

Bluesletter

Washington Blues Society

May 2023



MICK JAGGER

WINTHROP R&B FESTIVAL
WHO'S ON THE LINEUP?

LEE OSKAR'S MICK JAGGER
HARMONICA LINE

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Hi Blues Fans,

This year is just racing by and so much cool music ahead of us this spring, summer, and fall! You will find ads for Sunbanks (Blues and Country Events), Winthrop, Gorge Blues & Brews, and the list just goes on. I hope that many of you are able to get out and have some fun at our many celebrations of music that are offered by the many

first-class events we have in the greater Pacific Northwest!

The Washington Blues Society will be featuring a lot of new merchandise in our booth at most of these festivals. I have ordered a new stock of our signature black shirts with the large WBS logo. The Embossed Flaming Guitar shirts will also be making a come back and a few other surprises too! Be sure to stop by the booth and check these new items out!

In this issue you will also find the International Blues Challenge instruction and entry forms for the Washington Blues Societies Semi-finals that are spread out across the state so that potential entrants can throw their hat in compete for a chance to go to Memphis Tennessee and show their talents in the Blues Foundation's International Blues Challenge. I highly recommend this for any band or solo/duo who want to explore this opportunity of a life time. I have seen this opportunity change musicians lives and open doors to many incredible opportunities.

Don't forget that the Washington Blues society is offering two different Blues Bashes a month now! We have our traditional Second Tuesday Bash at the Aurora Borealis. And our new fourth Tuesday Blues Bash out in Snohomish at the Collector's Choice in the Old Man Brewery room. This new event is growing in attendance and sending music fans home with big smiles on the faces and their toes tapping. Get out of the house and attend these fun monthly events, enjoy some good music and let someone else cook dinner! You may even go home with a new CD or tickets to a cool show at one of Seattle's many outstanding music venues from our free drawings at all of our Blues Bashes! Previews of each of these bashes are always available in the Bluesletter to help you in planning your adventures!

As always, I hope to see many of you out and about and be sure to stop by and say "Hi"



Tony Frederickson, President
Washington Blues Society
Member, Board of Directors, The Blues Foundation (2015-2017)



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In this issue we cover the new partnership between Washington's own harmonica master Lee Oskar and Rolling Stones frontman Mick Jagger on a line of Mick Jagger harmonicas. Oskar is not only a harmonica player who revolutionized the instrument with the band War and who is now manufacturer of the world's third-largest harmonica company, Lee Oskar Harmonicas; he is quite a nice guy.

Also we get a preview of concerts coming to the region in May, in Eric Steiner's Blues on the Road article.

A student writer from the University of Washington presents a piece on the progress of the Black and Tan Hall, a non-profit venue that celebrates the history of Seattle's Black and Tan Club. The historic club was a rare desegregated venue in the 1920s and was a premium location for blues and jazz through the 1960s.

In the new regular feature "Gospel in the Northwest" is a story on Sounds of the Northwest, a Seattle choir that is one of the few in the nation to do African-American music predating gospel. And in this issue we also have a preview of the impressive Winthrop Rhythm and Blues Festival lineup.

Above: Mavis Staples, featured performer at the 2023 Seattle Theatre Group Fundraiser on May 6, 2023 at Seattle's Paramount Theatre, DOORS 2023: Opening Doors to the Arts!
(Photo Courtesy of Red Light Management)

Cover: Lee Oskar (Graphic Art by Sean Donovan)

THE BLUESLETTER
MAY 2023 - Volume XXXIV, Number V

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(www.pacificpublishingcompany.com)

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JUNE DEADLINES

Ad Reservations	5PM on 5/5 to editor@wablues.org
Calendar	5PM on 5/10 online. Please submit @ www.wablues.org
Editorial	5PM on 5/5 to editor@wablues.org
Camera-Ready Ad Art	5PM on 5/12 to editor@wablues.org

Please Note: If the Editor receives enough editorial copy before the 5th, or camera-ready ads before the 10th, space may be filled and material may be saved for a future issue. Please send in contributions early!

