

ISSUE #21

American Music

The Blasters/Dave Alvin newsletter

NOVEMBER 1998

Dave Joins Bob Dylan's Arena Tour & Blaster Tribute CD is Released

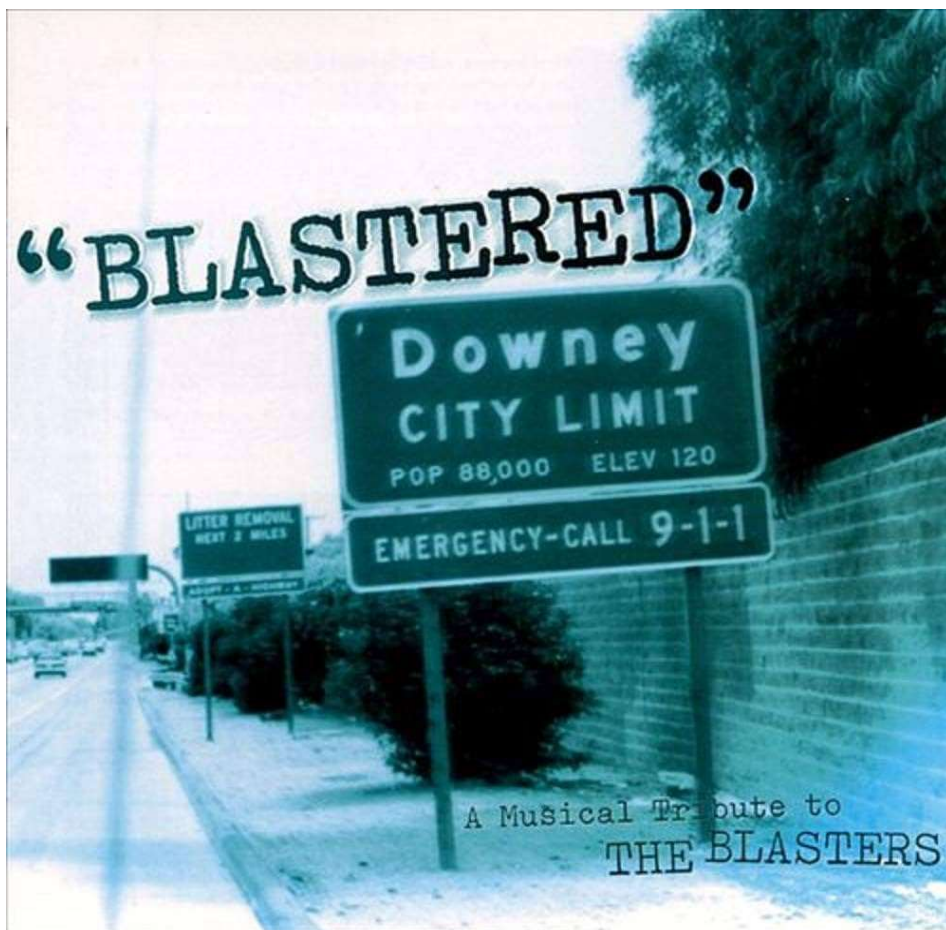
DAVE ALVIN TOUR DATES

With the Guilty Men

12/3 Vancouver B.C at Starfish
12/4 Seattle WA at Tractor Tavern
12/6 Independence OR at Lenora's Ghost
12/8 Mill Valley at Sweet Water
12/9 Sebastapol CA at Powerhouse
12/10 Monterey CA at Doc Ricketts Lab
12/11 Hollywood Ca at Jacks
12/12-13 Long Beach Ca at Blue Café
12/31 Long Beach CA at Pine Square
1/16 Pasadena CA at Neighbor. Church
2/18 Columbus OH at Little Brothers
2/19 Detroit MI at Magic Stick
2/20 Chicago IL at Fitzgerald's
2/23 Toronto Ontario at TBA
2/24 Pittsburgh PA at Rosebud
2/25 Phila. Pa at Tin Angel (acoustic)
2/26 Arlington VA at Iota
2/27 N.Y.C. at Bowery Ballroom
3/3 Greenville SC at Handlebar
3/5 Orlando FL at Sapphire Club
3/6 Tampa FL at Skippers

BLASTERS DATES

11/27 Monterey CA at Dr. Ricketts Lab



LATEST NEWS: : —Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men Have just finished up an arena tour with Bob Dylan and Joni Mitchell that spanned 12 dates from 10/22 – 11/7. (Postcards and e-mail up-

dates were sent out to y'all when the news broke a week before the tour.) Dave will start making up cancelled club dates starting on 2/18/99 — Dave will produce The Derailers new album in January of '99 and then Katy Moffatt in the spring followed by Chris Gaffney. — John Bazz and Jerry Angel are playing in a local L.A. band called Uncle Daddy. — In October, Dave taped a radio show called Acoustic Café doing 4 songs and interviews. It will go out to about 50 syndicated stations. (((more latest news on page 2))))

Inside: Reports on the Dave Alvin/Bob Dylan Tour, The Black Jack David Tour, Dave Alvin in Italy, and the "Blastered" Tribute CD

Latest News: (((cont. from page 1))) The Blasters were featured in the L.A. Times newspaper Calendar section on 11/12/98. The band was called down for a special photo and interview session. A color picture of the band made it to the front page of the Calendar with the headline, "Phil Alvin fuels the return of the Blasters." The article explains that the band is continuing to rehearse, to prepare, to get ready to record their new High-Tone album. — Dave's Crazy Ones book is still indefinitely delayed, but a book called The Guide To Outlaw Poetry has one of Dave's poems in it. It will be out sometime in early '99. — Rumors have spread that High-Tone may release a live Monsters of Folk CD. — John Bazz has come up with an idea of starting his own label called HighTop records (referring to the sneakers) to release Blaster CDs — Bobby Lloyd Hicks and the Skeletons have been busy lately, as Bobby reports, "The Skeletons got a gig with the "Cartoon Network/Asia" doing the theme song and 13 other pieces of incidental music for a morning show called Toons A Go-Go that will air in the fall." They finished it in May along with sessions backing up rockabilly legend Rudy "Tutti" Grayzell." Rudy is a 50's rocker / rockabilly artist that recorded for Sun, Starday, and a host of other regional labels. He's been living in the Oregon/Washington area since the mid-80's and will release the new CD on Sideburn Records, a subsidiary of Burnside Records. — The November issue of Playboy magazine ran a great review of Blackjack David. — Smokey Hormel has left Beck's band and is now playing bass with Sean Lennon's band. — If you ever wanted to read a thorough history of the Blasters, now you can. Check the Blasters official web site at <http://bullwinkle.as.utexas.edu/scot/bhist.html> — The Japanese pressing of the Blackjack David CD is very different than the US version. This import pressing of BJD has lyrics in english and japanese, 2 bonus tracks and comes in a jewel case. — Dave has been so happy with the new formation of the Guilty Men that he wants to put out his own live bootleg to sell at his shows. He says he would want to put tracks like AMERICAN MUSIC, HALEY'S COMET, the country version of SIX NIGHTS A WEEK, and others that didn't make it onto the Interstate City live CD. — Dave has co-written a song with Jack Smith for Jack's new Run Wild Records CD due out in January '99. Jack Smith and the Rockabilly Planet are based in Providence Rhode Island and put together the project that became the Tennessee Border album. — Dave Alvin's interview with Buck Owens appeared in the September issue of Mix Magazine. Dave, "That Mix interview was one of the fun-nest things of the year." — Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men played The Long Beach Museum of Arts in California on 8/19 and Phil Alvin showed up. Phil was seen backstage joking with Dave paying his respects by kissing Dave's hand while down on one knee. Spirits were high with all and Phil came up in Dave's encore to sing MARIE MARIE. Everyone had a great time. After the show they all went out to the Blue Cafe and Phil and Dave sat in with the house blues band for a few songs. Dave happily stated, "It's the most fun I've had with Phil in a long time." See! The boys still get along. But don't start rumors of a reunion. — Dave, "It's been a fun year, meeting Buck Owens (for the Mix interview), touring with Bob Dylan, the album doing so well, and now I've been asked to do a song on an album with Little Milton next year. They want me to write a new song." — Rick Shea played live and on the air on KXLU 88.9, a L.A. radio show called Happy Trails. It aired 11/19. Rick Shea and his own band performed material from Rick's forthcoming solo CD. — Jerry Angel has recorded an album with the Devil Dolls on Geffen Records due out in the spring. He will be joining the band on tour as a regular member. — James Intveld just won the "Best Solo Artist" award for 1998 at the Rock City News Music Awards, The 10/29/98 issue of the Rock City News has an interview and a cover photo. — A piece of Dave Alvin's NEW HIGHWAY" was used on TV during the opening scene of Pensacola: Wings of Gold. — *AM*

Contest # 4 Answer. We have a winner. - Jon Handel - He won a copy of James Intveld's recent first CD release on Innerworks records. The question was: James Intveld has been associated with both the Blasters and Dave Alvin. Obviously, James was the Blasters guitarist and is connected to them that way. Now try to name the connection he had to Dave Alvin. It could be a certain project they worked on together. **Answer:** James performed songs for the CRY BABY movie soundtrack, which Dave Alvin produced. Also James played bass on BUS STATION and WHAT AM I WORTH on Dave's King Of California album.

The Dave Alvin/Bob Dylan Tour

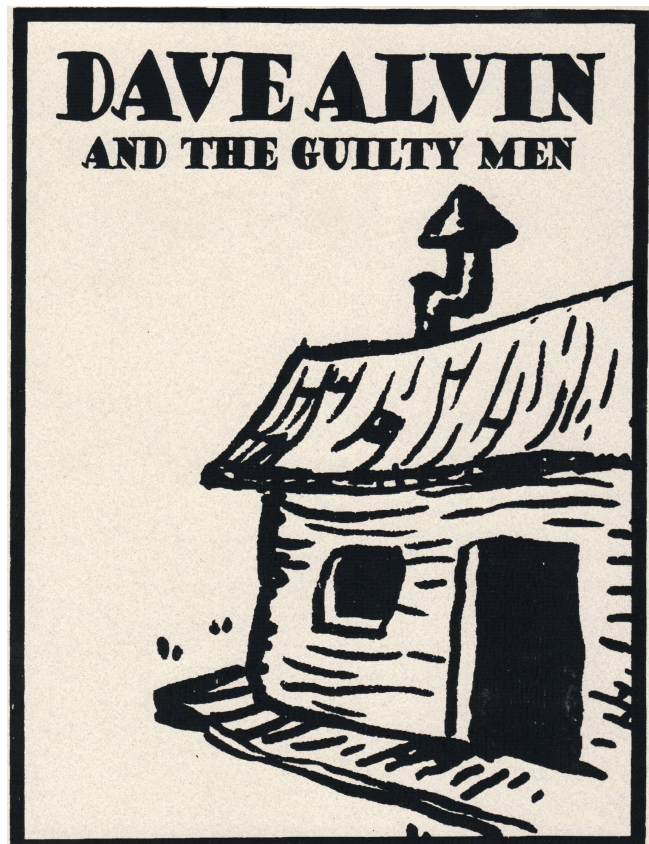
- Billy Davis

OCTOBER 12, 1998 – Dave Alvin, Rick Shea, and Gregory Boaz were driving towards Springfield, MO, to pick up the other half of the Guilty Men in order to start a second U.S club tour in support of his Black Jack David album. Then, Dave's cell-phone rang. It turns out that Bob Dylan wanted Dave and the band to open up his east coast arena tour!! As Dave said "This is f**kin wild!!" Rick Shea was driving at the moment the call came in, and remembers, "Dave was sleeping in the back when the phone rang. His main concern was having all those dates to cancel. I said, 'Can you really say 'No' to that!'" So it meant canceling a string of club dates on short notice. Bobby Lloyd Hicks said, "That means we gotta piss off about thirty club owners, but hey, it's BOB DYLAN, man!!" What an exciting turn of events for everybody. Two days later, it was made official. They would play 12 concerts with Dylan and Joni Mitchell. The tour would start in Dylan's hometown, Duluth, MN, and move through the mid-west through New York state and then down south. The venues were all hockey sized arenas. In another crazy twist, Dave's producer Greg Leisz, who also is a friend, and former member of the Allnighters, is the steel guitar player in Mitchell's band.

