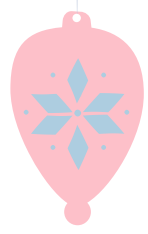
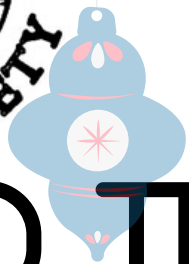


BluesLetter December 2019



# B L U E S

CHARLOTTE BLUES SOCIETY

# CHRISTMAS

E X T R A V A G A N Z A



SUNDAY DECEMBER 1, 2019

# THE THERMA TONES

THE RABBIT HOLE  
1801 COMMONWEALTH AVE CLT

[www.CharlotteBluesSociety.org](http://www.CharlotteBluesSociety.org)

# Blues Christmas Extravaganza

Blues musing from The President ~ Mary London Szpara



Well it's that time of the year again...  
time to wish you a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Kwanza  
and Time for Members, Guests and Friends to gather and celebrate our  
Charlotte Blues Society Annual Blues Christmas Extravaganza

And this year, we are excited to bring back one of the regional favorites from the past: **The Therma Tones**. The ThermaTones preach the "gospel of blues" with a vengeance. Guitarist Jared Stamey's menacing guitar work blows away the most critical crowds. He shares the front line with the spirited vocal testaments and hellacious harp of "Fat Mike" Berrier. We have not seen them perform since the days of the Double Door, so come to The Rabbit Hole in Charlotte. Sunday December 1 and celebrate the blues with some old friends.

Playing a blend of Texas and Delta Blues from the traditional styles of Mississippi Delta Blues (Robert Johnson) to Chicago Blues (Howlin' Wolf and Muddy Waters) and to the Texas guitar-slinger sounds of Billy Gibbons, Johnny Winter, and of course Stevie Ray Vaughan, the Therma Tones are fun and the perfect holiday party band.

We will be drawing the winner of the Candy Apple Red Fender Strat Squier that was donated by our good friend and board member, the late Ray Otstott last December. Since then it has gathered signatures of some high profile blues artists, including Robert Cray, Mike Zito, Eric Gales, Kenny Neal, Marcus King, Gary Hoey, Albert Castiglia, Geoff Achison, Samantha Fish, Ana Popovic, just to name a few. The drawing will be done LIVE on Facebook at 9:30 pm. If you have already purchased a ticket, good luck, if you have not yet purchased a ticket, there are still some available prior to drawing.

We had an outstanding Blues Sunday on November 3 with our featured artist **Crank Sinatra**. They will be representing us in the Youth Showcase in Memphis in January and they impressed the crowd with their abilities. Our resident blues expert, board member, contributor to the newsletter, and published writer for various blues magazines, **Marty Gunther**, has contributed a really good piece on the band following their November performance in this month's newsletter, "**Crank Sinatra, Keeper of the blues flame**". Check it out

It's our final push for **Loaves and Fishes** this month! We are on target to go over our one ton goal this year, and encourage everyone to bring non-perishable food items to this month's meeting. It is especially important this month, as the long holiday break from Christmas through New Years will have kids out of school and the meals that usually sustain them through the week, will now be absent. Please help feed the at risk children our area. Thank you.

You may have noticed that we have been successful in bringing you outstanding talent at every event. As a CBS Member, you have the privilege of attending at least 8 shows a year at *no charge*. We have already booked some of our talent for 2020. Our **On-line Calendar** will keep you updated on artists for our Blues Sunday Events.

If you have not renewed your membership to **Charlotte Blues Society**, or if you do not currently have a valid membership, I highly recommend you do so soon! *We will have special promotions for members only on select upcoming shows. These shows will be priced higher than in the past, but still the best entertainment value in town. Non-member prices will increase from \$5 to \$10 on most events. Some shows will be priced higher. By the way, we have not raised our membership fees in over 12 years.*

Our **April 5th** 27th Anniversary event will feature the incredibly talented **Vanessa Collier**. You may have seen her in 2017 at Whitewater Center, or this past November at Amos' for the Intrepid Artists 25th anniversary bash. Oh, and she also won a **BMA** earlier this year for Best Blues Instrumentalist/Horn. She plays a mean alto sax, guitar, keys, and can sing..no she can SANG! There will be a **members only pre-sale** announced Dec.15th. Membership will entitle you to early ticket sales. This is not a free show. Pricing at the door day of show will be higher if tickets are still available

Additionally our **May 3rd** show will feature **Grammy** nominated artist **Jontavious Willis!** That show will also have **members only pre-sale** for this *seated event*. If you saw him open for **Keb' Mo'**, you already know you will be in for a real treat. We expect both events to sell out, so make sure you keep an eye on your emails for pre-sale information! Please note: this is not a Free event, but there will be special opportunities for members.

Non-member prices will increase in 2020 from \$5 to \$10 for most events.

Included in this newsletter are show announcements to help you "Save the Date".

CHAD ANDREW HARRIS  
AND  
THE BLUE HERONS  
Memphis Bound!  
Representing  
Charlotte Blues Society  
Band Challenge