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Please send articles and photos only as attachments. Please do not embed images or stories directly in emails and please do not send links.

Please only send attachments with each file titled with a unique file name instead of computer- or camera-supplied identifiers. All contributions not meeting these requirements will be returned for revisions by the contributor.

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SIZE	B/W	COLOR	HT x W in mm
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MISSION STATEMENT

The Washington Blues Society is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to promote, preserve, and advance the culture and tradition of blues music as an art form. Annual membership is \$25 for individuals, and \$35 for couples. The Washington Blues Society is a tax-exempt nonprofit organization and donations are tax-deductible. The Washington Blues Society is affiliated with The Blues Foundation in Memphis, Tennessee.. Our website is www.wablues.org.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



This is my third issue as editor, and I am slowly getting the hang of the software we use to lay the pages out. This month I laid out half the pages and am quite pleased with myself about it. This month I am also proud to announce that Sean "Gatorboy" Donovan, the graphic designer responsible for much of the art used on Winthrop Rhythm and Blues Festival materials, who also laid out the cover featuring Sugaray Rayford for the March

issue, has volunteered to lay out our covers going forward. He's an amazing guy, friendly and skilled and generous, and this publication is going to look incredible with his help.

Speaking of the cover, working on the cover story for this issue was a joy. I've had the pleasure of meeting harmonica legend Lee Oskar several times and every time was struck by his generosity of spirit. Once, while playing bass for the nonprofit United By Music North America, which makes music performance available to musicians with intellectual disabilities, I played bass behind Lee Oskar on a performance of his iconic War hit "Lowrider." You can believe I was nervous, but he was welcoming and complimentary.

So, when it came time to interview him for this issue, I was looking forward to a good conversation. Lee exceeded my expectations. Had I not known that he is one of his generation's most influential instrumentalists and the maker of one of the world's top-selling harmonicas, I would certainly not have guessed from his demeanor. He is self-effacing, interested in everyone and everything, and genuinely nice. We ended up talking for a couple of hours. A week later I received a package in the mail containing some harmonicas, stickers, and a copy of his album "Never Forget."

(As a side note, when one of the world's top harmonica players and manufacturers sends you a harmonica, it is clearly a nudge from the universe that you should learn to play harmonica, so I am practicing.)

This being a blues publication, we didn't review that album, which is a *mélange* of classical and world music. If I had reviewed it, I'd have run out of ink before I was done. The album is Lee's reflection on his lifetime of confronting his family's experience during the holocaust. Though the musical arrangements are quite sophisticated and incorporate a dazzling array of instruments, Lee's harmonica parts provide strong, clear melodies that remind me of Gershwin and Astor Piazzolla in their memorability. It's haunting music, tragic and hopeful at once.

For the record, I will forever be salty that it didn't get a Grammy nomination. It is the masterwork of one of music's greatest modern innovators on one of the world's most troubling themes. For people

like me who have eclectic musical taste I can't recommend that album highly enough.

The interview and the subsequent thoughtful package got me reflecting on being a performer. I have often thought that being a performer provides me with a handful of glitter for the day. I know what it's like to approach someone whose music I like to pay my compliments. It's a vulnerable moment. So, when I am fortunate enough to be approached in that capacity, I have an opportunity to glitter that person. I can focus, see that person, listen, engage, and leave that person affirmed and happy. Lee, of course, is orders of magnitude more notable than I am, and therefore probably gets approached a lot more than I do, but he is unstinting with that handful of glitter. We are fortunate to claim him as a member of Washington's music community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Polly O'Keary".

Polly O'Keary, Editor
Washington Blues Society Bluesletter

A colorful poster for Madison Ave Pub's May's Music series. The background is a gradient of yellow, orange, and red with a subtle pattern. The text is in various fonts and colors, including black, white, and red. It lists the address, phone number, and a variety of musical events and performers for the month of May.

