



newsletter@bluesblowtorch.com May - June 2008

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

HELP DONATE CDs!

The BBS is collecting used CDs from members and friends of our members. These will be sold at the "Nothin' But The Blues" festival and at our Central Illinois Blues Challenge. Proceeds will be used for our Blues Education events. Please go through your CD accumulations and donate everything to which you no longer listen. All kinds of music CDs are welcome and appreciated. As we are a non-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 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!

NEW BBS WEBSITES

Check out our two newest websites to better inform. www.bluesblowtorch.org www.myspace.com/blues_blowtorch_society

For comments or changes, contact Deborah Mehlberg at Deborah464@aol.com.

Note: www.bluesblowtorch.com/society will stay up for a year. At the end of this contract, Delta Frank will take down www.bluesblowtorch.com/society, but www.bluesblowtorch.com will remain.

NEWS YOU CAN USE:

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

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 Central Illinois Blues Challenge, 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



BBS UPCOMING BLUES EVENTS

NOTHIN' BUT THE BLUES FESTIVAL

Celebrating 7 Years!
 Friday, July 18 & Saturday, July 19, 2008
 Tri Lakes, 2100 Bunn Street
 Bloomington IL
www.nothinbutthebluesfestival.com
 The following bands are booked as of May 31, 2008.

Friday July, 18th

- 6:00 PM Cleveland Fats
- 7:00 PM Mike Wheeler Band
- 8:15 PM Teeny Tucker
- 9:30 PM Larry McCray



Holmes Brothers

Saturday, July 19th

- 1:30 PM Steve "The Harp" Blues Band
- 3:00 PM TBA
- 4:15 PM Alvin Jett and the Phat Noiz band
- 5:30 PM Janiva Magness
- 6:45 PM Holmes Brothers
- 8:15 PM Thornetta Davis

What it 'tis

It's big city sound in your own backyard. It's the Nothin' But The Blues Festival in its 7th year of keeping the blues alive and kicking in central Illinois. Enjoying

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its new location at Bloomington's Tri-Lakes, the festival's crew is ready to roll.

The Blues festival has grown from a one-day affair with five artists to a two-day, 5000 plus attendee, open air extravaganza with the biggest blues names in the country including Grammy and Blues Music Award winners and nominees.

It's summertime and the livin' is easy. Pack your lawn chairs and blankets because families come for the entire festival. It's parents, it's kids, it's blues fans from all over the country, kicking back and having a great time.

The Place - Bloomington Tri-Lakes, 2100 Bunn Street

How do you make the hottest blues concert in Central Illinois even hotter? Just add water. That's right, the Pantagraph's 7th annual Nothin' But the Blues Festival has moved to Tri-Lakes, 2100 Bunn Street, in Bloomington. Tri-Lakes is located in the heart of Bloomington, a luscious hideaway of green trees, open grass and three peaceful lakes, carefully hidden behind a junkyard.

It's a journey as old and varied as the blues themselves. Traveling through the mountains of abandoned cars piled one on top of the other; you feel the desperation, the emptiness that is the junkyard. Then you unexpectedly reach Tri-Lakes, the beautiful jewel of pastoral beauty, and you feel the healing power of the blues.

The Food Awesome!

What kind of food goes with the blues? How about some walleye or catfish? Or some gumbo? Or some ribs? All washed down with a cold beverage of your choice. And there are plenty of corn dogs, ice cream, and cotton candy as well. Whether you want to enjoy a taste of 'Nawlins' or play it safe with a corn dog, if you crave it, you'll find it here.



Janiva Magness

For The Kids

BBS Harmonica Workshop with Harmonica Master Steve "The Harp."

Free harmonica for children 17 and under attending the workshop; \$5.00 for adults attending the workshop that want a NBTB harmonica. Harmonica lessons are free for adults if they bring a harmonica in the key of "C."

TICKET INFORMATION

Prices: One day advance \$15.00; Gate \$18.00

Children 12 and under FREE!

Credit Cards by Paypal:

www.nothinbutthebluesfestival.com

Phone! 309-820-0099

Mail:

Nothin' But The Blues Festival,

P.O. Box 265

Normal, Illinois 61761

(All mail order tickets end July 15, 2008)

In Person:

BLOOMINGTON:

The Pantagraph

Eastland Chiropractic and

Wellness Center

Golf Discount

Pro Tire and Auto

Famous Liquors

Pro Sound / Music Shoppe

Growing Grounds

CHAMPAIGN:

Pro Sound

CENTRAL ILLINOIS BLUES CHALLENGE

September 21, 2008

Tri-Lakes, 2100 Bunn St.
Bloomington IL

The CIBC winner will be sent to Memphis, February 5-7, 2009, to compete as our representative in the International Blues Challenge. We currently have quite a few bands and solo/duo acts that are interested in competing for the trip to Memphis. This year we are limiting the number of bands to five. The solo/duo acts competition is to be determined based on interest.