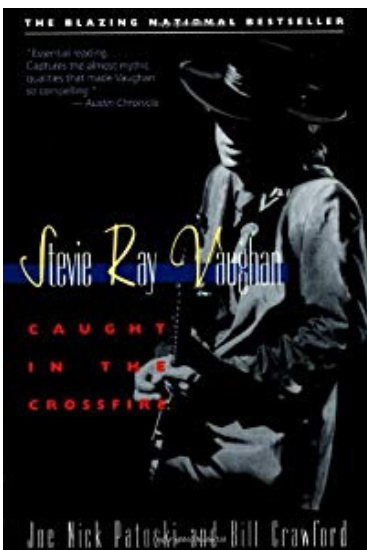
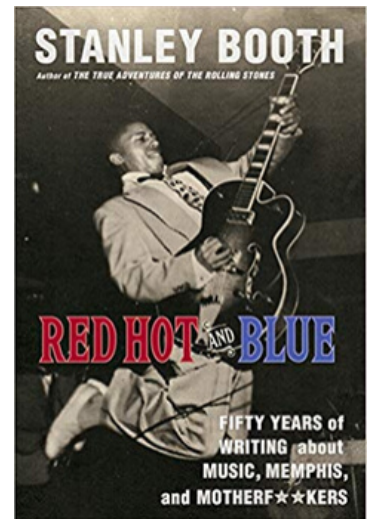
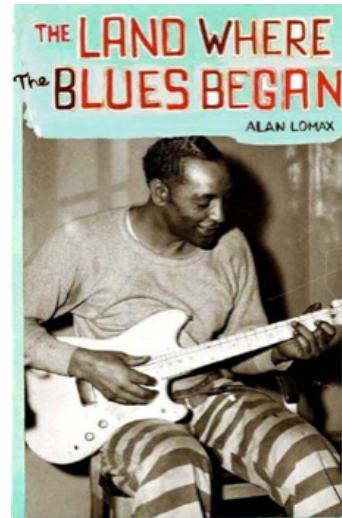
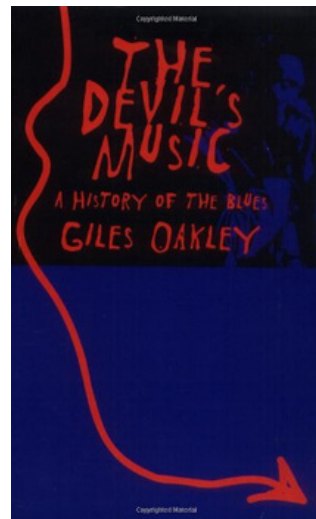
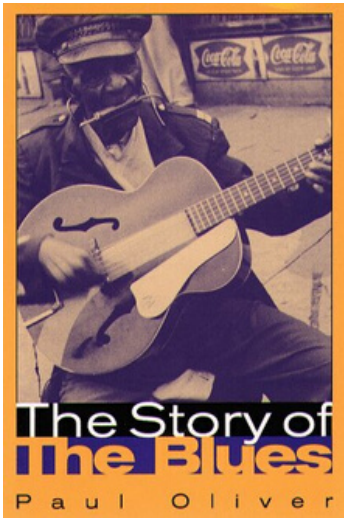


CRANK  
SINATRA  
Memphis Bound!  
Representing  
Charlotte Blues Society  
Youth Group Category



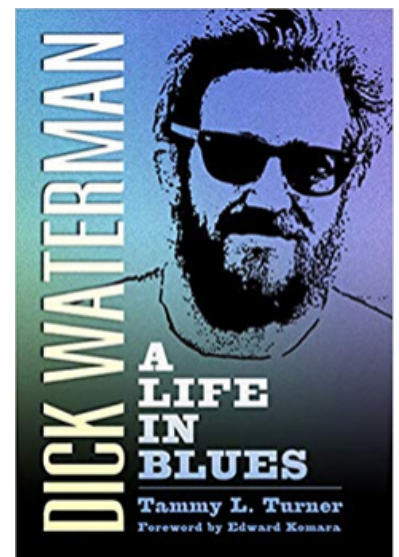
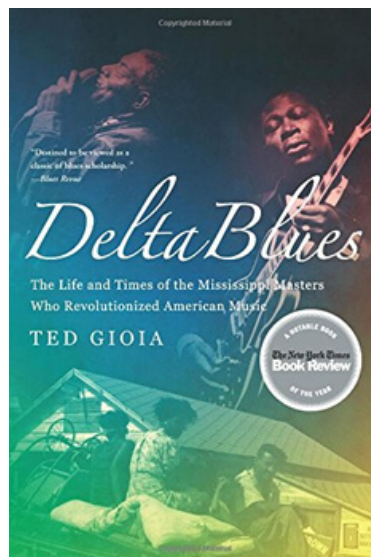
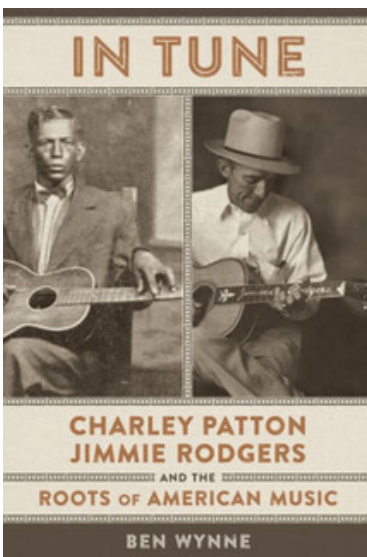
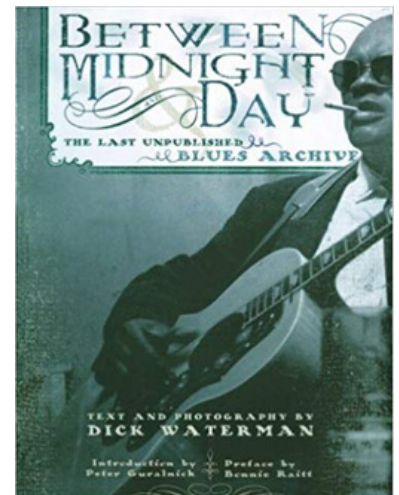
**THIS HOLIDAY, CUDDLE UP ON A COLD WINTER NIGHT...**

**WITH A BOOK.**



**The reading of all good books is like a conversation with the finest minds of past centuries.**

—Rene Descartes





**hot,  
smooth,  
tasty  
& sometimes  
nasty**  
**WE SPEAK BLUES HERE**



**special  
band  
membership  
pricing  
& benefits**  
**WE SUPPORT MUSICIANS HERE**

**LIST YOUR BLUES GIGS ON OUR MUSIC CALENDAR**

- \*SEND US **ONE** EMAIL PER MONTH WITH YOUR GIG INFO.
- \*INCLUDE: DAY/DATE/TIME/LOCATION/ ADDRESS/ FOR EACH PERFORMANCE
- \*EACH ACT IS LIMITED TO **ONE** EMAIL PER MONTH TO PREVENT CLOGGING OUR SYSTEM
- \*DEADLINE: 20TH OF EACH MONTH.