Madison Ave Pub
905 Madison St. Everett 425-348-7402
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May's Music

Mondays with Mad Bojo 7 till 9-ish

Tuesday Night Dinner Show 7 till 9
5/2 Lee Howard 5/9 Jill Newman, Margaret Wilder & Friends
5/16 JP Falcon & David Tondi 5/23 Angelfire
5/30 Unbound Band with Kevin Sutton

Wednesday Unbound Blues Jam
with special guests each week 7pm
5/3 CD Woodbury 5/10 Joe Cook & Eric Rice 5/17 Scott E. Lind
5/24 John Stephan & Billy Reed 5/31 Chester Jones & Patrice Collet

Thursday Singer/Songwriter Showcase 7-9ish
Kevin Sutton with special guests 5/4
Stacy Jones with special guests 5/11, 5/18, 5/25

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Friday & Sundays Rob Bramblett Entertainment
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Red Hot Saturdays live music
5/13 Suze Sims & La Roca Boom
5/20 James Howard Band 5/27 Joe Cook Band
Saturday 5/6 UFC #288 \$10 6-11

Painted Black: Lee Oskar releases line of Mick Jagger harmonicas

Lee Oskar and Mick Jagger collaborate on scarlet and ebony line of Mick Jagger harmonicas

By Polly O'Keary, Editor

In 1983, when he got the first harmonicas he'd designed for sale under his own name, Lee Oskar had to figure out how to get other people to buy them. As the pioneering harmonica player who brought the instrument into the horn section, famed worldwide for his work with the seminal funk band War, he had credibility. He just didn't have a ton of money for promotion.

That, he says, was a good thing.

"Thank God I didn't have money for advertising," he said. Advertising, he believes, is for confirming the excitement about an existing product, not for creating excitement about something unknown. His strategy was to get his harmonicas to other players, get people talking about them, and get them into media stories. Then, he believed, players would hear about the harmonicas through word of mouth, try them out, and become loyal customers.

It worked.

Forty years later, Lee Oskar harmonicas are the third largest maker of harmonicas in the world; a fact that is made even more impressive considering that harmonicas are the world's top-selling instrument, with 3 million sold each year.

And now Mick Jagger is putting his name on a limited-edition line of Lee Oskar harmonicas, a sleek red and black instrument with Jagger's name on one side and Oskar's

on the other, only available online through Jagger's son's company whynow.

"Mick Jagger uses my product, claims it's the best in the world, and he can pick anything," said Oskar in an interview with the Washington Bluesletter. "That's to me is real. It's what I live for."

It's a formidable endorsement for a product that was originally created because Oskar simply wanted to play something he liked. He was famous for his skill and innovation as a harmonica player, but he could never get the exact sound and experience he wanted from the harmonicas available at the time.

So out of sheer frustration, Oskar decided to design his own harmonica.

"I didn't get into this business to make money," said Oskar. "You have to have passion, and a desperation to have the right tools."

Despite his frustration, Oskar took his time developing his line of instruments. After a careful exploration of the world of harmonica production, he found Tombo, a company in Japan that had been making harmonicas since 1917.

Although harmonica is often associated with American blues music and the American west, the instrument became popular in Japan more than a century ago. Japanese harmonica makers eventually started making instruments tuned to the scales used on Japanese folk songs, called "Japanese tremolo

tuning." From then on, Japan led the world in innovation of the instrument, adding different scales including minor keys.

When Oskar met with Tombo president Yasu Harumano and the rest of the Mano family, they were already fans of his and eager to meet.

Together, they developed an instrument that met all of Oskar's desires. It wasn't harsh but had a sweet tone. The brass was carefully chosen. The instruments had replaceable parts; unlike most harmonicas, when a reed wore out on a Lee Oskar harmonica, the player didn't have to throw it away. Also, although harmonica was primarily associated with blues, Oskar wanted harmonicas suitable for playing any style of music. So, the company worked with him to develop instruments tuned to play reggae, clave, jazz, Yiddish, and more.

