



BLUES NEWS

newsletter@bluesblowtorch.com

July - August - September 2008

BBS UPCOMING BLUES EVENTS

**CIBC CANCELED,
FALL BALL, INSTEAD!
SAME DATE**

September 21, 2008
1:00 PM 6:00 PM

Tri-Lakes Banquet Facilities
2100 Bunn St.
Bloomington IL 61704-7425
Phone: 309-829-1848

**FALL BALL: Blues Blowtorch
Society's Educational Fund
Raiser**

Two Bands Performing:
Black Magic Johnson (band) 1:00
PM - 3:30 PM
Lil' Dave Thompson 3:30 PM -
6:00 PM

Food and Drink for sale by Tri-
Lakes Membership
Events for Everyone "How to
Start a Band" Workshop
More events to be announced

Due to an unimaginable lack of interest, we have had to cancel the Central Illinois Blues Challenge. President Randy Hoffman explains it this way, "Last year we decided to open the up the Central Illinois Blues Challenge to the whole state, and we did seem to draw some good talent. This year we opened it up entirely, and almost no one is interested. It may be we have worn this thing out locally.

Possibly, we don't have the financial resources to attract the bands that are ready to break onto the national scene, using the International Blues Challenge in Memphis as the way of 'making it'. So.....let's have a party!"



*Reggie Britton of
Black Magic Johnson*

Black Magic Johnson is not one guy; it's a band composed of Alexis V. Rogers: guitar, Dan Grover: guitar, Bob Hagler: bass, Reggie Britton: drums, lead vocals, and harmonica. BMJ is known for its fun collection of southern delta and Chicago new age blues. This band may have been pumping originals and covers for only the past six years but the players in this band bring over 50 years of experience to the table. BMJ has opened for

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OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

NEWS YOU CAN USE:

- 1) How To Start and Organize Your Own Band
- 2) Guitar and/or Harp Lessons, September 21 at Fall Ball

Harmonica player extraordinaire Steve "The Harp" and master guitarist Bill Porter are planning to present a seminar and workshop for musicians who want to start a band and learn how to organize a band.

Also, during the Fall Ball, September 21, 2008 to be held at the Tri-Lakes in Bloomington IL, these two will provide Blues guitar lessons and harmonica lessons.

Contact: Steve the Harp at 309-662-0996 or stevetheharp@aol.com. Contact Randy Hoffman, President, 309-531-2533 or rd.hoffman@verizon.net

HELP TRADE OR DONATE CDs!
The BBS is collecting used CDs from members and friends of our members. These will be sold or traded at our Fall Ball. Buy one or bring one to trade and put a sale price into the BBS Education Fund. Proceeds will be used for our Blues Education events. Please go through your CD accumulations and donate anything you know you will never listen to again. All kinds of music CDs are welcome and appreciated. As we are a non-

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**BBS Upcoming Blues Events
Continued from previous page**

some of the greatest blues acts around today such as KOKO Taylor and Lonnie Brooks. In 2006 the Band was nominated as one of the best blues act in central Illinois and performed at the Great Performers of Illinois concert at Chicago's Millennium Park. BMJ recorded their first CD titled "Food for Thought" and is currently working on a new one.



Lil' Dave Thompson



Black Magic Johnson

Lil' Dave Thompson was nominated in 1996 for the WC Handy, Blues Music Awards for "Best New Artist Debut" and "Contemporary Blues Album" with his Fat Possum Record release. Lil' Dave is supporting a brand new CD continuing his soul-blues guitar mastery and maturity as a songwriter and performer. Born in Hinds County, Mississippi May 21, 1969, Lil' Dave's exposure to music came early and has always been a way of life. At the age of

14, he formed his first band. Thompson's confident, aggressive guitar solos combine the buzz-saw snarl of Albert King and the sweet, metallic sting of Little Milton, and his unpretentious vocals seem equally influenced by blues and soul.



**Opportunity Knocks
Continued from previous page**

profit organization, your donations are tax deductible. Donation forms are available. There are two easy ways to get the CDs to us:
1) Bring them to the Fall Ball and any BBS sponsored event, and drop them in the box at the door.
2) Phone Jeff Augsburger at 309-275-7010, or email him at beatles.normal@verizon.net, and he will pick them up at your convenience.
Thank you for helping your club!

**BBS BUS TRIP TO:
International Blues Challenge
Memphis Tennessee**

February 5-8, 2009
Healy Travel Inc
www.healytravelinc.com
Sheila Healy
Wenona, IL 61377
815-853-4606

Trip Schedule:
Thursday February 5, 2008
6:00am Leave from (Parking Lot behind Toys R Us)
11:30am Lunch stop on your own
3:30pm Arrive and check into hotel Hampton Inn on Beale Street
5:00pm Semi Finals (Included)
Friday February 6, 2008
Breakfast at the hotel (Included)
Site seeing (On your own)
5:00pm Semi Finals (Included)
Saturday February 7, 2008
Breakfast at the hotel (Included)
5:00pm Finals

Sunday February 8, 2008
Breakfast at the hotel (Included)
8:00am Check Out
11:30pm Lunch Stop (On your Own)
5:00pm Arrive Home
Prices:
Single \$605 Double \$585 Per Person
Triple \$475PP Quad \$450PP
½ Down upon Sign up;
Balance due 30 days prior to departure

BBS WEBSITES

Check out our websites to better inform.
www.bluesblowtorch.org
www.myspace.com/blues_blowtorch_society
www.bluesblowtorch.com/society
www.bluesblowtorch.com (Delta Frank's site)
For comments or changes, contact Deborah Mehlberg at Deborah464@aol.com.



ASK DELTAFRANK



Frank Black and Janiva Magness

Note: This column can also be read on the BBS website "Forum." Send questions to skydobro@bluesblowtorch.com or jwalker4@mchsi.com

In the last issue, we left you with this question:
Question: Delta Frank, Who is your most favorite living Blues guitarist that you have seen perform in the last decade and really want to see again?

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From Kurt Foor, The Coal City Clubman

Answer: My favorite Blues Guitar Artist I would want to see again, would be BRYAN LEE.

