



BLUES NEWS

newsletter@bluesblowtorch.com

October - November - December - September 2008

OFFICIAL RAMBLINGS FROM THE PREZ

IMPORTANT!

Folks,

If you didn't go, you missed a beautiful day, great music, and good food. I am referring to the Fall Ball, held Sunday September 21st at Tri-Lakes. And, since only about 55 people showed up, that means I'm addressing this to most of you. In the coming meetings and months, the BBS Board of Directors will discuss the future direction this Society will take.

In the first *Blues News* this year, I spoke of the need for our members to step forward and help us run this organization. We were fortunate to bring Rick Tull and Dave Long onto the Board, both have provided great resources. And, as of the October meeting, we have a Secretary. Sallie Able was asked to fill the position and accepted. The General Membership agreed. About seven more members became active in our meetings and a few more at our events. That's a small percentage of the 270+ members we have.

The last two music events we held were a lot of fun, good music, but didn't generate the attendance to make them as successful as they should have been. It is becoming obvious that our members are not really interested in the BBSociety providing live Blues. We started a



Reggie Britton
of *Black Magic Johnson*



Matthew Curry joins
Lil' Dave Thompson

CD exchange program, thanks to Jeff Augsburger, and it, too, generated almost no interest. Is Frank Black's theory true that the only reason people join organizations is to have it listed in their obituary?!?!

Currently, our most successful operations are in the education department, which fulfills our charter's mission. It is becoming the new cornerstone of our function, and every indication is that it will continue to grow. As

school systems have been forced to cut back on music education, we are being recognized as a valued education contributor by a number of education providers in the community. Steve Mehlberg has conducted workshops for, and given harmonicas to, over 500 children in the past year. We are looking to expand to providing guitar, bass, piano, even banjo workshops and instruction over the next year.

I think the disappointment from the Fall Ball attendance is due to the fact that this event was our Education Fundraiser. Fortunately, our wonderful Corporate Sponsors, Rhonda Glenn Law Office, and those that donated and bid on auction items, put the event in the black.

Look for your Board to begin transforming our focus and redirecting our energy to the functions that are successful.
Randy Hoffman



IMPORTANT NEWS

Bylaw Changes: The amended bylaws, adopted at the October General Meeting, are posted on the website at www.bluesblowtorch.org. To read them, click on the "BBS Minutes" tab on the left menu.

No Christmas Combo; Regular Meeting: The BOD has decided not to have a Combo Party this year, it will just be the elections and standard meeting at the VFW

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Continued from previous page on Thursday, December 18. We will discuss some live entertainment options after the first of the year.

International Blues Challenge Bus Trip: The IBC bus trip has been cancelled due to lack of interest in these difficult financial times.

Future Entertainment Events: Check the website for future entertainment events. We are planning to change our focus more towards education and away from live entertainment for next year. We will probably have a September Party/Education Fund raiser next year, utilizing local bands for a mini blues fest. That is just a proposal right now.

Our T-shirt Logo worn nationally/globally: Approval was given for releasing our t-shirt logo and design to www.dabluesguy.com for \$100 paid to us. We thought it would be cool for people all over the country and world to be wearing our shirts!

Last "Paper Copy" of Blues News: the BOD/GM decided the next Newsletter Editor would be submitting it to the website in order to reduce our printing and mailing expenditures. The BOD felt that nearly everyone has web access, and we could send out postcards for any event we hold. Since we aren't going to have as many events, we may not have the revenue to support the mailed paper copies of the newsletter. Those revenues will be needed for our education workshops, which are taking off. So, this will be the last paper copy of the *Blues News*.
Note from Prez Randy: "The BOD, and especially I, would like to thank James Walker, and all past editors, for producing one of

the best blues society newsletters in the country. James, over the past three years, has made it pretty special, and I always looked forward to reading it."

Three BBS Websites:
www.bluesblowtorch.org
www.myspace.com/blues_blowtorch_society
www.bluesblowtorch.com (Delta Frank's site with Forum)
For comments or changes, contact Deborah Mehlberg at Deborah464@aol.com.

