

ISSUE #50

American Music

The Blasters/Dave Alvin newsletter

AUG 2006

Blasters shows

(Phil, John, Jerry, Keith)

8/26 Hollywood CA at Vine Street Lounge

9/23 Reno, NV at Hawkins Amp.

Dave Alvin / Guilty Men shows

8/24 Bakersfield CA at Fishlips

8/25 San Juan Cap CA at Coach house

8/26 Solana Beach CA at Belly Up Tavern

8/27 Los Angeles CA at Sunset Junction

9/1 Tucson AZ at Rialto Theatre

9/3 Santa Fe NM at Eaves Movie Ranch

9/6 Oklahoma City OK at The Blue Door

9/7 Dallas TX at Sons of Herman Hall

9/8 Austin TX at Continental Club

9/9 Houston TX at Continental Club

9/12 Ashville NC at Grey Eagle

9/14 Greenville SC at Handlebar

9/15 Chattanooga TN at Nightfall Concert Series at Miller Plaza

9/16 Atlanta GA at Smiths Olde Bar

9/18 Raleigh NC at The Pour house Music

9/20 Nashville TN at American Music

9/23 Pittsburgh PA at Rex Theatre

9/24 Ann Arbor MI at The Ark

Gene Taylor Rejoins the Blasters For Two Special Shows

Gene Taylor joined the Blasters for two shows at the July 4th American Music festival in Chicago. Dave Alvin surprised everyone and sat in for a few songs. The full story is in this issue.



Latest News: This is the 50th issue of the Blastersnewsletter now in its 12th year. -- Dave Alvin will be featured in the L.A. Times Sunday edition magazine called West on August 27, 2006 -- 'Dave Alvin's 9-Volt' radio show for XM radio is scheduled to debut Monday September

18, 2006 at 11 AM Eastern Time. -- Dave Alvin's taped segment for NBC-TV's Extra show that was due to air on Friday July 21, 2006 was pre-empted for Hollywood rumors and gossip. It may never air. The tabloid news show taped an interview with Dave that he was very happy with. -- For a brief period in July, James Intveld rejoined the Blasters for what was a reunion of the 1992-95 version of the Blasters. James filled in for Keith Wyatt on guitar at three east coast shows July 12 thru the 15th. -- Bill Morrissey's album due out in January has Dave Alvin playing on a few tracks. -- The Knitters have some dates scheduled in October on the west coast. -- The Dave Alvin DVD is still being worked on and is expected to be released by Yep Roc in early 2007. ((latest news continued on page 2))

In This Issue: The Flesh Eaters history and 2006 Reunion tour, The Blasters with Gene Taylor, and Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men play the American Music fest together.

((latest news continued from page 1))

-- Billboard Magazine's Web site reports that Tom Waits has opened his vaults for the first time on the three-disc collection Orphans: Brawlers, Bawlers and Bastards, due Nov. 21 via Anti- Records. Of the 54 tracks, 30 are new recordings. Dave Alvin and other guests appear on some tracks. -- Dave Alvin was interviewed for the documentary Ghost on the Highway: A Portrait of Jeffrey Lee Pierce and the Gun Club. The film was directed by Kurt Voss, who directed Border Radio. Ghost on the Highway was screened at a film festival called Don't Knock The Rock in June in Los Angeles. -- Next issue will feature a story on the reunion of the 1992-95 Blasters with James Intveld on guitar. They reunited for a few shows in July 2006. ~ *AM*

Tuning Into Dave Alvin's Border Radio **by Tom Wilk**

'Border Radio' is a term for the powerful, unregulated radio station just across the Mexican border that commanded a nationwide audience from the 1930s to the 1960s. With more than 500,000 watts of AM power, these stations could be heard all across the United States. Dave was exposed to the music of border radio stations while growing up in Southern California.

Dave: "It was station XERB. That was where I first heard Howlin' Wolf." Of all his songs, BORDER RADIO has been one of Dave Alvin's most flexible compositions. The song has a timeless appeal. A single mother sits at home late at night, listening to the radio and hoping a song will connect her with a long-gone lover.

The opening lines have the feel of a haiku: One more midnight, her man is still gone, the night moves too slow.

As recorded by The Blasters on their 1981 self-titled album, BORDER RADIO was played as an up-tempo rocker with a Chuck Berry feel. On Romeo's Escape, his first solo album, Dave slowed down the tempo, performing it as a country-style duet with Katy Moffatt. On King of California, his 1994 solo album, it evolved into a stripped-down lament for a lost love.

