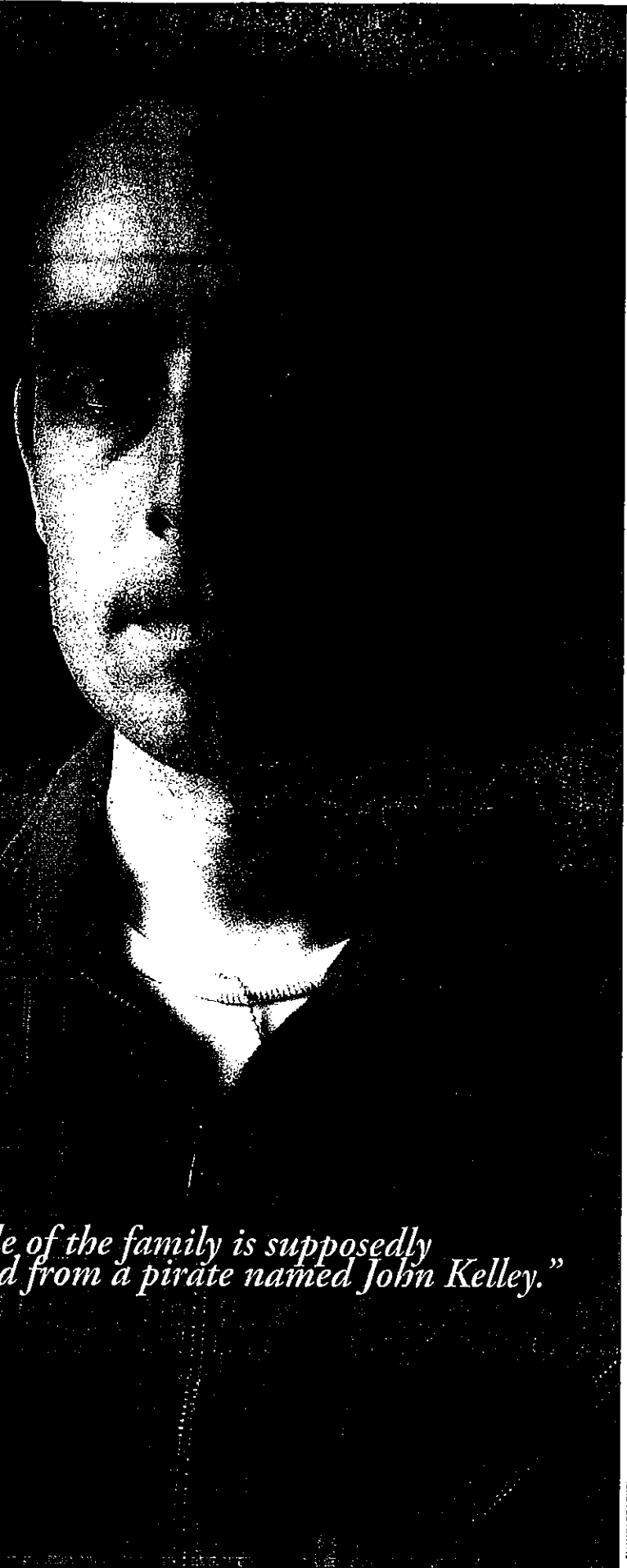
8) Most people refer to me as a Jersey artist. While I did grow up in New Jersey, I was actually born in South Bend, Ind. I spent the first couple of years of my life in Indianapolis, where [my father] was stationed during Vietnam.

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9) I've been a vegetarian since 1988 and a vegan since 1998.

10) Scharpling & Wurster's comedy bits keep us sane on the road, but at home, I'm a sucker for *Project Runway*, *The Biggest Loser*, and, especially, *Top Chef*.

HAI BIENSTOCK



SHAWN BRACKBILL