

# Greetings From the Shore

By JOE LEYDON

A Newstyle Releasing release of a Jenny Jump Pictures presentation of a Hudson Mermaid Prods. production. Produced by Gabrielle Berberich. Executive producer, Robert I. Schulman. Co-producer, Gregory C. Schaefer. Directed by Greg Chwerchak. Screenplay, Gabrielle Berberich, Chwerchak.

With: Kim Shaw, Paul Sorvino, David Fumero, Jay O. Sanders, Andrew Shaifer, Lars Arentz-Hansen.

**Just in time to give auds one last chance at a summer beachside holiday, "Greetings From the Shore" finally arrives in limited theatrical release after a long sail through fest-circuit backwaters. An undemandingly pleasant coming-of-age dramedy aimed at young femme ticketbuyers (and perhaps their nostalgic moms), the pic might make a minor splash before drifting into homevid and cable tributaries.**

Producer Gabrielle Berberich -- who co-wrote the script with helmer Greg Chwerchak --reportedly drew from her own youthful experiences while spinning a familiar scenario about a resourceful young woman who spends her last summer before college working at a swanky yacht club on the New Jersey shore. (Pic was shot on location in Lavallette, N.J.) Whatever its real-life roots, "Greetings" often plays like standard-issue Hollywood fiction.

Still, there's no denying the appeal of newcomer Kim Shaw as Jenny Chambers, an agreeably plucky lass who's determined to fulfill her recently deceased dad's dream -- attending the expensive college where he could never afford to finish his studies.

While she waits to hear from the financial-aid office, Jenny waits tables at the yacht club. She's also kept busy as an English tutor for busboys and waiters -- most of them Russians and Eastern Europeans -- whose legal status appears to be questionable at best.

Jenny is a tad slow to figure out that Commodore Callaghan (Jay O. Sanders), the sleazy manager of the yacht club, is caught up in a scam involving desperate workers and expensive work permits. But it doesn't take long at all for her to fall for one of her students, a hunky Cuban (David Fumero) who isn't fooling anyone, not even Jenny, with the alias Patrick O'Malley.

While "Greetings From the Shore" is seriously lacking in originality, still, this nicely crafted indie manages to be modestly amusing and genuinely engaging, with a low-key charm that may play even better in the more intimate medium of homevid.

That may be a tribute to the well-cast actors (Paul Sorvino makes the absolute most of a supporting role as a grizzled fisherman who takes Jenny under his wing). But it also may say something about the irresistible appeal of pics about summertime romances. Even not-so-hot ones can warm your heart if you let your guard down.