Thanks for asking,
Delta Frank

Question:

Delta Frank,
Why has the Nothin' But The Blues Festival been a continual success? They just completed 7 years!

Justin N. Quiry

Answer: See next issue of Blues News



OFFICIAL RAMBLINGS FROM THE PREZ

Folks,

I want to THANK everyone for making the Nothin' But The Blues Festival a huge success this year. Our Board members did an outstanding job.

Dave Long, Marketing, brought a great 'tent concept' to us a couple months ago, we approved it, and it worked! Our tent was really a focal point during the festival. The artists enjoyed hanging out there and signing their CDs for all of you. Eric Tapley was totally impressed with our efforts. Teeny Tucker told me our Volunteers were 'Blues Angels'.

It wouldn't have worked if Rick Tull, Parliamentarian, hadn't done an excellent job of lining up a great bunch of Volunteers. Debbie Mehlberg had the cash boxes ready to go and did a great job as Artist Liaison for the Festival. Steve 'The Harp' played a great opening set Saturday and held one of the best Kid's Harmonica Workshops ever. Larry D., our VP, brought some really nice fans that made everyone much more comfortable. Frank Black had some great help in pulling in more members to the Society. James



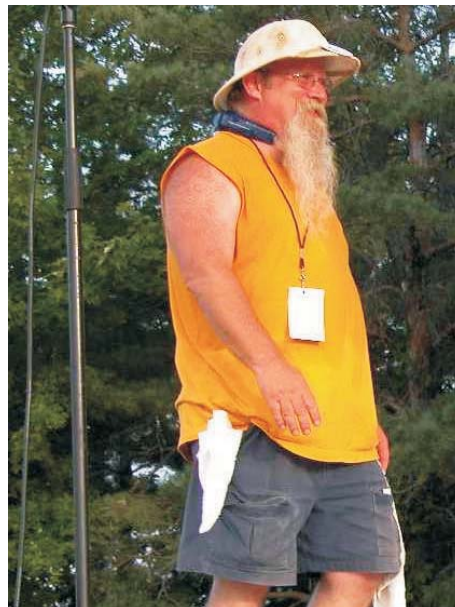
BBS Tent Hosts Harmonica Workshop

Walker gave our tent and BBSociety numerous plugs while keeping the MC job as entertaining as the acts!

Kudos to our Volunteers. You are too numerous to name, but your efforts at the stage and tent were crucial in our success. We just plain can't do it without you. When Dave Long asked us to put "The only thing missing in Vol_nteer is U" on our emails, it really seemed to catch your eye. Your response was very much appreciated.

For all the rest of our Members that came for the show, Thank You!! Your participation as Blues Fans helped the whole festival seem like a big family party.

We have decided to eliminate the Central Illinois Blues Challenge this year and instead



Randy Hoffman, Stage Manager!

hold a Fall Ball on September 21st at Tri-Lakes. Last year we decided to open the Challenge up to the whole state and we did seem to draw some good talent. This year we opened it up entirely, and almost no one is interested. It may be we have worn this thing out locally, and we don't have the financial resources to attract the bands that are ready to break onto the national scene, using the IBC as the way of 'making it'. So let's have a party! This is just in the planning stage now, so watch for those cards and emails!

Remember to sign up for the bus trip to the 2009 IBC in Memphis!!

Randy,
Prez



FROM THE EDITOR'S BLUES SHACK

• As some of you know, **Chris and Deb Hoelscher** own the Eastland Chiropractic and Wellness Center in Bloomington. **Chris was in a motorcycle accident** on Saturday, June 14. Chris suffered multiple injuries to all parts of his body. He was initially in critical condition at BroMenn's intensive care. As he continues to recuperate, you can go to www.caringbridge.org and enter "chrishoelscher" into the search box to read a blog about his progress. You can also sign the guestbook and leave him a message. Please do that! Even if you don't know him very well, wish him well, thank him for all his love for and support of GLT and BBS. The family is reading him all the messages, and that gives him encouragement.

• **Howlin' Wolf story** by T-Bird Huck, Joliet bluesman
Thank you to our original "Joliet Jake" blues buddy for this remembrance:
On June 10, 2008, Howlin' Wolf

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T-Bird Huck, Joliet Bluesman

would have been 98. He was born June 10, 1910. His real name was Chester Arthur Burnett. I was blessed to have seen him perform a number of times. I visited him once at his home and also at Hines Hospital (Chicago) before his death January 10, 1976, where at his wake/visitation, I had the privilege to pay my respects.

He was massive in stature and bigger than life as a performer, but he could really be a gentle giant. I remember his wife Lilly the day I knocked on the door of their immaculate Southside brick bungalow. I was with my longtime great friend and blues brother, bassist Michael Ciancanelli.

When she answered the door, I said, "Hello Mrs. Burnett. We're from Joliet, and we're Blues musicians and fans of the Wolf. We wanted to tell him how much we appreciate him." Well, she must have recognized the sincerity in the tone of my voice and the look in our eyes. We were flabbergasted when she said, "Please come in." We couldn't believe it! There we were, two young white blues-boys from Joliet standing in Howlin' Wolf's house!

She said "He's taking a nap in his den." We said, "Oh, don't wake him, no." The gracious Mrs. Burnett said, "I don't think he'll mind." She took us down stairs where the Wolf was sleeping in his den. She said, "Chester, a couple of your fans are here to see you."

The Wolf got up, came out, greeted us, and offered us a glass of wine (we accepted). I remember it was Giacobazzi Lambusco! We had a great visit with one of our blues heroes, and I'll never forget it.

• One of the newest members of BBS, **Ben Cox** is a DJ, journalist, musician, and photographer. He has started his own website to promote blues:

<http://jukejointsoul.blogspot.com>. "Juke Joint Soul: The best in contemporary blues music and all that other stuff in between that is pleasing to the ears. Check here for reviews of the latest CDs, live shows in Illinois and wherever I roam, and interviews with some of your favorite artists either on the rise or on top of their game." See Ben's review of the Nothin' But the Blues Festival in this issue.