**HELP US HELP PROMOTE YOU! DO NOT SEND US LINKS TO YOUR WEBSITE'S DATES. OUR STAFF IS ALL VOLUNTEER AND WILL ONLY ENTER WHAT WE RECEIVE BY DEADLINE**

**EMAIL: CLTBLEUSSOCIETY@GMAIL.COM**

**WE SUPPORT ALL BLUES GENRE AND MUSICIANS CHARLOTTE BLUES SOCIETY OFFERS ALL BANDS A SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP.  
\$40 PER YEAR FOR 4 MEMBERS / \$10 EACH ADDITIONAL MEMBER**

**RENEW OR JOIN TODAY CHARLOTTEBLUESSOCIETY.ORG**

**MUSICIANS/BANDS WITH CBS MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:**

- \*FREE ADMISSION TO MINIMUM 9 CBS BLUES SUNDAYS
- \*FREE ADMISSION TO BLUES SUNDAY JAMS
- \*FREE GIG LISTING ON CBS ONLINE MUSIC CALENDAR
- \*DISCOUNTS TO MEMBERS FROM PARTICIPATING PARTNERS
- \*SPECIAL PROMOTIONAL EVENTS FOR MEMBERS



**10% Discount on Food**  
*at The Rabbit Hole*  
**every CBS Blues Sunday**  
*with valid CBS Membership*



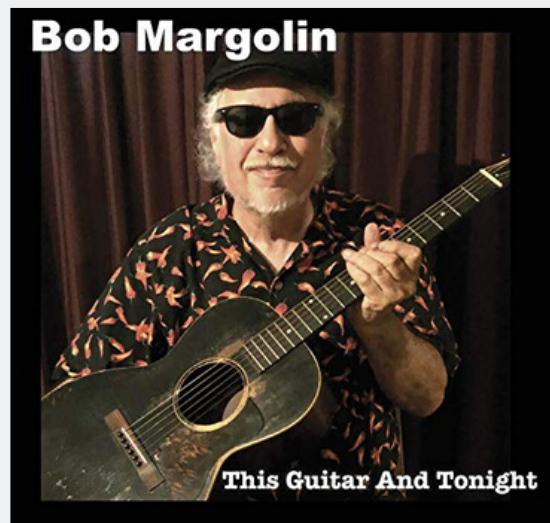
## Rick Estrin & The Nightcats – Contemporary

(Alligator Records ALCD 4996)

[www.rickestrin.com](http://www.rickestrin.com)

Anyone who's ever spent time listening to Rick Estrin and his band of melodious merrymakers since their debut in 1987 knows they always deliver tunes that reflect modern sentiments with a great deal of insight and humor. But he and The Nightcats put it in overdrive for this release, their 15th title in their Alligator catalog.

Continuing on the path established when Little Charlie Baty was leading the band, it's a tongue-in-cheek effort to break through the glass ceiling in the world of mainstream music, and it works on all counts as the quartet – Estrin, Kid Andersen, Lorenzo Farrell and new percussionist Derreck "D-Mar" Martin -- stretches its comfort zone to include new, no-holds-barred numbers that incorporate elements more familiar to hip-hop and other art forms while delivering cutting-edge blues throughout. This album is loaded with treasures. Be sure to check out "I'm Running," an unsettling description of being chased by Father Time, "Resentment File," Rick's advice for men to treat their women better, the title tune "Contemporary," "Root of All Evil," a humorous take on poverty, and "The Main Event," in which Estrin speculates about his own demise. And, while you're at it, be sure to check out the video for the title cut. It's a laugh riot!



## Bob Margolin – This Guitar and Tonight

(VizzTone Label Group VT-SRR004)

[www.bobmargolin.com](http://www.bobmargolin.com)

North Carolina-based Bob Margolin has been a vital member of the blues community since Muddy Waters hired him as his second guitarist in the early '70s, but this is his first acoustic, solo effort ever since launching his own career in 1980.

Like the concept itself, this is a throwback effort with Bob alone with his six-string except for one-cut guest appearances from former Conan bandleader/guitar virtuoso Jimmy Vivino, with whom he occasionally tours, and harmonica master Bob Corritore. The sound gives off the feel of a home concert -- warm, personal and unadorned with gimmickry -- as he delivers a set of nine intimate originals.

The title cut with Vivino, "This Guitar and Tonight," quickly sets the stage for what's to come. Be sure to tune in to the minor-key "Evil Walks in Our World," a not-so-subtle view of current world events, the dazzling "Dancers Boogie," "Blues Lover," which describes a lady partying at Corritore's long-running nightclub, the Rhythm Room in Phoenix, Ariz., and the ballad "I Can't Take These Blues Away." A true old-school pleaser

## Zack Walther Band – The Westerner

(Self-produced CD)

[www.zackwaltherband.com](http://www.zackwaltherband.com)

Based out of New Braunfels, Texas, where he was mentored by Rodney Crowell, Zach Walther is a powerful, roots-based singer and guitarist who fuses blues, R&B, country and rock into this package of original barn burners delivered atop a driving beat.

Primarily a potent power trio, they deliver a set in which the blues bubbles beneath the surface throughout with helping hands from a horn section and Lone Star State heavyweights -- guitarist David Grissom (John Mellencamp, Joe Ely) and lap steel player Jeff Plankenhorn (Jennifer Warnes, Ray Wylie Hubbard) -- too.

The album powers out of the gate with "DFW" and drives steadily forward throughout. Be sure to tune into "What Kind of Man," "When the Show Comes to Town," "Bad Girl" and "Bailey's Light," one of three tunes culled from a previous EP.





## Various Artists – Bea & Baby Records Definitive Collection

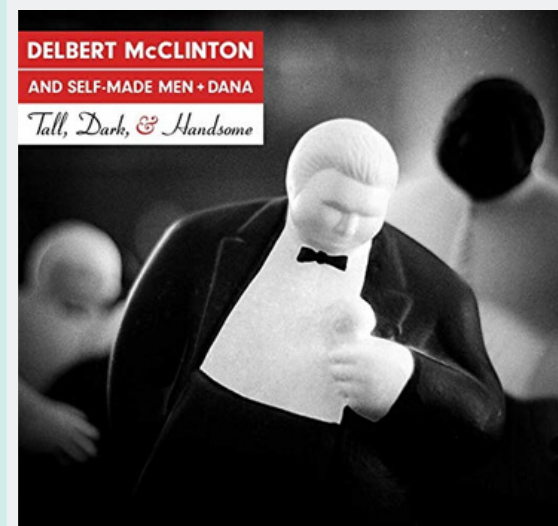
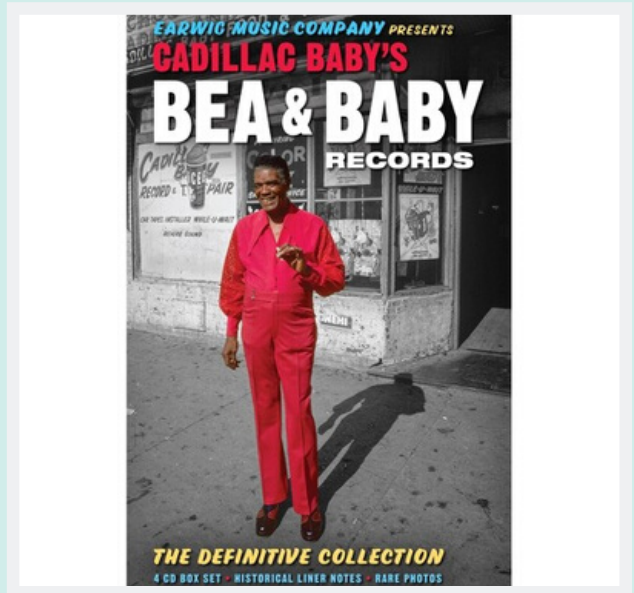
(Earwig Music Company B&B CD4975)