In concert, Dave has a history of turning BORDER RADIO into a medley by including snippets of other songs.

"It makes it sound like the character is listening to a radio station. It's another way to tell a story and go a little deeper," Dave said in a 2006 interview. During a 1994 interview/concert on the Fresh Air radio show with Terry Gross, Dave included a verse of Sam Cooke's CUPID, a Top 20 hit for the soul singer in 1961.

On the same show, he played a version of HE WILL BREAK YOUR HEART, a song co-written by Curtis Mayfield and Jerry Butler that was a hit for Butler in 1960.

For his 2002 Outtakes in California CD, Dave performed BORDER RADIO with several lines from GOODNIGHT MY LOVE, a rhythm-and-blues hit by Jesse Belvin in the mid-1950s. GOOD NIGHT MY LOVE is a song also recorded by Los Lobos for the La Bamba soundtrack album in 1987. Today, BORDER RADIO remains a part of Dave Alvin's repertoire. "It goes in and out of the set," he said.

With the disappearance of the original border radio stations, Dave wonders if the title will lose its meaning. "It's becoming an outdated reference," he said. ~ *AM*

a Flesh Eaters history

By Dave Alvin

Chris Desjardins had an L.A. area band in the mid-70's called the Flesh Eaters with a rotating membership. Chris D. was the only constant member. They were one of the original L.A. punk bands. They recorded a few 45's, and John Doe was on one of them.

Chris was working at Slash records, I don't remember what his job was, maybe an A & R guy, but he produced the first Gun Club record, the first Dream Syndicate, and the first Misfits album. In 1981, Slash talked him into doing a Flesh Eaters LP (A Minute To Pray a Second To Die) on their subsidiary label, Ruby. So he contacted all of us and put together a new Flesh Eaters.

The Blasters hadn't signed with Slash for our first record yet, so this was my first experience recording in a real studio.

Chris D's theme idea for the record was a voodoo vibe with voodoo lyrics - sort of Haitian voodoo. At the time I asked: "What does Haitian music sound like? (laughs) I was soon to find out." Bill Bateman was picked to play drums and DJ Bonebrake was added to play additional percussion.

We recorded the album A Minute To Pray twice. The first time, it just didn't sound right. Only one song from that session made it to the record called SATAN'S STOMP. The rest of the tracks were re-recorded at Quadtech, the studio the Blasters later recorded at. A Minute to Pray is a weird record because it was punk rock, but then it wasn't. It was very tribal - as if Link Wray went to Haiti (laughs). It was reissued in the 90's, but again is out of print.

I later played on a few Chris D. solo albums. There is a Flesh Eaters Live LP on the SST label that has live recordings from The Whiskey. One side is our version of the Flesh Eaters, the other side is a later version of the band. Our version of the band only played about 6 gigs back then from January through April 1981 - The Whiskey, The Roxy, Café De Grande, a few times at Myron's Ballroom and that's it. The Blasters started to take off, so I couldn't play with the Flesh Eaters after that. It was fun, but it's not what I do.

When we got back together for this reunion, we didn't realize what an influence we had. The guy from Mudhoney said that was his favorite record. When we played San Francisco, the bass player from Camper Van Beethoven and Cracker said to us, "I can't believe you guys are back. That was my favorite record when it came out."

It was nice for me to do this project after Buddy Blue died because I was devastated. Buddy was 48 years old with a wife and a four year old daughter. The next day I went to a Flesh Eaters rehearsal and looked around the room. I thought: "We made a record 25 years ago and we're all still here. This is really cool. So let's enjoy this." It was very therapeutic.

I said something at Buddy's memorial that I thought was true: "Buddy was supposed to write my obituary, not the other way around." ~ *AM*



Chris D, DJ Bonebrake, Dave, John Doe, Steve Berlin, & Bateman



Dave Alvin and Chris D. in San Diego, 2006

a Flesh Eaters reunion

By Billy Davis



Photo: Kurt Mahoney

Steve Berlin and DJ Bonebrake

Alvin on guitar, John Doe on bass and DJ Bonebrake on percussion from 'X', Bill Bateman, ex-Blaster, now with the Cramps on drums, Steve Berlin is on sax from Los Lobos, and of course the singer is Chris D.

Coincidentally, all involved were free at that time. They planned rehearsals then added three California warm up dates.

The band played all of the songs from their LP called A Minute To Pray A Second To Die, which only amounted to half a set. Chris D. has fronted different versions of the Flesh Eaters over the years, so he had other songs to choose from.



