



Keeping Classic R&B Alive

Rhode Island Rhythm and Blues Preservation Society

Affiliate Member of the National Blues Foundation

www.bluespreservationsociety.org | 12 Kipling Street, Providence, RI 02907 | 401.461.0012

RHYTHM & BLUES NEWS of NOTE

Newsletter Editor: Sylvia Whiting

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Volume 19 No. 1

From the Editor

This issue of ***R&B News of Note*** is dedicated our successful 2023 year and plans for 2024.

We look forward to seeing you and supporting our events and the Rhode Island Rhythm & Blues Preservation Society. Thank you.

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President: Cleveland Kurtz
Vice President: Max Whiting
Sec/Treasurer: Sylvia Whiting

Instruments Program Director

Tom Colantonio

Board Members

Tom Colantonio
Guia Sanchez
Clarice Smith
Paul Williams
Dhana Whiteing

Honorary Board Members

Richard & Donna Pena
Lynn & Elizabeth Pegg
Sylvia Ann Soares

Black History Month

St. Martin DePorres Center

Thursday, February 29, Noon - 2PM

R&B Preservation Hall Band
160 Cranston Street, Providence, RI

From the President's Desk

You know who you are. The Rhode Island Rhythm and Blues Preservation Society is more than two decades old now, and we're doing all right. We are doing all right because of your support. ***You know who you are,*** and so do we. Thank you so much. We wouldn't be where we are today if it weren't for you and all the help that you extend to us. We know this, and we are sincerely grateful to you and

yours for what you have done for us. ***You know who you are.***

You showed up for all of our festivals and events. You danced with us, you sang with us, you paid your admission, and bought all our raffle tickets. Some of you even left donations in our familiar scruffy donation jar that is always a fixture at these events. Yep, we produced the event, but you're the one who made it a success. ***You know who you are, and we are so grateful.***

Our instruments for children program is a roaring success. Yes, we do know who donated all the instruments and whose financial support allowed us to purchase instruments for these young people. ***You know who you are.*** I'm not sure that the children who benefit from these donations know who you



President Cleveland Kurtz

are, but you don't care. It's the young people that are precious to you, and you did it for them. At each event that we showcased these young people playing the instruments that you provided for them, you showed up and cheered them on. How can we forget that!

When our Rhode Island music history component came to you looking for your help chronicling our music's local history, you dusted off all your old memories and gave them to us. Thanks for your help and be ready. We may be coming for more. ***You know who you are.***

While I'm singing your praises, I have one more mission for you. Like you, Rhythm and Blues is the favorite music of most Rhode Islanders; and we would like Rhode Island to ***adopt Rhythm and Blues as our state music.*** Rhythm and Blues is the state champion of live music in Rhode Island. More people play it, more people sing it, more people dance to it, and more people just love it. That's saying something, because Rhode Island has more than its share of great musicians and music lovers. This is what we are asking you to do. ***Contact your state representatives and remind them that the Rhode Island populace and Rhythm and blues has been living together harmoniously for decades now, and it's about time we made an honest woman out of her.*** Hurry up and get that done. ***You know who you are.*** Yes, you do.

Vice President / Music Director – Max Whiting



This Newsletter marks our 21st year! This August we held our 20th Anniversary Celebration with an outstanding event that received positive feedback from all in attendance (and from some who didn't even attend!). Entertainment was provided by and the authentic R&B band Front & Center, who exemplified the spirit of the R&B era. We look forward to more of the same in the upcoming year.

This year also marks a turning point for our organization. The RI State Legislature is hearing a bill to declare R&B as the 'official' state music, an outstanding accomplishment for our group and the many contributors who have work hard to make this a reality (See article below.) It would be very difficult to name all of them but we are working on a 'wall of fame' to honor those individuals.

As we start our 21st season with hope and optimism this will be our most productive season ever. Plans are underway to hold a Black History Month event, a Juneteenth exhibit, as well as continuing the city-wide library tour of 'A Day in the Life' series. We have gained members and respect around the city and look forward to continuing this momentum in 2024. Best wishes for a happy, healthy, prosperous year.