In the beginning, the success of Oskar's unorthodox marketing strategy took others in the industry by surprise.

"I had created so much demand from magazines writing about them, people playing them, and word of mouth, a lot of people took it on," Oskar said.

When he became unhappy with his distribution company, he learned who the top distributor of harmonicas was. He was warned that he was not yet a big enough name for that distributor, but Oskar called anyway.

"The guy on the phone said, 'Is this Lee Oskar? Please come in. Salespeople are

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getting beat up because all these people are coming and saying, 'how do I get those damn Lee Oskar harmonics?'" Oskar recalled. "I've been with them for 36 years now."

After his harmonicas had been on the market for about 10 years, Oskar got a gratifying call. The Rolling Stones were recording in LA, and Mick Jagger wanted to buy several Lee Oskar harmonicas.

A bigger name selecting his harmonicas was impossible to imagine. Jagger had started playing after hearing the work of Little Walter and Sonny Boy Williamson, two of the great innovators of the instrument. He wanted to be able to contribute more to the Rolling Stones' work than just vocals, too.

His efforts paid off. He had such a natural ability on the instrument that even his famously cantankerous bandmate Keith Richards bestowed rare praise on his ability. On his own online video series "Ask Keith," Richards said, "To me, Mick Jagger is one of the best blues harp players in the world. He does things you wouldn't dream of vocally."

Jagger's harmonica work became foundational to the Stones' sound on such songs as "Midnight Rambler," "Miss You," "Sweet Virginia," and "When You're Gone."

For Oskar, it was nice to know that one of the world's most famous musicians had chosen his brand. He frequently saw pictures of Jagger playing his harmonicas, and roadies from the Stones tours would sometimes call to get more.

Oskar loved Jagger's playing, too. Not only was he technically proficient, but he played with passion, which for Oskar is the single most important quality a musician can express.

The two artists never met, however, in spite of their considerable mutual fame and authority as harmonica players. And Oskar never mentioned Jagger's choice of harmonicas. He felt it would be improper to capitalize on an artist's name without that artist's consent or awareness.

Then, a couple of years ago, Mick Jagger's son Gabriel came to him. Gabriel Jagger has a company of his own called whynow Music that partners with artists to create products directly available to fans through the company's website. His father, Mick Jagger, was interested in partnering with Oskar on a line of Mick Jagger harmonicas; was Oskar interested?

He was.

In a January 25 tweet, Jagger posted a video of himself playing one of the new harmonicas, along with the message, "Always loved Lee Oskar harmonicas and now I've been lucky enough to collaborate with them on a harmonica of my own."

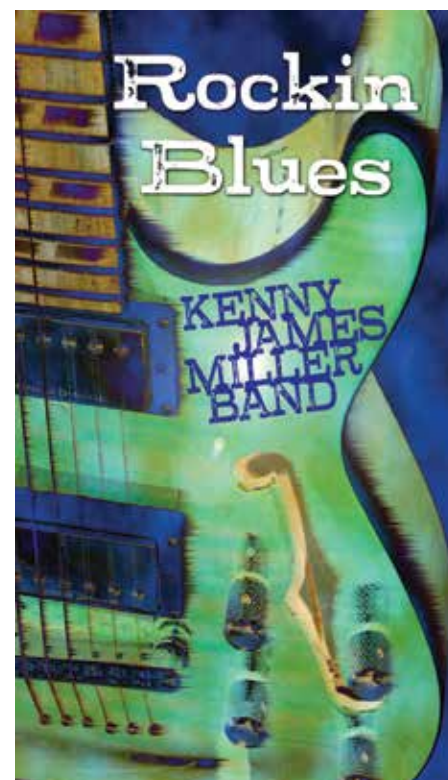
The first round of harmonicas sold out through presales and were shipped February 8. But there are more on the way.

How the future product will be rolled out is still under some discussion; they will be available at whynow.com and at Jagger performances, and Oskar will sell them in

such a way that the two companies don't wind up competing.