Photo: Kurt Mahoney

Chris D.

The Flesh Eaters' songs have a somewhat punk style, so often there are no guitar solos. Dave did play a few solos, which was the only thing from Dave that resembled his own music. The band started out with DIGGING MY GRAVE, one of the more popular songs from the record they did together. To be sure, The Flesh Eaters' sound is unlike anything else. Part of what makes the sound so unique is the combination of Steve Berlin's saxophone and DJ Bonebrake's marimbas (which sounds at times like a xylophone).

Chris D's vocals are backed by John Doe. Other songs like PRAY TIL YOU SWEAT sounded like 1981 L. A. punk. Chris D. reminded the audience that John Doe wrote CYRANO DE BERGER'S BACK for the 1981 Flesh Eaters – which was long before that song was popularized by X. MISS MUERTE is a title song that came from the newest Flesh Eaters album from 2003. This version of the band worked up their own arrangement and it might have been the best song of the set. Another song they worked on was HOUSE OF THICKETS from the 1999 album Ashes of Time.

Dave Alvin looked like he was really having fun. All of the musicians are friends of his that he has played with over the years in various other formations of bands.

For the encore the band played a few favorite cover songs: Sonics' CINDERELLA and Gun Club's SHE'S LIKE HEROIN TO ME. Dave says the reunion isn't over, they may do more gigs. ~ *AM*



Photo: Kurt Mahoney

John Doe and Chris D.



Photo: Kurt Mahoney

The HighTone Records Box set

AMERICAN MUSIC is more than a song by Dave Alvin. It also is the name of the new box set on the history of HighTone Records. American Music: The HighTone Records Story will be released on Sept. 12. It includes four CDs, a DVD and a 124-page booklet to recap the history of the Oakland-California based label, which began operations in 1983 with the release of a Robert Cray album.

Writer Lee Hildebrand produced the compilation and supplied liner notes for the booklet. Dave Alvin released five studio CDs and two live albums on HighTone between 1991 and 2002. In addition, HighTone issued American Music, the first album by the Blasters, on compact disc in 1997 and Trouble Bound, the live album from the 2002 Blasters' reunion tour. HighTone released COUNTY FAIR 2000, Phil Alvin's 1994 solo CD and the Pleasure Barons' Live in Las Vegas CD featuring Dave Alvin.

Dave Alvin speaks highly of his time with HighTone: "HighTone Records gave me the unique opportunity to grow as an artist that few, if any, other labels would have. For that I am eternally grateful to Bruce Bromberg and Larry Sloven. If it hadn't been for them, I never would have found my voice as a singer-songwriter and I'd probably either be flipping burgers right now or something far, far worse. No artist can ask for more."

In addition to his own albums, Dave Alvin produced CDs for such HighTone artists as Tom Russell, Katy Moffatt, Chris Gaffney, Christy McWilson, Sonny Burgess and Big Sandy & The Fly-Rite Boys. He also co-produced Tulare Dust, a songwriters' tribute to Merle Haggard, with Tom Russell.

The box set includes 79 songs and 16 videos. Three Dave Alvin videos are included on the DVD: WHY DID SHE STAY WITH HIM, KING OF CALIFORNIA and BARN BURNING. This marks the first time they have been commercially released. Dave: "KING and BARN are pretty good live performance videos. The WHY DID SHE STAY WITH HIM video is embarrassing. It's the typical production with a pretty girl at the center of it. And it has nothing to do with the song." ~ *AM*

By
Tom Wilk



Highly Recommended New Releases The Hacienda Bros. What's Wrong With Right

Chris Gaffney's Hacienda Brothers release their second album. This one on Proper Records.

www.properamerican.com

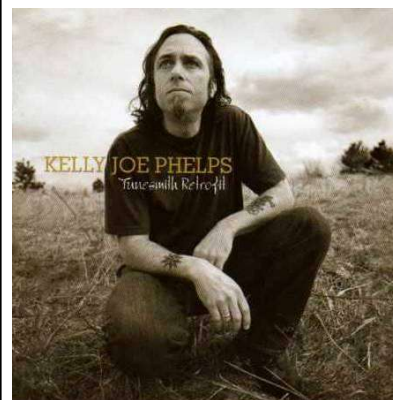
WHAT'S WRONG WITH RIGHT



Kelly Joe Phelps Tunesmith Retrofit

Kelly Joe Phelps, guitar extraordinaire and folk songwriter, releases a new album on Rounder Records.

www.rounder.com



Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men, St. Louis, MO at Off Broadway