It's speculated that Dylan heard the buzz about Dave's highly proclaimed Blackjack David album and requested him for the tour. Dave has had a sporadic association over the years with Bob that is based on mutual admiration. It was no secret that Dylan was a big Blasters' fan, who has asked Dave that annoying question. Which question? Dave

picks it up, "The last conversation I had with Bob was in 1990 at a benefit for Roy Orbison. I played with Syd Straw and John Fogerty. I was hanging out on the crew side of the stage, and Dylan came over to talk to me while he was waiting to go onstage with the Byrds. We were

10/22 Duluth MN at Convention Center
10/23 Minneapolis MN at Target Center
10/25 Chicago IL at United Center
10/26 Indianapolis IN at Market Sq.Arena
10/28 Detroit MI at Palace of Auburn Hills
10/29 Toronto Ont. at Maple Leaf Gardens
10/30 Ottawa Ont. at Corel Center
11/1 N.Y.C. at Madison Square Garden
11/2 Syracuse NY at War Memorial Arena
11/3 Rochester NY at Blue Cross Arena
11/5 College Park MD at U. of Maryland
11/7 Atlanta GA at Alexander Coliseum



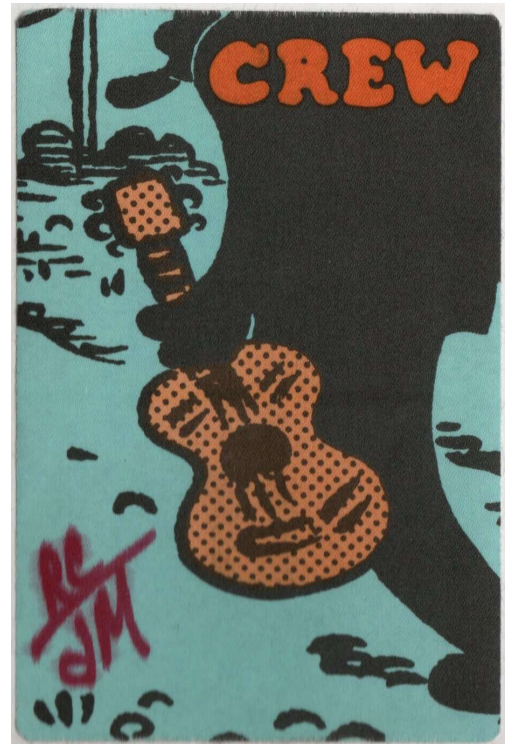
This old shack artwork was drawn by Bob especially for the tour passes and backstage signs.



talking a lot and he asked what everybody else asks (Dave doing the Dylan imitation): ‘Dave. When are you and Phil getting back together?. Man!!...That was magic.’ ” Dave also recalls the first time he had any contact with Dylan, “I was out on tour with the Knitters (1983). A guy named Charlie Quintana from The Plugz, was playing with Dylan and called me in my hotel room in Sacramento. He said, ‘You have to catch a plane. Bob Dylan wants you to record with us.’ I said, ‘I can’t leave my car here.’ He said to me, ‘You’re crazy.’ So I couldn’t make the session. Later at the first Farm Aid (9/85) Dylan was on the bill. He had finished playing and was sitting on the steps of his trailer with members of his crew. I was drunk enough to go over and talk to him. So, I went over and apologized, ‘Sorry I couldn’t make that session.’ He goes, ‘Yeah, you were in Buenos Aires or San Diego or something.’ (laughs) and I said, ‘Oh Yeah.’ Then I told him I thought he was one of the best white blues singers ever. And he said, ‘Yeah, I always thought so too.’ (laughs)

He said, ‘Well, we’ll get to play one of these days.’ Eventually, Dave was asked to a session in ’86 for Dylan. “I don’t think it was my greatest musical contribution to the world. I was in awe of just being in the same room with the guy. I’m still looking for a tape of that session too.” These songs were recorded for two Dylan albums called Knocked Out Loaded and Down in the Groove. None of the songs Dave played on were released. “I saw him a few months after the recording session,” Dave recalls, “Dylan was playing with Tom Petty at the L.A. Forum. I was with John Doe and Exene and my girlfriend. We were hanging out at this backstage bar, and Dylan’s road manager came and brought me backstage. We talked for awhile about Sonny Burgess and stuff like that. It was a wild scene in his dressing room. He’s more remote now.”

Rick Shea remembers a funny moment when Dave realized that the tour was really going to happen, “My favorite response from anybody about this whole thing was from Dave. He said, ‘I gotta get me a new suit.’ Instead of, ‘I gotta check out my guitar,’ or ‘We have to rehearse new songs.’ (laughs)” Keyboardist Joe Terry thought the most exciting part of the Dy-



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lan tour was events of the week leading up to the shows. Joe: "For a week at our club shows, many people seemed to know about the Dylan tour and would ask about it. Once, while a hundred miles outside of Duluth (the first Dylan show for us), we stopped at a store and were asked if we were goin' to the Dylan show. A hundred miles away! Gregory couldn't contain himself and blurted that we were playing for Dylan. At that point we felt a little bit like rock stars. While in Duluth, I woke up early in the morning and stepped outside the hotel into the parking lot to greet the day with a Marlboro. A maintenance man named Joey asked if I was goin' to the show tonight, to which I couldn't contain myself and told him that I was indeed **PLAYING** the show tonight. Needless to say, I was

his best friend for the next day and a half. He also reported to me the next morning. While enjoying another Marlboro (or was it Kent?), he admitted that he really liked us better than Joni or Bob. He asked if we had any CDs out, to which I said, 'Not yet, but we're hoping to. We were just playing out at the airport lounge when we were asked to join the Dylan tour!' (laughs) I didn't really say that! He was too nice a guy."

OCTOBER 22, 1998 — The first concert of the Dylan/Dave Alvin tour was in Duluth, MN and the whole band was excited. Dave "That was the town Dylan was born in, but he never played there before. It was sold out and the audience was just incredible to us." Joni Mitchell wasn't on the bill, so just the two bands played. To accommodate a larger crowd, there was no floor seating, only standing general admission. Dave: "There was open floor dancing, and it was just like playing a rock 'n' roll club. We came out blasting and Dylan came out blasting!" It was a great show to start the tour.

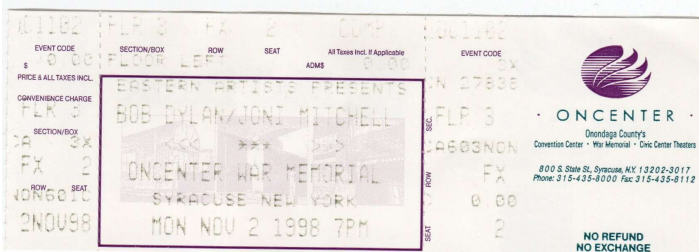
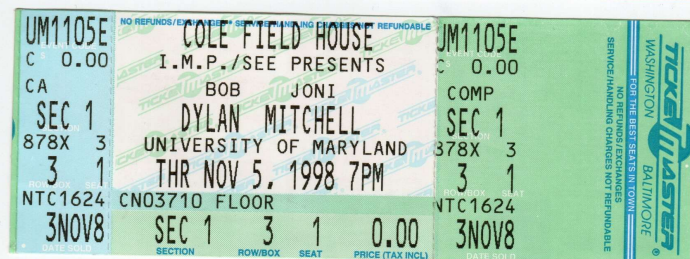
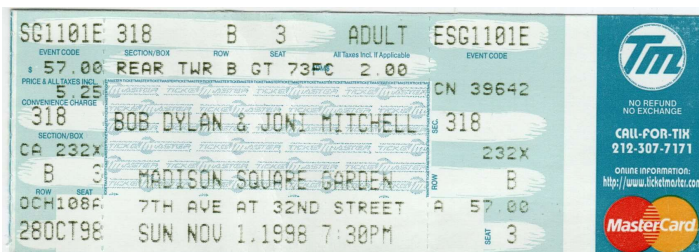
The set list started as OUT IN CA, ABILENE, JUBILEE TRAIN, KING OF CA, 4TH OF JULY, and AMERICAN MUSIC. In later shows they dropped KING OF CA and added BLACKJACK DAVID. In Syracuse they exchanged JUBILEE TRAIN for \$30 ROOM and MUSEUM OF HEART. Then the following night in Rochester they tried INTERSTATE CITY in the JUBILEE spot. In Maryland and Atlanta they returned JUBILEE to the set again since that formula seemed to work best.

Choosing a set list for 35 minutes took some careful planning as Dave recalls: "I learned

real early when the Blasters toured with Queen (1980) that some songs work in arenas, and some don't. Songs where the band plays all the way through, tend not to work in arenas because it just becomes a big sound glob. I had a conversation with Brian May, the guitar player in Queen. He said that, once they started playing arenas, it changed the way they wrote and arranged songs. In arenas, less is more. I chose songs that had breakdowns or just guitar and drums." Songs like 4TH OF JULY, JUBILEE TRAIN, and AMERICAN MUSIC all have sections where the band lowers the volume and either Dave or another member plays to the forefront of the song. In AMERICAN MUSIC, at one of those quiet points, Dave plays the solo from an old blues song called OOKIE DOOKIE STOMP. These subtle changes got the audience's attention. "In AMERICAN MUSIC after OOKIE DOOKIE STOMP, I stopped playing." Explains Dave, "Then I would hit a low E string and let it ring while the band kept vamping. So it was sort of teasing the audience, very much like what Lee Allen used to do on SO LONG BABY GOOD-BYE. He would do the long solos; then he stopped and did the Lee Allen stance. People would really get off on that."

OUT IN CA is a great set starter that has developed as a better song than the original version on the Interstate City album. That and AMERICAN MUSIC were my favorites of the tour. ABILENE and BLACK JACK DAVID are good choices not only as good songs but for promotion for the new CD. In the set, Dave carefully mentioned the CD and the fact that it was available in the building. JUBILEE TRAIN was chosen for its familiarity to folk music fans with its elements of DO RE MI and PROMISED LAND. Even Dylan fans who were not familiar with Dave would easily recognize those folk classics. 4TH OF JULY is well known as Dave's most famous song and AMERICAN MUSIC was a great closer because there is no better way to hit 'em harder. Drummer Bobby Lloyd Hicks saw the newspaper the next day after that first show, and picks up the story: "We got a one-sentence blurb in the paper among three pages of 'Homecoming Bob' articles: It read, 'We sat, Minnesota-polite, through a set by David Alvin and the Guilty Men, a country rockabilly band that played real loud.'" Bobby and the band gladly accept any kind of review that mentions 'Loud.' So Bobby yells, "PERFECT!" Hicks continues, "After the show, Bob's crew, who couldn't have been nicer to us the entire tour, told us to leave our equipment with them. They put it on one of their trucks and from then on, our stuff was backstage at every venue."

Bobby remembers, "We just had to walk in, set it up and they'd put it on and off stage for us. So we got to ditch the trailer (that towed the equipment on the club tour). We all felt a little sad about having to leave her there in the Minnesota cold country, but were glad that we wouldn't have to hassle with her in all the big cities." Most of Dylan's staff had been with



him for the last twenty years. Rich Neeson acted as Dave's tour manager. Rich originally managed the Skeletons and road managed Dave when backed up by the Skeletons on the '91 tour. He has worked with many acts over the years. He first worked as a roadie with The Rolling Thunder Review (famous Dylan tour in the mid-seventies) and later road managed Edie Brickell, when she opened up a Dylan tour in the eighties. It was very helpful in knowing how the Dylan tour crew worked.



Bobby Lloyd Hicks newly painted Blackjack David kick drum head

OCTOBER 25, 1998 — Bobby, “The third afternoon (at the United Center in Chicago), Rick and I were setting up when Bob's guitarist, Larry Campbell walked by. He stopped and talked and said that he thought we were 'the perfect band for this tour'. I had to agree: We'd go out and rock the joint, Joni would mellow out the room, and then Bob and his band would come out and tear the place up. You couldn't ask for much more for your entertainment dollar!!”

NOVEMBER 1, 1998 On November 1, it was Madison Square Garden in New York City. This is as big as it gets. The top ticket price was \$82, and the arena was sold out. Seats behind the stage were put on sale to meet the demand at \$55 each. They sold too, proving how popular Dylan still is. The local newspaper advertised “3 Great Bands.” Vendors at all the arena's were selling Dave Alvin BlackJack David T-shirts with a print of the face symbol from the front of the new album. Blackjack David and Interstate City CD's were also being sold as well as a 14 X 20 hard cardboard concert poster with Bob Dylan and Joni Mitchell pictures announcing the concert. On the bottom it reads “Also featuring Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men. Don't You Dare Miss It.”

The arena is an overwhelming place -- big with lots of history. I was a N.Y. Rangers' hockey season ticket holder years ago and have attended many concerts there over the last 20 years. MSG is the place to be. In my eyes, there is no more prestigious gig. The band members had their wives and girlfriends fly in for the special event. Backstage, stars like Paul Simon, Julia Roberts and Martha Stewart were hanging around but Bob Dylan was nowhere to be seen. Bob, being very elusive, got to the stage without anybody seeing him. Unfortunately, through out the whole tour, Bob's routine was pretty much the same. As Bobby Lloyd remembers, “Bob stayed on his bus until it was time to go onstage. Then he'd get back on the bus after the encores and go on to the next town.” We heard that Bob has a tour bus all to himself and his body guard and driver. Bobby thought the reclusiveness didn't matter much: “He looked like he was having a good time though. Smiling, dancing on stage, talking to the crowds a lot. After the encore in Rochester, he walked down and slapped hands with some of the people up front . . . I've Never seen him do that!”