Recognition and acclamation from artists mean a lot to Oskar. And this new partnership is the kind of reward for a life in making instruments that lifts him the most.

"To me, the highlights in the 40 years of manufacturing are two things," he said. "The first is that I've had 40 years of manufacturing a consistent product with a perfect team. The second is being acknowledged by people like Bobby Rush, Taj Mahal, and John Nemeth now, who are highly respected for harmonica. This acknowledgment from Mick Jagger is the icing on the cake. It's a great feeling."



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Blues You Can Use: May 2023 Blues Bash Previews

Mark your calendars for live blues on the 9th in Shoreline & the 28th in Snohomish!

Compiled by Rick Bowen

The Washington Blues Society Blues Bash continues with two in person live events on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month! On the 9th at the Aurora Borealis, 16708 Aurora Avenue North in Shoreline at 7 PM, and on the 28th at CCR Sports and Entertainment, 215 Cypress Avenue in Snohomish at 7 PM.

The first Blues Bash features music from acoustic trio Crushed Velvet and the Skagit Valley-based blues group The CC Adams Band. The second Blues Bash will feature a solo set from guitarist Brian Butler and first time Blues Bash performers The Cold 102s. The monthly Washington Blues Society Blues Bashes are presented free, and all are welcome. The Aurora Borealis is an all ages venue, and CCR Sports and Entertainment is reserved for patrons 21+. We will have a door prize raffle with great prizes, including tickets to Jazz Alley, Seattle's Neptune Theater, and more. We encourage everyone to Tip the Band in support of their volunteer performances. More about May's Blues Bash performers:



Crushed Velvet (Photo by Alexandra Seelye)

Crushed Velvet: The acoustic trio Crushed Velvet is a new venture featuring veteran musicians Alexandra Seelye on vocals and

guitar, Jimmy Culler on bass and vocals, and Greg Murat on guitar vocals and percussion. The trio plays a warm mix of genres focusing on sweet vocal harmonies that have earned them accolades including a nomination for Best New Blues Act from the Washington Blues Society.



The CC Adams Band (Photo by CC Adams)

CC Adams Band: Powerhouse vocalist Marry Ellen Lykins fronts the CC Adams Band from Skagit County. The six piece band's roots are in the Blues with R&B and tasty rock mixed in for flavor. Thwarting the conventional, the group thrives on unique arrangements playing what they call "Dancin' Music."



Brian Butler (Photo by Dave Corry)

Brian Butler: Blues guitarist, singer and songwriter Brian Butler has been playing the blues around the northwest for years.

The Brian Butler Blues Band was a favorite on the scene for many years and performs occasionally. The band backed up Albert Collins, Eddie Taylor, Elvin Bishop among others and has featured a number of talented local players over the years. As a solo performer, Brian plays acoustic and electric guitar and rack harmonica and is a soulful singer. His shows feature original songs in addition to classic blues. The Washington Blues Society awarded Brian's latest CD, *Butler's Blues*, Best Blues Recording of 2019 as well as Best Acoustic Blues Guitarist Awards in 2020 and 2021. He also won the Lee Oskar Harmonica Award in the regional 2021 Points West Virtual Showdown.



The Cold 102s (Photo by Johnny Horn)

The Cold 102s: Four words define one of the Northwest's finest blues bands: "The Blues That Soothes." The Cold 102s have been filling prescriptions with no need for copay or spenddown since 2007 and have been doing so gleefully, with core members Anthony "Antoine Dooron" Estrada (vocals, guitar, harmonica, percussion) and Leonard "The Lion" Daniel (drums), who had played for years in late Chicago bluesman Richard Molina's band. The two met after the 102s had gone through many lineup changes, finally settling on Johnny Horn (host of 'Preachin' the Blues' on KEXP) on bass and Curtis Smith on guitar. The band has a funky, upbeat, soulful, Gospel-infused, but very unique, sound that holds true to its roots in blues from all regions that is sure to get any crowd rocking and swinging in no time!

