



BLUES NEWS

January-February 2009

OFFICIAL RAMBLINGS FROM THE PREZ

Here's to a New Year!! The Blues Blowtorch Society has a full compliment of Directors to set some new directions for 2009.

The November meeting, with all the nominated Officers, was very stimulating with many ideas expressed. Weather forced us to cancel the December meeting, but since all of the nominated Officer were running unopposed, no election was required.

We decided to open our Board Meetings to the members and have just one meeting at 6:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month, at the VFW. Please join us!!

In an effort to go green and reduce costs, the 'paper' Blues News will only be sent to members that do not have email. If you receive a paper Blues News and have an email address. Please contact me, we have limited the number of emails we send and will not release any information our members give us. A BIG THANKS to James Walker for creating the best Blues News ever during his tenure. We are working on having a Friday evening Blues Night once a month, beginning in March, so watch for more information. We really look forward to having more members attend and help us make this the most fun Blues Society in the state.

Randy Hoffman—Prez

OFFICERS

President: Randy Hoffman -

rd.hoffman@verizon.net

Vice President: Jeff Augsburger

Treasurer: Deborah Mehlberg

Secretary: Sallie Able

Parliamentarian: Leonard Beach

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Education: Steve Mehlberg

Entertainment: Rick Tull

Marketing: Dave Long

Membership: Frank Black

Newsletter Editor: Sue Camp

Webmaster: Deborah Mehlberg

GENERAL BOARD MEMBERS

Larry Duchanois

Mike Sacco

J Balmer

NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Renewals:

David Armstrong

Paul Blackwell & Mary Dellorto

Gary Dean

Michael & Carol Limer

Jerry Porter

Terry Irvin

[Fox N Hounds](#) Corporate

[Jay Goldberg Events & Entertainment](#) Corporate

New Members:

“Welcome” to our newest members!:

[A 1 Restoration](#) (309) 473-3330 Corporate
Sherry Velton

Frank Black reports that nearly 60 members have not yet renewed their January membership. Please help us make this Society work and renew your membership today!!

THE NEWS IN PASSING

RIP Chico Banks: Word just came to us from Michael Freeman of Coachouse Industries that the young Chicago blues guitarist Vernon "Chico" Banks passed on December 2, 2008. He was 47. He was the son of legendary guitarist Jesse Banks (of The Mighty Clouds Of Joy), and he represented a younger generation in the Chicago Blues scene that mixed elements of rock and funk into the blues. He has performed and/or recorded with Willie Kent, James Cotton, Mavis and Pops Staples, Little Milton, Magic Slim, Big Time Sarah, Buddy Guy, Melvin Taylor, Freddie Roulette, Otis Clay, and others, as well as being a star in his own right. A popular hometown attraction with an international reputation, Chico will be greatly missed. There was no additional information available at the time of this writing. Bob Corritore Blues Newsletter bobcorritore@yahoo.com -Editors Note -Chico performed several times at the **NBTB** festival.

By DANIELLE HATCH *Journal Star* Posted Dec 06, 2008 @ 06:16 PM Last update Dec 07, 2008 @ 03:08 AM

