

March 2017 e-BluesLetter

Welcome to 2017: a new year and a new beginning for the Charlotte Blues Society.

A New location: **THE RABBIT HOLE** in Charlotte 1801 Commonwealth Ave. Charlotte. opened their arms and doors for our Sunday Events.

Check out our list of dates further in the newsletter. Speaking of which: The BluesLetter has new look and a new direction! We want our members more involved. Look for stories, articles, reviews, pictures and news from fellow members. Your Voice. Your Point of View. Check out **On The Road Again** by **Ray Otstott**

Help us make each issue spectacular! Like Ray, You can contribute with Reviews of blues music new and old. **Revues** : your take on blues artists you've seen past and present. **News:** Events in the blues world. **Memories:** quick blurbs of artists or events of the past, **Blues Calendar:** National , regional & local act info, **Blues Bits.** Blues Trivia.

Together, we will make our Charlotte Blues Society better than ever!

FROM OUR PRESIDENT, RICK BALLEW:

Hey Blues Family: We've got a new home for **The Charlotte Blues Society**. **The Rabbit Hole**, 1801 Commonwealth Avenue, in Plaza-Midwood. The first gathering is Sunday March 5, 2017 with **The Bill Miller Band**. Most of you were there in November and gave us very positive feedback. The management of **The Rabbit Hole** approached us and opened their doors to whatever we needed to make the transition of moving from The Double Door Inn, as smooth as possible. And they are giving more than we asked for.

The **Charlotte Blues Society** will continue to meet on the First Sunday of every month. Drink specials include a \$5 Vodka drink, a \$5 Whiskey, \$3 Blue Moon and \$3 PBR Tall, every Blues Sunday. Parking is **Free** and across the street at Sammy's Deli.

This parking lot is regularly patrolled by bike cops, foot cops and plain clothes. An incredibly safe place. **The Rabbit Hole** will hang a permanent **Charlotte Blues Society** banner in the entry. They are booking National Blues acts and working with our Blues Friends at **Intrepid Artists** to bring the same quality entertainment that we got used to for over 43 years.

Guitar great, **Coco Montoya** is booked for April 14. We'll have a **Coco Montoya** package to raffle on March 5, including tickets to the show and a CD pack.

My favorite benefit on the First Sunday of every month is the 10% discount on your meal, right next door at The Peculiar Rabbit. This is for CBS members with a current valid membership card. This is an All Day discount.

I look forward to your feedback on what we're doing. Please tell me your thoughts personally and not through a second or third party. Positive or negative I need to hear it from you, not from someone supposedly speaking for you. I'm very reachable at rickballew2015@gmail.com. If you want to talk one on one, just email me a number and I'll call you.

I look forward to seeing you on March 5 at 7 at The Rabbit Hole and PLEASE bring family and friends. It's FREE and we'll have raffle packages and membership discounts.

Keep checking our web page www.CharlotteBluesSociety.org for updates about all of the Blues happenings in our region.

As always, Thank You for your patience and your continued support.

Rick



THE RABBIT HOLE
1801 Commonwealth Ave, Charlotte, NC

Don't Miss our First Show in our new HOME:
and its **FREE**

Sunday March 5, 2017

Keepin' The Blues Alive!



The Bill Miller Band

SHOW

Charlotte Blues Society

BLUES SUNDAYS at the RABBIT HOLE

1801 Commonwealth Ave, Charlotte

Doors 7pm Band 8pm Jam 10pm



\$5 VODKA SPECIAL
\$3 Blue Moon \$3 PBR Tall
\$5 Whiskey Special



www.CharlotteBluesSociety.org

www.CharlotteBluesSociety.org

**It's a FREE Show, so Bring something
Sweet to share for our Hospitality Table!**

March Blues Birthdays!!