The Black Out Show July 19, 2006 by Sara Beeler

A major wind/rain storm went through a couple hours before the show started so there was no power. We arrived at the venue and walked in not knowing if there was going to be a show or not. The lobby was really dark, but the bar area was somewhat illuminated with candles and emergency lights, and we could see a girl sitting on a barstool playing acoustic guitar. And in the corner of the lobby a guy was on the phone. I heard him ask, "Do you have a playable stand-up bass?" and a few other things that indicated they might actually be playing. Then the girl finished up and the guy in the lobby walked in and announced that he had rounded up an acoustic guitar and bass, and they were going to try to play regardless of the power situation. It was Joe Terry. He said he'd do some backup vocals and play tambourine since there wasn't much they could do about the keyboard. Later on stage he asked the audience if anyone had an accordion. We laughed and he said: "No, I'm serious."

The staff lit candles on all the tables and the stage, so that was enough light to see fairly well. Fortunately, the storm brought slightly cooler weather, so it was no longer 95 degrees outside, and the room wasn't as hot as I expected. But it was still a little uncomfortable and I was pretty sweaty by the end, even though I was sitting the whole time. The owner went up on stage a couple times to remind people to pay if they hadn't already. Since no one was in the lobby most of the time, and the side doors were open, anyone could have just walked in. I hope everyone was honest and paid.

On to the show... They all had stools, except Joe, who was standing. They were tuning the guitars and bass, and then Dave started playing MAKE ME A PALLET. It seemed like he was just messing around at first, but then the other guys joined in and it became a full-blown opening song. He got the audience to sing along on the chorus, and then sing it by ourselves a few times.

After they finished, Dave said we're all in this together, so we'd have to participate. We had audience sing-a-longs on a couple other songs also. After the real opening song, KING



OF CALIFORNIA, Dave said it would be all-request night. That meant people yelled out song titles even more than usual.

When they got to the piano solo in OUT IN CALIFORNIA, Dave said "Take it away, Joe Terry!" and gestured to poor Joe standing there with his tambourine. He did get in some nice "air piano" playing.

After 5 or 6 songs, the audience could tell the band was sounding good and having fun despite the circumstances. As the completely unplugged night continued, the "can I get more monitor" joke came around often.

At one point Gregory put his bass down and left the stage. Then someone brought up to the stage a little toy piano for Joe. It looked just like a miniature upright piano, about 2 feet tall and 2 feet wide with maybe 25-30 keys. It got a big laugh as people thought, "Yeah, right!" Joe gave it a shot and started messing around with this little piano and joking about tuning it. We were still laughing, as it looked ridiculous and it only had really high tinkly notes on it.

Dave told the audience that Gregory left the stage because 'he has an ear infection and can't hear very well.' His hearing wouldn't be that much of a problem normally, but with low decibels it was. Dave joked: "This is one of the highlights, no THE highlight, of my career, the bass player quit and was replaced by a toy piano."

The audience adjusted to the fact that Joe was actually going to try to play the piano, and finally stopped laughing. Dave probably wasn't sure if Joe's new instrument was gonna work so he assured the audience: "Ah, I won a Grammy." Everyone laughed. WANDA AND DUANE was the first song after that, and Joe was actually really good. He rocked the toy piano in a way I would not have thought possible. First he tried holding it to the side but mostly rested it on his knee and held it with his left hand while playing with his right.

At the end of WANDA AND DUANE, Joe faked throwing the toy piano in the audience. His solos on FOURTH OF JULY and WHAT DID THE DEEP SEA SAY brought the house down. At one point, Dave talked about how we can't hear the guitar (which actually I could pretty well). Then Joe said, "You can hear THIS bad mother, can't ya'?"

Even though I missed out on the rockin' electric show, it was still a great show. They made the best out of a less-than-ideal situation and we all got to see and hear something unique and challenging for Dave and the Guilty Men. ~ *AM*

(Photos courtesy of St. Louis Steve)



The American Music Festival

at Fitzgerald's in Berwyn, IL July 1-3, 2006

by Billy Davis

The best roots music club in the Chicago area is in the suburb of Berwyn called Fitzgerald's, and that was the place to be on July 4th weekend. The Blasters and Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men were playing for the first time together on the same bill at the annual Fitzgerald's event.

Making it even more special, the Blasters featured Gene Taylor as special guest on piano. Gene now plays piano for the Fabulous Thunderbirds and has played many gigs over the years with the Original Blasters, but never with the modern day Blasters. Gene was joining the Blasters only for these two shows.