BBS Nominates Two for KBA
The Blues Blowtorch Society has nominated Delta Frank Black and Illinoisblues.com for Keeping the Blues Alive Awards. Visit: www.blues.org



ASK DELTAFRANK



Frank Black and Skyy Dobro

Note: This column can also be read at www.bluesblowtorch.com in the "Forum." Send questions to skyydobro@bluesblowtorch.com or jwalker4@mchsi.com

In the last issue, we left you with this question:
Question:
Delta Frank,
Why has the Nothin' But The Blues

Festival been a continual success? They just completed 7 years!
Justin N. Quiry

Answer:
Justin,
The reasons the Nothin But The Blues Festival has been a continued success over the years are:
1. The blues fans in Central Illinois have supported it every year and been there at the festival.
2. Eric Tapley, Chances Entertainment, has done a great job in presenting it.
3. We have had dedicated volunteers to help get out the word and been there at the festival to help in every way.
4. We have had so many corporate sponsors over the years and other people to donate money in support.
Thanks for asking,
Delta Frank



FROM THE EDITOR'S BLUES SHACK

- **You Tube video** featuring Jimmy Rogers and Big Walter Horton:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ranm9B5LKq0>
- **Video:**
<http://tinyurl.com/2x62l6> This one has Fats Domino, Ray Charles, Jerry Lee Lewis, Ron Wood, Paul Shafer
- **Blueskillet news:** "We had a son, Nicholas, in Sept. 2006. We were off from May 06 to Feb 07 and have been steady rollin' since then. Hope things are cool in the BBS!" Tadd & Monica Swanson. Visit; www.blueskillet.com
- **Delta Frank Black nominated for Emmy:** In conjunction with Ken Burns series on WW II, Frank voice tracked a war story on W ILL TV, Channel 12 in the spring. The program he voice tracked has been nominated for an Emmy Award.

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Editor Passes Torch

• Farewell from 2006-2008

Editor: It has been my privilege, honor, and pleasure to be your newsletter editor these past three years. With Brian Wilkinson's help, and Bruce at PIP Printing, I produced 15 issues of *Blues News* and received many generous compliments. Thank you for taking time to read them. In a democratic organization of all volunteers, it is time to pass the editor's torch. I will assist the new person, as needed, and will contribute whatever copy is requested. Visit www.bluesblowtorch.org for the next issue on-line.

Sincerely, Skyy Dobro



NEW MEMBERS AND CHANGES

Note: Approximately half of all BBS memberships are up for renewal by December 30, 2008. The other half will be due by June 30, 2009. If you did not get a renewal letter, you are due next June. Renewals are coming in daily as we go to press, Thank You!

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:

Richard & Karen Behrens
William & Donna Belshaw

Leanne Boyd
John & Ramona Fitzpatrick
Marianna & Jonathan Hasse
Richard Lake
David Lumsden
Jon Norton/Denise LaGrassa
Bill & Deb Porter
Steve & Judy Quimby
Rick Ridenour
Richard Risberg
Mike Sacco
Brian Stear
Dave & Julie Wade
James & Susan Walker
Ross & Linda Wear
Ralph & Carol Weisheit
Al White
Ronda Glenn Law Office
(Corporate)
WGLT FM (Corporate)

New Members:

“Welcome” to our newest members!:

Rick Beier
Reggie Britton
Mark Carlisle
Kelsey Dennis
Mark Dietrich
Duke Horton
Greg Hurley
Dan Isaia
Ward Lancaster
Matt Lembke
Diane Otte
Kim Robinson
Tricia Terry

CHANGED ADDRESS ?

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



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



Harmonica Workshop

national talents, and to educate the public to foster an appreciation of the American Heritage known as The Blues.”

HARMONICA WORKSHOP, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9

The Blues Blowtorch Society sponsored Steve “The Harp” Mehlberg and wife Deborah for a workshop with the children at St. Mary's School. The children were all very attentive and excited at the same time. “What a joy to hear all those 175 harmonica players,” said Deborah. “The Harmonica Workshop was a huge success! At the end four students came up and played the song they had just learned with Steve.”

Dear Blues Blowtorch Society,
Thank you so much! The kids were very excited about their harmonicas, and the teachers all commented on how great it was to have you there. Thanks for e-mailing the pictures as well. It is fun to see the kids enjoying themselves.