- 1- Walter Davis (1912)
- 2-Rory Gallagher (1949)
- 3-John Primer (1945)
- 4-Bobby Womack (1944), Willie Johnson (1923)
- 5-J.B. Lenoir (1929), Peg Leg Howell (1888), Tommy Tucker (1933)
- 6-Walter "Furry" Lewis (1899), Wes Montgomery (1925)
- 7-Jesse Fuller (1896)
- 8-Bob Brozman (1954)
- 9-Georgia White (1903), Laura Lee (1945), Lloyd Price (1933)
- 10-Dave Alexander (1938), Ronnie Earl (1953)
- 13-Otis "Lightnin' Slim" Hicks (1913)
- 14-Robert Pete Williams (1914)
- 15-Bertha "Chippie" Hill (1905), Lightnin' Hopkins (1912), Clarence Green (1929), Sly Stone (1944), Ry Cooder (1947)
- 16-Yank Rachell (1910), Son Bonds (1909)
- 17-Nat "King" Cole (1917)
- 18-Charley Pride (1938), Wilson Pickett (1941), Big Daddy Kinsey (1927)
- 19-Clarence "Frogman" Henry (1937), Jackie "Moms" Mabley (1894), Ornette Coleman (1930), Walter Jackson (1938), Sam Myers (1936)
- 20-Sister Rosetta Tharpe (1915), Frank Edwards (1909), Marcia Ball (1949), Sam Lay (1935), Eddie Shaw (1937), Jimmie Vaughan (1951)
- 21-Bo Carter (1893), Eddie "Son" House (1902), Otis Spann (1930), Smokey Smothers (1929)
- 22-Weldon "Juke Boy" Bonner (1932), Iverson "Louisiana Red" Minter (1936)
- 23-Stick McGhee (1918), Chaka Khan (1953)
- 24-Pete Johnson (1904)
- 25-Aretha Franklin (1942)
- 26-Rufus Thomas (1917), Curley Weaver (1906)
- 27-Leroy Carr (1905), Robert "Junior" Lockwood (1915), Sarah Vaughan (1924), Herman "Little Junior" Parker (1932), Johnny Clyde Copeland (1937)
- 28-"Cripple" Clarence Lofton (1887)
- 29-William Clarke (1951), Willie Clayton (1955), Sue Foley (1968), Camille Howard (1914)
- 30-John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson (1914)
- 31-Big Maceo Merriweather (1905), Lowell Fulson (1921), Lizzie Miles (1895)

February/March Blues Calendar

February 17: Matthew Curry @ RH

February 25 : Tab Benoit @ NT

March 3: Eric Gales @ NT

March 5: Bill Miller Band @ RH (CBS)

March 10: Trongone Band @ RH

March 15: Melvin Seals & JGB @ NT

March 17: Black Stone Cherry @ NT

March 22: Rev. Horton Heat @ NT

March 25: JohnnySwim @ NT

Coming in April:

April 12: Coco Montoya @ RH

April 19: Jonny Lang @ NT

April 21: Kara Grainger @ EM

Legend:

RH: Rabbit Hole EM: Evening Muse

NT: Neighborhood Theatre



Blues Festivals:

March 17-18: **River City Blues Festival**

Marietta OH www.Bjfm.org

April 9: 13th **Annual Blues By the Sea**

Festival Kiawah Island, SC

April 22: **Wiregrass Blues Festival**

Dothan, Alabama

www.wiregrassbluessociety.com

May 20: **31st Annual Carolina Blues Festival**

Barber Park Amphitheater, Greensboro, NC

www.Festpiedmontblues.org

May 20: **9th Annual Simply Texas Blues**

Festival, San Angelo, Texas

July 8: 4th Annual Buffalo Niagara Blues

Festival www.wnyblues.org

October 12-15 **16th Annual Canal Bank**

Shuffle Blues Festival, Thorold, Ontario,

Canada www.canalbankshuffle.com



The **2017 IBC in Memphis** is over, but we are already looking forward to competition later this year to select band, solo/duo, youth and self produced album to represent CBS in 2018.