Report From Memphis: 2023 International Blues Challenge

"The buzz on the street began immediately following the Tuesday night kickoff..."

By Rick J. Bowen

Beale Street was windy, cold, and sometimes wet as January often can be in Memphis, and yet the stout-hearted blues fans were undeterred and filled the clubs for the 2023 international Blues Challenge.

The buzz on the street began immediately following the Tuesday night kickoff with the International Showcase at Club 152, with folks remarking about the exceptional performances from Australian, French, Korean, and UK acts.

The Pacific Northwest Showcase played to a full house before the competition began in earnest on Wednesday.

The specter of civil unrest began to creep into the week on Thursday as news of a video released around the controversial death of a local man, Tyre Nichols, was announced. Only one official activity was cancelled as The Blues Foundation worked with local law enforcement to ensure the safety of blues fans and musicians.



When the Friday night semifinalists were announced, our Pacific Northwest entrants had not made the cut, but had given their all with fine performances.

crown, with husband-and-wife duo The Sugar Thieves taking second place.

In honor of their 40th anniversary, Washington based Lee Oskar Harmonicas not only presented the annual harmonica award but gave every placeholder a prize package. Throughout the week workshops and showcases took place each afternoon and after-hours jam sessions kept the music going to the wee hours.

Bob Margolin held court at the Rum Boogie Cafe for three nights, as this former sideman with Muddy Waters made his first public performances since lockdown. John del Toro hosted two All Star jams and locals Eric Hughes and the Ghost Town Blues Band hosted packed rooms. A first time all-harmonica jam took place as well, and the International Blues Challenge will return to Beale Street in January of 2024.



The finals began on Saturday with a moment of silence in honor of Tyre Nichols and his family. In the band division, a cross section of genres took the top three spots, with Dick Earle's Electric Witness delivering red dirt blues, and blue-eyed soul from The Cinelli Brothers took second place. The championship trio led by 20-year-old phenom Mathias Lattin, who also won the best guitar award, gave us a show of straight ahead Texas Blues.

In a twist of fate, this year's International Blues Challenge-winning band had taken high scores in the same venue as Eric's Maine Connection, bumping the Washington state band out of the race. Australian Frank Sultana took the solo/duo

Above: Eric's Maine Connection plays their first set at the International Blues Challenge in Memphis.

Left: Washington Blues Society's Son Jack Jr. returns to Memphis!

Photos by Wendy Rice

Previews: Blues on the Road!

Join the Washington Blues Society in welcoming nationally touring artists to the Evergreen State!

By Eric Steiner

Here is a sampling of national acts touring through Washington and the Pacific Northwest this month.

Reverend Horton Heat, The Delta Bombers & The Dusty 45's



On the 1st, Rev. Horton Heat, The Delta Bombers, and the Dusty 45's play in Idaho at the Argyros Performance Hall in Ketchum followed by the Neurolux Lounge on the 2nd. The tour continues to Oregon with shows at the Old Volcanic Theatre Pub in Bend on the 4th and the Bossanova Ballroom in Portland on the 5th. In the Evergreen State, the three bands play El Corazon in Seattle on the 6th, the Redwood Theatre in Bremerton on the 8th. Heat & the Bombers play the Wild Buffalo House of Music in Bellingham on the 7th. I remember Dusty 45's bandleader Billy Joe Huels on the June, 2019 festival preview issue that featured Keeping the Blues Alive Award recipient Marilyn Stringer's cover photo.

Ottmar Liebert & Luna Negra



Welcome Ottmar Liebert & Luna Negra back to Portland at the Alberta Rose Theatre on the 10th and then Seattle at Jazz Alley from May 11th to the 14th. Joining Liebert at Jazz Alley will be bassist Jon Gagan and drummer/percussionist Robby Rothschild. Looking at my calendar, I simply can't believe I first discovered Ottmar Liebert & Luna Negra in 1992 on the exceptional Solo Para Ti CD.