[www.earwigmusic.com](http://www.earwigmusic.com)

Looking for that perfect, albeit pricy, gift for an old-school blues lover? Check out this stunning, four-CD collection. Bea & Baby was a minor label in Chicago operated by Narvel "Cadillac Baby" Eatman, a hustler and entrepreneur who released an impressive catalog of blues, R&B, gospel, doo-wop, proto rap and comedy records between 1959 and 1989.

Lovingly assembled with Cadillac Baby's blessings by Earwig honcho Michael Frank, this stellar set features 101 cuts on four CDs accompanied by 128 pages of background information – all contained within hardback book binding. And interview segments with Baby himself are treasures, too.

Although you might be new to the label, the lineup is chockful of name artists, including Homesick James, Sunnyland Slim, Detroit Junior, Little Mack Simmons, Eddie Boyd, Hammie Nixon, Sleepy John Estes, Earl Hooker, Hound Dog Taylor, Lee Jackson and L.C. McKinley as well as many other minor Windy City favorites. Essential listening and a great read, too!



## Delbert McClinton and Self-Made Men + Dana – Tall, Dark, & Handsome

(Hot Shot Records)

[www.delbert.com](http://www.delbert.com)

Fresh off his 79th birthday, Delbert McClinton swings from the jump with this pleaser – a continuation of his 2016 release, *Prick of the Litter*, which blended straight-ahead Texas blues, jazz and roots. Recorded at longtime keyboard player Kevin McKendree's Rock House studio in Franklin, Tenn., it's an all-original, 14-cut set that delivers a whimsical look at love, life, hard luck and loose women.

A five-piece horn section fronted by sax player Dana Robbins provide the perfect support for Delbert's stylish, slightly raspy voice and single-note six-string fret work. The traditional jump blues "Mr. Smith" opens the action before "If I Hock My Guitar" takes listeners on a trip to the swamp.

The highlights come hot and heavy all the way through, but be sure to catch the acoustic "No Chicken on the Bone," the blues shuffle "Can't Get Up" and the New Orleans tinged "A Fool Like Me."

Long" and the Ozark Mountain Daredevils' "If You Wanna Get to Heaven."

## Johnny Burgin – Live

(Delmark Records DE-858)

[www.rockinjohnnyburgin.com](http://www.rockinjohnnyburgin.com)

A longtime fixture in Chicago, where he delivered true West Side blues in the company of Tail Dragger and Jimmy Burns, Rockin' Johnny Burgin has been touring the world regularly since relocating to the West Coast. A guitarist and vocalist of the first order, he calls out the big guns for this 68-minute set, which was captured live at Redwood Café in Cotati, Calif.

The stellar lineup includes Kid Andersen on guitar and piano, Aki Kumar and Charlie Musselwhite on harp and guest appearances by sax player extraordinaire Nancy Wright and Portland, Ore.-based Rae Gordon, who handles vocals on four cuts. If you're a lover of Windy City blues, this CD is as comfortable as a pair of well-worn shoes.

Burgin swings for the fences from the opening bars of "You Got to Make a Change" before taking it to the basement for the searing six-string pleaser "Can't Make It Blues." Other highlights include "Late Night Date Night," co-penned with Gordon, the rock-steady shuffle "She Gave Me the Slip," and "Blues Falling" and "When the Bluesman Comes to Town," both featuring Musselwhite.



# RED HOT & BLUES REVIEWS

By Marty Gunther

## Toronz Cannon – The Preacher, the Politician or the Pimp

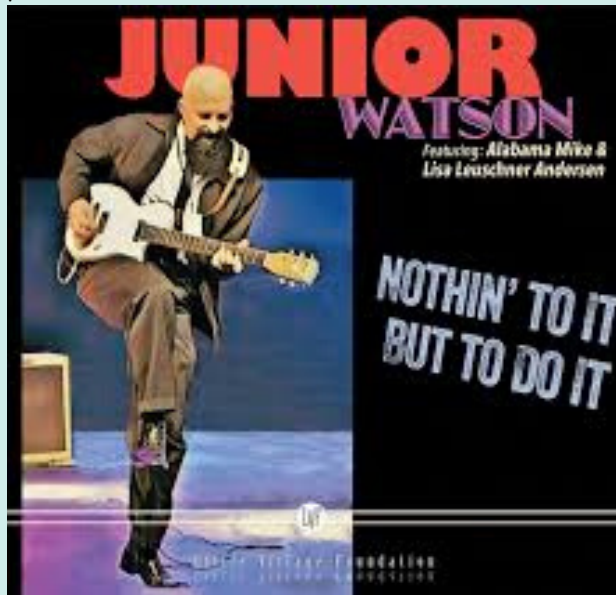
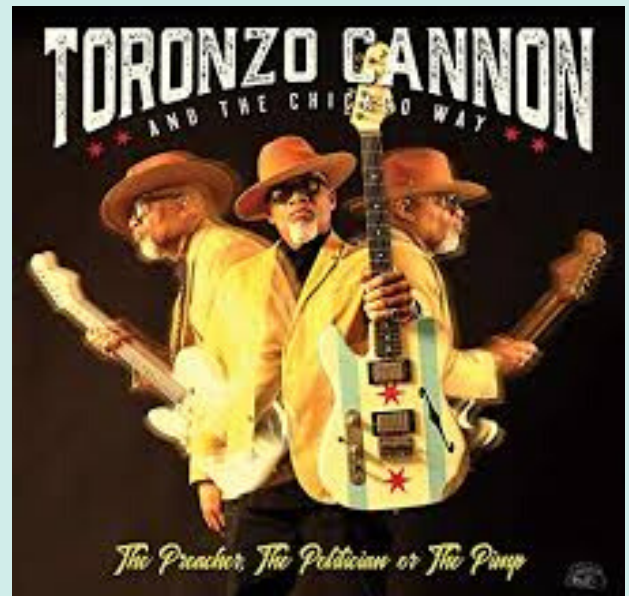
(Alligator Records ALCD 4995)

[www.toronzocannon.com](http://www.toronzocannon.com)

No bluesman has a better view of the inner workings of the Windy City than Toronz Cannon, who's a searing guitarist and imposing vocalist by night and a Chicago Transit Authority bus driver by day. Since debuting in 2007, he's consistently delivered deeply insightful, intimate musical statements about life in the inner city, celebrating the good and picking at the scabs of the bad for all the world to see.