We congratulate the **Red Dirt Revelators** for a tremendous performance on both Wednesday & Thursday night! Heard great buzz from the audience and the judges. They had the Blues City Café on its feet! Well done Guys! So proud of you! Great to see you out on the streets and in the clubs throughout the week and weekend.

Pam Taylor was part of the house band for the **Women in Blues Showcase**. Did a great job anchoring the vocalists for the day at Alfred's on Beale.

Shout out to all the CBS members who made the trip to support RDR & the Charlotte Blues Society: Rick Ballew, Libby Ballew, Mary London, Betsy Norton-Stowe, Betsy's sister & our Blues Sister Patty Cappetta, Rick Kite, Nona King, Lauren Michaelis, and the famous Mr. Roy.

Favorite Youth Band: Hands down from the whole CBS gang to: LIMELIGHT from Australia! Laurent Michaelis was rockin' a little Koala pin all night to support the Aussies.



The Charlotte contingency visited the Blues Hall of Fame in Memphis over the weekend. It has interactive displays and memorabilia from blues greats.

The isolation booths give everyone an opportunity to sit and absorb music from the earliest days of the blues to current artists.

It is directly across the street from the Lorraine Motel and the National Civil Rights Museum. Highly recommend you check them both out!



Charlotte Blues Society Members at Blues Hall of Fame

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT:

The Instigators

Keith Cummings-Bass & Vocals, Rob Dayton-Harp & Vocals, John Hartley-Drums, Michael "the Wolf" Ingmire-Guitars & Vocals

Authentic Chicago blues

Delivered with energy and passion, Dayton's harp & vocals pack the punch of a freight train at full steam. Ingmire's wailing guitar allows room for the notes to talk without the noisy chatter of a shredder. Every note is felt as this tight group's solid rhythm section Hartley and Cummings nail the bottom end, proving Authentic Chicago Blues are alive and well in the Carolinas.

The Instigators have anchored the jam section of the CBS meetings on a frequent basis. Dayton has the gift of keeping it organized and moving, in order that all musicians have the opportunity to be a part of the jam.

NOTE: Jam time is 10pm on CBS nights.



THE INSTIGATORS

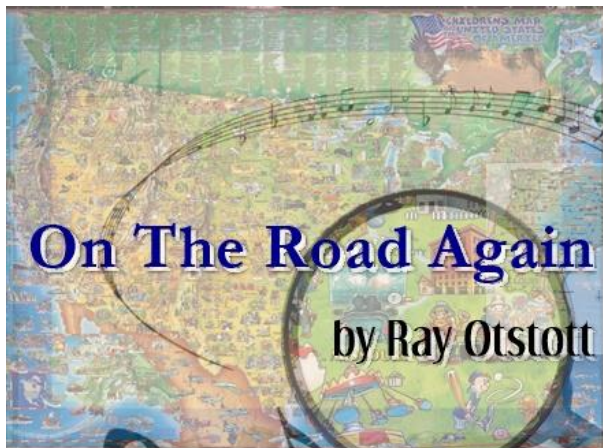


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www.Blues.org



Sidemen – Long Road to Glory provides an intimate look into the incredible lives of three of the last Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf sidemen, piano player Pinetop Perkins, drummer Willie 'Big Eyes' Smith and guitarist Hubert Sumlin. These legendary bluesmen, who performed and recorded into their 80's and 90's, played a significant role in shaping modern popular music. The film features some of the last interviews conducted with all three men as well as their final live performances together. These memorable live performances, vividly capture these blues legends with the blues and rock stars they have inspired including, Robby Kreiger of The Doors, Elvin Bishop, and Tim Reynolds of The Dave Matthews Band. Personal insights from artists such as, Bonnie Raitt, Gregg Allman, Derek Trucks, Shemekia Copeland, Kenny Wayne Shepherd, Joe Perry, Joe Bonamassa and Johnny Winter offer heartfelt accounts of how these three legendary sidemen helped shape rock 'n' roll.