The MSG crowd tuned in and was very receptive to Dave's set. I heard some Dave fans calling out and most of the crowd gave Dave a good listen. Dave mentioned his CD being sold by

vendors saying, "It's available in this hall, just like in a night club."

Dave on playing MSG: "That was such a rush. Like jumping off the top of Mount Everest. It was rough getting psyched up for 4 hours beforehand and at the same time thinking, 'what if I bust a string?' Anything could go wrong. I looked out from the stage and saw 20,000 people and it's like...Wow! It's a real come down, coming off stage, because after 35 minutes you're just getting going. So at MSG, it especially took a long to come down. I really felt like I accomplished something."

NOVEMBER 2, 1998 — The next night was the Onondaga Center in Syracuse, NY. The band felt they didn't play up to par. It was kind of a come down after MSG the night before. On to Rochester at The Blue Cross Arena the band was in really good spirits. The big topic of conversation before the show among the band that night was that they discovered that Joni Mitchell's trumpet player, Chris Botti, was the guy who recorded the infamous Buddy Rich temper tantrum tape. The story goes that years ago, famous band leader and drummer Buddy Rich went on a tirade backstage cursing his band, threatening, and just plain repetitively berating his backing band with insults and obscenities. Some kid with a Walkman recorder, taped the conversation which was to become a highly bootlegged and collectable recording. Joni's horn player was that kid. The tape has been called The House of David tape -- because Buddy Rich wasn't happy that some of his band members had beards that reminded him of a 1930's religious cult bearded baseball team called 'House Of David.' The joke in Rochester was that the horn player was more famous than anyone in the building -- just based on his accomplishment of taping that incident.



The band displays the MSG concert posters while waiting to go on stage in Rochester.



NOVEMBER 3, 1998 — For the set, the band had been playing **BLACKJACK DAVID** in the arenas a few times; and it really was sounding great with the spacious echo effect of a large hall. Dave attracted listeners to his song lyrics, by intro-ing the song saying, “I have a new album out, I know you’re gonna just love it. Its available here in this fine, beautiful 44 million dollar updated War Blue Cross....night club. Here’s a wonderful old folk song that’s got song should have. It’s got sex, marriage, infidelity, class warfare, babies, and horses.” The crowd responded with light laughter, and I could see a lot of people listening carefully for those elements. Dave dedicated **AMERICAN MUSIC**, “I’d like to send this one out to Sleepy LaBeef. I hear the beef man is in town.” Dave was having fun with his raps to the audience. He said, “I’m Dave Alvin and these are the Guilty Men. We’re guilty of loving too much, and too well.”

everything in the world a **Madison Square Garden**

Dylan put on an entertaining show. I have to admit I have a lot of respect for his accomplishments. Also he plays different songs every night so that is a credit to him still as an artist and not just a performer. Not being familiar with Dylan’s live shows, I didn’t have any pre conceived notions, but I’m told that he is a lot more animated than in recent years, and they say his voice is gotten better.

After the show Dave and the Guilty Men walked out the stage door into a group of Dylan fans waiting to meet Bob. One girl begged, “Can you get me backstage to meet Bob? Please!” Guilty Men bassist Gregory Boaz summed up the bands relationship with Dylan on the whole tour with a comment to the girl. He said, “Hell, I’m in the opening band, and I haven’t even met him yet.” I found that very funny.

The night wasn’t over. What was to come was really too cool! We heard that Sleepy LaBeef was playing a club called Milestones. So Dave and the Guilty Men piled into my car and another car and headed over there. Upon entering, we heard that Sleepy’s car broke down on the highway, and he was canceling the gig. Dave brought his guitar on his back, probably with the intention of jamming with Sleepy. The opening band finished their set, and I could see Dave was itching to get up on stage. After a few beers, Dave suddenly starts calling out to Bobby, “Hey Bobby,” and then he asked me where Gregory was. I called Gregory, and the boys jumped up on the stage and did a mini-set. The crowd went crazy! Dave had his guitar and a





Madison Square Garden

few of the guys used the opening bands instruments, Gregory Boaz played great on upright bass. I had never seen him play upright, and he was impressive. Bobby played drums, and Joe Terry caused complete mayhem -- jumping on stage for assistance on back ground vocals, drums, and lead vocals. He was running around the club and hiding, then jumping up on stage. The pedal steel players (Rick and Greg Leisz) sat out as there were not any extra guitar amps.

They opened with Webb Pierce's HONKY TONK. That's a favorite of Dave's for encores and jams. Then, Joe Terry took vocals on the Jerry Lee Lewis song LET'S TALK ABOUT US, Bobby sang CRAZY COUNTRY HOP, and Gregory did GET YOUR BIG NOSE OUTTA MY BUISNESS. Who knew Gregory could sing? He jumped right in there and was really singing to the whole audience. He wound up ripping up his fingers playing on the big strings. They all sounded great and were having such a fun time. Joe was totally wild running all over the place. I'm sure the Guinness Draught I bought him helped. What a great time everyone was having. At one point he started playing drums on Bobby's set while Bobby was still playing. He was beating the floor tom so hard, I'm surprised he didn't break one of the skins! Finally, they did MARIE MARIE after numerous requests for the song. Wow! What a set. This type of spontaneity is what rock 'n roll is all about. And only a small group of fans were lucky enough to witness it. Some friends in the arena audience heard Dave mention the fact that Sleepy was in town during that song dedication. With quick thinking, they guessed Dave might show up. They were right. The club owner was ecstatic and the crowd buzzed about the surprise appearance all night. Man! This was too cool! Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men, fresh from the big 16,000 seat Bob Dylan concert now playing this intimate club. You had to be there! We left the club, piled into the cars as a light snow started to fall.



It wasn't the first excursion into clubs, for Dave and the Guilty Men on the tour. In Chicago, Dave and Greg Leisz joined Dale Watson and Jimmie Dale Gilmore on stage at Fitzgerald's. Dave played HONKY TONK with Jimmie Dale, and then returned to the stage in the encore with Leisz. I hear there was a rip roaring steel guitar battle between Dale Watson's steel player Ricky Davis and Greg Leisz.

NOVEMBER 5, 1998 –The Cole Field House in College Park, Maryland, is just outside Washington D.C., so it is considered a D.C. venue. The Cole Field House is actually a large basketball arena on the grounds of the University of Maryland. In the band's soundcheck, they played the old Blasters classic song CRAZY BABY. Dave did all the solos and the vocal treatment was perfect. Dave looking back said, "Yeah. That was fun. We might start doing that (back on the club tour). That would really throw some people for a loop if we played that! (laughs)"

Earlier in the day, Joni Mitchell was performing at the White House for the president. While Dave was on stage, she was caught in traffic and was running late in getting to the gig. During FOURTH OF JULY the road manager on the side of the stage held up his finger signaling "One" to Dave. I thought he had only one song left, but actually it meant one extra song. The audience wasn't aware that Joni was running late. AMERICAN MUSIC was next, and Dave dedicated it to a group of local rockabilly legends, "I'd like to send this next song out some old friends of mine. Billy Hancock, Tex Rubinowitz, Bill Kirchen, and the late great Danny Gatton." Dave remembers being forced into extended versions of his last two songs to stall for Joni Mitchell to arrive, "During AMERICAN MUSIC I started getting the universal sign of stretch." Dave expanded AMERICAN MUSIC with some different solo sections and upon fading out, launched into LONG WHITE CADILLAC. This was a real treat. The band wound up playing 15 minutes over what they normally play, and it was the first time on the tour they were playing CADILLAC. Later, I asked Rick Shea when they decided they were gonna add CADILLAC, and he replied, "I found out about it when you found out about it." Dave later responded to Rick's remark, laughing, "That's part of the fun of playing with me. I started looking at the stage manager thinking, 'Please tell me were done.' We hadn't done CADILLAC in a long time, but I said, You want stretch, I'll give you stretch! (laugh)" It all ended well and Dave got a rousing round of applause.

Bob Dylan seemed more upbeat in his set and even said, "Thank you, everybody!" He doesn't normally speak to the audience much, but here in the D.C. area he may have been thinking about politics and wanted to connect more with the crowd. Dave watched most of Dylan's shows on the tour and honored him by commenting to me that, "This is like watching Lightnin' Hopkins!" That's quite a compliment. Dave has lots of respect for Bob Dylan. Joni Mitchell was very friendly backstage and Dave had a few conversations with her. In Syra-



Photo: Mike Lynam

Billy Davis, Dave and Phast Freddie



Photo: Mike Lynam

Phast Freddie, Dave and Mike Lynam

cuse, Dave remembers, "We discussed how you can get screwed by record labels and what a horrible thing the music industry is. She basically sounded like one of us. (laughs)" Dave also admires Joni's abilities as a songwriter and singer. He watched her shows, too, and cited a favorite in her version of a Marvin Gaye song called TROUBLE MAN.

NOVEMBER 7, 1998 — The tour ended in Atlanta and Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men felt they finally have received some major recognition. As Dave said, "This was a nice validation for what we do. Kind of like, 'Somebody's paying attention and thank God its Bob Dylan.' The guys needed the kick in the butt saying, 'Yeah! Were Good!'"

Bob Dylan's manager felt that Dave and Dylan complemented each other very well, and he would like to bring Dave out on the road again. Dave feels that there is a narrow band-width that the two artists occupy: "I can't think of anybody else besides him and Springsteen with that size audience doing my kind of music. What we do is really similar musically, but not lyrically. Basically, he does rock 'n roll, bluegrass stuff, but really loud. It's a real rock 'n roll songwriter type of audience. It's tailor made for me." Bobby Lloyd Hicks heard a rumor that, "We may possibly do some more dates next summer with just the two bands" Hicks added playfully, "Although it's hard to play that way, I'm keeping my fingers crossed."

Dylan never got to meet up on this tour with the former guitarist of one of his favorite bands, The Blasters. But he did pass on these words of admiration, "Dave is out there in a van, driving from gig to gig, and that's what Rock 'n Roll is all about." — *AM*

THE GUILTY MEN TESTIFY

American Music: How did you enjoy the tour?

Gregory Boaz: It was really exciting to be on the tour. We were all blown away with the great response we got. It was a little hard to get used to only playing 35 min., so I think we all missed the clubs in that sense. The catering backstage was KILLER!"

Joe Terry: I must say, I think my favorite show was Madison Square Garden. I wasn't very nervous before the show, but once I got on stage, I thought I was going to pass-out. I was breathing so hard I really thought I would hyperventilate.

AM: What was the craziest thing that happened?

Gregory Boaz: One night Bob was wandering around the backstage halls with a boomerang!

Rick Shea: Yeah, I saw him! I never did figure out what the deal was with that. It was a big boomerang too! (laughs)

AM: I heard nobody met Bob, but how about Joni?

Gregory Boaz: I did meet Joni. She was very "down to earth"

Bobby Lloyd Hicks: Joni was very nice. She usually ate with the bands and crew in catering each evening.

Rick Shea: Bob was very secluded, but I saw Joni often. She spent time hanging out with her band before the shows. — *AM*

THE BLACKJACK DAVID 1998 TOUR

The tour to support the BlackJack David album started in June of 1998 with a new version of The Guilty Men. Regular members Gregory Boaz on bass and Bobby Lloyd Hicks on drums returned. Keyboardist Rick Solem left to pursue a solo career. Dave brought in another member of the Skeletons, Joe Terry. Besides being a fine Keyboard player, Joe also plays accordion adding that Cajun flavor to the sound of certain songs.

Adding even more color to the sound is string master Rick Shea. Rick plays pedal steel, mandolin, lap steel, and guitar. Dave knew he had a lot of sonic expectations to live up to in his live shows due to the great sounds achieved on the new CD. Dave, "Rick is a great player; he really knows how to follow me. I've known Rick for a long time. (He was a member of Chris Gaffney's band in 1990, and backed Dave for a few dates on the West Coast) He is such an easy-going, great guy. I knew Joe



Photo: Billy Davis

All photos from the Rhythm and Roots Festival in Escoheg, Rhode Island, September 6, 1998

from the Skeletons, and he knew most of the material which made it easier." Dave and Rick Shea played as a duo in May on the Folkscene radio show in Southern California and were exceptional --considering that the arrangements weren't worked out yet. The full band started touring in June in Atlanta, and played only their third show as a band when Dave heard a fan's tape of the show in Ashville, NC: "I listened to it in my car and the band sounds great. I was listening to what Joe did on piano, and I like it a lot. He adds a lot of weird chords that I really like. It's the first time I sat back and listened to us. Rick (Shea) is great too."