Secretary/Treasurer - Sylvia Whiting

Your contribution as a member helps us continue to offer the programming, information and instruments that we strive to provide. Dues are only \$15 for individuals/Musicians, \$5 for students and \$25 for couples. Through your support we continue to grow our Instruments for Children Program with many instruments donated this past year, expanded our music series and celebrated our 20th year.

All donations are tax deductible. For information, volunteer opportunities, musician listings, programming and donations please visit us at www.bluespreservationsociety.org.

Director, Instruments for Children Program, Tom Colantonio

Most schools with active music programs have a good inventory for student participation during the first semester. We are ready to help if needed as the second semester is gearing up. There continues to be a need for **flutes and clarinets**, both great entry level band instruments. We will be looking to access any school needs within the next few weeks and continue to accept instrument donations. Instruments in need of repair will be handled by local partners and our web presence leads donors to our program.

Anyone with a musical instrument to donate or information on a school or program in need of our assistance, please contact Tom at 401.793.1281 or Cleveland at 401.461.0012. We will arrange to pick up the instruments, if necessary.

Instruments Program Tom Colantonio



Tom Colantonio

OF INTEREST as heard by

R&B Official Music of RI



Prof Ed Coates

For the past few months (or years) our founder, Ed ‘Prof’ Coates has been lobbying the legislature to make **R&B the ‘official’ music of Rhode Island**. We’ve reported on these efforts in previous editions of ***R&B News of Note***. The legislation was not approved in the last legislative session. However, the Bill **ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- STATE EMBLEMS** (Designates as the state music, the genre of rhythm and blues which contains elements of pop, soul, funk, hip-hop, and electronic music.) **has been re-filed in the 2024 session under H 7113**. The primary sponsor is Representative David A. Bennett RN. The Bill was heard by the House Special Legislation Committee on January 18 and was voted positively out of Committee.

When RIRBPS receives further information about the next committee assignment and timeline, we will again ask for your support to: **Testify (hopefully in person) or Submit a Letter of Support**.

We are pleased to notify our readers that this is paying off. The effort to persuade the legislature to designate **Rhythm & Blues as RI’s official state music** was picked up by Providence PBS Station, Channel 36 reporters and will be highlighted on **Providence PBS station channel 36, last year (July 9 and Re-Broadcast on July 12, 2023)**. The Program was broadcast as part of the Rhode Island PBS weekly series.

🎵🎵🎵 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

20th Anniversary Tribute to R&B (August 11, 2023)

Front & Center Band rocked the CV Club on Friday, August 11th for the **20th Anniversary Celebration** of the Rhode Island Rhythm & Blues Preservation Society. Established as a non-profit corporation in 2003, the 20th Anniversary Tribute highlighted our goals, accomplishments, and successes during an evening of celebration and achievement.



August marks R&B Heritage Month in Rhode Island. Each year we honor this month with a Festival. Our event highlighted the history of RIRBPS, key players who created and moved our organization forward while highlighting how R&B has impacted life in RI. The musical tribute featured a slide video of R&B history and remembrances, dancing, a raffle and more.

The slide video depicted highlights from RIRBPS past and present displaying 20 years of R&B history in the making with featured artists, programming, student performers, board and member support and more.



Front & Center Band



Jean Coates & Elizabeth Pegg
Founding Members RIRBPS

Groups and artists featured in the slide presentation included the Castaleers, the Stompers, Little Randy and the Stompers, Joe Hill, Jose Santos, Leg's Osborne Band, Lonnie Gasperini, Louie Camp Band, Celebrity Club

highlights, Paul Gonsalves, Prof Coates & the Dynamics and so many more. The groups from the 1940s to the 70s bring back the memories. The activities of RIRBPS over the past 20 years keep these memories alive. There were also highlights of Instruments for Children program awardees, graduation and performances alongside current board members and performers.