Acts will be judged by the same criteria that are used in Memphis for the IBC. Each act has 30 minutes to perform and is given points based on Blues Content, Talent, and Stage Presence. Full details about scoring criteria and official rules are available at the Blues Foundation web site, www.blues.org.

CIBC 2008 Eligibility

Requirements:

- 1) Registration Fee of \$35.00 is non-refundable
- 2) 30 minute sets
- 3) Bands and Solo/Duo acts must submit a song list with recorded representation (MP3's or CD's). If a CD with more than one song is submitted, the artist must note which song they wish to have judged, or it will be the first one on the CD.
- 4) All songs presented must be Blues (electric or acoustic), Rock/Blues, Jazz/Blues, Country Blues or Rhythm & Blues. Not acceptable examples are: Country & Western, Rock & Roll, Bluegrass, Celtic, Hip Hop, Pop, Jazz, Reggae, and Rap.
- 5) The final five contestants will be judged on acceptability by a review board, determined solely by the BBS Board of Directors. Their decision is final.

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6) Submission deadline is July 18, 2008. Selected bands and solo/duo acts will be notified on August 1st 2008

7) Please submit your items to Deborah464@aol.com. Mail your CD and Registration Fee to: Entertainment Director Blues Blowtorch Society
C/O Deborah Mehlberg
1310 Pinehurst Drive
BLOOMINGTON IL 61704-2233

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA - Restrictions:

Any artist whose name has appeared on a final Blues Music Award (Handy) ballot is ineligible. All other musicians who have had peripheral and/or professional contact through performance with a Handy nominee, including but not limited to touring band members and studio musicians, are deemed eligible for the IBC --An individual may not compete in more than one act in any capacity.

--A musician cannot compete in the Band Division and the Solo/Duo Division, even if that musician represents a different Affiliate in each.

No other entry restrictions apply. This means that management contracts, booking agent contracts, recording contracts, performance contracts (even those that include regular television or radio broadcast), and nationally distributed recordings have no bearing on eligibility.

Therefore, the only artists who are deemed **ineligible** to even be considered for entry in the International Blues Challenge are artists whose names have appeared on a final ballot in the 28 year history of the Blues Music Awards (formerly WC Handy Awards). All other traditional gauges of success are moot in determining eligibility for the IBC.

THE INTERNATIONAL BLUES CHALLENGE IS RESTRICTED TO ACTS REPRESENTING AN AFFILIATED SOCIETY OR ORGANIZATION OF THE BLUES FOUNDATION.

A complete list of Blues Foundation Affiliated Organizations is available at www.blues.org.

The IBC adheres to the following criteria for what constitutes a band and what constitutes a solo/duo act.

Band- any act with three or more musicians. Vocalists are counted as musicians for the purpose of this competition. Both electric and acoustic instruments are allowed.

Solo/Duo- any act with one or two musicians. Vocalists are counted as musicians for the purpose of this competition. Both electric and acoustic instruments are allowed.

GUIDELINES FOR SOCIETIES AND AFFILIATES:

1. Each of The Blues Foundation's 140 Affiliated Organizations has the right (but not the obligation) to enter a contestant in the IBC. (If your society is not an affiliate, contact Jay Sieleman at jay@blues.org).

2. An Affiliate's representative may be chosen by any means the organization sees fit, whether through a regional competition (recommended) or by appointment. If an affiliate does not conduct a competition to determine who it will sponsor but instead appoints a representative, that representative may not include a board member or officer.

3. Each Affiliate may enter a Band in the Band Division AND a Solo/Duo act in the Solo/Duo Division to compete in the 23rd IBC in 2007.

4. If the Band and/or Solo/Duo act is appointed rather than selected through a regional competition, the Affiliate must

demonstrate through official organization meeting minutes that the organization has adopted this band and/or this solo/duo act as its official representative(s).

5. An Affiliate's entrant is considered a representative of that Affiliate in every capacity. Thus, the Affiliate remains liable for any problems created by its representative.

6. All paperwork, as well as findings of eligibility and registration requirements for IBC are the responsibility of the Affiliate, NOT THE ENTRANT.