The Blasters were in the middle of a cross-country tour when Gene Taylor flew into town the day of the first show. The band met at their hotel and had a sit-down rehearsal that actually amounted to only a discussion of what songs to play.

They Blasters hit the stage without a rehearsal or sound check. It didn't matter because these guys have been playing together in different formations for many years. Besides, Gene is such an exceptional musician, he can play in any situation and make it sound great.

It was the first day of the festival. The Blasters played on the outdoor stage under a tent and opened with the perfect song: AMERICAN MUSIC. The Blasters played a bunch of songs as a 4-piece; then Gene joined them half-way through the set. Phil announced: "It is my great pleasure and burden (laughing) to introduce my good friend Gene Taylor." Gene came out to a big ovation.

There was a funny moment when Phil started to call out the introduction to BORDER RADIO: Gene sat at attention and whipped out a big piece of paper that had the set list on it. He held it up close to his face to make sure he could read what the first song should be. Then Gene yelled something to Phil, who suddenly remembered they were supposed to start with the BIG JOE TURNER MEDLEY song. Phil put down the guitar to concentrate on the vocals and they launched into a great boogie-woogie piano version of the song. Gene sang the few songs that he always did in the old days with the Blasters: LIGHTS OUT, WHAT AM I LIVIN' FOR, and DON'T LIE TO ME.



Gene sure is a character; he always has fun on the stage and talks with the people in the audience near him. During DADDY ROLLIN STONE, Gene played the piano with one hand as he reached into the audience. He pulled his hand back holding a bottle of beer from a fan. At that same moment there was a break in the song. In that tiny moment of silence, you could hear Gene twist off the beer cap. Then not miss a beat resuming playing the song.

The night finished off with a high-energy version of ONE BAD STUD with Keith and Gene trading off solos. Keith finished off the song, as he usually does, leaning his feeding-back guitar



against his amp while beating it with a towel. Keith exited the stage and as Gene was the last one to leave, crossing the stage with one of those I-have-an-idea grins on his face. As he passed Keith's feeding-back guitar, Gene couldn't help imitating Keith taking a swipe at the guitar with his hat. Then Gene doubled back, still grinning, and wailed a few more times on Keith's guitar with his own towel. Gene obviously was having a lot of fun and enjoyed playing with his long time friends again.

They played a good first show. There was a little bit of a "feeling-it-out" process between the musicians

on solos and how they heard the sound in their monitors.

The second day, the Blasters were scheduled to play late at 11:30 PM on the indoor main club stage. The rumor was that Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men were just coming in from out of state and would be hanging out at the club. (Dave and the Guilty Men would play the American Music Fest the following night).

When the festival was first booked, it appeared all the Original Blasters would be in attendance. At the time, Bill Bateman was scheduled to be the new Guilty Men drummer, but touring obligations with the Cramps put a "cramp" in Bill's schedule. Dave replaced Bateman with drummer Steve Mugallian. So only Bateman from the original Blasters wouldn't be here this weekend.

The Blasters shook up their set list for the inside stage. The stage backdrop was a gigantic 48 star United States flag.

At one point Phil told the audience: "My brother David is here tonight." That of course brought a roar from the crowd. A fan yelled something and Phil replied "Don't believe all that mythology."

Half way through, Phil introduced Gene to the stage: "It is my great pleasure, on the very day that he was born some 16 years ago, to introduce Gene 'The Wild Man' Taylor." Phil started singing happy birthday to Gene as Gene playfully tried to cover Phil's mouth. Phil: "Happy birthday to you, I can take your left hook and your right one too."

They played the same set of songs with Gene that they did last night, but of course it was tighter.

Near the end, Phil called out in the mic: "David are you here? Don't let your brother down." Suddenly Dave walked on. He looked very serious, but as he walked past John Bazz, Dave pulled out John's amp cable and walked on past. John did a double take and laughed.

Phil handed Dave a spare guitar, a Stratocaster to play. Dave later joked that the strings were rusty and he was



afraid of cutting his fingers. Phil never changes strings unless they break.

Dave shook hands with Jerry Angel and Keith Wyatt, but didn't motion towards the other three, who are all original Blasters. I think Dave must feel right at home with the Original Blasters and it shows when he plays with them because it all comes right back together again--just like the old days.

As Dave plugged in to Phil's amp, Phil took the opportunity to poke some fun at his brother. He said, "I'd like to point out that he has boots on with high heels. That's why he looks taller than me."