Sidemen takes us on the road with Pinetop, Willie and Hubert, three of our last direct links to the origins of the blues as they share the incredible stories about each of their personal histories. From their upbringings on Delta plantations of the Jim Crow south to lives spent on the road in the shadow of two of the biggest figures in music, their stories are not only a part of music history, but American history as well. As we ride along, we can't help but fall in love with these three endearing men as we experience all the trials and triumphs of these remarkable lives. ~ www.Sidemen.com



On the Road Again ~ By Ray Otstott

In the course of my work, I've had to travel to locations coast-to-coast. My favorite way to de-stress is seeking out live music in or near my assigned area. Nothing like having a glass of wine (and water – it's important to hydrate!), enjoying dinner, and catching some live music. Beats the hell out of sitting in the hotel room watching TV.

I've been lucky enough to discover some blues talent that I probably wouldn't otherwise have heard if I didn't go hunting for nearby music haunts. And when they're free to boot, it's a true win-win!

Some years ago, I was assigned to a client in Lawrenceburg, Indiana. Yes, that Lawrenceburg...

On my first week there, I stopped at Willie's sports bar for dinner. I heard guitar playing in the background, so I asked to be seated near the stage. A one-man-show named **Sonny Moorman** was holding court. He had three guitars (more on that to follow), a small amp, and a foot-stomp percussion gizmo. And a chair...

I was overwhelmed by his performance. Impressive blues and blues-rock originals and covers played on those three guitars – a standard-tuned six-string played pickstyle, another six-string played with a slide, and a lap steel played with a bar. Aside from his good vocals and impeccable playing, he also had a winning stage presence. I highly recommend Sonny to any fan of blues guitar... or slide guitar... or lap steel...



As luck would have it, on one of my weekends home, Sonny and his band played the venerable **Double Door Inn**, opening for Jimmy Thackery. He rocked the joint! Playing the same variety of guitars, he did some of his material from his solo act with a selection of originals and covers in a power trio format. He played slide using my (empty, thankfully) glass as a slide and roamed deep into the crowd. I don't think it's too blasphemous to say Thackery had a pretty tough act to follow.

Well worth seeking out, especially if you're in the Cincinnati area.

Also in that musical bedrock that is Lawrenceburg, Indiana, I was fortunate enough to discover that the city (and that's a somewhat charitable depiction) had during its long summer days a regular Thursday night free music event – Music on the River. Of course, it became an integral part of my Thursday routine.

One of the performers that summer was another Cincinnati-area blues-rocker – one **Jay Jesse Johnson**.



Jay is a Strat-wielding firebreather. Although more conventional in instrumentation than Sonny, JJJ is equally skilled on his ax. He played a nice long set of mostly originals, including one called "Play That Damn Guitar". (And he did...)

He was engaging on stage and friendly and talkative after the show. Also well worth seeking out.

As work led me throughout the country, another memorable musical encounter occurred in Columbus, Georgia. On my first visit, all I knew of Columbus was that it was near Fort Benning, was the headquarters of my client, and was the locale where "The Walking Dead" was filmed. I was encouraged on the drive, however, because a major part of I-185 between Atlanta and Columbus was named the Chet Atkins Highway.

Although Chet wasn't around – musically or residentially – on my first Wednesday I discovered The Loft. It had a sit-down restaurant downstairs and one of those neon signs with a real (albeit cheap) guitar over the door. I ventured in, walked up the stairs and discovered a signed Gibson BB King Lucille model in a framed shadowbox in the bar. Among the other guitars hanging on the walls was a signed Fender Buddy Guy model Stratocaster.

They were playing Jimmy Herring's solo instrumental album "Lifeboat" as background music. Hmm... promising...