Jose Santos & the Four Hearts





Woonsocket Student Performers



Preservation Hall Band – 2007

**Top: Paul Williams, Jose Santos, Max Whiting
Front: 'Prof' Coates, Fred Morrison, Dave Hamel**



THE CASTALEERS
Felsted Recording Artists
Top Left: George Smith - DeL Padgett



TAPA Awardees & Faculty



Max Whiting, Vice President/Music Director of RIRBPS was interviewed by Stoughton (MA) Media Access Corporation prior to the 20th Anniversary event to promote RIRBPS, R&B and the 20th Anniversary event. The link may be found at: <https://youtu.be/cs2rFmlrE30>.

Sponsors of our 20th Anniversary celebration included La Familia Restaurant, Cumberland, RI, Cheesecake Factory, Providence, RI, Theatre By the Sea, American Ring, East Providence, Sandra Faïman –Silva, Potter, Jemetta Hunt, Photographer.

RIRBPS Apparel

T Shirts are now available at our events or by contacting us at rirbps@gmail.com. Just \$20. Hope to see you in your R&B Tee at our next event.



A DAY IN THE LIFE

The summer schedule of 'A Day in the Life' series was a big success for our organization. The R&B Preservation Hall Band, led by Music Director, Max Whiting performed at four Providence Libraries in the 2023 summer/fall season. The series mixes music with dialogue to introduce RIRBPS to new audiences while highlighting the music of R&B to



Rochambeau Library 2023



the life of an R&B musician in Rhode Island. Library staff welcomed our supporters and friends at the Knight Memorial Library on July 26, Rochambeau Library on

August 1, Wanskunk Library, August 24 and Mt Pleasant Library on September 20. Performers, Randy Ashe on Sax, Paul Williams, Guitar and smooth vocals, Miles Wolcott, Drums and Max Whiting, Bass played for lively audiences at these events.

Knight Memorial Library 2023



Highlights of '*A Day in the Life*' summer of 2023.

Wanskunk Library 2023



Rochambeau Library 2023



VISIT OUR WEBSITE
www.bluesperservationsociety.org

🎵🎵🎵 **BOARD MEMBER HIGHLIGHT**

Sylvia Whiting, Secretary/Treasurer

We are pleased to introduce you to a board member who spends most of her time 'behind the scenes' except when we have a major activity or event. Sylvia has served on the Rhode Island Rhythm & Blues Preservation Society board since 2011 and keeps our information pipeline moving. As an organization officer she is responsible for making sure our friends, supporters and key stakeholders hear from us on a regular basis. She also ensures that legal filings are up to date and that membership notices are current. She brings many years of professional, managerial and program oversight experience to RIRBPS and is currently an officer of the Winthrop Art Association (MA), chairs the Knollsbrook Recycling Committee (Stoughton, MA), serves as a Town Meeting Member (Stoughton, MA) and works on fairness and equity in her work in MA and Florida. She previously served as Executive Director and Board President of the YWCA Cambridge (MA) and President of the Board of Directors of the Alliance for Prison Justice, Inc. (MA).

*Sylvia Whiting,
Board member*



A graduate of UMA Boston she holds a Master of Public Administration degree from CSULB and is a retired adjunct faculty member in the Management Department from Bentley University, Waltham, MA. She is a professional photographer who resides in Stoughton, MA and spends winters in West Palm Beach, Florida. Her major goal for RIRBPS in 2024 is to expand Board support.

New Members

We are pleased to announce the following members joined / renewed RIRBPS membership:

Tony Armstrong, Providence, RI	Barbara Bardsley, Woonsocket, RI
Gregory Berger, Kingston, RI	Denise Brophy, Providence, RI
Janet Caretti, Providence, RI	Marisa Chock, Providence, RI
Bob & Carolyn Corey, W. Warwick, RI	Corsino Delgado, Providence, RI
Diane Denisewich, Warwick, RI	Charlie Fishbein, Providence, RI
Cheryl Gray, Providence, RI	Elizabeth Pegg, Riverside, RI
Avelina Rocchio (Knight Memorial Library Manager)	Bob Previte, Cranston, RI
Erin Scales, Cranston RI	John Smithers/Jill Holloway, Prov., RI
Alvaro Soares, Cranston, RI	Nancy Whit, Providence, RI
Johnston HS Music Program, Johnston, RI (Supporter)	Joyce Zinne, Providence, RI