Susan Sammons, St. Mary's School



REVIEWS

Magic Slim and the Teardrops
Midnight Blues
BPCD 5125
By Randy Hoffman
For the Blues Blowtorch Society

When I read “guest artists”

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playing on this CD, especially the likes of James Cotton, Lil' Ed, Lonnie Brooks, and Elvin Bishop, I just figured that it's going to be a mishmash of styles and tone. Wrong! Magic Slim shines through on every single tune. Then I saw that Nick Moss produced the CD, and I knew why it came out so well. These "additional Teardrops" just add some real flavor to a fine batch of Blues.

This CD is mostly straight ahead, three chords and the truth, Chicago Blues. A slice of Country and a dash of Soul provide a nice change of pace, without messing up the Blues vibe. It's hard to pick a favorite tune, because they all stand on their own merit, but Muddy's "Crosseyed Cat" seemed to grab my mojo.

Magic Slim plays Blues guitar like you expect it to sound. There is nothing outrageous or particularly new, but always expressive, meaningful and tasty. His vocals have the same qualities, but you have to add the factor that draws you into the song, whether it's one of his own, or a cover.

I enjoyed this CD much more than *The Essential Magic Slim*. This one gets another road trip in the car player before I pass it along.

**Liz Mandeville *Red Top*
Earwig CD 4954
By Randy Hoffman**

The opening/title song is an obvious reference to Liz Mandeville's hair color, but it also tell us about the rest of the CD; it is Red Hot! Liz wrote every tune, and she is a creative storyteller. This is her 4th album with Earwig Records and Michael Frank, Earwig CEO, co-produced with Liz. Excellent Chicago

musicians, many who have toured with her, provide fine backing for her savvy vocals and tasty guitar work.

Some of the highlight cuts are: "Corner Bar Blues," a familiar story from a time in my distant past; "Spanky Butt" certainly got my attention; "Illinois National Guard," a timely view of today's reality; and "Little Queen," the right dose of sexuality for a real sassy Blues release.

I have to give this CD great marks on production, songwriting, vocals, Blues content, guitar work, and having horns that do not take away from the presentation.

This is a keeper and stayin' in my car player for another month.

**ROBIN ROGERS
Treat Me Right
Blind Pig Records
By Karen Brault**

Robin Rogers' CD has everything in it to touch your soul. Taking on Robin's powerful attributes, experience, and passion for blues, Blind Pig signed her incredible talents to their label in Spring 2008, and quickly released this debut album in June.

Treat Me Right has the makings of a classic in our time. Her rich and subtle mixture of blues, soul, R&B and a touch of jazz blend well. Together with studio musicians and her husband/guitarist Tony Rogers, the chemistry of blues talent is electrifying. *Treat Me Right* will have the listener begging for more.

"Ain't No Use" opens with a traditional upright blues piano sound and builds with a sweet, low organ and laid-back horns. The lead guitar and B3 organ

will sway you away as Robin's dynamic and sultry pipes accentuate the mood of this song. In "Dark Love," Robin captures the essence of a true blues artist as this song embraces her expressive and smoky vocals. Topping off this great song is her laid-back harmonica styling that is first class.

Robin's most notable song is "Color Blind Angel." Written by Robin and her husband Tony Rogers, it's a deep and moving tribute about slain white civil rights worker Viola Liuzzo, who was shot and killed by Klan members in 1965 after the Selma to Montgomery freedom march in Alabama. "Color Blind Angel" won second place in the 2007 International Songwriter's Competition in the Blues category.

Robin Rogers' creative flow blends in fine unison with each song. Her vocals caress each heartfelt song with a soulfully sweet, yet powerfully expressive, voice. Her extraordinary talents shine bright on *Treat Me Right*. I am looking forward to her future CDs.

Karen Brault is a Chicago area musician who sings and plays keyboards with the band After Midnight Blues.

**SCOTT ELLISON
Ice Storm
Earwig Records
By Karen Brault**

Scott Ellison is becoming a highly acclaimed blues artist with good reason. *Ice Storm* has captured his most outstanding features as a blues-rock guitarist, singer, and songwriter. Ellison shines

Continued on next page

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brightly and draws the listener in with his powerful talents and strong vocal attributes that lay hold of the excellence and creativity in his original songs. Ellison shares with the listener a deep, soulful blues experience in this excellent CD.