As the tour progressed, some songs were somewhat incomplete in their arrangements, such as 1968. Later, Joe would play accordion on the song, and it filled out well. Joe picked up the accordion for more songs as he learned the parts. In Philadelphia they finished the show with a great version of

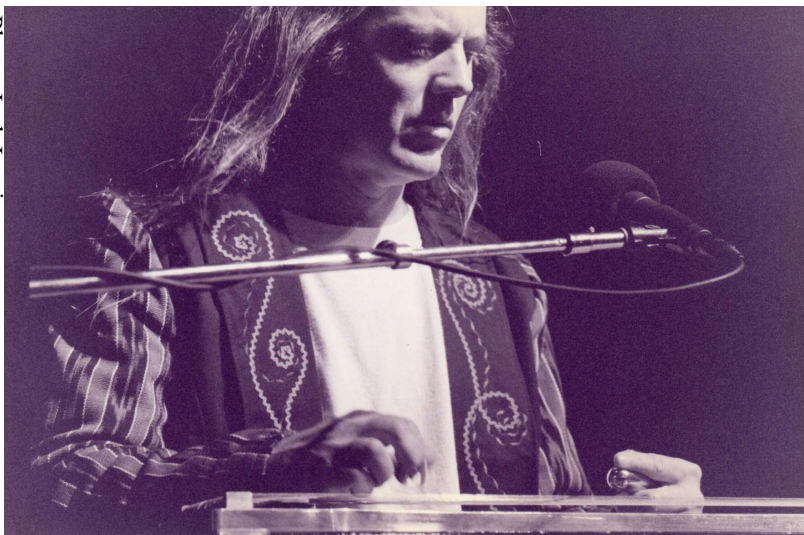


Photo: Josh Lewis

Rick Shea playing pedal steel

RICK SHEA – profile

Pedal steel, mandolin, lap steel, guitars, and vocals.

Born: 9/22/53 Annapolis, MD

'89 - Outside of Nashville self-released album (produced by Wyman Reese)

'90 - Chris Gaffney & The Cold Hard Facts

(ROM Records) - Rick plays electric and pedal steel.

'92 - A Town South of Bakersfield Vol. 3 (Restless, 1992) – comp. Song FOOT IN THE FIRE - Rick: vocal & lead guitar

'92 - Movie Soundtrack – The Body Guard song I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU. Not on CD release. John Doe Vcl, Dave Alvin Gtr, Rick Shea on Steel.

'94- Rick was named “Male Vocalist of the Year” by the California Country Music Association.

'95 - Heather Myles UNTAMED (HighTone,)

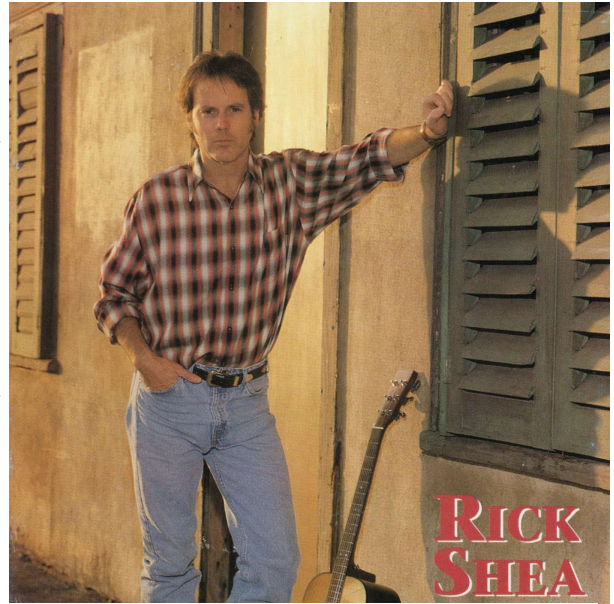
Rick acoustic guitar on 1 track.

In between tours to europe, session work, writing music

reviews, and playing in bands like \$1000 Wedding, in '95 Rick released The Buffalo Show (Major Label Records, produced by Wyman Reese) which blended honky tonk, Tex-Mex and featured guest harmony vocalists Jann Browne, Heather Myles, Randy Weeks (of Lonesome Strangers), with a core band of Skip Edwards (Dwight Yoakam's keyboardist), Brantley Kearns (fiddle), Keith Rosier (bass), & John Lee White III (drums). Chris Gaffney provides accordion and harmony vocal on one tune. The record received very good local reviews in LA, but remained unheard elsewhere. Rick's first show with Dave Alvin was in San Francisco CA at The Noe Valley Ministry on 11/29/97. It was an acoustic show with Kelly Joe Phelps, and Brantley Kearns on Fiddle. After Blackjack David was released, Rick was recruited in the Guilty Men.

'98 - Treasures Left Behind –(Redhouse Records) Compilation.

Dave Alvin sings THESE TIMES WE'RE LIVIN IN accompanied by Rick.



The Buffalo Show

Photo: Josh Lewis



New Guilty Man Joe Terry

MARIE MARIE where Joe Terry took an accordion solo. They had never played the song that way before, and they were having a ball on stage wondering if they were gonna pull it

off. They did! The funny story we heard later goes that the band was coming into the city, and Joe Terry was driving. He took a wrong turn and got them lost. Dave playfully punished him saying he had to play accordion and take a solo on MARIE MARIE. He was apprehensive, but it came out great. He was really stretching to hit those notes. The band was having a great time - all smiling at each other - and that energy rubbed off on the crowd. Dave laughs: “He had just taken up the accordion for this tour and had never taken a solo in a song.

(laughs)”

When the band hit New York and Annapolis, MD, they had been playing every song on the album, but two; EVENING BLUES

Photo: Josh Lewis

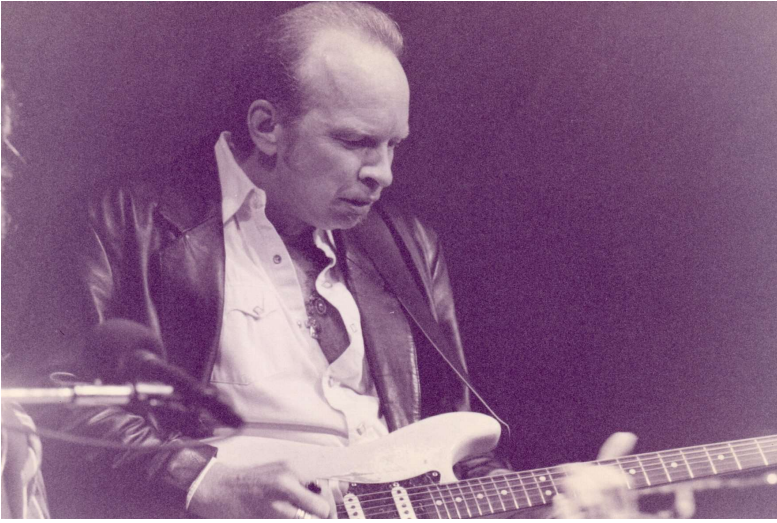
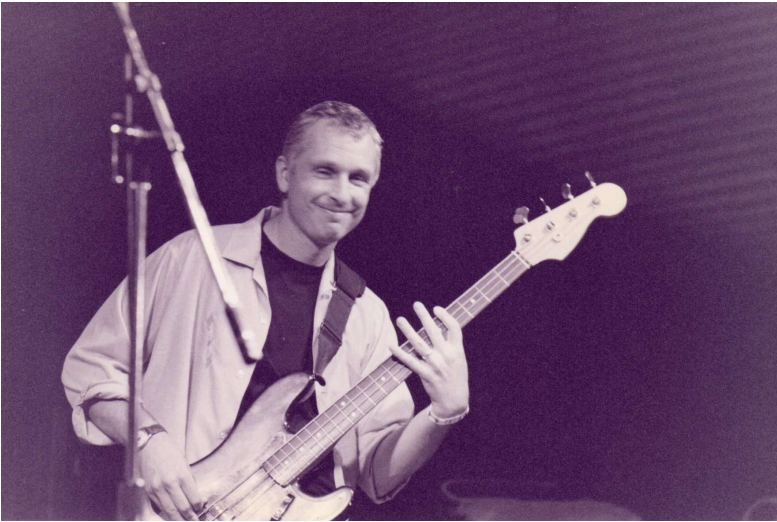


Photo: Josh Lewis



couldn't be played live because of an unusual tuning. The other missing song was TALL TREES. Dave: "We did it in Lincoln NE. Then, I did it in all 4 of the acoustic shows. (In October Dave played 4 acoustic shows in Texas) I think it works better acoustic." It was still early in the tour and in Annapolis, MD, at The Rams Head club, a bunch of new songs were introduced to the live show.

Watermelon recording artist Duane Jarvis was the opening act for the last few dates. He was being backed by the Guilty Men. Duane requested LAUREL LYNN and Dave did it. Then the band did a request of mine – HATE THE WAY YOU SAY GOODBYE. In the encore someone yelled out "KITCHEN TABLE!" and Dave started playing it. Joe and Greg started motioning to Dave that they didn't know that one, but Dave turned to them

and demanded, "I really want to do this." and he did, as they just listened. In that show they did 8 songs from the new album.

The New York City show was really exciting. Dave and the band prefer playing stand up audience clubs, where they feel the energy in the dancing crowd. At sit-down clubs, Dave sometimes has trouble figuring whether the crowd wants the quiet or loud songs. He would finish his shows saying, "There are two types of folk music, quiet and loud. I play both!"

Dave: "The first leg of the tour was just getting to know the new band, but by the second leg west of the Mississippi, we really gelled." On July 4th they played an excellent show in Berwyn IL at Fitzgerald's where the crowd was really celebratory. A rare treat was the pairing of BLUE BLVD, merged with an old Bobby Fuller Four song called LET HER DANCE. Dave: "We get a lot of requests for BLUE BLVD and Bobby Fuller was one of the first rock 'n roll bands I ever saw. I was a little, little kid. I saw a show of him, the Lovin' Spoonful and the Midnighters." The show was one of the best of the tour so far as Dave remembers: "They didn't let us stop, so we did three encores! We got a killer review in the Chicago Tribune." A few days later at the First Avenue club in Minneapolis, Dave remembers being joined on stage by the band



Photo: Josh Lewis

Los Straight Jackets, “We brought them on in the encore for ROMEO’S ESCAPE. They are a surf instrumental band that wears Mexican wrestling masks. The 2 guitarists came up and we had a rock ‘n roll guitar battle. It was great.”

By this point in the tour, some arrangements had changed to accommodate the live show like on MARY BROWN. Dave: “We made it more up tempo and there’s more of a beat to it. On the album Greg (Leisz, producer) wanted it real moody. I think that was right for the record, but live it works nice when we jump it up a little.” Another thing worked into the set was a unique ending song, as Dave explains, “In Columbia, MO, I was in some kind of mood and at the end of the night I did an R & B exit where I kicked off a blues shuffle, played a solo, and then exited the stage while the band continued to play. It went

like, ‘Ladies and Gentlemen. Mr. Dave Alvin!’ (laughs) and off I went.” Dave liked that ending and used it on the rest of the tour.

Another song that Dave hasn’t played in a long time was SIX NIGHTS A WEEK, which now they did as a country version. Dave: “That’s the way that Chris (Gaffney) and I originally wrote it. On the Museum of Heart album, I wanted to do it as a blues shuffle but now live with Rick on pedal steel I figured let’s do it like Gaffney and I wrote it.”

AMERICAN MUSIC which later in the tour took over as a finisher, for either the set, or the encore changed somewhat as Dave explains: “There is this section on AMERICAN MUSIC where I go into OOKIE DOOKIE STOMP and Joe does this stuff on piano that’s great. It subtly changes the groove of the song. You have the raved up solo that is Blasterish, then when you go into OOKIE it’s more of a shuffle feel.”

By August in California, the band felt they had gelled. Dave proclaimed the San Francisco gig at Slim’s to be the best of the tour: “I think that was one of the best I’ve ever played! AMERICAN MUSIC and LONG WHITE CADILLAC were real good.” Around this time, they added RAILROAD BILL to the set in their West Coast encores. Dave did the song acoustic on the Monsters of Folk tour and now was doing a full band arrangement.