Those messages come through loud and clear here in his best set of original tunes yet. Billy Branch, Joanna Connor, Lynne Jordan and Nora Jean make guest appearances – backed by The Chicago Way, Toronz's regular, veteran unit: Roosevelt Purifoy (keys), Pooky Styx (drums) and Marvin Little (bass).

The album opens with a plea for unity in "Get Together or Get Apart" and draws similarities among the seemingly different "The Preacher, the Politician or the Pimp." Pay attention to his views on "Insurance," enjoy a chuckle with "Stop Me When I'm Lying" and pay heed to his Martin Luther King-inspired "The Silence of My Friends," which speaks out against social injustice. Strongly recommended.



## Junior Watson – Nothin' to It But to Do It

(Little Village Foundation LVF 1033)

[www.juniorwatson.com](http://www.juniorwatson.com)

One of the top guitarists in the world for four decades, Junior Watson's credits as a sideman are legendary, backing everyone from Canned Heat and Rod Piazza to Charlie Musselwhite and Smokey Wilson. But he makes a rare appearance as a band leader on this disc, his first solo effort in eight years.

This stellar release delivers a combination of straight-ahead West Coast blues and jump, alternating several dazzling instrumentals, singing lead on two of the 15 songs and getting a vocal assist from Bay Area powerhouses Lisa Lueschner Andersen and Alabama Mike, Grammy winner Jim Pugh on keys and Gary Smith on harp. It's co-produced by Kid Andersen, who adds various instrumentation throughout.

If your tastes run toward crisp, clean, single-note fretwork and vocals that match, you'll love this one. Be sure to tune in to "Up and Down," an interesting take on Duke Ellington's "Ska-Ra-Van," Jerry Garcia's "Summer of Love," "I Found You" featuring Leuschner, the original "Shot in the Dark" featuring Alabama Mike and "The Pee Wee Classic," a tribute to legendary guitarist Pee Wee Clayton.

## The Paul DesLauriers Band – Bounce

(Bros Records/VizzTone Label Group VT-BROS11901)

[www.pauldeslauriersband.com](http://www.pauldeslauriersband.com)

Paul DesLauriers and his three-piece group of blues rockers have been pretty quiet since their most recent previous CD, Relentless, captured entertainer, electric band, bassist and percussionist of the year at the 2017 Maple Blues Awards. But fans of the Montreal-based band can rejoice because this super-tight album picks up where the last one left off.

An exceptionally gifted and inventive guitarist with a fiery delivery, DesLauriers is backed here by Maple honoree drummer Sam Harrison and bassist Greg Morency, who shares duties with Paul's longtime songwriting partner Alec McElcheran for a set of 11 originals and two covers. Former International Blues Challenge winner JP Soars makes a guest appearance on six-string.

The majority of the material here puts a positive spin on romance from different angles – no surprise since DesLauriers exchanged wedding vows with Houston songbird Annika Chambers close to the time this CD was released. Don't miss "It's All on You," "Let Me Go Down in Flames," "Take Me to the Brink," "Working My Way Back Home" and the ballad "Waiting on You." Blues rock at its finest!







## The Mike Duke Project – ...Took a While

(Little Village Foundation LVF 1032)

[www.littlevillagefoundation.com](http://www.littlevillagefoundation.com)

Here's one for all you shag lovers! Alabama-born Mike Duke has been one of the most in-demand musicians in the world for 45 years in a career that's included work as keyboard player for Wet Willie, The Outlaws and Delbert McClinton and as a songwriter who penned multiple hits for Huey Lewis & The News, including "Hope You Love Me Like You Say You Do," "Let Her Go and Start Over" and "Doin' It All for My Baby."

A warm tenor with an easy-going delivery, Duke makes his debut as a front man here backed by a lineup that includes appearances from Elvin Bishop, Angela Strehli, Jimmy Hall, Jim Pugh and Kid Andersen, who produced and remastered this all-original set of blues-flavored Southern rock that was recorded across four decades.

The original demo tracks of the three Lewis hits are included here along with 12 other originals that stand up extremely well considering their age. Among the other standout numbers are "Honey I Love You," "Let Me Be Your Fool Tonight," "That's What's So Good About the South" and "That's What She Does for Me."

recounts a conversation with a friend following a relationship that crashed and burned.

## Giles Robson – Don't Give Up on the Blues

(American Showplace Music ASM 7890)

[www.gilesrobson.com](http://www.gilesrobson.com)

One of the foremost harmonica players in the world, Giles Robson struck gold earlier this year, capturing a Blues Music Award for acoustic album of the year in partnership with Joe Louis Walker and Bruce Katz for Journeys to the Heart of the Blues, and follows it up with this all-electrified CD, which breathes fire from start to finish. A native of Jersey in the United Kingdom and only the third Brit to win a BMA – the others were Eric Clapton and Peter Green, he reunites with five-time BMA nominee as keyboard player of the year Katz, who produced, for this over-the-top collection of original, contemporary blues that comes across with a traditional feel throughout.

In harp parlance, Robson literally blows the back off it from the jump, ripping and running from "Land to Land" and the instant classic, "Don't Give Up on the Blues," to such pleasers as "Your Dirty Look & Your Sneaky Grin," "Hey, Hey Now!" and "Life, with All Its Charms." This one breathes fire throughout!



## Jason Ricci & the Bad Kind – My Chops Are Rolling!

(EllerSoul Records ELL1901)

[www.mooncat.org](http://www.mooncat.org)

Harmonica master Jason Ricci has never been shy about revealing his personal struggles in song, but fans should rejoice with the release of this album, which finds him residing in New Orleans and living a happier life as a married man.

A follow-up to Approved by Snakes, a brutally dark CD, this one's full of deep Crescent City grooves and subject matter that's far more upbeat than anything he's done before. A two-time Blues Music Association harp player of the year, he delivers a collection of eight originals and two covers backed by his regular band, which gets a boost from his bride, Kaitlin Dibble, who handles lead on one cut and backing vocals throughout.