Ellison kicks off with "Steamin," a classy little number that is so right for its name. Classic, walking bass lines and a punctuating beat set the scene with a wicked blues strut feel. It opens with a rock-blues guitar that is tough with texture and attitude. Seasoned with the smart growl of a Hammond B-3 organ and topped with Ellison's dynamic vocals, this song is hot!

"Big Blues Car" takes a ride with a fat funky groove and features a full horn section backbone. The deeply expressive lead guitar melts over this tune with long sustained notes that bend with a soulful cry. A funky rhythm guitar and bass line, along with a Hammond organ and keyboard sampling, adds stylistic attitude and variety. Ellison's raspy vocals have an authoritative grip in contrast to the polished, harmonized back-up vocals of Bobbi Davis and Linda Jackson.

"Ice Storm" is the title track done in the style of jump blues. Featuring the full sounds of The Dukes of Soul Horns, it's a tight, high-energy instrumental that hits you with a knock-out punch. Ellison plays his guitar hot, fast and furious in unison with the horn arrangements that are smoking.

Ice Storm is simply a great CD. I am placing this one at the top of my blues CD list.

Blues Blast Music Award Winners Announced

The winners of the 2008 Blues Blast Music Awards were announced Sunday November 2nd, 2008 at a gala Blues celebration at Buddy Guy's Legends in Chicago IL:

- Best Contemporary Blues Recording - Holmes Brothers - State Of Grace
- Best Traditional Blues Recording - Lurrie Bell - Lets Talk About Love
- Best New Artist Debut Recording - John Németh - Magic Touch
- Best Blues Song - Nick Moss - Mistakes from the Past
- Best Male Artist - Buddy Guy
- Best Female Artist - Koko Taylor
- Best Blues Band - Magic Slim & The Teardrops
- Sean Costello Rising Star Award - John Németh

Blues Blast Magazine also awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award to Delta Blues Legend David "Honeyboy" Edwards. The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes significant contributions and a lifetime body of work in the field of Blues music.

The ceremonies included performances by Magic Slim & the Teardrops, Lurrie Bell, Matthew Skoller, Nick Moss, Gerry Hundt, John Németh, The Kilborn Alley Blues Band, Dave Riley, Bob Corritore, Eden Brent, Sugar Ray Norcia, Teeny Tucker, Gina Sicilia, Dave Gross, Tim "Too Slim" Langford and others.

The winners were chosen by the 11,000 Blues Blast magazine readers from all 50 states and more than 40 countries voting at the IllinoisBlues.com website. There was no cost or fees to be eligible to vote.

These awards truly represent the Peoples Choice for the best in Blues music.

Celebrity award presenters included Blues Writer James "Skyy Dobro" Walker, who also served as the Master of Ceremonies for the five hour show, Eric Steiner, president of the Washington Blues Society, Linda Cain Publisher of ChicagoBluesGuide.com, Chicago Blues woman Deb Seitz, August "Lordy" Lord, owner of ChicagoBluesBeat.com, Blues Songwriter, Musician, DJ and Journalist, Ben Cox, Matt Eimer, Promoter of the Simply The Blues Fest in Fort Madison IA, and Kate Moss, Publicity director for Blue Bella Records.

The sponsors of the Blues Blast Music Awards were WGLT Blues 24/7, a FREE online Blues Music stream and Podcast at www.WGLT.org and The Chicago Blues Guide (www.ChicagoBluesGuide.com)

Blues Blast magazine is a FREE weekly Blues "web-zine" available from IllinoisBlues.com. The Blues Blast Music Awards recognize the best of today's Blues music.

A group of Blues industry professionals including artists, music writers, radio DJs, artist managers, and festival promoters selected five nominees in each of the eight categories. Voting for the awards took place during July and August online at the IllinoisBlues.com website. More than 2000 votes were cast, and the awards ceremonies were a celebration of the artists and the music that represent the best in Blues music today.

For further information contact Bob Kieser at info@illinoisblues.com

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Please remember to patronize our CORPORATE SPONSORS. They have taken the time to sponsor our Blues Society...and put out the money to help our Society promote and bring blues entertainment and education into McLean County...let's all show our thanks to them by patronizing and "promoting" them!

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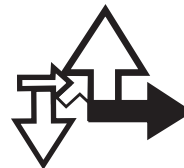
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**The Blues Blowtorch Society
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Would you like to volunteer? YES, Interest _____

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