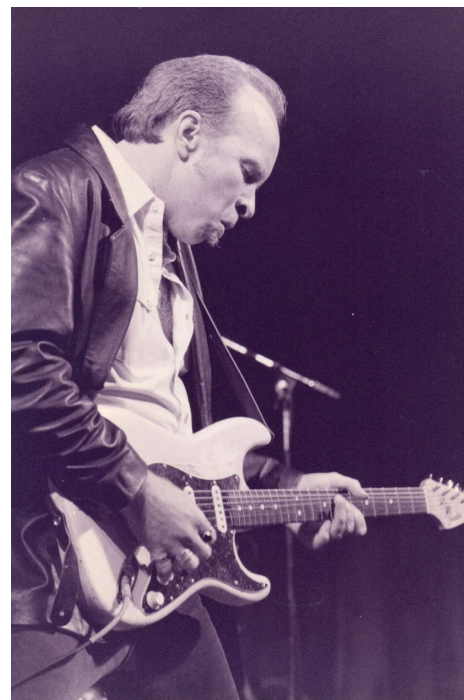


Photo: Josh Lewis

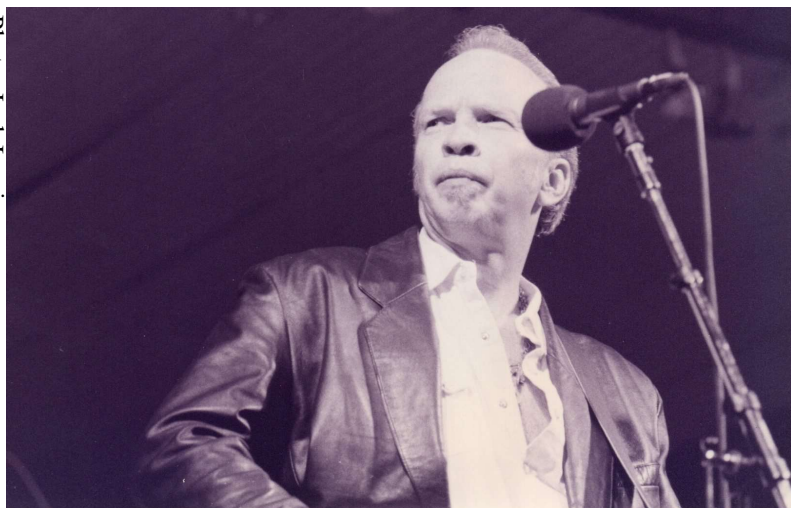
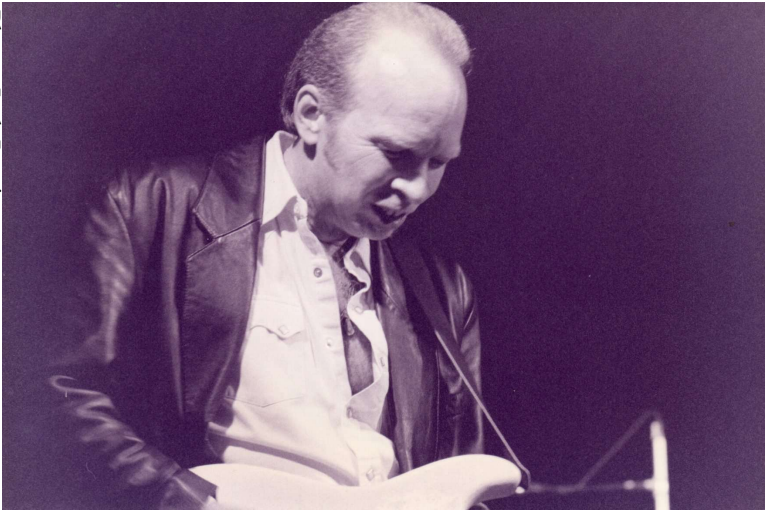


Photo: Josh Lewis



Photo: Josh Lewis



A show in Independence, OR, was very memorable at a club called Lenora's Ghost. Dave tells, "It's a haunted old whore house from the 1800s. In the encore they turned out the lights and had a seance. We played ghost music for about 5 minutes. Sort of like DARK STAR by the Dead. Then we morphed into LONG WHITE CADILLAC. Right at the peak of the guitar solo all the power blew out!



I wish somebody taped that!"

In September, the band was bound for Italy and made a quick stop on the East Coast in Escoheag, Rhode Island, at the Rhythm and Roots festival. They played right after Doc Watson as Dave remembers being thrilled, "He's one of the greatest fingerpickers ever...Phil will tell you different." Earlier in the day, Dave and Rick played some acoustic songs in a wooded grove billed as a songwriters workshop. The panel included Dave, Rick, Ana Egge, and Tim O'Brien. Dave, "I enjoy doing workshops. Anna Eggie was a friend of a friend of mine from Austin, and Tim O'Brien is a legendary bluegrass guy." Each played acoustic songs, and talked about the art of song writing. Dave revealed, "I don't like to talk about the process too much. It's not like building a house where you start with a foundation. With songs, they either come, or they don't." Dave performed BARN BURNING, 1968, and Rick played solo on his song GEORGIA PINES. From his Buffalo Show CD

Later that night, Big Sandy and the Flyrite Boys were playing in nearby Providence, RI, at a club called Lupo's. Dave showed up with a few of the Guilty Men. Dave was called up on stage, and Flyrite guitarist Ashley Kingman lent Dave his guitar: "I'm so used to playing a Strat or Fender guitar. Playing a Gretsch is like playing a totally different instrument. It's always fun seeing those guys." Dave played guitar on 2 songs. Dave sang HONKY TONK and Big Sandy sang HOOTCHIE COOTCHIE. The next morning, it's on to Italy.

Dave "We had Chris Gaffney with us for the first five gigs. Having him over there was hilarious. It was a lot of fun." The Guilty Men backed up Gaffney for his opening set. Chris flew in from Switzerland where he was doing shows with his harp player Kurt Bislin. It was

a reunion for Rick and Gaffney. Rick was a member of Gaffney's band, The Cold Hard Facts, and recorded an album together.

The first gig was in Chiari, On Sept., 11. Gaffney joined Dave for the encore, and they did a great version of the Curtis Mayfield song, PEOPLE GET READY. Chris also joined in on MARIE MARIE on accordion. With Joe also on accordion, they had a dual cajun sound going. In the sound check they played RAILROAD BILL and GAMES PEOPLE PLAY. Those songs never made it to the audience. The following night they played Rho. It was an outdoor show that had to be moved under a big tent because of heavy rain. Gaffney joined Dave in the encore on vocals singing COWBOY TO GIRLS (originally by the Intruders in 1968).

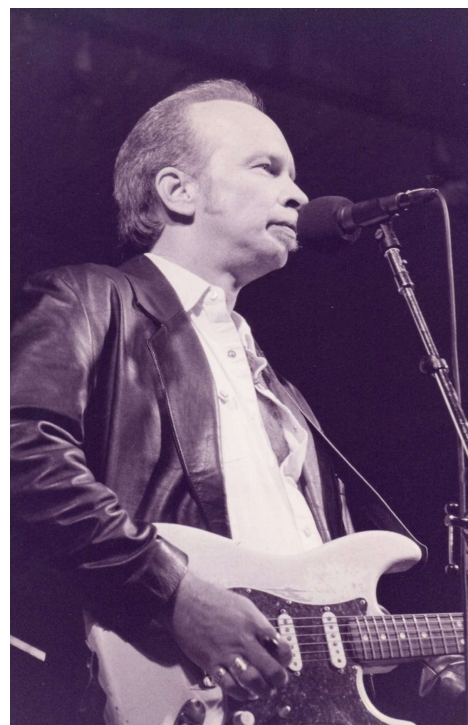
Next, they played Bergolo Cuneo. It's a Festival that featured other bands. Dave, "There was us, a Ska band, and about 4 Italian speed death metal bands. That was a trip (laughs). It wasn't bad, just weird." On 9/13 was Sesto Calende at a club called Sala Marna. At this show, Dave was the headliner over Gaffney, Michelle Shocked, and Chris

Whitley. The next gig was in Ponderano, followed by Ferrara on 9/16. Dave did a song called DRUNK which was an old R & B song by Jimmy Liggins. Dave, "We re-worked it to be a little more rockabilly. We will do it more in our encores." Bobby Lloyd Hicks also sang the Jerry Lee Lewis song LET'S TALK ABOUT US. The band moved on to play gigs in Pisa, and then in Pavia at Codevilla. It was an unusually late show for Italy - starting at midnight. It turned out to be the longest set of the tour at 2 hours.

The last 2 shows were played in Modena and Cantu on 9/20 with Victoria Williams opening. The band had a great time with the always - receptive Italian fans, but it was time to go home.

On October 14, the band started the 2nd leg of a U.S tour for the Blackjack David album. They had just gotten the word that they were invited to open the Bob Dylan tour. Lots of dates had to be cancelled, but they still had 6 club dates to play starting with the Zoo Bar in Lincoln, NE, and ending in Nashville. They then had to drive to Duluth, MN, for the first date of the Bob Dylan tour. — *AM*

Photos: Josh Lewis



Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men - Italian Tour September 1998

Our good friends in Italy, Lele Varano and his wife Oli made Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men feel right at home when they visited on a tour of Italy. Lele shares his photos and memories.

September 10, 1998 CHIARI

In the morning I picked up Greg Boaz from the hotel and we did some shopping, Later we met OLI and had a nice lunch at home. Greg likes Pasta very much! In the afternoon we drove to Chiari to meet Dave and Bobby Lloyd. We were happy to meet Joe and Rick for the first time. We arrived in Chiari and the band did their soundcheck. Chris Gaffney was not yet there. He was arriving later that day from Switzerland where he and his friend Kurt Bislin were doing a gig. Kurt was coming along and will play harmonica on this tour. We all had dinner, but had to rush to the gig where the opening act, Jono Mason was already performing. Dave was really happy to be playing with Chris. It was a great show, but Rick had some amplifier problems so they didn't do any acoustic songs that they planned. But we heard a loud rock 'n roll set. It was a wonderful outdoor venue, but it rained so hard, that they had to move the stage under a big tent. Dave played Curtis Mayfield's PEOPLE GET READY with Chris.



September 12 BERGOLO

Oli and I didn't attend this. It was a hard rock festival. I heard Dave wasn't happy with the audience. They weren't very receptive.

September 13 SESTO CALENDE

Dave knows this venue very well called Sala Marna. He was very happy to play there. Chris Whitley opened the show followed by Michelle Shocked. Chris Gaffney also did a set and last but not least Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men. We spent the afternoon sitting by a river talking,



drinking and doing a kind of interview. Oli was asked to shop for some jewelry for Rick and Chris' wives to bring back for them. Chris would be leaving early to get back to the USA. Carlini, the promoter promised to bring him back in July and if Dave is available he wants to organize a 1999 tour in Italy.

September 16 FERRARA

The band played some different songs in sound-check that didn't make it into the set that night - RAILROAD BILL and GAMES PEOPLE PLAY. In the show Bobby Lloyd sang the Jerry Lee Lewis song LET'S TALK ABOUT US.

September 18 CODEVILLA

Oli was at home, so only I joined the band in Codevilla. The gig started at 23.30, so we earlier spent the night watching TV. The band got a kick out of watching the Ace Ventura movie in Italian. They played a 2 hour set which was the longest of the tour. They played the song DRUNK, which was very good.

September 20 CANTU

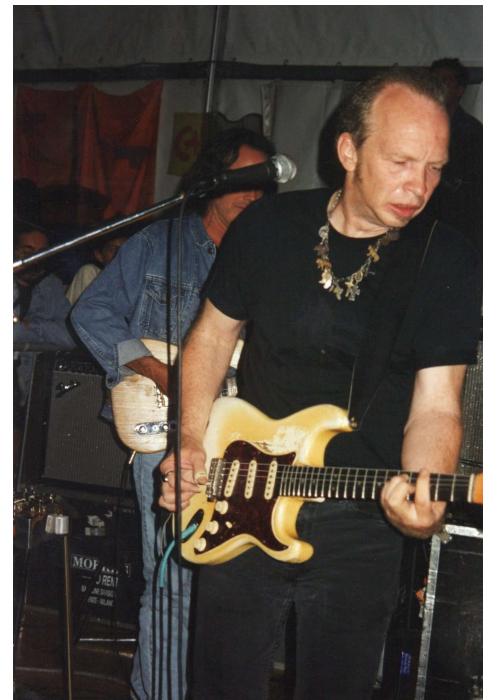
Victoria Williams opened the show and Dave just played 70 minutes because the venue doesn't stay open late. Rick Shea gave us a tape of his 1996 CD which we enjoyed. But earlier we had dinner at my home where Oli cooked 15 different kinds of Italian food. Of course we had to include a T-bone steak for Dave. We drank white wine, champagne and we listened to the new Big Sandy and the Flyrite Boys' album. Earlier, Oli did some shopping for dolls for Greg and Bobby Lloyds' wives. We gave the band some presents to take with them including Italian food. For Joe we bought a book on how to cook spaghetti and for Dave some books of Italian poetry. All of the band members have always been very kind to us. They are not only great musicians but most importantly great people. We hope they come back very soon to Italy. *ciao - Lele*



Lele Chris and Oli



Oli and Lele having dinner in their home with the band. Bobby is off to the side sending e-mails. September 20, 1998



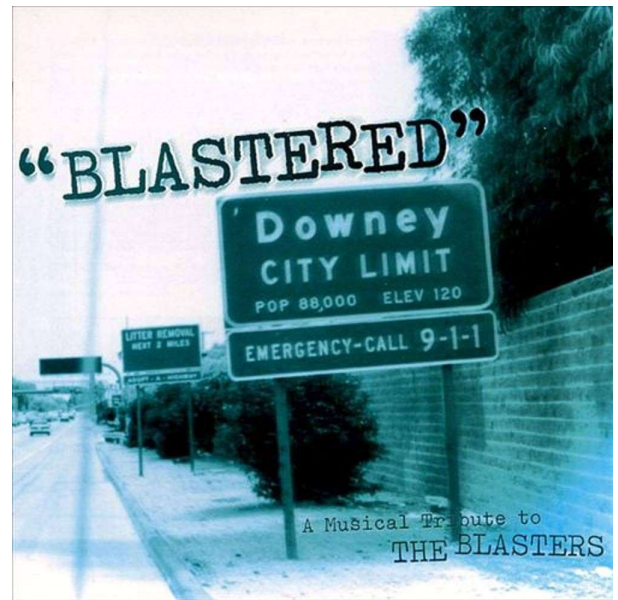
The Tour Crew, top row - Greg, Joe, Dave, Lele, Denis (driver), Carlini Mother, Rick, Paola Carlini, Carlo Carlini (promoter) 2nd row - Andrea, Bobby, Oliver

Review **BLASTERED: A MUSICAL TRIBUTE TO THE BLASTERS**

by Josh Lewis

"Blastered" An 18-song tribute to the Blasters out now on Run Wild Records. The short of it is that this CD is everything a tribute compilation of covers should be. It makes the listener want to go to the source and hear the originals, to check out other stuff by the bands on the comp, and to check out other releases on the label. Truly a triumph for Mike Lynam's Run Wild Records. [Disclaimer: A few of my photographs appear in the CD booklet and on the CD itself.]