The opener, "Break in the Rain," which was penned by guitarist John Lisi, sets the mood before things kick into high gear on "Don't Badger the Witness." A little darkness creeps in with "F\_ck the Falcons," a profanity filled statement about Ricci's beloved Saints losing the Super Bowl. Jason's harp has never sounded better on "Sleeping on Biscuits," "The Way I Hurt Myself" and "Who Dat Nation," a G-rated version of the gridiron groaner.



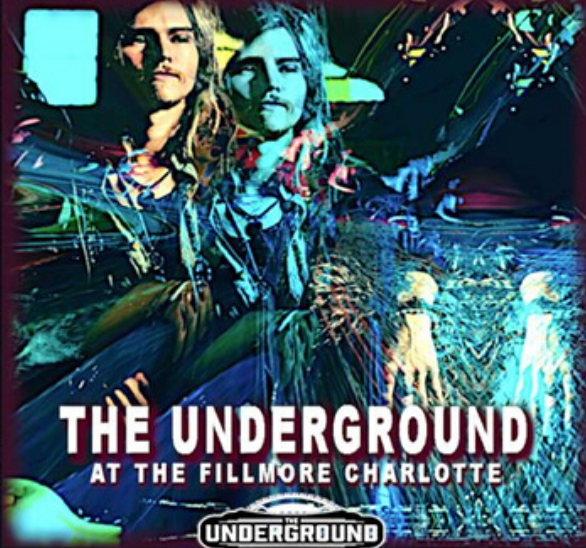
**MARTY GUNTHER HAS LIVED A BLESSED LIFE WHERE THE BLUES IS CONCERNED. A NATIVE RHODE ISLANDER NOW BASED IN CHARLOTTE AND APP STATE ALUM, HIS FIRST EXPERIENCES WITH LIVE MUSIC CAME AT THE FEET OF FIRST-GENERATION BLUES LEGENDS AT THE NEWPORT FOLK FESTIVALS IN THE 1960S. A PROFESSIONAL JOURNALIST AND HARMONICA PLAYER WHOSE WORK APPEARS IN BLUES BLAST MAGAZINE AND OTHER OUTLETS, HE WAS A LONGTIME MEMBER OF THE CHICAGO BLUES COMMUNITY BEFORE FOUNDING THE NUCKLEBUSTERS, A BAND THAT'S BEEN ENTERTAINING SOUTH FLORIDA SINCE 1987. MARTY IS ALSO A MEMBER OF CHARLOTTE BLUES SOCIETY AND ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF CBS.**



**JAKE HALDENVANG**

ARTIST ON SEASON 17 OF  
**THE VOICE**

**SATURDAY ~ Dec 21 8pm**  
Comes Home to Charlotte



All The Songs You Wanted to Hear

**THE WALBOURNES**

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THROUGH  
APRIL**

820 HAMILTON ST, CHARLOTTE, NC  
ALL AGES / DOORS 7PM / SHOW 8PM

**LIVE NATION**  
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**REPRESENTING CBS IN THE  
BAND COMPETITION:**

**CHAD ANDREW HARRIS  
AND  
THE BLUE HERONS**



**REPRESENTING CBS IN THE  
YOUTH SHOWCASE:**

**CRANK SINATRA**



**INTERNATIONAL**

**Blues**  
**CHALLENGE**



**THE BLUES  
FOUNDATION**

**JANUARY 28 - FEBRUARY 1**  
BEALE STREET 2020 / [BLUES.ORG](http://BLUES.ORG)



## **Crank Sinatra: Keepers of the blue flame!**

When **Crank Sinatra** took the stage for **Charlotte Blues Society's** regular November meeting at **The Rabbit Hole**, they proved beyond a doubt why they'll shine like the stars they're going to be at the **International Blues Challenge Youth Showcase** in Memphis.

Sponsored by **The Blues Foundation**, the IBCs will take place at multiple venues along Beale Street on Jan. 28 through Feb. 1, 2020. And the Youth Showcase is scheduled to take place at **the Hard Rock Café** on the afternoon of **Friday, Jan. 31**.

Musicians from around the world – all of whom are under age 21 – will take the stage that day and put the future of the blues on display, playing to a room full of music journalists, talent scouts, family and fans in what's become both one of the most popular events of the week and the opening act for the IBC semi-finals, which will take place at the same site later in the day.

Crank Sinatra has been diligently working on their craft since 2017, when the three founding members – bassist **Luke Tracy**, guitarist/vocalist/keyboard player **Alex Macri** and drummer/vocalist **Trey Tarzia** – formed a friendship at **Rock University**, the after-school program based in Concord, and Luke suggested they form a band to play at his aunt's 50th birthday party, during which they mixed a set of classic rock as well as Stevie Wonder's "Superstition," The Police's "Message in a Bottle" and Chuck Berry's "Johnny B. Goode."

All three young men showed early promise.

Now attending **Central Cabarrus High School**, Luke picked up the bass for the first time at age nine after studying piano at age five. And both Alex, who's now enrolled at Virginia Tech, and Trey, a multi-instrumentalist who can double on guitar, bass and keys and attends **Jay M. Robinson High School** in Concord, also showed interest in playing music shortly after they learned how to walk. Both Luke and Trey are still just 14 years old.

The trio have been working together ever since, playing an interesting combination of blues and improvisational jazz as their skills improved, and appearing before increasingly larger crowds at venues that include **Freedom Park, The Broken Spoke, Armored Cow Brewing** and **The Rabbit Hole** in Charlotte as well as several other locales in the region.

Their sound changed dramatically with the addition of trombonist **Matthew Seeley** and sax player **Greg Rubidge** in the past year or so – both of whom were attending Charlotte's **Northwest School of the Arts** when Alex was also a fellow student. Now attending **Myers Park High**, Greg's also a member of **Sound Syndicate**, another Queen City band with a strong following.

Despite appearing at **The Rabbit Hole** the same night the **Allman Betts Band, Joanne Shaw Taylor** and **Jackson Stokes** were playing **the Neighborhood Theater**, **Crank Sinatra** held their own, drawing one of the better, most enthusiastic crowds that have attended a CBS event all year.



The band displayed talent far beyond their years from the jump, playing a powerful 100-minute set that included tips of the hat to several blues superstars, including **B.B. King** and Alex's favorite, **Buddy Guy**. Their song selection showed they take the music seriously because it included several solid, but lesser known covers as well as new arrangements of a few classics, concluding with a spectacular, extended reinvention of **Humble Pie's** "I Don't Need No Doctor."