They started MARIE MARIE but it was very hard to hear Dave's guitar. Keith took the first solo. When Dave took the second solo, Phil turned around looking at Dave because he couldn't hear him. First Phil checked the amp then suddenly reached over and flipped the pickup switch on Dave's guitar. Suddenly we could hear Dave's guitar, the crowd roared, Dave shook his head but with a smile still on his face. Phil forgot to mention to Dave that one of the pickups didn't work.

Next they did ONE BAD STUD. It was cool to hear Keith and Dave doubling some of the same lead guitar parts. Then Dave took a solo and Keith finished with a solo. Gene took a break from playing along and took out his pocket camera to take some photos of this historic jam.

The band came back for an encore without Dave. They played ROCK BOPPIN BABY and AMERICAN MUSIC. The Blasters came into the festival playing AMERICAN MUSIC and left playing AMERICAN MUSIC.

That appeared to be the end, but the crowd wouldn't let the Blasters leave. They kept cheering, so the Blasters returned to the stage for a rare second encore to play RED ROSE. Day two was over.

Day three was filled with lots of music, but the crowd was waiting for Dave Alvin and the Guilty Men in the final slot of the evening. The indoor club was jammed with people.

Dave Alvin came to the stage and started warming up with a few guitar licks. He started smiling as he played the riff to I'M SHAKIN' and immediately went into OUT IN CALIFORNIA as the opening song.

As the band played, Dave said "Well, I can't think of anywhere on earth I'd rather be than right here tonight. We have a lot of old friends here and a lot of new friends and that's not just some show biz jive. I mean it." Dave has played a number of other years at Fitzgerald's American Music fest. Dave Alvin playing this fest has become somewhat of a tradition.

Dave played a few songs from the new West of the West album – REDNECK FRIEND, BLIND LOVE, BETWEEN THE CRACKS, and SURFER GIRL.

Dave Alvin connected with the audience between songs and had an opportunity to shoot back at his brother Phil. He said: "The last CD called Ashgrove was named after a club that I used to go to with my brother Phil – who I just happened to run into here last night. He's a charming . . . (laughs). Seriously, it was great seeing him and Gene Taylor and Johnny Bazz. I hope they didn't break anything (laughs)."

Dave has such a large catalog of songs that it has become hard to choose a set list. It's difficult to fit in any rarities with so many new album songs and mandatory old favorites. There has to be a balance to satisfy all the fans.

Over the years Dave has changed his performing style. In the Blasters days, it was all about short 3 minute songs. When Dave went solo, his songs went to 4 or 5 minutes with extended solos. Now Dave has taken his songs into the 7-to-9 minute range with very long guitar solos. This is a good thing because Dave has developed



into a better guitarist over the years and fans come specifically to see him play lead guitar. Dave has increased the length of his show to almost 2 hours to make up for the longer songs.

In the second half of the show, Dave really stepped things up a notch. A song that everyone was waiting for to finish off the 4th of July weekend festival -- FOURTH OF JULY, and it was exceptional.

Next Dave did a great version of SURFER GIRL. It's a song that everyone feels has really worked well as a live song. Next was MARIE MARIE.

A Fitzgerald's tradition is to throw napkins in the air in the last song. They did. There were a lot of napkins in the air and all over the stage. Dave jokingly said: "Tonight is very special to me. . .because I collect napkins."

In the middle of MARIE, Dave brought the sound down to introduce the Guilty Men. Dave said here is a guy we affectionately refer to as the new guy - Steve Mugallian on drums. When Dave announced the new drummer was from Chicago, he got a big round of applause.

Dave: "There is a guy here tonight, that if it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be here. And that's no bullshit. Many years ago, he got a gig at a wedding. He got Bill Bateman on drums, my brother Phil to sing and play guitar, a bass player named Mike Kennedy and he played harmonica. But they couldn't find a guitar player. All the guitar players in Downey were either dead, in jail, or on Mars. So this guy said: "Let Dave play guitar." He was trapped with a \$600 wedding gig, so my brother said he really didn't have a choice. Phil and I had never played together before, but we played the gig and the next morning we were the Blasters. Please welcome one of the world's greatest harmonica players. The guy who gave me my start; Frank Furillo."

Frank (who was interviewed in American Music #49) came out and played his harmonica bringing the band into SO LONG BABY GOODBYE.

For an encore, they played ROMEO'S ESCAPE and then Little Walter's MELLOW DOWN EASY – a song I've never heard Dave play before.

What a great weekend of American Music at Fitzgerald's. Chicago's always been a great city, but these two bands made it even cooler. ~ *AM*

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