7. The Blues Foundation will stand as the final arbiter of any eligibility disputes. All contestants will have to have a copy of the affidavit on file with The Blues Foundation before competing in IBC. Any Band found at any time to have been ineligible at the time of the competition will be stripped of its award(s) and the Affiliate may be liable for financial restitution of cash and other prizes to The Blues Foundation.

Questions for the Blues Foundation, ask Joe Whitmer at Joe@blues.org.



BLUES FESTIVAL DO'S & DON'TS

Do bring:

1. A duffle bag or backpack. Load it with all-weather gear; these are outdoor festivals. Be prepared for full sun to rain. To avoid sunburn, bring hats, long sleeve t-shirts, sunscreen, mosquito repellent, sunglasses. A compact plastic poncho can be handy for rain. Dress in layers.
2. Comfortable walking shoes; forget fashion comfort is in!
3. Lightweight, folding lawn chairs.
4. Binoculars and camera.
5. Sharpie permanent marker for autographs
6. Personal health items & hand sanitizer

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7. Money
8. Flashlight for after dark
9. Huggies / Can cooler collars
10. Best friend(s). Spread the good blues news.
11. A good time, no stress attitude!

Don't bring:

1. Dogs or your pet. I know this will cause arguments from pet owners. But, it is my experience that neither the audience, the pet itself, nor, ultimately, the owners have a good time over an extended hours festival when a panting beast is in attendance.
2. Firearms, weapons, or fireworks.
3. Expensive designer clothes or jewelry.
4. A huge umbrella that will block others' view of the stage.
5. Your own liquor or beer. Plenty will be available on site!
6. A desire to place wagers with strangers
7. A lack of patience, quick temper, or bad attitude.

Good times seem to rule at Blues Festivals. My wife and I attended five blues festivals last summer. We have observed that people who love blues music are simply real folks. Go to a live blues show anywhere, and no matter what type of crowd, people are going to have a good time and make sure you have a good time. Security personnel are always necessary but usually unneeded.



ASK DELTAFRANK

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

In the last issue, we left you with this question:

Question: : Delta Frank, Tell us



Frank Black and Marilyn with Honeyboy

about going to see Honeyboy Edwards with Kilborn Alley Blues Band in Decatur back in February? Answer: Seeing Honeyboy Edwards in Decatur on Feb 28th was a real thrill for me. I had seen and talked to him a few years back at the Nothin' But The Blues Festival, and he told me the real truth about Robert Johnson. This time we had a lot of small talk going on between us. I gave Honeyboy a black pen and a silver pen so he would be able to sign autographs. His agent didn't even supply him a pen. And later on, I saw Honeyboy trying to give one of the pens back to someone. I ran up to him and told him they were his pens that I gave him and to keep them. It was nice to have Bob Kieser (Illinoisblues.com) take a picture of Marilyn and me with Honeyboy. Honeyboy had signed my book about his life two or three years ago. I took an 8X10 picture of him and me with us, and he signed it. I have a few CDs also that he signed.

It snowed that night and was slick going home and took awhile, but it was well worth the trip to see him once again. The place was booked up, and had to turn people away. It was a sell out. Kilborn Alley is such a good band also. They did a very good job of working with Honeyboy, and sounded good together. I must say, two great entertainers are: Kilborn Alley and David "Honeyboy" Edwards. I would go again to see them. Thanks for asking, Delta Frank.

4

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? From Kurt Foor, The CC Clubman Answer: See next issue of Blues News.



OFFICIAL RAMBLINGS FROM THE PREZ

It seems like we are picking up a little membership steam, which is a good thing. We had a nice turn out at the NV Ultralounge for Too Slim and the Tail Draggers on May 8. Those guys put on a real entertaining show. Our last couple meetings have proved that the Society is alive and well, so I thought I would itemize what we have been up to and what we are planning on for the next couple months. If you have comments or questions, you'll find my contact information somewhere below and at our new website, which is really cool at www.bluesblowtorch.org

1) The BBS Board has approved the following Board of Director positions: Dave Long is Marketing Chair and Rick Tull is Parliamentarian. These guys stepped forward and will really help us manage our Society.

2) The BBS will be sending our members one email per week! We will have all the information on what's happening for the next week and the next month, but only send it out once, early in the week. This will reduce the volume of emails our membership receives. If you are not currently on the e-mail list and would like to receive our emails under this new format, please notify Frank Black at blusgrdn@mchsi.com.