Crank Sinatra's stage presence was exceptional with tight arrangements and skilled solos throughout. And the space between their songs was skintight – unlike many professional groups that seemingly can't decide what to play next. These young men had a set list and stuck to it.

Like all young bands, however, there's still room for improvement.

As someone who's been around the music business for better than 50 years, I truly enjoy what these gentlemen are all about. And the three suggestions that follow are not meant as criticism, but solely as advice as they move forward.

First, while the intros to all of your material were rock-solid, the outros occasionally trailed off weakly and could use improvement.

Second, there are some old blues warhorses – "Sweet Home Chicago" and others – that have been played to death and come off as tired no matter how good the band.

While that song wasn't in the set, the band took a big leap of faith by reinventing T-Bone Walker's "Stormy Monday Blues." Unfortunately, not only did it not work, but it was the low point of what was a spectacular set, and it would be best not to include it going forward.

And, finally, when Crank Sinatra hits the big stage in Memphis, the one thing that will set it apart from the crowd is to establish a "look" that will make them stand out. It's no secret that many bands today dress the same way on stage as they do at home.

When this writer was playing music, a wise mentor taught me early to dress differently from the crowd.

When **Mr. Sipp** won the IBCs a few years ago, he and his band adopted a "look": matching pants, Superman T-shirts and Urkle-like black-framed, lens-less eyeglasses. As corny as that was – and despite only knowing a handful of blues songs because they came from a gospel background, they walked away with top honors.

Competing at that scale remains in the future for Crank Sinatra, but it's never too early to plan ahead. These guys are already winners!

Catch them one more time before they head to Memphis. They'll be appearing at the Jan. 5 CBS meeting at The Rabbit Hole along with this year's Charlotte IBC representatives, **Chad Andrew Harris & The Blue Herons**. C'mon out and give both bands a big send-off. They deserve it!

-- Marty Gunther





# THE PARTY OF A QUARTER CENTURY



THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN  
THE BLUES COME TO TOWN



SO BIG IT NEEDED  
TWO NIGHTS





# BLUES CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA

FREE to members Donation requested  
\$10 non-members

## Sunday Dec 1, 2019



## The Therma Tones

Drawing for the Candy Apple Red Fender Squier Strat will be held live on FaceBook  
You can still buy raffle tix night of the event  
Cool raffle packages all night

Doors: 7pm

Band: 8-9:30pm

Open Blues Jam: 9:30-11PM

The Rabbit Hole  
1801 Commonwealth Ave

Charlotte NC

Special menu at The Rabbit Hole for this event

**Albert Cummings**  
9pm show  
Dec 5  
2019  
Free Range Brewing  
2320 N Davidson  
St. Charlotte, NC, 28205

A photograph of Albert Cummings playing an electric guitar on stage. He is wearing a white t-shirt with a black graphic.

**TAR BENOIT**  
WED. DEC 11  
Neighborhood Theater

A photograph of Tar Benoit playing an electric guitar on stage. He is wearing a blue shirt.

December 7 2019

**TOCO  
MUSIC  
HOLIDAY  
PARTY**  
MCGLOHON THEATER  
AT SPIRIT SQUARE

Neighborhood Theatre  
511 E 36th Street Charlotte, NC, 28205

SUNDAY DECEMBER 15, 2019  
**the DOUBLE DOOR Inn**  
ANNIVERSARY REUNION PARTY

with  
Lenny Federal Band  
Monday Night Allstars  
&  
Crisis



**Memphis Send Off**  
**CBS Blues Sunday**  
**January 3, 2020**  
**Chad Andrew Harris**  
**& Crank Sinatra**  
Doors: 6PM Show: 7PM  
followed by open Jam  
FREE to Current members/\$10 Non  
**The Rabbit Hole**  
1801 Commonwealth Ave, Charlotte

**DAVID BROMBERG**  
JANUARY 11  
8PM SHOW  
**BOOTH PLAYHOUSE**  
130 N TRYON ST, CHARLOTTE, NC

**ALBERT LEE**  
JAN 13, 2020  
**BOOTH PLAYHOUSE**  
130 NORTH TRYON ST CHARLOTTE

*January 15, 2020*

**CHRIS SMITHER**

**Stage Door Theater**  
155 N College St, Charlotte, NC



*Event Calendar  
Keep Up with  
the shows  
online*

Memphis Send Off

**CBS Blues Sunday**

**January 3, 2020**

**Chad Andrew Harris**

**& Crank Sinatra**

Doors: 6PM Show: 7PM

followed by open Jam

FREE to Current members/\$10 Non

**The Rabbit Hole**

1801 Commonwealth Ave, Charlotte



CHARLOTTE BLUES SOCIETY WELCOMES THE RETURN OF

**THE CHRIS O'LEARY BAND**

**BLUES SUNDAY FEBRUARY 9, 2020**



THE RABBIT HOLE

1801 COMMONWEALTH AVE CHARLOTTE NC

Events you  
DON'T  
want to miss

Charlotte Blues Society Blues Sunday

**March 1, 2020**

**WANNA JAM?**

Doors: 6pm

7:pm **The Instigators**



Jam begins: 8pm

Drums provided

Bring your amps and gear.

The Rabbit Hole 1801 Commonwealth Ave. Charlotte

You Asked for it  
You Got it!

The Blues Jam  
Night Returns



Our 27th Anniversary Celebration  
will continue to prove 2020  
will be our best year of live blues ever!

**CHARLOTTE BLUES SOCIETY**  
**PRESENTS**

**VANESSA**  
**COLLIER**

**CBS** **27th Anniversary Bash**  
Special Pre-Sale for Members TBA

**BLUES SUNDAY APRIL 5**  
The Rabbit Hole 1801 Commonwealth Ave. Charlotte NC

**Become a Member and get best seats first!**



**Seated Event. Pre-sale for Members only to be announced Jan. 15 Watch for email.**

**May 3, 2020 Charlotte Blues Society Presents a Very Special Evening with**

*2020 Grammy Nominee Best Traditional Blues Album*

**Jontavious  
Willis**

Advance Membership tickets sales TBA

**The Rabbit Hole**

**1801 Commonwealth Ave. Charlotte, NC**

Charlotte Blues Society

Keeping the Blues Alive



WWW.CHARLOTTEBLUCESSOCIETY.ORG



SAVE THE DATES  
IN  
**2020**  
MORE TO COME

NEW SHOW TIME IN 2020  
**6PM DOOR 7PM SHOW**  
SHOWS WITH \* ARE FREE TO CURRENT MEMBERS  
\$10 NON MEMBERS

**JANUARY 5 \***

CHAD ANDREW HARRIS & THE BLUE HERONS  
+ CRANK SINATRA ~ MEMPHIS SEND OFF

**FEBRUARY 9 \***

THE RETURN OF  
THE CHRIS O'LEARY BAND

**MARCH 1 \***

CBS 1ST QUARTER OPEN BLUES JAM  
WITH THE INSTIGATORS

**APRIL 5**

CBS 27TH ANNIVERSARY BASH PRESENTS:  
VANESSA COLLIER (ADVANCE TICKETING THROUGH EVENTBRITE).