Musical Instruments Needed
Epecially: Trumpets, Flutes,
Trombones, Clarinets, Saxophones

Call Tom @ 401.793.1281

WHERE IT'S AT – *Where music lovers may go to satisfy a healthy R&B craving !!!*

A DAY IN THE LIFE

As soon as dates are finalized we will announce the summer schedule of 'A Day in the Life' series. The R&B Preservation Hall Band, led by Music Director, Max Whiting looks forward to performing at local libraries and public spots throughout greater Providence this summer and fall. The series mixes music with dialogue to introduce RIRBPS to new audiences while highlighting the music of R&B to the life of an R&B musician in Rhode Island.

Local Venues

Blue Room, 2197 Broad Street, Cranston, RI. Live music venue. www.theblueroom.com. 401.365.8785.

TT's 133 Club, Sunday, 29 Warren Ave., East Providence 401.438.1330 – Blues/Jazz Music Series, call for details, dates, times. Mac Odom Band. Motown R&B - NO COVER



ASKEW, 150 Chestnut St., Providence, 774-526-9736. Music evenings, Wednesday Jam. Call for details.

Cady's Tavern, 2168 Putnam Pike, Chepachet, RI, 401.568.4102. Blues Jam, Sunday afternoon at 3-7PM. No cover.

<http://www.cadystavern.com/#!/ricks-roadhouse-blues>.

Fifth Element, 111 Broadway, Newport 401.619.2552 - Jazz in bar. Sat., Sun., Mon.

Knickerbocker Café 35 Railroad Avenue, Westerly, RI. 401.315.5070.

Featured Events. Classic Blues, R&B, Rock, Oldies, Pop.

<http://www.theknickerbockercafe.com>. No cover.

Murphy's Law 2 George Street, Pawtucket, RI. 401.724.5522. Blues Jams. No Cover. <http://murphyslawri.com/events>.



Sardella's Italian Restaurant, 30 Memorial Blvd., Newport 401.849.6312 Wednesday, 7-10 PM Live Jazz.

Tarragon Bar, 311 Westminster St., Providence RI. Blues and jazz Sundays, 7:30 PM. No cover.

Parlour Bar, 1119 N. Main Street, Providence, RI. Live Rock & Roots Music. 401.383.5858.

The Pub on Park, 661 Park Ave., Cranston RI. Vintage R&B Ensemble, call for featured bands. 401.781.8888

The Revolution, 2190 Broad Street, Cranston, RI. 401.780.8700. "Excellent Food + Good Music = Fun", Check their schedule for Blues greats.

RIRBPS Membership / Sponsor Application

Name: _____
Company/Organization: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Membership Types / Dues

Student	\$ 5/year
Individual/Musician	\$15/year
Couple	\$25/year
Non Profit	\$50/year
Venue/Club	\$75/year
Corporation	\$100/year

Payable to RIRBPS & mail to:

Sylvia Whiting, Treasurer
24 Jennifer Lane, Stoughton, MA 02072
857.222.1785 / sylmax99@yahoo.com

Payable on-line @ www.bluespreservationsociety.org.

Membership renewal year runs from June 1 to May 31.

Advertising Prices for Newsletter &/or Website: Business Card \$25 (2x3.5) ¼ Page \$50 (4.5 x 5.5) Half Page \$75 (5x8)
Full Page \$150 (8x11). All Ads require camera ready jpeg file.

Sponsor Flyers: Members only, 1st time free – You Print – We Attach (inserted if mailed).

Instrument played: _____

Membership	\$ _____
Voluntary Donation	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Volunteer Information (optional):

In addition to supporting RIRBPS with my Membership, I would like to volunteer in the following way:

Volunteer Opportunities

Your support is valuable to us in many areas. Here are some ways you may help:

- Promotion and advertising
- Bookkeeping and banking
- Social media coordination (website, twitter, etc.)
- Producing and staging shows
- Coordinating and compiling our history projects

Our needs have grown along with our organization and we could really use your help. We are easy to work with; we have a lot of fun; and we serve our community. Now, you can't beat that. Please contact us at your earliest convenience.