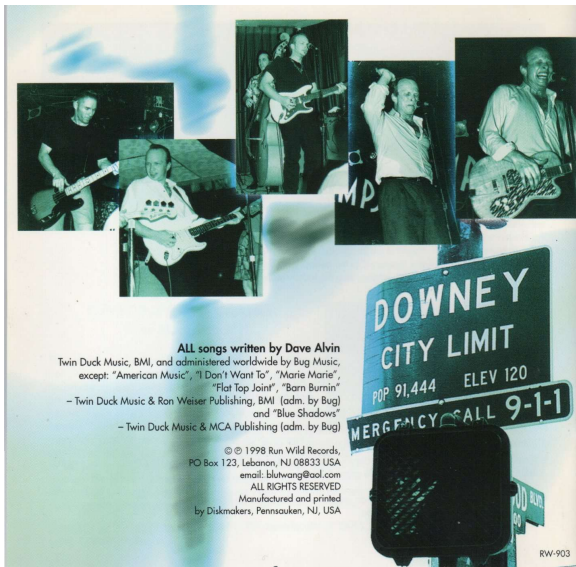
I was kind of nervous when I first spun "Blastered" , The Blasters have long been my favorite group, so I worried that none of the songs would live up to the quality of the originals. (Note: all the songs on this CD are songs written by Dave Alvin) Simply put, this album is great. Mike Lynam, who runs Run Wild, obviously put a lot of care into this project. The CD booklet looks great with a cover photo of the highway sign for Downey, CA, the home of the Blasters, and inside each band that contributed has a photo and a paragraph that briefly describes the band, including a quote from the band about what the Blasters meant to them. All that would be worthless if the music didn't move, but move it does. The songs live up to the quality of the originals. It is also notable that the bands generally manage to put their own imprint on songs that some might consider classics. It's funny; the album is so good, it almost makes me sad. Sad because the general public doesn't know about the Blasters, one of the best rock 'n roll bands this country has produced. Ultimately though, I'm happy because this album is living proof that the legacies perpetuated and created by the Blasters, who were always quick to acknowledge their myriad influences, are still being carried on by the Blasters themselves, the bands on "Blastered" .



"Blastered" takes off with The Blacktop Rockets version of AMERICAN MUSIC, the Blasters' clarion call to arms. An appropriate first song because it represents everything that the Blasters held musically dear. The BRs add their own lyrical twist to the song. The Grandsons adeptly handle one of my favorites, BLUE SHADOWS. Sax and piano make this one the full-bodied belly-to-the-bar raver that it should be. The Barn Burners do an absolutely defiant version of I DON'T WANT TO; it sounds like the theme song for rockin' rebels everywhere. SO LONG BABY GOODBYE has always been my favorite Blasters' song. Lucky 7 turns it into a zydeco flavored rave-up, powered by accordion and an urgent guitar. Josie Kreuzer and Hot Rod Lincoln follow up with a strong rendition of RED ROSE, a good choice of songs to be sung from a female point of view. Billy Hancock is next with an energetic reading of MARIE MARIE. Next, NO OTHER GIRL by The Original Sinners shuffles quickly along with great vocals. I was very happy that several of the songs, including this one, featured piano, as Gene Taylor's playing for the Blasters was always an important part of the blend. Tom Clifford's vocal strength carries TROUBLE BOUND, not to slight his great backing band, The Alvin City Limits. They're an all-star group of Austin musicians, including several from Mojo Nixon's Toadliquors. It's always a treat to hear the great piano of Pete "Wet Dawg" Gordon, one of the aforementioned Toadliquors.

Phil Alvin's distinctive vocals, not to mention his distinctive grimaces, are a big part of the Blasters sound. (Okay, okay, so you can't hear a facial expression, but you can't mention his singing without mentioning that face!) So it is gratifying that many of the songs on Blastered feature vocals with unique personality. HELP YOU DREAM by King Kerosene is one of the best in that department. Cool backing vocals with a lead that sounds as if the snake in the Jungle Book movie moved to the city and became a lounge lizard. An awesome song!

The Sloe Gin Joes decided to turn THIS IS IT into a rockabilly purist's dream - no drums. (Nice vocal turn too.) The Tone Popes contribute an appropriately sinister LONG WHITE CADILLAC. The bar-band anthem ROCK 'N ROLL WILL STAND is handled ably by Jumpin' Jupiter. The Sabrejets turn in a version of BARN BURNING that moves along. This band is from Ireland, but I wouldn't have guessed that they were anything



ALL songs written by Dave Alvin
Twin Duck Music, BMI, and administered worldwide by Bug Music,
except: "American Music", "I Don't Want To", "Marie Marie",
"Flat Top Joint", "Barn Burnin"
- Twin Duck Music & Ron Weiser Publishing, BMI (adm. by Bug)
and "Blue Shadows"
- Twin Duck Music & MCA Publishing (adm. by Bug)

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other than some of America's homegrown finest. Kind of haunting vocals on this one. Libbi Bosworth neatly changes HEY GIRL into a rollicking HEY BOY (another good choice of songs for gender switching.) She's got a great country-ish type voice. I actually thought that the band might have been rockin' a little harder and faster than the vocals. Wet Dawg again turns in some great boogie woogie piano licks. Hot Rod Lincoln logically serves up BORDER RADIO, Tex-mex style, complete with dramatic traded-off vocals. FLAT TOP JOINT is a classic rockabilly tune and Highway 13 does it justice. The Crescent City Maulers rendition of ONE MORE DANCE will leave you begging for at least one more. This song really moves with strong horns. (Sax always helps, something the Blasters certainly knew, using legendary New Orleans sax man Lee Allen, and Steve Berlin).

I was a little confused about two versions of SO LONG BABY GOODBYE on the CD. Surely there was another song that could be covered. After I heard Last Train Home's version, I picked my jaw up off the floor, wiped a tear from my eye and nodded in understanding. What had always been a whirlwind account of the fittingly abrupt end to a brief relationship had been transformed into a regret-tinged ode to what might have been. Gone is the lightning quick harmonica riff in the beginning, replaced by a mournful harmonica instead. Incredible.

It's also probably the perfect way to end a tribute album to the Blasters. The band was definitely the sum of its parts, with one of the most important parts being Dave Alvin, the guitarist and principal songwriter. Go out and get Blastered!

"BLASTERED" A Musical Tribute to The Blasters is available in stores or directly from RUN WILD RECORDS for \$12 post paid. PO Box 123, Lebanon, NJ, 08833

Dave Alvin on the Blasters tribute:

Dave, "That thing is so cool. It brought tears to my eyes. All the songs are really good, but the two that stand out are the Crescent City Maulers version of ONE MORE DANCE, because I had forgotten what a great song that is; that was really cool. And the last SO LONG BABY GOODBYE by Last Train Home; That really got me." When asking Dave why he never did an acoustic version, he said, "Yeah! That pissed me off that I didn't do it first (laughs). I always considered it, like they said in the notes, a kiss – off song. Like, 'See ya later, baby!' There was supposed to be a bitter sweet element to it, but I never thought of going all the way. That was real good."

"I loved everything about the album. I was supposed to go to see Emmy Lou Harris that night. I was on the guest list for her show. I had gotten home late and that package was there (with the "Blastered" CD). I put it on, and just skipped Emmy Lou Harris to listen to it all the way through. It was one of the most touching things anyone has ever done. It brought back lots of memories. I'm speechless! Since then we have added RED ROSE to the set and at some point were gonna add NO OTHER GIRL."

INTERVIEW WITH RUN WILD RECORDS' MIKE LYNAM

American Music: When and how did the idea of doing the Blaster tribute come to you?

Mike Lynam: Since first hearing the Blasters in the early 1980's, I really feel that I became among the biggest of fans. As time moved on, I would always run across people with similar musical tastes as my own. The conversation would invariably lead to a comment or two about the Blasters. Amazingly, in all these years, I've never read anything or heard anyone say anything negative about the Blasters. I guess if you saw the band perform, or, heard their music, you knew that it was real, it was good, and it was wholesome. So, as we got into the 1990s, I guess around 1994 or so, I thought it would be great to pay a little tribute to the Blasters. That's when I started to feel that this is what I'd like to put together.

AM: What bands showed initial interest and what made you think that anybody still cared about the Blasters?

ML: As far as the bands, it seems virtually every roots rock and roll band during the 80s and the 90s had a Dave Alvin tune in the repertoire. There are many bands today who feel as reverent as I do about the Blasters. Many groups, who have worked the pubs and bars for years with very little reward, continue to play Blasters' music. There has always been a great deal of interest. For some, there is no way you can ignore great tunes...tunes that will stand the test of time. There was no

shortage of bands who would have loved to be on this disc. Towards the end of my selection, I unfortunately had to turn down a number of bands who contacted me to be included.

AM: How did the idea come about for the wonderful artwork and cover picture?