PEORIA — Blues singer Bobbye A. King, known to some as the queen of the Peoria blues scene, died Saturday morning of natural causes after being rushed to a Peoria hospital with breathing difficulties. She was 54. King, also known by her legal surname of King-Beavers, was taken from her Peoria home by ambulance to Methodist Medical Center around 6:30 a.m. She was pronounced dead in the emergency room there about half an hour later, according to Peoria County Coroner Johnna Ingersoll. Peoria bluesman Dave Chastain said King's death is a major loss for the local blues scene. Chastain first met King in the late 1980s and was struck by her talent. "We became very good friends; I enjoyed her shows," Chastain said. "She poked fun at herself, and she had a way with connecting with the crowd - humor along with great music. She was a great singer, had great stage presence, everything. Everybody loved Bobbye." Chastain said the singer was more than a powerful performer. She was a "sweetheart, a real friend." "She was a very spiritual person; I appreciated that," he said. "Bobbye had a real deep faith, in her own quiet way." Others remembered her Saturday for the way she personified blues music and connected with audiences in casual yet invigorating style. "She was authentic, that's one thing you can say - meaning, not fly by night," said Preston Jackson, a local visual artist and jazz guitarist, who has known King for 30 years. "She was a real blues person, who sung the blues, understood it and was the blues." "Even when she was sitting down (during a performance), she had a way of connecting with the people that got the people going," said Brian Stear, a Peoria-based blues harmonica player. "That's the sign of a true artist - to be able to make that connection through her singing and her personality. She had, as we like to call it, mojo." Ingersoll said the blues singer had a significant medical history of high blood pressure, congestive heart failure and diabetes. The singer told the *Journal Star* in a 2007 interview that she also had undergone gallbladder surgery and once had a respiratory problem that left her bedridden for months. "She had her ups and downs with her health," Chastain said. "She loved her audience, she loved to entertain, but in the later years it took its toll on her." The 2007 interview was sparked after a rumor circulated that King had passed away - mostly because of health problems that had forced her out of the spotlight for long periods between 2003 and 2006, alarming her fan base. King began singing as a toddler and often performed with her Lady's Choice Band. She has opened for everyone from Koko Taylor to Lonnie Brooks. She also joined the roster of musicians at the 20th annual Budweiser Illinois Blues Festival in August. Peoria entrepreneur J.M. "Sully" Sullivan has called her "the queen of blues around here." "I just loved to watch her perform," Chastain said. "It was a joy - because of her stage presence and her personality, just everything. That's the best word I can come up with."

EDUCATION SPOT

Blizzard Bash

10 am ~ 6 pm January 31, 2009 at Coon Dog Designs LLC, El Paso, IL 39 E. Front St., next to Rebbec Motors

There will 10 Artists giving workshops and performing. Steve "The Harp" will give a Harmonica Workshop, 1:15 to 2:30 pm. We will also host Amanda Huskinson, a PhD student from Nottingham University in England.

She wrote to Steve, "I am currently staying in Chicago until October in order to research Blues in the Schools programs. I am interested in how blues is used to promote self esteem in students and to teach them about social and cultural history. I obtained your contact details from the Blues Foundation's website and was interested to learn about your role as the education director for The Blues Blowtorch Society. I was wondering if the society has any upcoming BITS programs planned which I could attend."

Miss Huskinson has accepted our invitation to attend the Blizzard Bash Harmonica Workshop and Interview Steve "The Harp" for her dissertation.

Where is all the stuff that was in the Blues News?
IT'S ON OUR WEBSITE!!

www.bluesblowtorch.org/

Visit and patronize the [Corporate Sponsors](#)
who support us in bringing Blues Entertainment and Education to
McLean County Illinois

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Links?? Yeah we got 'em!!

[Contact Us](#)...we want to hear from you!!

From: Ben the Harpman
2009 Grammy Nominations Announced

Best Traditional Blues Album
(Vocal or Instrumental.)

- **The Blues Rolls On**
Elvin Bishop
Delta Groove Music, Inc.
- **Skin Deep**
Buddy Guy
Silvertone Records
- **All Odds Against Me**
John Lee Hooker Jr.
Steppin' Stone Records/CC Entertainment
- **One Kind Favor**
B.B. King
Geffen Records
- **Pinetop Perkins & Friends**
Pinetop Perkins & Friends
Stoneagle Music/Telarc

Best Contemporary Blues Album
(Vocal or Instrumental.)

- **Peace, Love & BBQ**
Marcia Ball
Alligator Records
- **Like A Fire**
Solomon Burke
Shout! Factory
- **City That Care Forgot**
Dr. John And The Lower 911
429 Records
- **Maestro**
Taj Mahal
Heads Up International
- **Simply Grand**
Irma Thomas
Rounder Records

The Blues Blowtorch Society Membership Application

Name _____ Start Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone # _____ E-mail Address _____

Would you like to Volunteer? YES! _____ Interest _____

MEMBERSHIP TYPES:	Individual	\$20/yr. _____
	Family	\$25/yr. _____
	Student	\$10/yr. _____
	Corporate	\$100/yr. _____
	Preferred Corporate	\$TBD/Event

Make checks payable to:
The Blues Blowtorch Society

Mail to:
Frank Black
#1 Tarter Court
Clinton, IL 61727



Read All About it!

**Attend the
General Membership
Meeting - 6 pm
The third Thursday
Of each month!!**

www.bluesblowtorch.org

www.myspace.com/blues_blowtorch_society