• **Russell Miller & 6V6** will be opening the **Illinois Blues Festival, August 29th at 6:30 pm**. You can also keep an eye on their schedule at www.myspace.com/russellmiller6v6 or just check out the pics and comments! By the way, Russell has officially retired from Catepillar, so double congratulations are in order.

• **Nick Moss and the Flip Tops** were joined in July by Chicago's **Lurrie Bell** in recording another "Live From Chan's" CD. Watch for it the fall.

• **Blind Pig Records** and country-roots icon **Commander Cody** both originated in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Now the two are teaming up to release **Cody's first studio album since 1993**, tentatively entitled *Drunks Dopers and Everyday Losers*. George Frayne, aka the Ol' Commander, said, "Looking to getting back in the studio after almost 15 years, Commander Cody has beamed down from the ozone just to partner up with old friends from

Blind Pig."

AND, **Magic Slim and Albert Cummings** have new albums on the way.

• Youtube pick:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDsUuYMwleU&feature=related>.

It features **Dave Riley and Bob Corritore** performing at the Cognac Blues Festival in France.



NOTHIN' BUT THE BLUES FESTIVAL REVIEW

Attention: See all of Ralph Weisheit's photos at www.bluesblowtorch.org; then click on "pictures."

Folks,

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For all the rest of our Members that came for the show, Thank You! Your participation as Blues Fans helped the whole festival seem like a big family party. It is going to take a week or so for us to tally the Society's income/expense figures and recover from the extraordinary efforts we put forth, but there is no doubt, this was the best NBTBF Festival ever.

Randy Hoffman, BBS Prez

To BBS,

The Nothin' But The Blues festival once again turned out to be a huge success. Although the humidity took its toll, the beauty of Tri-Lakes made it a wonderful two days.

Friday started with the worry of thunderstorms, I started getting phone calls at 8:00 AM, but a quick check of the weather channel by Steve "The Harp" showed a beautiful (although humid) day ahead. If it had not been for Larry D. and his amazing fans, none of us would have made it through the first day, let alone two. Thank you Larry D. for having the forethought to think of our members and the artists' health.

Jonell of the Pantagraph did her magic in the VIP area turning

it into a tropical paradise with palm trees and grass skirting. Fresh fruit was a constant on the buffet she had set out for the guests. Hospital volunteers manned the bar as the artists and their guests arrived as well as special invitee's from the Pantagraph and Chances Entertainment.

The guests were treated to an acoustic set by Matthew Curry and Haley Crouch; these two teenage artists proved they have what it takes to play the blues. They started off playing on stage with Steve "The Harp" Blues Band then took their combined talent to the VIP area. They were given a huge round of applause and were encouraged to continue playing during the breaks between artist sets. Every time I hear them play, they sound better and better. Our next generation of artists is on their way and will be a force to be reckoned with because of their superb talents. It's easy to see they have been working hard at their craft.

Had there been a contest for the best looking tent, The Blues Blowtorch Society would have won hands down! The large white tent had a back drop of blues legends created in silhouette with a large BBS Logo in the middle of both. The carpeted floors made it easy to navigate and kept any annoying insects away from our volunteers and artists. Tie dyed curtains were hung in the area where the artist signed autographs and chatted with the guests. Standing back it looked like a stage, with the ability to open or close them at the artists' whims. The skirting made a professional impression and the layout of the merchandise was superb. Topping off the BBS tent was the brand new LED display that could be read from anywhere outside. The information displayed not only told of the

Nothin' But The Blues Festival's artist line up, but encouraged festival goers to come on down and join the party. Temporary tattoos of the BBS logo were seen everywhere. Our new merchandise was a big hit, and I was very proud to be a Blues Blowtorch Society member. Dave Long our Merchandise Director deserves a big Atta boy for all his hard work.

In addition, all the volunteers were expertly handled by our Parliamentarian Rick Tull. He had them all organized like a military function; we were by far the most impressive group at the event.

Special thanks to Avanti's restaurant for donating 40 half gondolas for the volunteers working not only in the BBS tent, but backstage and in the VIP area. Wal-Mart west and Kroger's on main both donated gift cards that were used to supply us with enough water to make it through the entire event. Last but not least Convenient on Hershey donated 16 bags of ice, which seems trivial until you got there and realized just how much money our volunteers saved by not having to purchase (at festival prices) these items.

Steve "The Harp" gave his Harmonica Workshop at the BBS Tent for the first time ever. This change turned out to be a very fortunate move for the BBS. It allowed our volunteers to not only witness the workshop, (something they would not have been able to do had it been held at the back of the park like last year) but they were able to participate and handled the harmonica purchases smoothly. 84 students (more than last year) received a lesson from the Harmonica Master and some were repeat students. Teeny Tucker even asked for a private lesson from Steve "The Harp" after her appearance and

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autographs were completed. She was given a harmonica and a practice sheet, and she and Steve "The Harp" worked together for 20 minutes. Teeny stated that she had heard about our Harmonica Workshop and wanted to participate since she has a newly found interest in learning how to play the Blues on harmonica. What a treat for Steve "The Harp!"

James Walker was epitome of professionalism as the announcer for the Nothin' But The Blues Festival both Friday Night and Saturday afternoon and evening. His announcements kept our visitors up to date on what was happening and where. His clear voice could not only be heard, but also understood throughout the event.

Saturday night the "Blues Doctor" Delta Frank's appearance as announcer brought Blues credibility to the event. Frank's outstanding knowledge and intimate detailed stories kept the audience on the edge of their seats. The artists all knew him and treated him as if he were a member of their family. Frank's down home attitude made everyone feel as if the event was a family reunion. Who knew our own Frank Black, Membership Director, was a super star! His show on WGLT 89.1 FM has proven once again that The Blues is thriving in our community. Thank You WGLT. What a treat!

Randy Hoffman (President of the Blues Blowtorch Society) was Stage Manager extraordinaire! He ran the area so well, no one noticed the change overs. One minute the band was finishing up their set, and in what seemed like moments (15 short minutes, actually), the next act was in place ready to take charge. He had everything in order and running as expertly as any large

professional event. Eric Tapley is very fortunate to have Randy in his corner. I doubt anyone could have done a better job.