ML: At first I had a real 'generic' idea for what the cover would be. It would have been along the lines of a vintage equipment design (i.e. old time microphones). The Downey City Limits photo which was eventually used was actually supposed to serve as a "filler" shot on one of the inside pages of the CD booklet. Once I saw the picture though, up on a computer screen, especially when it was changed from color to B/W, I said 'Wait a minute, that's it!' I lived in LA some years ago, and I recall the mornings being nothing but smog and haze. Around mid-day that would all burn off leaving the bright California sunshine. So, in adding the blue-ish duotone, I think I captured that eerie effect. I was really pleased with the cover; it is simple, but meaningful for sure. A good friend of mine, who lives in Southern California took the photo. What is interesting is that he is not a photographer and not even the biggest music fan, but the photo worked! Also, professional photographers like Josh Lewis from NY have to be thanked. Josh has a number of great shots on file, not only of the Blasters but dozens and dozens of roots and rockabilly bands." — *AM*

~~~~~  
~ PHIL QUOTE OF THE MONTH: ~  
~ "I'm my own worst day-dream" ~  
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Review – RED MEAT - 13 (Ranchero Records 1998) By Billy Davis

I started writing this review mainly because Dave Alvin produced the album, but I have to say that this band is so good they stand on their own. Dave must not have had a hard job getting the right sound from these guys (and girl). The latest trend is the Bakersfield sound. Red Meat cites Buck Owens and Bakersfield as influences but that might be a way of fitting into a rough and tumble music industry. I don't think this band needs a label other than foot stompin' country.



The members of Red Meat come from all over the country. I hear a lot of influence in the music that isn't necessarily what's popular, but instead a mix. Iowa is the most western state a member grew up in. Could I call them a mid-western band? I love the fact that they have 4 vocalists. Their instrumental sound is perfect, but I would just as well call them a vocal group - even though 2 tracks are instrumentals. I'd like to hear a little more of bassist Jill Olsen on lead vocals.

Dave Alvin recalls a funny story on how he came to produce the Red Meat record, "Jill the bass player called me up and started pestering me on the phone (laughs). But she was very charming in her pestering. She's a friend of an old friend of mine. So finally, I said I would do it"

Rick Shea played acoustic guitar on the album. With a title of 13, of course there are 13 songs on the album. The catchy opening song CRY A LITTLE BIT is a perfect song for a single. I love CATTLE DRIVE, an original RED MEAT instrumental that sounds like it came right out of an old western movie. Other favorites are I'M NO STRANGER, DEEP WATER, and THE HEART ACHES ON ME. I'd say definitely give them a listen if you like real country music. Visit their Web Site for more details and tour dates at <http://home.earthlink.net/~lesjames/index.htm>

The CD is available in stores or by sending \$15 to Ranchero Records, 4200 Park Blvd., Suite 227, Oakland, CA 94602

AMERICAN MUSIC SUBSCRIPTION INFO: Publishing 4 issues quarterly. Send \$8 which includes 4 issues and postcard mailings (U.S.A. only) covering Blaster and related tour dates in your region. Overseas rates are \$10 U.S. for 4 issues. Canada \$9. For overseas subscribers wanting tour updates between newsletter mailings send 2 I.R.C.'s per desired response and you will be notified by Airmail letter of regional tour dates. If paying by check, payable to Billy Davis.

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Here in the year 2025, I've reformatted the old American Music Newsletters off paper to digital form for this archival website. While searching my archives for the original photos articles and memorabilia, I came across this unabridged writing of my experience on this tour. Earlier in this issue you can read my short story on the Bob Dylan/Dave Alvin tour. But if you have further interest, here's many more words . . .

OCTOBER 12, 1998 - I decided to call Dave Alvin to go over some things for the next issue of the Newsletter, so I left a voice mail for him. Dave was already en-route to Springfield MO to pick up half of the Guilty Men to start a long club tour in support of his Blackjack David album. Later that evening he returned my call and said "Guess what! Bob Dylan's manager called and wants us to open for Bob on his Arena tour!! This is fuckin wild!!"

Dave has had much contact with Dylan in the past and has a few stories to tell about Dylan encounters. Dave played on some Dylan sessions in 1985 or '86 for Dylan's Knocked Out Loaded album but those tracks haven't seen release. Dylan was already a Blaster fan stating, "Dave. When are you and Phil getting back together. Man...That was magic." It's assumed that Dylan has heard the buzz about Dave's great new album and that is why he asked Dave on the tour.

So with this unfinalized news, Dave asked me to immediately get a hold of Scot Kleinman (official web site guy that I supply info to) to post this exciting news on the Web Site. He may have jumped the gun because the next day Dave thought it wiser to wait until all the contracts were signed. The problem was the 14 club dates already scheduled, that would have to be canceled. Opening act Robbie Fulks was depending on the tour to promote his new album. Lots of clubs were gonna be pissed at the cancellations, but how can you turn down opening for Bob Dylan.

Dave called back a few days later and I could tell that the tour was officially confirmed because he was happy. He said, "Listen to this billing, Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, and Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men! Wow!!" He was blown away just hearing that billing in one sentence. The tour would span 12 dates from Duluth, MN through the mid-west through New York state and then down south. The venues were all hockey-sized arenas. Bob Dylan was the headliner, followed by Joni Mitchell and of course Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men. Adding to this was the crazy coincidence that Joni Mitchell's pedal steel player is Greg Leisz, who has been Dave's producer for many years. Also a friend and former member of Dave's first solo band The Allnighters.

I instantly made plans to attend the Madison Square Garden show, which was going to be a monumental event. I then added Rochester, Syracuse, and Washington D.C. to my trek plans. Dave was very gracious in offering to get me in on the guest list for all, but the MSG show. He said that there were so many people on the guests lists in New York City, that he couldn't get me in there. The problem was that the show was sold out and now because of the demand they started selling seats behind the stage. I decide I couldn't miss this so I bought one of those behind the stage seats for \$55. Top price for the best seats, face value were \$82 each.

I had this idea that Dave Alvin playing his biggest gig of his life should be covered in some way by his record company. I suggested bringing a photographer who would represent HighTone records (Dave Alvin's record company). I thought this event should at least be documented on film. I mean, it is HighTone's biggest artist playing his biggest gig ever. I don't think HighTone has had an artist on their label who has played before 18,000 people in one house. Well, HighTone didn't take the idea seriously and no kind of representation happened at all. I had already gotten a friend of mine named Josh Lewis to be ready for the possibility of using his services. He's an excellent photographer and as he says he works cheap...for the love of the music he would have done it for free.

Oct. 31, 1998—To my surprise Dave Alvin called and left a message on my machine saying he was getting me on the guest list for his show at Madison Square Garden, but he had to check if I could bring a guest. Wow! Dave really came through for me. That means complimentary tickets too.

Nov. 1, 1998 – Dave calls at 5 PM and said "You're on the list plus one, (meaning me and a guest) but no photo pass." Josh Lewis was too far to make the drive at such a late notice, so I scrambled to find who would want to go on such short notice. I called Mike Lynam (owner of Run Wild Records company) who has become friends with Dave through his company's release of the Blasters tribute album. Luckily, Mike was only 30 minutes out

of the city. We had to get there quick because Dave would be coming on at 7 PM sharp.

We met outside and grabbed a few hot dogs. Mike raved to me about this band that he likes as much as the Blasters called the Dictators. He just kept going on about them. I only mention this because of what transpires later.

We went into Madison Square Garden and we saw a Dave Alvin shirt for sale at all the vendor counters. It was a black shirt that had the face symbol from the new album on the front. On the back it read "Dave Alvin Blackjack David." Price \$25 each. Dylan's merchandising people were getting a heavy percentage of sales, so \$25 was the price. When Dave plays clubs the shirts will probably be a much lower price. CDs were also for sale including mostly Blackjack David and Interstate City. They also sold a collectible that would be unique to each venue: A 14" X 20" hard cardboard concert poster. It had B&W pictures of Bob Dylan and Joni Mitchell with a purple background. On the bottom it reads "Also featuring Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men. Don't You Dare Miss It." On the top, it lists the venue and the date. Each venue sells the same poster with the only difference being the venue name and date changed. Price \$10

Upon entering the arena area it's an overwhelming place - big with lots of history. I've been a NY Ranger Hockey season ticket holder and have attended many concerts there over the last 20 years. MSG is the place to be. There is no more prestigious gig in the world in my eyes.

We found our seats which were in the back of the floor behind the sound board. Minutes before Dave was to hit the stage I spotted Dave's long time girlfriend Mary standing at the soundboard. I went over to say hello and she remembered me when we met once in Philadelphia 3 years ago. We had guest passes, but she suggested we follow her to the backstage area after Dave's set. I had to rush back to my seat as Dave started playing quickly. I started my tape recorder late and missed a minute of the first song, OUT IN CALIFORNIA.

Dave did a great set of songs that would repeat through most of the shows on the tour. - OUT IN CA, ABILENE, JUBILEE TRAIN, BLACK JACK DAVID, 4TH OF JULY, and AMERICAN MUSIC. The set was very wisely chosen to include lots of rockers to keep the primarily Dylan fan crowds attention. OUT IN CA is a great starting song that has developed as a better song than the original version on the Interstate City album. ABILENE and BLACK JACK are good promotion for the new CD. Dave carefully mentioned the CD and the fact that it was available in the building. JUBILEE TRAIN has a certain familiarity with elements of DO RE MI and PROMISED LAND. Dylan fans not familiar with Dave would easily recognize those folk classics. 4TH OF JULY is well known as Dave's most famous song and AMERICAN MUSIC was a great closer, because there is no better way to hit 'em harder. The crowd tuned in and was very receptive. I heard some Dave fans calling out and I heard a few people buzzing saying this band is pretty good.

After the set we proceeded backstage. Each artist had a separate room with lots of hallway distance between them. Mike and I came in and met everybody. Now, remember I mentioned Mike talking about the Dictators; well who just happens to be there but Andy, the bass player, and "Top Ten" (aka Scott Kempner) rhythm guitarist, who has performed solo acoustic sets on the same bills as Dave in the early 90s. Mike had no idea that Guilty Man Joe Terry was friends with the Dictators and got them on the guest list. Crazy coincidence!

All the guys had their wives there. Gregory Boaz struck up a rapport with Mike as they both pulled out cigars. Cigar smokers seem to be able to talk about Cigars for hours. Dave's tour coordinator Nancy Sefton was there, as was old L.A. musician Phast Freddie.

We could hear Joni Mitchell come out on stage as stars hung around like Paul Simon, Julia Roberts, and Martha Stewart. Of course Bob Dylan was no where to be seen.

Later it was time for Bob to come on, we couldn't see how he got to the stage, but it wasn't where anybody was waiting for him. We said our good-byes and went back out into the audience. It was pretty dark and seats were hard to find so we thought it was a good idea to go for a beer. We went out the back of the floor seating and went right to a counter where surprisingly right ahead of us was Dave and Phast Freddie. Dave bought me a beer and we wound up hangin out back there eating hotdogs and beer. We shot a few pictures and I gave Dave a copy of a Village Voice newspaper ad that advertised the gig stating "3 Great Bands" with his name on it. He was thrilled to see that press and yelled out to Freddie, "Yes! See That."

While we were standing there and an attractive blond girl approached Dave and told him how great he was and that she never heard of him before. She said she was looking for his CD at one of the vendors and they didn't have it. She said come and show me." So Dave played along and walked to the vendor. She said, "What

is your name again?" Dave said, "Dave Alvin and the Chipmunks." We all got a laugh out of that. Anyway the Blackjack David CD was sold out at that window, so I advised her to check the big vendor at the front entrance and off she went. Well we figured we would check out part of Dylan's set. We did and left at the encore to beat the crowd.

Nov. 2, 1998 – I drove up to Syracuse and Dave had 6th row tickets waiting. There was a lot of traffic and finding the Onondaga Arena also was tough. Eventually I arrived during Joni Mitchell's set. It turns out that Dave and the boys would be staying 90 miles away in Rochester that night. That was where the next gig would be, so they hit the road right after they went off stage. It was still pretty cool seeing Bob Dylan from the 6th Row.

I heard that the band was on a come down after playing MSG the night before. They didn't feel they played that good. The set list was the same with the exception of switching \$30 ROOM and MUSEUM OF HEART for JUBILEE TRAIN.

Nov. 3, 1998 -- On to Rochester. I arrived at the arena called the Blue Cross Arena at 3:30 hoping to catch the band going in for soundcheck. I assumed it was at 3:30 because Dave had told me, "The bad thing about the tour is that we have to arrive at the arena at 3 or 3:30 everyday. It's like a movie set. They want you there real early in case anything happens." That means they had to drive long hours early to get to the next city by 3 PM. Well after waiting a while, I figured I would go in the stage entrance and see if I could find anybody. I walked in and tried to not look like I didn't belong there – It worked. I wound up finding the bands dressing room, but nobody was there. A load in and out schedule showed that Dave would soundcheck last after Dylan and Joni's band at 5:30 PM. That made sense that the band coming on first should set up last, they must have sneaked back to the hotel. I left and went to visit a lighthouse on Lake Ontario then went to eat dinner with my wife.

I came back about 5:30 and heard the band on the stage soundchecking. I entered and sat one of the front rows in the dark. The band was practicing OUT IN CA. Dave Alvin's road manager from L.A. was at the soundboard. He wasn't the first choice for the tour by Dave. The old Blasters sound guys were busy at the time and couldn't do the tour. Rich did a good job and insisted on working the sound board even after one of the other sound people were prepared to do Dave's sound. Rich wants to go in the direction of doing sound, so here was his practice. During the soundcheck he kept requesting Dave to do SO LONG BABY GOODBYE and eventually Dave relented with a great version. They also played a Jimmy Liggins R&B song called DRUNK. This song was introduced to their set in Italy. A pretty good song.

I was sitting in the dark and Dave was trying to focus on my figure. Suddenly he says over the microphone, "Is that Billy Davis." It was weird hearing that echo around in an empty arena. I responded, "Yeah" and approached the stage. Dave said, "I thought you were James Intveld sitting there and what would James be doing up here?." I said "What, I don't look like James?" I was wearing a leather Motorcycle jacket and my hair is cut short, but those were the only similarities. Well thanks for the compliment.