VALID CURRENT MEMBERS PRE-SALE TO BE ANNOUNCED DEC. 15

**MAY 3**

CBS PRESENTS A VERY SPECIAL NIGHT WITH  
JONTAVIOUS WILLIS (ADVANCE SEATING THROUGH EVENTBRITE).

VALID CURRENT MEMBERS PRE-SALE TO BE ANNOUNCED JAN. 15  
THIS IS A SEATED EVENT.

THE RABBIT HOLE

1801 COMMONWEALTH AVE, CHARLOTTE NC



## *Monday Memories*

CBS was founded in 1993

We've got a lot of history.  
Share your memories, photos, videos  
from the past with new members  
and old friends

## *Trippin' Tuesday*

Share upcoming Blues Festivals, Cruises.

Hit the road to events out of town.  
We support our fellow Blues Society Events:  
Let us know what you have coming up!

## *Hump Day Blues*

Post your favorite Blues Videos

Post your favorite Blues Photos  
What gets you over the hump(s) in life?  
Every Wednesday

## *Local Thursday*

Promoting LOCAL Blues Artists

Their websites, videos, events  
Here is your chance to self-promote!  
Duplicate posts will be deleted

## *Fresh Music Friday*

New Blues Music creations

New Blues Music releases.  
New Local, Regional, National, International  
Let's hear it, Share it, Mention it!



Find us on  
**Facebook**



Join our [Group](#) [Charlotte Blues Society](#) on  
Facebook or "like" our FB page  
"Charlotte Blues Society a/k/a CBS"  
Instagram & Twitter @CLTBluesSociety"



## *New Daily Themes*

Share & Interact Daily

~Blues Sunday ~ Monday Memories  
~Trippin' Tuesday ~Hump Day Blues  
~Local Thursday ~Fresh Music Friday  
~ Saturday Funnies

## *Saturday Funnies*

Weekend Upbeat: Make Us Laugh!

Post funny cartoons, memes, gifs, videos  
that are musician/blues/music related.  
A positive post for the weekend!

## *Blues Sunday*

CBS loves a good blues jam!

Sometimes we Jam at our Blues Sundays  
at The Rabbit Hole.

You will find that info here plus  
other Blues Jams for the upcoming week



# BLUES JAM GUIDELINES

Blues Jam Guidelines and Courtesies     Charlotte Blues Society Blues Jam.

You are participating in a tradition that is over 25 years in the making. The Charlotte Blues Society has consistently promoted a Blues Jam as part of its Blues Sunday. The Charlotte Blues Society's Blues Sunday occurs on the first Sunday of each month. The Blues Jams do not happen at every Blues Sunday. Always refer to [charlottebluessociety.org](http://charlottebluessociety.org) for details and schedules. We hope your experience will be inspiring and that your own musical abilities will be informed by these jams.

We offer the following guidelines to consider when signing on as a participating jammer:

**\*A practical suggestion, sign up early. On the sign-up sheet please list your instrument and/or ability that you wish to contribute to the Jam. While the Blues has a lot of variations, please be advised this is a Blues Jam. Please keep it real ladies and gentlemen.**

**\*Be respectful of any equipment that you use, backline and PA, treat it as your own or possibly better than your own. If you have a special amp, pedal or set-up that you need to use, remember guideline #1; Come early**

**"Bring your own gear including amp. Do not rely on there being enough amps on stage. If you happen to blow up an amp during a righteous jam, then make sure it is your own"**

**\*Keep track of your place on the sign-up sheet. It is not up to the Jam Master to track you down when your time to shine arrives.**

**\*Please be advised that you need to be tuned and ready BEFORE you get on stage. Additionally, if you are a guitarist that tunes down a half step, please note the House band will be tuned to standard 440. Two choices remain, either tune to 440 or make allowances in your choice of a chord voicing.**

**\*If you only hear yourself on stage, perhaps you are too loud. Likewise, if you hear everyone else, but not yourself; turn up.**

**\*Be respectful of your fellow musicians, no matter what their ability may be. Everyone usually starts at the same place.**

**\*In regards to soloing, again please be respectful of other musicians in the jam. For example, rhythm guitar is not just something to waste your time on while you wait for your next solo. One of the lessons of a Blues Jam is to learn how to be as apt an accompanist as you hope to be as a soloist. The Jam Master will be generous with solos, but be mindful of other musicians that may be waiting to jam.**

**\*Lastly, have fun. Also respect the traditions as well as the innovations of the Blues. Likewise, respect the Charlotte Blues Society and The Rabbit Hole for providing the space and equipment for you to jam.**

**We are fortunate to have an experienced blues man and great "Jam Master" in Michael Ingmire. Help him make it a great jam by following our guidelines. No matter what degree of experience you have, Michael will help make your first, and every jam, one that is fun and make you want to come back for more!**



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# Support our Partners



10% OFF FOOD ORDERS AT THE RABBIT HOLE, PECULIAR RABBIT & JACKALOPE JACKS WITH VALID MEMBERSHIPS ON BLUES SUNDAYS

## Great food available at every event



CHARLOTTE  
FOLK SOCIETY

# PARTNER

## Support Live Music



MUSIC  
EVERY  
WHERE



THE FILLMORE  
CHARLOTTE



THE JAZZ ROOM





# Final Words

*Remembering*

**ROBIN**

**ROGERS**

*June 17 1955-  
Dec 17, 2010*

Robin's Brick at in front of the Blues Museum Memphis, TN installation in progress



Thanks to all who bought raffle tickets.

Drawing for the winner of the Double Door commemorative plaque is Dec. 1 at our Blues Christmas Extravaganza at The Rabbit Hole.

The ThermoTones are featured artists.



Photo by Andrea Zucker