Each of the Artists that arrived expressed to me their impression of the event, and all stated that they had never been treated so well and accommodated so professionally. I must say I was taken by surprise when speaking to Thornetta Davis as I was invited on stage to sing background and play tambourine to Mustang Sally. Had I a tambourine and change of clothes, I would have jumped at the chance to sing with Thornetta. Well maybe next time.

I want to personally thank all of the volunteers that suffered through extraordinary humidity to make this event the great success it was. Kudos to you all, you deserve it.

Sincerely,
Deborah Mehlberg, Entertainment Director & Treasurer

Hi Gang,

Among the many needing "thank you's" - let me add Randy Hoffman, our team leader. Randy did, again this year, a superior job of stage management. Along with Jim McAvoy assisting and Mike Grim's team, they once again did the 15 minute change overs. I have been to several festivals this year alone, and NOBODY does 15 minute change overs. Poor Randy's legs were cramping up Friday, but he kept going like a true trooper.

I have been in BBS since 2001, just missing being a charter member by 6 months. Randy is a charter member, and he has been there the whole time as clearly a most dependable and thoughtful and skilled leader. In human relations, I love his ability to be both sensitive and frank - no bull shirt, but no back stabbing!

I learned early on that if Randy said he was going to do something, he actually does not forget - he gets it done! How rare is that? Really, our current team has been inspired by Randy to do the same: Think it, promise it, do it! Way to go team!

Randy, you da MAN!!
Best regards,
James Walker

To Deborah and BBS,

The BBS tent was fantastic. Loved the tie-dyed curtains and carpeted floors. And, I love the fact that this tent was the home base from which Steve gave his Harmonica workshop. I could not believe the crowds he always attracts. What a great way to give back to the community.

Deb, you were fabulous as always. I appreciate all your help with the VIP tent, and I continue to be amazed at your ability to track down artists and keep them on task.

Thanks so very much to you, Deb, and the Blues Blowtorch Society for helping make this event so successful. I look forward to working with you again next year!

Jonell Kehias, Pantagraph VIP Tent

To BBS,

Yes, it was hot and humid, but the music was even hotter. Volunteers went above and beyond the call of duty in making everything go smoothly. Eric Tapley is also to be commended for not only choosing great performers, but for having a wonderful mix of musical styles. Tri-Lakes is also a great setting with trees, water, and even playground equipment for the kids. The festival gets better every year.

Ralph Weisheit, BBS
Photographer/Archivist/Webmaster

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To BBS

I thought this was the best organized festival we have had. The Blues Blowtorch Society Tent was outstanding. The folks did themselves proud. Thank you for all their input. It was as Hot as it could have ever been, but the folks kept coming. I had a great time, even though I got hot.

Everyone did an excellent job who were volunteers, but Deb Mehlberg did a terrific job! I was really worried about her about 8:00 PM as she was looking like she wasn't going to make it. Her face was red and swollen, and I figured she was about to have a heat stroke. I asked her to sit down a few minutes. Well, in two minutes, she was on her feet again; a real trooper she is! She was taking care of business, and I mean a lot of business, and doing an excellent job of it. She just had so many responsibilities THANK YOU Deborah, you are truly a leader.
Delta Frank

The NBTBF was fabulous! Kudos to Dave Long on the tent! I'll be sending "Thank You" notes to the volunteers over the next couple of days, and ask them to attend the general meetings. Thanks everyone!

Rick Tull, Parliamentarian

To James and BBS,

I thought the whole event was awesome. James did a great job as MC, bands kicked ass, and the BBS tent was "THE" place to be! Dave Long, Marketing Director

REVIEW BY BEN COX

For Ben's pictures, too, go to: <http://jukejointsoul.blogspot.com/2008/07/nothing-but-blues-festival-2008.html>

Nothing But the Blues Festival
Tri-Lakes Fishing Club,

**Bloomington IL
July 18 & 19, 2008**

I rolled into Bloomington shortly after seven o'clock on Friday. Some of us still have day jobs so going to festivals all the time has to be worked in. Right away the tempo of the weekend would be put into blazing bright perspective; hot, sweaty blues goodness. A last minute substitution, Cadillac Dave was on stage blowing away on a hard dose of blues-rock. I could hear the screams of a lightning fast guitarist on stage but couldn't recognize the song.

I finally turned the corner and caught the stage to catch Chico Banks ripping into one of many fiery solos of the set. Cadillac Dave, who received his name from the infamous Buddy Guy, tore through a blues-rock jukebox set of familiar crowd pleasers. From the Rolling Stones' "Miss You" with a unique harp solo to blues standards like "Dust My Broom," "Five Long Years," and "Hey Bartender;" I heard my first of many standing ovations and dancing crowds for the weekend. I had unfortunately missed the Michael Wheeler Band, who started the festival but heard via the good stage crew at the festival that it was a very good set. I quickly made my way to a cooler in the VIP tent, handled wonderfully by the Pantagraph and Hospital folks, and got the first of many bottles of water. The humidity was so thick you could cut it with a knife.

By the time spitfire Teeny Tucker took the stage, the weather had cooled to a nice breeze and the stage heated right up. Diving head first into her latest album *Two Big M's*, Teeny unleashed "Hound Dog" and got the crowd dancing on their feet. The crowd never left as Teeny ripped through her own compositions like "How Unlucky,"



Thornetta Davis by Ralph Weisheit



Larry McCray

"Show Me A Sign," and a new song yet to be recorded called "Trouble." Bringing the crowd almost to a frenzy of shouting and singing along, she cried out in the middle of "Trouble" saying: "That's how we used to sing it at church." Complete with 3 back up singers and stinging guitar from band leader Robert Hughes playing stinging guitar, it really was like paying witness to a full church choir and band. She went from church to juke joint prowling around the stage on "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On" and then blew the crowd away with the Etta James classic "I'd Rather Go Blind." Sporting the tremendous pipes that continue to win her accolades all across the country,

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Tucker also paid homage to her father Tommy Tucker with “Two Timin’ Me.” She rounded out the set with a funky and soulful version of Bob Dylan’s “Gotta Serve Somebody.”