So they finished soundcheck and went to the dressing room. Gregory had a few CDs of one of their gigs recently in Italy for me. A mutual friend of ours from Italy, Lele Varano, asked Gregory to pass it on to me. I regretted not picking up a copy of the Madison Square Garden tour poster back in NYC. But just my luck, they had one left over for me. I got all the guys to autograph it, with plans to frame it as a souvenir of the event. I took a few band pictures posing with the posters. Each band member took a MSG poster to keep.

Dave asked Rich to get me a backstage pass and he responded with a crew pass which gave me all access, which was great. Dave doesn't like to eat before he plays, so he decided not to go with the Guilty Men and I to catering to have dinner. It was a room set up for all the band members and direct crew members to eat. Pretty good spread too. I could get used to that life. Of course Joni and Bob Dylan don't show up for soundcheck or dinner, only their bands do.

Rumors were spreading that Joni Mitchell was sick and might have to cancel playing a date or a few. Instantly Dave started wondering how that would affect his set. Luckily she remained healthy enough to not miss any shows.

Dave and the boys would be going on at 7 PM so I went out and sat in 1st row center while people kept filing in. I didn't have a ticket for the seat but luckily no one showed up during Dave's 35 minutes set. The set changed in one way. Instead of JUBILEE, they played INTERSTATE CITY. I thought the spaciousness of the place added to the atmospherics of that song and BLACKJACK DAVID. Dave seemed to think he lost the

crowd during that song and vowed to return JUBILEE TRAIN to the set the following night. For BLACK-JACK DAVID Dave introduced it saying, "I have a new album out and I know you're gonna just love it. It's available here in this fine, beautiful 44 million dollar updated War Blue Cross....night club. Here's a wonderful old folk song that's got everything in the world a song should have. It's got sex, marriage, infidelity, class warfare, babies, and horses." The crowd responded with light laughter and I could see this heightened the crowds interest to listen to the lyrics. Dave dedicated AMERICAN MUSIC, "I'd like to send this one out to Sleepy LaBeef. I hear the beef man is in town." Again, I thought the band sounded great.

After the set I went backstage easily with my crew pass and we had a few beers while Joni Mitchell was on the stage. Dave wasn't drinking beer, but talking about hearing that Sun records legend Sleepy LaBeef was playing a local club later that night. I said, "Come on Dave, have a drink." He said he didn't want to start drinking until he got to the Club that night. He said, "If I start drinking now, by the time I get to Sleepy LaBeef, I'll be like...(hanging his tongue out like he was sloppy drunk.)" I should have realized that the only time Dave doesn't have any beer is before he goes onstage. He always tries to perform with a clear head. That meant he had plans to get onstage with Sleepy later that night.

The big topic of conversation among the band that night was that they discovered that Joni Mitchell's horn player was the guy who recorded the infamous Buddy Rich temper tantrum tape. The story goes that famous band leader and drummer Buddy Rich went on a tirade backstage cursing his band, threatening and just plain repetitively berating his backing band with insults and obscenities. Some kid with a Walkman recorded the conversation which was to become a highly bootlegged and collectable recording. Joni's horn player was that kid. The joke was that the horn player was more famous than anyone in the building for those accomplishments.

The dressing room was a totally different experience than the MSG backstage area two nights before. There was nobody here except for the band members and me. A reporter from the local paper came to say hello as did 2 women acquaintances from the area.

When Dylan was ready to come on Dave went towards the stage and stood somewhere. Gregory, Greg Leisz, Joe and I sat in some blocked off seats on the side of the stage. Rick Shea got a seat at the mixing board on the side of the stage. Bobby went into the road manager's office to check his e-mail. Dave soon joined us at the seats. Dylan put on an entertaining show. I have to admit I have a lot of respect for his accomplishments. Also he plays different songs every night, so that is a credit to him still as an artist and not just a performer. Not being familiar with Dylan's live shows, I didn't have any pre conceived notions but I'm told that he is a lot more animated than in recent years and they say his voice is gotten better.

As the show ended, we packed up to go. The Dylan crew was transporting Dave and the bands' equipment (amps, drums and pedal steel) so they only had to carry their guitars. The band and I walked out the back door of the arena into a group of Dylan fans waiting to meet Bob. I was carrying Bobby's snare drum in a case. I must have appeared to be a band or crew member when a girl said, "Please! Please! Can you get me back stage to meet Bob??" I said, "He's gone already." Gregory who was right next to me had something to add that summed up the bands relationship to Dylan on the whole tour. Gregory said, "Hell, I'm in the opening band and I haven't even met him yet." I found that funny that Bob could be that much of a recluse.

Supposedly, Bob has a tour bus just for himself a body guard and his driver. He runs off the bus when he gets the call to come on stage and then after his encores he runs back on the bus as crew, local staff, and a few fans look on. Earlier I asked Dave if he had a chance to talk to Dylan yet. He remembered Dylan's road manager mentioned that Bob wanted to have a chance to talk to Dave for a few minutes. He suggested Dave wait along the ramp to catch Dylan as he was running towards his bus. Dave said, "Nah." Dave has got too much pride to suck up like that.

So we loaded all the guitars and stuff into the van. Rich was taking the van back to the hotel while I would be taking some of the band to the club where Sleepy was playing. Rich is very formal in his job, thanking me for driving the band as if it would be a chore for me. I was excited. So we fit all the Guilty Men in my car. It was now Billy Davis and the Guilty Men. Ha Ha!

Dave and Greg Leisz went in a car with the aforementioned 2 women. I still don't know who they were, but they didn't stick around long.

The club called Milestones was about 5 minutes away. The newspaper man who visited Dave backstage

earlier tonight, warned the club Dave was coming. His name was Jeff Spevak and gave Dave a note to get the whole band into the club for free. The note read, "Please admit guitar stud."

Upon entering we heard that Sleepy's car broke down on the highway and he was canceling the gig. Dave brought his guitar on his back, I'm sure with the intention of jamming with Sleepy. The opening band finished their set and I could see Dave was itching to get up on stage. After a few beers, Dave suddenly starts calling out to Bobby, "Hey Bobby," and he asks me where Gregory was. I called Gregory who was by the door talking to a friend and I knew Dave couldn't take it anymore and was going on stage! The boys jumped up on the stage and did a mini set. The crowd went crazy!

Dave had his guitar and a few of the guys used the opening bands instruments, Gregory Boaz played up-right bass great. I had never seen him play upright and he was impressive. Bobby played drums and Joe Terry caused complete mayhem jumping on stage for assistance on back ground vocals, drums, and lead vocals. He was running around the club and hiding, then jumping up on stage. The pPedal steel players Rick and Greg Leisz sat out as there wasn't any extra guitar amps.

They opened with Webb Pierce's HONKY TONK. That's a favorite of Dave's for encores and jams. Then Joe Terry took vocals on the Jerry Lee Lewis song LET'S TALK ABOUT US, Bobby sang CRAZY COUNTRY HOP, and Gregory did GET YOUR BIG NOSE OUTTA MY BUISNESS. Who knew Gregory could sing, he jumped right in there and was really singing to the whole audience. They all sounded great and were having such a fun time. Joe was totally wild running all over the place. At one point he started playing drums on Bobby's set while Bobby was still playing. He was beating the floor tom so hard I'm surprised he didn't break one of the skins! Finally they did MARIE MARIE after numerous requests for the song. Wow! What a set. This type of spontaneity is what rock 'n roll is all about. Can you tell I really enjoyed it?

The club owner was ecstatic and the crowd buzzed about the surprise appearance all night. Man! This was too cool! Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men fresh from the big 16,000 seat Bob Dylan concert, now playing this intimate club. You had to be there!

We piled back in the cars this time with the assisted transportation of Monica Simpson and her boyfriend Rick's car and off we went back to the hotel as a light snow started to fall.

Nov. 4 1998 – We drove back to New York for a day of rest.

Nov. 5 1998 – I made the trip down to College Park Maryland for what would be my last show of the tour and the band's second from last of the tour. College Park is just outside Washington D.C., so it is considered a D.C venue. The Cole Field House is actually a large basketball arena on the grounds of the University of Maryland. I would be meeting a few friends for the show. Craig Frischkorn who proof reads the American Music Newsletter for me, and his friend Ken who was flying in from Seattle for the show.

I arrived at the arena at about 5 PM and brought along my crew pass from the last gig. It was a different color than what was supposed to be used that night, but nobody thought twice of it. I bumped into Bobby who was tuning his kick drum out by the equipment storage spot. I took a cool picture of Bobby's new drum head that has a silk-screened image of the face symbol that is on the front of the Blackjack David album. I went into the dressing room to say hello to the guys. It was again a different situation. Here all the dressing rooms were combined including the catering dining room into one section. The room was actually some kind of library or recreation room that must serve as a college activity room when no event is going on.

It was almost 5:30 so I went out into the arena area and sat in front for the soundcheck. The boys came on and tuned in with OUT IN CA. They played some parts of 1968. Then Dave really surprised me with a version of CRAZY BABY. It's an old Hollywood Flames song that was a staple in the Blasters set for many years. A recording of it can be heard on the Blasters American Music HighTone album. It's a real rousing song that the Blasters adopted as their song. Dave played it with the original solos and it sounded fantastic. His vocals were perfect on the song. He gave me a little wink and grin after the song. He knew damn well that would give me a charge hearing that. Wow!

Dave walked off the stage thinking that soundcheck was over but Rich at the soundboard wanted to hear OUT IN CA one more time to set the levels on the board. So the Guilty Men played the song solo with no lead vocals but all the harmonies. That was interesting to hear. I never really made a habit of getting there early for soundcheck, but I will from now on.

Craig and Ken were supposed to meet me at the stage door to watch the soundcheck but they arrived late

so they waited out at the box office. I met them there and claimed our tickets and guest passes. Ken returned his camera to the car since they were searching everybody upon entering the arena. I had a camera and my Walkman recorder, so I decided to go around to the stage entrance and use my crew pass to get back in.

We all met at the seats and we were very happy to have 3rd row seats. Dave came on and did the same set list except for changes at the end. Earlier in the day, Joni Mitchell was performing at the White House for the president and by this point was running late getting to the gig. So during Dave's set, Rich the road manager ran up from the soundboard to the side of the stage signaling the band by holding his finger up indicating; one. I thought he had only one song left which would be 4TH OF JULY. But actually Rich was saying Dave could do one extra song. At that point the audience wasn't aware that Joni was running late. AMERICAN MUSIC was next and Dave dedicated it to a group of local rockabilly legends, "I'd like to send this next song out some old friends of mine. Billy Hancock, Tex Rubinowitz, Bill Kirchen, and the late great Danny Gatton." During the song Rich started to spread his arms indicating to stretch out the songs if possible. Dave expanded AMERICAN MUSIC with some different solo sections and upon fading out, launched into LONG WHITE CADILLAC. This was a real treat. The band wound up playing 15 minutes over what they normally play and it was the first time on the tour they were playing CADILLAC. Later I asked Rick Shea when they decided they were gonna add CADILLAC and he replied, "I found out about it when you found out about it."

Craig, Ken and I went backstage right after Dave went off and Dave looked quite winded. We waited a few minutes and went into the small dressing room to say hello to the guys. The last time Craig saw Dave was when he coordinated Dave's gig at the Jamestown Community College in September of '97.

I met up with Vernon McNemar from HighTone records. I was happy to see someone from the record company made an appearance at one of the shows. Joni was supposed to go on at 7:50 but was 40 minutes late. Craig and Ken went back to their seats to watch Joni Mitchell's set. I had sat and watched her set once and it was okay, but she's a little too mellow for me. Instead I drove Rick Shea back to the hotel to pick up a few items he promised me. One was a CD recording of the FolksScene Radio show that he and Dave did back in May. Also Rick's first album called Outside of Nashville which was a cassette only release. Rick gave me an idea of what he has been listening to while out on the road – Robert Johnson's Complete Recordings, Flatt & Scruggs, Patsy Cline, and some other old country and blues.

I made it back and went to my seat to watch Dylan's set. Dylan seemed more upbeat and even thanked the audience a few times. He doesn't normally speak to the audience much. Here in the D.C. area he may have held the audience in a higher regard and wanted to connect more with the crowd.

I decided to leave early during the encore. I had a 4 hour drive back to New York and I had to go to work at 7 am. I went backstage to say goodbye, but I couldn't find any of the guys. I bumped into Dave out in the hall and had had a few and was feeling pretty good. I tried to say goodbye and he interrupted and said, "Nah. Let's go check out the end of Dylan's set." So how could I refuse. I followed Dave right along the stage ramp as the crowd was roaring. Dylan had finished a song and the lights went out. Security had flash lights shining on the ramp expecting Dylan to come running down. We jumped to the side on top of some road cases and Dave said, "Clear the way for the royalty." Bob went into another song instead of leaving the stage, so we ran up onto the stage next to the mixing board. What a view! I was right there. The rest of the Guilty Men were standing there too. Dave and I were exchanging comments as Dylan did about 4 more songs. Dave put Dylan in legend-terms stating, "This is like watching Lightnin' Hopkins!" I could tell Dave was awed by this guy. He lightened it up saying, "but Dylan eats better," in reference to his wealth. Dave then revealed to me that he heard from someone that Bob Dylan had high respect for Dave. He said, "Dave Alvin travels every day to a gig and that is what real rock 'n roll is all about." Dave was very proud to hear that. After Dylan went off, we followed behind and Rich the road manager was somehow able to intercept Dylan and get him to sign an album flat. I don't know how he did it. We went backstage and I met up with Craig and Ken who were saying their last good-byes. I shook all the hands and high-tailed it out of there to hit the road. Wow! What a tour. Next time Dave will have to come back and be the headliner in these arenas – I wish.

For the band, it's on to Atlanta for the final night of the tour. Good Luck to all. —Billy