3) The BBS is considering our 1st (maybe annual) golf outing,

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possibly at Ironwood Golf Course in Normal. The entry fee would be \$50. This would include 18 holes of golf, a cart, 6 pack of your favorite beverage per cart, and a gondola sandwich for each entrant. A 9-hole outing is also a possibility, since it does take some time to play 18. The outing may be followed with a Blues band (TBA) on the patio. The event will be open to all BBS members and their friends. This will give you a chance to meet the BBS officers, talk the blues, golf, business, and if it ends up like the golf outings I've been on in the past, I'll bet you'll walk away with a new joke or two!

We would like to schedule this event sometime in August or September so we need to start planning now. Please contact Dave Long at 309-275-5666 if you are interested, or would like more information.

4) The BBS is also considering a bus trip to the 2009 International Blues Challenge next February 5-8, in Memphis TN. This would be the bus, hotel and wrist bands for the events for Thursday, Friday, Saturday and return Sunday. Singles @ \$605, Double Occupancy @ \$585, Triple @ \$475, and Quad @ \$450, based on a minimum of 40 people, could be less if there is a lot of interest. We are looking at a ½-down-deposit upon sign up and balance due 30 days prior to departure. Again, contact Dave Long at 309-275-5666 if you are interested, or would like more information.

5) Jeff Augsburger, one of more active members, has put together a distinctively unique CD collection box. At all of our meetings and events, it will be placed in a conspicuous location for you to donate your used and no longer listened to CDs. We will



Randy Hoffman On The Job

also provide donation letters for your tax accounting adventures. These CDs will be available for sale during our events with the profits benefiting the Society. Jeff says if this really takes off, he'll be happy to come to your house and pick them up. Contact Randy Hoffman at rd.hoffman@verizon.net or 309-531-2533 if you'd like Jeff to visit you. Anything that hangs around too long will be donated to GLT at the next Recycled Music Sale.

6) Wondering where you can catch some live Blues? Check out our new website at www.bluesblowtorch.org. You will find BBS sponsored events on the home page, but hit the "Calendar" button, and you can see all kinds of activities listed. Just click on the band or event listed on the calendar, and it will take you to either the Artist's or Venue's web site for further information. Want your gig or event listed? You must have a website, but then just send our webmaster an email. That is a contact button at the bottom of the home page.

7) Our June 19th, General Meeting will be held at Coconut Louie's, 2303 E. Washington St. Bloomington, IL 61704. As always, the meeting will begin at 7:00 pm, and we understand that it may be in the meeting room in the basement, so if you don't see us, ask the bartender! We are discussing bringing live Blues Music to follow each of the meetings. If you like this idea, contact Randy at the address or phone number provided above.

8) Nothin' But The Blues Festival volunteers will receive a free pass for the day they work. Ticket discounts will be available to BBS members, and if the tickets are here in time, we will have them for sale at \$10 per day. Considering they will \$18 at the event gate (and still an entertainment bargain), that is a very good deal.

So let's have a great summer of Blues and look for the BIG EVENT NEWS we will have in the Fall.

Randy



FROM THE EDITOR'S BLUES SHACK

** Keep abreast of **Chicago Blues happenings** with two sources: www.chicagobluesguide.com and www.todayschicagoblues.blogspot.com

• **Steve "The Harp" and guitarist Chris Stevens** are set to give workshops in harmonica and guitar respectively on Saturday, August 30 at the Budweiser Illinois Blues Festival in Peoria. Steve is scheduled for 2:00 PM and Chris for 1:00 PM.

• **Bryan Lee health report:** Unfortunately Bryan did spend a few days in the hospital while in

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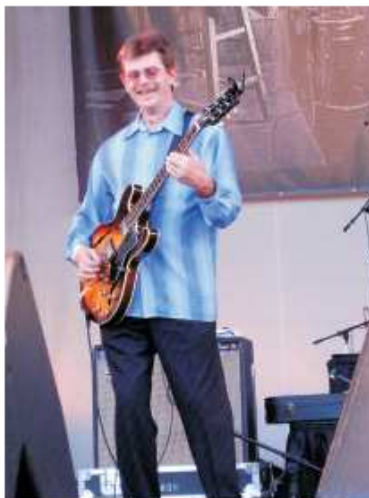
Germany, May 8-10. However, it was not because of a heart attack or aneurism. Following a 10 hour international flight, he was feeling quite bad. The hospital found he had fluid in his lungs and his oxygen level was in the danger zone. After many tests the doctors found that the right side of his diaphragm is punctured and paralyzed. This is what caused the low oxygen levels. So, he is back to work performing and touring, but for now he is on oxygen full time except when playing and singing. They cannot fix the right side of his diaphragm, but if he loses some serious weight, the condition will improve. Keep him in your prayers and thoughts.