Guitar phenomenon Larry McCray finished off the already destroyed crowd with his amazingly soulful voice and of course, his guitar. Going through bold originals like “Broken Promises” and “Love” and through soaring original arrangements of covers in “Sugar Sweet” and “Soulshine,” McCray’s performance was a perfect cap on the evening. If not that, the tongue-in-cheek titled instrumental “Buck Naked” full of Albert King styled funk on a Flying V nonetheless really was the perfect nightcap.

Day 2 started on shaky ground. It had rained the entire morning, letting up just in time to warm up the humidity. At a sweltering 90+ degree heat, Steve “The Harp” Band took the stage with some of the ruckus old school Chicago Blues. From the “Highway 39/Dust My Broom” Medley to “Give Me Back My Wig” and Canned Heat’s “Let’s Work Together,” Steve and Company really gave a relative class on Post War Chicago. Steve also invited up local young phenoms Matt Curry on guitar and Haley Crouch on harmonica to close out his set. A year 30 year master of harmonica, Steve also brought along a fun easy lesson to first-time folks who wanted to learn the instrument after his show.

Next up was Chicago piano/organ sensation Darryl Coutts. Darryl has been on a number of popular records that have come out recently. Darryl’s trio of seasoned Chicagoans plowed through a number of great 88s classics like “Shake Your Money Maker,” “Next Time You See

Me,” Professor Longhair’s “Let Me Hold Your Hand,” Louis Jordan’s “Caldonia,” Jimmy Rogers’ “Watch Yourself,” and ruckus Ray Charles’ “Mess Around,” to cap his show and the sweaty 90 degree heat.

Alvin Jett and Phat Noiz brought a mixture of jazz, soul-blues, and rock to the stage to the Bloomington crowd. This is the second time this festival season I’ve seen Alvin and the guys from St. Louis and they’ve always been great. They are better and better each time I hear them. They did a lot of work off of their two LPs including the critically acclaimed *Milk and Cookies*.

Janiva Magness, broken ankle and all, leapt to the stage (even on the bum leg) slinging herself around the stage better than most folks with two legs. A magnificent and emotional performance is always the norm when this Detroit native hits the stage. Mixing in work off of her two albums from Northern Blues while giving a healthy dose of songs from her latest and greatest release on Alligator, Janiva and her road band brought the entire crowd to its feet for the first time all afternoon. This lady looked like she barely broke a sweat in hour and ten minutes she spent on stage. Her magnificent stage presence and banter with the crowd also was highly entertaining.

The Holmes Brothers brought a heavy roots sound to the stage. Grounded in all of America’s roots music and their stirring harmonies vocally were second to none. As they “Holmes upped” such covers like Cheap Trick’s “I Want You To Want Me,” many of the crowd who are new to the blues absolutely were sold this weekend. If they weren’t convinced, the Motor City’s Thornetta Davis cat crawled and purred across the stage like a young Aretha Franklin, with a

voice equally as powerful. Her stirring renditions of “Piece of My Heart” and “Love the One You’re With” demonstrated her wonderful command of her arrangements and her voice. Slinging sweat and rousing the crowd huddled around the stage, Davis proved that she is definitely a great final act to what was a great weekend of blues.

Blues Blowtorch Society President and Nothing But the Blues Stage Manager Randy Hoffman said, “There wasn’t a bad act or a band that seemed like they had a bad time. We had one of the biggest crowds we’ve ever had and all the performances were spot on...absolutely great.”

I couldn’t have said it better myself. Priced reasonably, great vendors, and the beautiful scenery of three little lakes in the background was a great back drop to a fine festival. In their 7th year, Nothing But the Blues continues to live up to its name. This festival only leaves anticipation for me to hear what’s going to happen again next year!



BLUES NEWS NOTES

IllinoisBlues.com’s Blues Blast Music Awards 2008

WGLT has partnered with the *Blues Blast* e-zine from Illinoisblues.com to help you vote in their first ever music awards. Take a listen to the nominees. You can also hear the nominees, along with other great new and classic blues at their 24/7 blues stream. After you’ve listened be sure to cast your vote online!

Nominees:

Best Contemporary Blues Recording

Too Slim & the Tail Draggers - The Fortune Teller
Bryan Lee - Katrina Was Her Name

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Mem Shannon - Live at Tipitina's
Watermelon Slim & the Workers -
The Wheel Man

The Holmes Brothers - State of
Grace

Best Traditional Blues Recording

Omar Dykes & Jimmy Vaughan -

On the Jimmy Reed Highway

Bobby Rush - Raw

Lurrie Bell - Let's Talk About Love

Dave Riley & Bob Corritore -



Dave Riley and Bob Corritore

Travelin' the Dirt Road

David "Honeyboy" Edwards -

Roamin' & Ramblin'

Best Blues Song

Nick Moss - Mistakes From The
Past

The National Debonaires - Ain't

Gonna Happen Again

Sugar Ray Norcia - Little Green

Talking Frog

Omar Dykes & Jimmy Vaughan -

Jimmy Reed Highway

Watermelon Slim & the Workers -

The Wheel Man

Best Blues Band

Nick Moss & the Fliptops

Kilborn Alley Blues Band

Bryan Lee & the Blues Power Band

Magic Slim & the Teardrops

Back Door Slam

Best Male Artist

Lurrie Bell

Buddy Guy

Bobby Rush

Nick Moss

Bryan Lee

Best Female Artist

Koko Taylor

Teeny Tucker

Dianna Greenleaf

Betty Harris

Bettye LaVette

Best New Artist Debut Recording

Gina Sicilia - Allow Me to Confess

The Soul of John Black - The Good
Girl Blues

Moreland & Arbuckle - 1861

Dianna Greenleaf & Blue Mercy -

Cottonfields to Coffee

John Nemeth - Magic Touch

Sean Costello Rising Star Award

John Nemeth

Homemade Jamz Blues Band

John-Alex Mason

Seth Walker

Eden Brent

BBS WEBSITE NEWS:

As all of you probably know by
now, the Blues Blowtorch Society
has a new web site:

<http://www.bluesblowtorch.org>.