I sat in the bar area and had a glass of wine (Okay, 2 – and water!) and some dinner. (It was delicious, in case you were wondering...) When I closed out my tab, my waitress asked me if I liked music, to which I of course replied in the positive. She suggested I stay for the **Neal Lucas Band**. "He's the best guitarist in Columbus," she insisted. And it was free... (except for the additional wine...)

So they rolled the doors/curtains open to reveal a small theater with a stage and seats and tables. I snagged a front-row seat.



Neal and his band, a power trio augmented from time to time by guest musicians, including several regulars (keyboards/Hammond organ, saxophone) and occasional 2nd guitarists, vocalists, and keyboardists. They rocked! Neal is an excellent guitarist and singer, and his bandmates are equally good. They played a variety of originals and covers every Wednesday, usually playing three or more hours of music. Hard on the old body having to go to work early Thursday morning when you rock till well after midnight, but The Loft became my regular Wednesday-night haunt.

Did I mention it was free? And did I mention that the food was excellent, too? And reasonable?

Neal is another blues-rocker you don't want to miss. (Factoid: They opened for BB King there.) Tight band, good songs, friendly and engaging. So much so, that on my last week, they told me to bring a guitar and invited me to join them on stage. On my last Wednesday in Columbus, we played a 20-minute rendition of "Whipping Post", a cover of "Black Magic Woman" (closer to Peter Green's bluesy original than Santana's excellent Latin-tinged cover), and a fine original written by the drummer, Steve Thompson. I had heard it so many times on my Wednesdays that I was quite familiar with it by the time my engagement was due to end and my star-turn happened.

Next time you're in Atlanta, take the short drive to Columbus. If Neal's playing, you won't regret it. For the record, he *is* the best guitarist in Columbus.

And then I was assigned in Greenville, South Carolina. Greenville has a thriving music scene: the (now-shuttered) Handlebar, Smiley's, Blues Boulevard, Bon Secours (former Bi-Lo Center), and seemingly every bar/restaurant on Main Street. They also have the Downtown Alive music series on Thursdays on Main Street. Did I mention that it's free?

One particular Thursday a few years ago, I was fortunate enough to catch the **Marcus King Band**. 17 years old at the time, Marcus and his bandmates played a variety of blues-rock covers and originals. They rocked! I'm hooked.



This kid was good – **way** beyond his years! He's a fluid guitarist and a decent vocalist, too. We're fortunate here in Charlotte that Marcus has added us to his regular stops. He frequently plays at **the Rabbit Hole**. I highly recommend seeing him.



They're another must-see. Worth the trip to Greenville, but even better because they play here several times a year. Of course their shows aren't all free any more, but well worth the price of admission.

I hope you get (and take!) the opportunity to experience all of these under-recognized talents. They work hard and they deserve your support. Let's make them (more) famous!

Check 'em out on YouTube:

Sonny -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YYtSrRhBTsA>

Neal -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64WqUqHRwv0>

Jay -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rW-9RToy6BI>

Marcus -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkSOEcq44oc>

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1801 Commonwealth Ave. Charlotte



225 E. Woodlawn Rd, Charlotte



3425 David Cox Rd, Charlotte

Invite your friends: Become a member of the Charlotte Blues Society today!

Commit yourself to Keepin' the Blues Alive!

www.CharlotteBluesSociety.org

Keepin' The Blues Alive!

March 5
 April 2
 May 7
 June 4

August 6
 September 3
 October 1
 November 5
 December 3

The Charlotte Blues Society
 at The Rabbit Hole
 Door 7pm Band 8pm Jam 10pm
Live Blues!
 more info: www.CharlotteBluesSociety.org

SAVE THESE DATES! SAVE THESE DATES!

Members get in FREE

THE RABBIT HOLE

1801 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE
Charlotte

There are more blues events going on all the time, and we rely on YOU to help us build our blues community like never before.

Contribute your time and your talent.

This is YOUR CBS

Better than ever in 2017!



Keepin' The Blues Alive!