• Heard **Jerry Lee Gingery**, leader of the JuJu Kings, is on the road to recovery following a recent health scare. Contact: jerrylee@jujukings.com. Even better news: Jerry Lee has proposed to the lovely, Leslie Etienne. Remember Jerry, "Happy wife, happy life."

• Billy Flynn Reflects on **Cadillac Blues** Soundtrack: Guitarist Billy Flynn participated in the recording sessions that will be part of the soundtrack of **Cadillac Blues**, a movie about the famed Chess Records out of Chicago. Chess was the label responsible for 1950s and 60s hits by Muddy Waters, Little Walter, Sonny Boy Williamson II, Jimmy Rogers, Howlin' Wolf, Bo Diddley, Chuck Berry, Etta James, and many others. Billy will play guitar on many of the selections of the soundtrack, which will recreate classic Chess hits for the movie. The producer/drummer of these sessions was Steve Jordan, best known as the drummer for the Saturday Night Live band. Also on board were Larry Taylor, Barrelhouse Chuck, Kim Wilson, Eddie Taylor, Jr., and others.



Jerry Lee Gingery



Billy Flynn at Chicago Blues Fest 2005

Billy reports that Kim Wilson's remake of Little Walter's hit record "Juke" was simply amazing in how it captured the original feel of the groundbreaking harmonica instrumental that would redefine the role of that instrument in blues. Billy also reports that he played three Etta James ballads that will be sung by Beyoncé, who portrays Etta in the movie. In addition to appearing on the movie soundtrack, Billy states that his guitar work will be included on the next Beyoncé CD as she recreates Etta's "At Last" and brings it to a whole new generation. Congratulations to Billy and all of those involved in this noble movie project.



BLUES NEWS NOTES

BBS CHANGES

New on BOD From the May 15, 2008 Meeting:

Larry D has tended his resignation as Marketing Director. Larry will continue as Vice Presidnet. Motion to appoint Dave Long to the Marketing Director position was approved .

Steve Mehlberg has waived his position of Parliamentarian, and will continue as Education Chair. Motion to appoint Rick Tull to the Parliamentarian position was approved.

Welcome aboard Dave and Rick.

June Meeting Site:

Our June 19th, General Meeting will be held at Coconut Louie's, 2303 E. Washington St., Bloomington, IL 61704. As always, the meeting will begin at 7:00 pm, and it may be in the meeting room in the basement. So, if you don't see us, ask the bartender! We are discussing bringing live Blues Music to follow each of the meetings.

6V6 NEWS

Hey Folks,

Just wanted to drop you a line and let you know that Russell Miller & 6V6 have a myspace page. Here's the link, you can listen to some music, browse some pictures, and check our schedule.

www.myspace.com/russellmiller6v6

Russell Miller & 6V6, Randy Hoffman
Real Blues Power
Blues is the Healer of the Soul.

The Blues Foundation's 2008 Blues Music Awards Winners:

1. DVD - Kenny Wayne Shepherd
"10 Days Out: Blues from the Backroads"

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2. Traditional Blues Male Artist - Hubert Sumlin
3. Traditional Blues Female Artist - Koko Taylor
4. Acoustic Artist - Bobby Rush
5. Acoustic Album - Bobby Rush "Raw"
6. Pinetop Perkins Piano Player - Honey Piazza
7. Instrumentalist-Guitar - Bob Margolin
8. Soul Blues Male Artist - Bobby Rush
9. Soul Blues Female Artist - Irma Thomas
10. Soul Blues Album - The Holmes Brothers "State of Grace"
11. Historical Album - Epic/Legacy "Breakin' It UP, Breakin' it DOWN"
12. Contemporary Blues Album - Tommy Castro "Painkiller"
13. Contemporary Blues Female Artist - Bettye LaVette
14. Contemporary Blues Male Artist - Tab Benoit
15. Instrumentalist-Harmonica - Kim Wilson
16. Instrumentalist-Bass - Bob Stroger
17. Instrumentalist-Drums - Sam Lay
18. Instrumentalist-Horn - Deanna Bogart
19. Instrumentalist-Pedal Steel - Robert Randolph
20. Best New Artist Debut - Diunna Greenleaf & Blue Mercy
21. Song - "Gonna Buy Me a Mule" Koko Taylor
22. Traditional Blues Album - Koko Taylor "Old School"
23. Contemporary Blues Album - Watermelon Slim & the Workers "The Wheel Man"
24. Band - Watermelon Slim & the Workers
25. B.B. King Entertainer - Tommy Castro

SAD NOTICES OF PASSING:

Sean Costello April 16, 1979 – April 15, 2008
News of Atlanta blues artist



Sean Costello 2005

Sean Costello's death shocked fans and friends of his Wednesday, many of whom had been preparing to help the musician celebrate his 29th birthday Wednesday night. Costello's unexpected passing Tuesday on the eve of his birthday party was just the sort of ironic bluesy twist the prolific songwriter routinely worked into the songs on his critically acclaimed albums.