This new site is managed by
Deborah Mehlberg, and she is
doing an excellent job managing
it.

<http://www.bluesblowtorch.com/>

society has been removed from
the internet. If you have an e-
mail account and address

@bluesblowtorch.com, you must
go to

<http://www.bluesblowtorch.com>
to log in on the home page. Also,
on the left side of the home page
below my picture, is a "Society"

button, and when you click on
that, you will be taken to the new
web site of the Blues Blowtorch
Society. I want to personally thank
Ralph Weisheit and Pete Moore for
helping me keep the old site
working all these years. You can
still get to my personal site by
going to

<http://www.bluesblowtorch.com>
for the Forum and all information
on the "old" BBSociety site.

Frank Black

SAD NOTICES OF PASSING:

Our condolences to past president
and BBS founder Mike Sacco for
his sister, **Monica Sacco**, who
passed in January. The BBS sent a

memorial in her honor: In
Remembrance of Monica Sacco,
sister of Mike, a Memorial Gift has
been made to The American
Cancer Society.

Mike, our prayers are with you.

The Blues Blowtorch Society

Bo Diddley (December 30, 1928
June 2, 2008) Born Ellas Otha
Bates (adopted surname
McDaniel) was an original and
influential American blues singer,
guitarist, and songwriter. He was
known as The Originator because
of his key role in the transition
from blues to rock and roll.

Isaac Hayes (August 20, 1942
August 10, 2008) A fixture of the
City of Memphis, Hayes was best
known for his hits "Hot Buttered
Soul," "The Theme from Shaft,"
and "Black Moses." He was a
three-time Grammy® award
winner. He was a crucial part of
Stax Records, serving not only as a
star, but as a behind-the-scenes
writer, arranger, and musician. He
crafted songs for Otis Redding and
Sam and Dave during his Stax
tenure. In later years, he was well
known as the voice of Chef in the
animated TV show South Park, but
left the show after it made a
parody of Scientology, which was
his religion.

SOCIETY PHOTOS

Go to www.bluesblowtorch.org
and click on the "Pictures" tab.
Visit society photographer Ralph
Weishiet's own website to see
more:

www.prettygoodphotos.com

WIN BLUES CRUISE TICKETS

Dear Fellow Blues Lovers,

Once again the South Florida
Blues Society is happy to present
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Rhythm & Blues Cruise (2009 IS
SOLD OUT!), leaving Ft.
Lauderdale, January 24-31, 2009!

Continued on next page

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Raffle tickets are only \$20 each, and a maximum of only 500 will be sold! Only 500 tickets give very good odds of winning! The drawing will be held on September 21, 2008 at the SFBS 6th Anniversary Picnic & Jam. You need not be present to win! The South Florida Blues Society is the only Blues outlet nationally or internationally for that matter to offer LRBC Caribbean Cruise Raffle Tickets! These tickets are worth almost \$5,000! All the proceeds go to the SFBS.

You can purchase tickets online with a credit card or E-Check securely through PayPal on our web site www.soflابلues.org, or send a check (*Be sure to legibly include your name, address, phone number and email address) for \$20 for each ticket to:

South Florida Blues Society
P.O. Box 772548
Coral Springs, FL 33077-2548
Thank you.

Bob "Bluesbobby" Weinberg
President, South Florida Blues Society



NEW MEMBERS AND CHANGES

Note: Approximately half of all BBS memberships will be up for renewal by December 30, 2008. The other half will be due by June 30, 2009. As we go to press, many due on June 30, 2008 have renewed, Thank You! Thank you, also, for new members since last issue.

Our apologies, to any one misspelled or missed entirely. E-mail all corrections to the editor: skyydobro@bluesblowtorch.com OR phone 815-432-5656.

Renewals:

David & Mardelle Berchtold
Larry du Chanois
Gary Clem
Gordon Holmes
Jim Kelly

REGIONAL BLUES ROUNDUP



Reverend Raven

KANKAKEE

Contact:
skyydobro@bluesblowtorch.com
The Friends of the Blues present:
Sept 16 - Bryan Lee
Oct 12 & 13 - Too Slim & Taildraggers,
Nov 20 - Reverend Raven & Chain Smokin' Altar Boys

Steve & Debbie Mehlberg
Dean Miller
Gloria Replogle
Larry Spaulding
DMi Technology Group - Corporate
Eastland Chiropractic and Wellness Center - Corporate
Tony Valentine / TV Blues Band - Corporate

New Members:

"Welcome" to our newest members!:
Jim & Becky Baker
David Barker
Michael Bielfeldt
Merv Borkholder
Matt Brownfield
Richard Casper
Robert Clapper
Ben Cox
Dave & Dianne Fornoff
Dave & Alice Fulks
Dan & Norma Jean Fultz
Peggy Flynn
Ron & Fran Garrett
Dori Kempin

PEORIA

Labor Day weekend has the Illinois Blues Festival with 6V6 opening the fest.

Info:

www.illinoisbluesfestival.com

SPRINGFIELD

Illinois Central Blues Club Blue Mondays at the Alamo

www.icbluesclub.org

August 25 - Peter Karp

Sept 1 - Scott Ellison (Tulsa Ok)

Sept 8 - Bill Lupkin & Chicago Blues Coalition

Sept 15 - Harmonica Wizards
Dennis Gruenling (New Jersey)
& Steve Guyger

(Philadelphia)

Sept 22 - Lil' Dave Thompson

Sept 29 - The Blues Deacons

Oct 6 - TBA

Oct 13 - The Rich Fabec Blues Band (Anna IL)

Oct 20 - Too Slim & Taildraggers (Seattle)



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CHANGED ADDRESS ?

Dear Members of the Blues Blowtorch Society,

Please let us know when you change your phone number and e-mail address so we can get the news out to you. Access Delta Frank: blusgrdn@mchsi.com OR BBS, PO Box 1092, BLOOMINGTON IL 61702-1092

Thank you, Frank Black
BBS Membership Director



EDUCATION SPOT

Our mission statement: “The Blues Blowtorch Society was formed as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization to enhance the culture of blues music in the Central Illinois area through the promotion of local artists, as well as regional and national talents, and to educate the public to foster an appreciation of the American Heritage known as The Blues.”