The musician's body was discovered Tuesday at the Cheshire Motor Inn where he was staying as a guest. When the singer didn't respond, a call to 911 was placed. An immediate cause of death was not known. According to Fulton County Medical Examiner's Office investigator B. Honey, there were no signs of foul play in the singer's motel room. A toxicology report is pending.

A public viewing for Costello washeld from 6 to 9 p.m. Friday at the Mayes Ward Dobbins Funeral Home, 180 Church Street, Marietta. The singer's funeral was held at 11 a.m. Saturday at the Shrine of Immaculate Conception, 48 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. SW, Atlanta.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the singer's non-profit, The Sean Costello Foundation for Bi-Polar Research, are requested. To donate, call 678-384-0063 or e-mail tray@bbandt.com.

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.prettvgoodphotos.com



REGIONAL BLUES ROUNDUP

KANKAKEE

During May, The Blues Blowtorch Society and the Kankakee area Friends of the Blues continued to join in booking touring artists to get them two shows on their way through. Too Slim and the Taildraggers and Bryan Lee and the Blues Power Band both played shows in Bradley IL and Bloomington-Normal. See Too Slim review by Ben Cox in the "Reviews" section.



Bryan Lee, May 2008

BRYAN LEE NOTE:

Jeff Beninato now lives in Bloomington with his amazing wife Karen and is now playing bass with this incredible band. Jeff is a New Orleans native who got displaced by Hurricane

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Jeff Beninato

Katrina, but lived through it. His mom's house got destroyed. Jeff and Karen Dalton-Beninato started the New Orleans Musicians Relief fund which to date has donated thousands of dollars to displaced New Orleans musicians.

Greetings BBS Members,

As a follow up to last week's call for attendance at the Too Slim and the Taildraggers show on May 8, the Blues Blowtorch Society deserves a big "Thank You" for coming through in the clutch. The club owner and manager at the NV Ultra Lounge were happy with the results. Attendance was sufficient to prove that a BBS sponsorship does mean something! Many folks came early and had dinner there, too. Randy Hoffman
BBS Prez

SPRINGFIELD

Illinois Central Blues Club Blue Mondays at the Alamo
www.icbluesclub.org
June 16 Deak Harp Blues Band
June 23 Harper (from Australia)
June 30 Levee Town

Illinois Central Blues Club Blues Challenge

Old Capitol Blues and BBQ,
Springfield
August 23, 2008.

Winner is awarded the key to the International Blues Challenge that is held in Memphis, February

4-7, 2009. This August competition will be to select a band. A later competition will be held to select a Solo/Duo artist.

Interested in participating? Reply to Judy Burgess at judygaile@yahoo.com to get on a list to receive details as soon as they are available. At least one member of a participating band must be a member of the Illinois Central Blues Club.



NEW MEMBERS AND CHANGES

Note: Approximately half of all BBS memberships will be up for renewal by June 30, 2008. The other half will be due by December 31, 2008. As we go to press, many below have already renewed, Thank You! More renewals will be listed in the next issue. 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:

- Jeff & Barb Augsburg
- J Balmer
- Becky Bell
- David Birky
- Tom and Pam Brouillette
- Bob and Carol Burger
- Mark & Cindy Gillis
- Gary Goodwin
- Tim & Coleen Kerestes
- Tim Muehlenpfort
- Sheila Nettleton
- Melissa & Larry Paschold
- Ron & Paula Phipps
- Kim & Rebecca Smith
- Julie Swanberg
- Bill & Trisha Swanson
- Phil Stickel
- Dan & Maureen Woodard
- Cindy Youngren

New Members:

- "Welcome" to our newest members!:
- Warren L. Ellis
- Judy & Thomas Elston

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."



Too Slim

"TAIL DRAGGER"

At the Too Slim and the Taildraggers show on May 8, Brian Wilkinson asked, "This phrase seems to come up quite a bit in the blues. What does it mean? What is its significance?" After posting the question on the

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Blindman's Blues Forum, here is what he and we learned: "As used by Howlin' Wolf, it just means you cover your tracks well enough when sneaking around so you don't get caught," wrote Dick Shurman, record producer.

So, if you're sneaking in the back door while her husband is leaving by the front, you have to be good to cover your tracks so you don't get caught!



REVIEWS

Too Slim & the Taildraggers - LIVE

Thursday, May 8, NV Ultra Lounge

Normal IL

By Ben Cox

Portions of this review originally ran in the

Illinoisblues.com *Blues Blast*

Set against the back drop of a college bar in a college town in Campus Town, Tim "Too Slim" Langford refuses to compromise to any setting. Tim and his band the Taildraggers have been well at it, touring incessantly over the last 15 years while Tim himself has been at it for over 23 years. Bloomington-Normal's Blues Blowtorch Society can be thanked for bringing this underappreciated veteran back to Central Illinois. Tim and Company have been branching out this year in support of their Top Ten Billboard Blues Charting album and Tim's most personal record to date, *The Fortune Teller*.

Serving up a heaping dose of swamp rock, barrelhouse blues, and American Roots, Tim never let up for the steaming and early two hour set. Tim as always is a tasteful slide and rootsy guitar player's wet dream, pulling riffs that you've

heard and haven't heard out of the air and into your ears. Tim's vocals had a little bit of problem in the early going as the sound man still had a few kinks to work out, but the guitar was straight forward and the crowd took notice. As over 50 paying customers and countless others who passed by or who came late could verify, Tim's sounds were on top. With no flash and no wannabe guitar hero pyrotechnics, Tim's "Les Paul-O'Caster" custom guitar rocked through many of the tracks from his latest album. The swampy guitar, almost Creedence Clearwater Revival sounding "Givers and Takers" and "Motherlode" were crowd pleasers. The hard-driving southern rock driven story of "Cowboy Boot" barreled through the room like a swampy Harley Davidson. The "sappy love ballad to my wife" as Tim called it, "She Gives Me Money," brought dancers and hoots and hollers to the small corner lit stage in the hipster location. Tim also dug back into his past a little pulling out an Elmore James cover, "Sunnyland Train" and an original Hawaiian lap steel sounding instrumental, "Drinkin' Rye." Tim's double-entendre lyrics on "Oven Burnin' Woman" gave the crowd a chance to call and respond to Tim, showing his ability to entertain even more.

In the meantime with all these American Roots guitar playing and entertainment, herein lies Tim Langford's greatest gift; his songwriting. Underwriting the entire night with stories and tall tales, the guy from the forests of Spokane WA can spin a good one without

you even knowing it because his sound and vibe aren't preachy but straight ahead, gutbucket in your face rockin' blues. As one of Tim's songs states, we just can't get enough of this brown bottle rock!

Kenny Neal

Let Life Flow

Blind Pig Records

www.blindpigrecords.com

www.kennyneal.net

Written by James "Skyy Dobro" Walker for

Illinoisblues.com and BBS

11 songs; 50:11 minutes;

Library Quality

Style: Soulful Louisiana Swamp Blues

They've killed Kenny! Those bastards..... Wait a minute! Kenny isn't dead. Kenny Neal is alive and well, with a new album. My apologies for the lame *South Park* reference, but Neal has been missing from the scene for three years due to health problems. Those issues forced Kenny away from the studio and touring. His first release since signing with Blind Pig Records finds him returning with a renewed vigor and outlook on life.

Recorded in West Columbia, SC, *Let Life Flow* is full of the laid back, soulful grooves that have garnered him a solid fan base over the past 20 years. Usually the phrase "easy listening music" is the kiss of death, but taken as a sincere compliment, this phrase accurately describes the music which is as soothing as a good back rub. Scott Cable, along with Neal and his son, Kenny Jr. co-produced the album as a reflection of Neal's optimistic sense of perseverance.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

Let Life Flow marks the return of the multi-instrumentalist and modern swamp-blues maven. It is an inspired set that draws musically from Louisiana sounds, while striking a deep, emotional chord in response to the personal trials he has recently endured. In addition to his recent frailty, Neal suffered the passing of his father, Rafal, a brother, a sister, and a drummer all within eleven months in 2004-2005.

This album opens with the uplifting title track that just instantly sets the delightful mood and groove. Joe Campbell and LeRoy Harper add horns behind Jimmy Adams piano all punctuated by Kenny's mellow guitar picking.

Packing a little more punch from the horns, Neal lays down gritty guitar work on "Blues Leave Me Alone." Frederick Neal adds the keys here.

Opening with Lucky Peterson on organ, the third track, the stirring ballad "You've Got To Hurt Before You Heal," has a gospel sound. Kenny's vocals resonate with an emotional feeling that convinces listeners the singer truly has lived, loved, lost, and healed.