Origin and Definition of “The Blues” - Shortest and best found!

“Delta Sharecroppers all too often felt the blues, born of hard times and injustice. Blues songs spread from work songs, field hollers, and spirituals, with roots that stretched back to the rhythms and melodic scales of Africa and the harmonic and lyric structures of Europe. Born in the early 20th century (1900s), the standard blues song evolved into a series of twelve-bar musical phrases based on three chords and an A-A-B rhyme pattern. Simple and evocative, the blues was infinitely adaptable for expressing deep emotion. The blues dealt with the day-to-day travails of poor folks just barely getting by. The best Blues, like Country & Western, its light skinned twin, are concise, powerful, and aphoristic: three chords and the truth.”

From page 17 in the book *Moanin' At Midnight The Life and Times of Howlin' Wolf* by James Segrest and Mark Hoffman.



REVIEWS

Wanda Johnson
Hold What You Got
Erwin Music

www.wandaj.com

By James “Skyy Dobro” Walker
14 songs; 56:02 minutes;
Suggested
Style: Variety: blues, soul, R&B,

pop, and gospel

Hey Skyy,

I attended the Chicago Blues Festival last year and saw a really great female singer performing named Wanda Johnson. She had a strong, ear catching voice that covered a wide range. I had never heard of her before, but that is the beauty of a huge, free festival like Chicago's I get to see new-to-me artists. She was on the Front Porch Stage on Sunday afternoon, June 10.

Anyhoo..... why haven't more people heard her? Why don't you do a review of her? You review all these big name artists from the big labels, but why not give the little guy a break? She sang a cute song about being a “low maintenance woman who was allergic to mink.” Ain't that funny? Yer fan,
Justin N. Quiry

Dear Justin,

I have never heard of her either, but that doesn't mean a damn thing! Simple answer: so much blues; so little time. I could spend the rest of my life just trying to catch up on the dead artists, let alone the contemporary ones.

Good news, however, I did get Wanda Johnson's latest album to review. And, you are so right she is great! Good thing I did find out about her because she is moving up so fast that I was in danger of being the last-to-know.
Skyy

Wanda Johnson is a natural-born singer and entertainer who hails from a large family in a farming community in upstate South Carolina. Born in 1963 one of nine all-girl children, she has been performing semi-pro since the early 1990s.

Wanda is quickly gaining notoriety as a new star on the

international scene. With three European tours under her belt, numerous USA festival appearances, and three CDs in worldwide distribution, 2008 is going to be a big year for Wanda Johnson. Her website schedule shows continuous gigging in the Southeast with overseas touring in France, Macau (China), Poland, and the Czech Republic.

She writes much of her own music, and five of the fourteen numbers on this latest CD are penned by her. Wanda is accompanied by Shrimp City Slim, aka Gary Erwin, the Charleston SC based label owner, producer, pianist, and composer who contributed seven album tunes.

Erwin's deft keyboard work is a big part of the fun on the CD, and his band includes Silent Eddie Phillips guitars, LaMont Garner drums, Jerome Griffin bass, Mike Kincaid tenor sax, and Juke Joint Johnny harmonica. All but the last two add backing and harmony vocals.

For blues purists, “Girlfriend,” a shuffle by Patricia J. Pruitt, is a 12 bar killer. Erwin opens with two fisted Chicago blues piano to accent the sad story revealing a man stealing best friend. The mid song slide-guitar solo is so completely greasy it's just plain, down-in-the-dirt nasty. Man, I love it so much it will be on my radio show this week!

The catchy title track also opens with some bouncing piano before clever estrogen-laced lyrics send a message to women that my male brain probably can't fully comprehend. “Hold What You Got” seems to celebrate full bodied women who should be proud of themselves as they are

Many a joke has been created by men about the “perfect woman.” In “Allergic To Mink,” Johnson beats all us men to the punch (line), “I'm a low

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

maintenance mama, allergic to mink." In this mid-tempo romp, each line is punctuated nicely by alternating harmonica, piano, guitar, and sax giving the song more of the creativity that makes the whole album a winner.

Most of the songs run three to four minutes which is significant. Too many times it seems, if an artist can not find a muse to craft a solid song, they can always improvise one ponderous extended guitar solo after another. But, that wears thin and ultimately exposes the truth.

As I said at the top, I know essentially nothing about Erwin Music and Wanda Johnson. But, all I need to know is contained in this wonderful release revealing there are some hugely talented musicians and composers and one rising star of a singer in South Carolina.



Back Door Slam

Back Door Slam

Roll Away

Blix Street Records, Inc.

www.backdoorslam.com

www.myspace.com/backdoorslam

www.blixstreet.com

**By James "Sky Dobro" Walker
11 songs; 48:44 minutes; Library
Quality**

**Styles: Acoustic ballads, Electric
Blues-Rock, Rock**

**Note: Youtube.com has lots of
Back Door Slam videos!**

There is truly something

special going on here with this band and their debut album. From an April 2 appearance on ABC's "Jimmy Kimmel Live" to a sold out show at Buddy Guy's Legends in Chicago to an upcoming September date on "Austin City Limits," three guys barely in their twenties from the Isle of Man are grabbing attention all over the US and world, well beyond their British home. They are currently on a summer long tour of the US and Canada.

Their debut CD is an impressive set full of attention grabbing, "who-is-that-singing?" vocals by Davy Knowles. With clear, distinct enunciation that is rare, Knowles' voice is simultaneously fresh and seasoned beyond his age and completely versatile in range and power. The album features moving blues, heads up rockers, and poignant ballads that makes Back Door Slam one of the year's most interesting arrivals capable of linking all good music across any expanse of time.

Since this is a "Blues" publication, we might as well set the record straight up front: For all the adulations, the truth is BDS will be controversial in the blues community. Clearly BDS is more rock than blues and will be considered by many to not be blues at all.