Next, Kenny treats us to his learned harmonica as he recites some stereotypical nouns about his home state on the funky "Louisiana Stew." "Starlight Diamond" also showcases his harmonica prowess on this easy-going 12 bar shuffle.

Displaying a social consciousness, "It Don't Make Sense You Can't Make Peace," has Latin-tinged grooves that drive the message. Robin Rogers and Shelly Magee add

background vocals

Welcome back, Kenny, we missed you. *Let Life Flow* does more than announce Neal's return, it soothes and inspires with a heartfelt sentiment born of the real-life, human struggles to which any listener can relate.

Albert Castiglia
These Are The Days
Blues Leaf Records
www.bluesleaf.com
www.albertcastiglia.com
www.myspace.com/albertcastiglia
Written by James "Skyy Dobro" Walker for Illinoisblues.com and BBS
11 songs; 56:58 minutes;
Quality: Love at First Listen
Style: Electric Blues with no horns

How do *you* rate and judge an album? One valid method is: how many listens did it take until one liked it? This method is based on my belief that one will like almost any music after five listens. If not, then six exposures will not help, and one will never like it. So, top rated CDs are the ones you enjoy and relate to with just one listen. Loved-it-upon-my-first-listen makes Albert Castiglia's third album (second on Blues Leaf) my pick for best album of Jan May 2008, on its way to album of the year. (Pronounce the 38-year-old's name "ka-STEEL-ya")

Two other measures cemented *These Are The Days'* top position: (1) my wife also immediately liked it upon first listen as we were on a road trip and she is fussy! (2) there are no horns in this blues album. I must confess my bias here: in too many blues CDs the added

horns have as much business being in there as a football bat does in an NFL game. If Muddy Waters didn't need them, I don't either. (Ok, I can be fussy, too.)

Right from the opening single string guitar notes of track one, "Bad Year Blues," the mood is up in this original 12 bar shuffle, and the album is happening. Humorous lyrics, underpinned by delicious slide guitar, don't hurt anything either, "...my new year's resolution didn't last too long / tried to quit smokin' but too many thing went wrong / it's been a real bad year / only twelve more months to go." At two minutes, Susan Lusher takes a perky piano solo followed thirty seconds later by a Castiglia slippery slide guitar solo. The rollicking fun and story lyrics continue to an ending that left me smiling a big, "hot damn!"

The second number features blistering guitar solos in a funky version with of Robert C. Guidry's "He's Got All The Whiskey." Castiglia's wonderful blues vocals have been compared to Van Morrison, but that comparison is probably a disservice to Albert. Drummer Bob Amsel and bassist Steve Gaskell expertly hold down the beat while Lusher pours out a cascading piano solo to round out the four piece band.

Just as the smoke begins to clear from the CD player, the first notes of the third track slowly emanate, reassuringly giving the listener's racing heart a break. "Loan Me A Dime" is simply the best version of the Fenton Robinson song since a young Duane Allman joined Boz Scaggs in the Muscle Shoals

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page studio May 5, 1969. Now that is a testimonial in itself!

Bouncing right back with an up tempo number, Ken "Stringbean" Sorensen blows harp to open track four, "Godfather of the Blues." The original song is a Castiglia tribute to his mentor, Junior Wells, for whom Albert played guitar and sang for two years, 1997-1998, up until Wells' death.

Track five, the title track, is an acoustic change of pace. The mid-tempo ballad features more Sorensen harmonica and was written by Graham Wood Drout (of Iko Iko) who has contributed a song to each of Castiglia's albums. Previously Drout contributed "Ghosts of Mississippi" and "Big Toe."

Bob Dylan's ode to baseball pitcher Catfish Hunter ("Catfish") is another slow blues performed so well that it is nearly as good as "Loan Me A Dime."

The rather pedestrian "Another Bloody Day" keeps the album from perfection, but the jumping, original "Twister" puts thing right back on top.

The CD ends with the love-

at-first-listen slide guitar found at the beginning on the band original "Blues For Evan." Ending the CD up tempo with harmonica thrown into the 12 bar mix was a good move.

Wake up world! His name is Albert Castiglia, and he is burning the planet down! The fire has begun down in his current region of Florida, but this CD will propel Albert to festival stages galaxy-wide!



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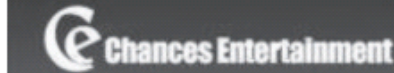


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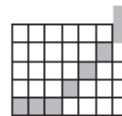


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