But, we may just be witnessing the beginning of a blues revival that hasn't happened since Stevie Ray Vaughan and, before that, the 1960s. Davy Knowles, Adam Jones, and Ross Doyle are well schooled in the blues and are a generation of young lions breathing life into it. To package blues music in a pop shell recorded with reverbs and incredibly lush guitar tones is the reason they will catch on with people, especially young people.

On the other side of the coin, that creates a potential problem. While Back Door Slam creates a

whole new audience for the blues, "the blues" will have meanings in the minds of many it never had before. Certain styles can fall off and have less appeal. For example, none of the younger BDS fans will know who Paul Butterfield was, but they can start reading and digging.

In 1967, I didn't know who Robert Johnson was either when the Rolling Stones (the hot new band of the day) sang "Love In Vain."

Back Door Slam are Davy Knowles (acoustic and electric guitars, vocal, mandolin, lap steel), Ross Doyle (drums) and Adam Jones (bass), all brought up on an appetite of everything blues. The result is a sound reminiscent of the blues greats but with a nod to the influential modern music and songwriters they love: Clapton, Knopfler, Mayall, and Mayer. "Roll Away" was recorded at DAM Studios in Douglas, the principal city on the Isle of Man, and produced by Dave Armstrong. All songs are Davy Knowles originals except one cover of a Cream number.

The album opens with "Come Home," a catchy all-out blues-rock that is fast becoming a favorite on radio stations across America. Kicking off with a creative bass hook, the song is the complete package for popularity: clicking rhythm in the quiet spaces, harmonious vocal a cappella passages, sweet repeating guitar riffs, all summing up the protagonist's desire to reunite with his lover.

My favorite song is track 4, "Gotta Leave." A blues number that has a slow, single note picked guitar opening, it builds in intensity and heartache. Showing off some pretty good songwriting, Knowles wails, "Ooh, you must have got me CAWN-fused with some other man... / Tell me:

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

how can I trust you when you can't trust your self?" Knowles' killer mid-song guitar solo talks without words to the listener, perfectly explaining the protagonist's anguish as he must leave a disloyal partner.

Track 5 is a Celtic-folk acoustic number, the likes of which separate Back Door Slam from mere guitar slingers. Instead of more sonic assault, here is a thoughtful and sad dedication to Richard Brookes and Brian Garvey, a rhythm guitarist who was one of the founding members of the band killed in a 2004 car crash

"Heavy on My Mind," track 2, is full bodied and amplified rock which, following track 1, suggests that is all you get until tracks 4 and 5. "Maybe my mind is playing tricks on me" becomes a catchy sing-a-long phrase by the second listen. "Outside Woman Blues," the only cover on the album, recapitulates the boys as the power trio Cream.

The title track, "Roll Away," is an acoustic folk-bluesy number addressing a dilemma of living in such a desirable but off-the-beaten-path locale as the Isle of Man. Knowles sings, "I've got to Roll away/Maybe I'll return to this island some day."

In interviews the boys talk about performing live as an overwhelming desire. The rest of the world is the better for it when the boys left the island and brought their music to us. Check them out yourself or just keep your ear to the ground, and you'll hear that Back Door Slam!

Back Door SlamLive at Buddy Guy's Legends, Chicago IL , Monday, [June 09](#), 2008

By James "Skyy Dobro" Walker

When is the last time an artist played a "Sold Out" show at Legends, other than Buddy Guy himself? That was the setting for a live show by Back Door Slam.

Their first two numbers gave a good taste of what the boys are all about, but the third song demonstrated why they are truly special. "Gotta Leave" had a slow start that built in intensity across the number. Perhaps the best attribute of the band is the singing of Davy Knowles with clear, distinct enunciation that is rare. As the intensity welled up, so did the power of his vocals. His mid-song guitar solo featured a fantastic pyrotechnic sonic assault reflecting the mood of the protagonist's anguish. Any lingering doubts I had about "too much hype" were gone, and I was just putty in their hands after that.



CONCERTS



Benoit at NBTBFest 2007

www.bluesblowtorch.com/society...Forum...Concerts

Band Schedules and concerts: Our Forum is a great source of information for the latest. Delta Frank posts the concert listings he receives, especially ones for Central Illinois. Many listings are also now available at www.illinoisblues.com

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Saturday, September 27, 2008

8:00 PM

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Buddy and Hopkins

By Jason Nocera (www.buddyandhopkins.com)



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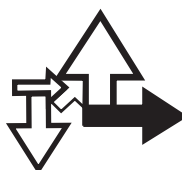
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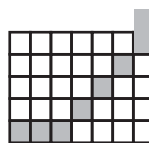
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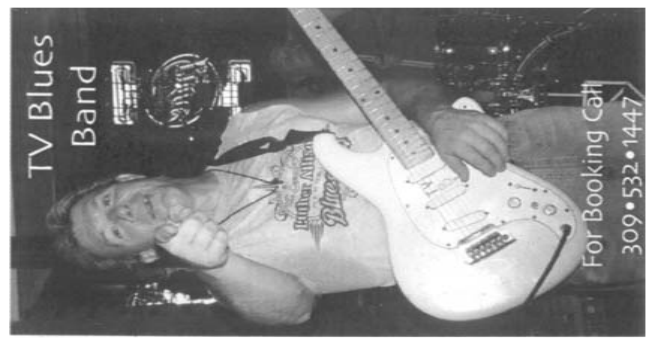
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Treasurer
Deborah Mehlberg 309-662-0996
deborah464@aol.com
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Parliamentarian
Rick Tull 309-242-9464
Rick.Tull@comcast.net

Entertainment
Deborah Mehlberg 309-662-0996
deborah464@aol.com
or stevetheharp@aol.com

Membership Director
"Delta Frank" Black 217-935-8603
blusgrdn@mchsi.com

Education
Steve "The Harp" Mehlberg 309-662-0996
stevetheharp@aol.com

Marketing
Dave Long 309-275-7911
davelong42@hotmail.com

Photographer/Archivist/Webmaster
Ralph Weisheit 309-452-6444
raweish@ilstu.edu

Newsletter Editor
James "Sky Dobro" Walker 815-432-5656
Skydobro@bluesblowtorch.com