The Guess Who



When I was in junior high in Chicagoland, I saved up my paper route money and bought Live at the Paramount, a classic LP from 1972 from the Guess Who. Little did I know then that I would eventually relocate to the Pacific Northwest and see shows there. On the 12th, Bremerton's Admiral Theatre hosts The Guess Who, followed by a show at Tacoma's Pantages Theatre on the 14th. This year's tour features original drummer Barry Peterson with Derek Sharp on guitars and vocals, multinstrumentalist Leonard Shaw, guitarist Michael Staertow, and bassist Michael Devin.

Blood Brothers Tour: Mike Zito & Albert Castiglia

New blues and roots super group Blood Brothers, featuring multi-Blues Music Award-winners Mike Zito and Albert Castiglia, bring their tour to the Pacific Northwest in May in support of their self-titled debut album with stops in Portland, Everett, and the Sunbanks Blues Festival.



Mike Zito and Albert Castiglia are true "Blood Brothers" in life and in music. For the Blood Brothers Tour, both Mike and Albert will be onstage performing together for the entire show, so fans can enjoy the amazing chemistry and creativity that these two musicians share with each other – and the audience. Catch the Blood Brothers Tour on the 17th at the Alberta Rose Theatre in Portland, the 18th at the Historic Everett Theatre in Everett, and on the 20th at the Sunbanks Blues & Roots Festival in Electric City.



Take 6

Growing up, I preferred the Glimmer Twins to the Beach Boys, but at last month's Grammy Beach Boys Tribute, I enjoyed how Michael McDonald & the Take 6 updated "Don't Worry Baby." Claude McKnight, Mark Kibble, Joel Kibble, Dave Thomas, Alvin Chea and Khristian Dentley have led Take 6 to 10 Grammy Awards, 10 Dove Awards, two NAACP Image Awards, a Soul Train Award, and more. Take 6's Jazz Alley residency features six performances from May 18th to the 21st.

Backroads Blues Tour: Joe Bonamassa & Kenny Wayne Shepherd with Special Guests Solomon Hicks & Bobby Rush



Blues rock icon and five-time Grammy-nominated guitarist Kenny Wayne Shepherd has announced the second annual KWS Backroads Blues Festival, which will begin with two performances in the Pacific Northwest featuring 25x Billboard chart-topper Joe Bonamassa, New York City-based blues star King Solomon Hicks, and the Grammy-award-winning blues artist Bobby Rush.

The festival starts at the Hayden Homes Amphitheater in Bend, Oregon, on Saturday, May 27th and rolls up to the Chateau Ste. Michelle Winery in Woodinville, Washington on Sunday, May 28th. As of press time, additional dates include June 7th at the Rose Music Center at the Heights in Huber Heights, Ohio and at the Yaamava' Theater, Highland, California with Ally

Venable and Eric Gales.

"I wanted to offer a traditional touring blues festival," said Shepherd. "One that will give people a chance to see the best of the best all in one place." The announcement follows a hugely successful inaugural run of the 2022 Backroads Blues Festival, which featured Buddy Guy and Christone "Kingfish" Ingram.

"I'm really happy Joe and I were able to work out our schedules to do these shows together," Shepherd continued. "And King Solomon Hicks is such a great talent, I'm thrilled he's able to join us."

The Backroads Blues Festival is an extension of Shepherd's award-winning, Platinum-selling *10 Days Out: Blues from the Backroads* film and album project, which saw him travel the country with his band and a portable studio alongside the world's most renowned blues players, as well as some of the genre's lesser known, but rare and towering, talents. Featured artists included EZ Baker, Pinetop Perkins, Honeyboy Edwards, Lazy Lester, Willie "Big Eyes" Smith, Hubert Sumlin, B.B. King, among others.

Remembering the B.B. King Blues Festival Tour, Shepherd recalled, "In the past, I really looked forward to those blues packages both as a fan and as an artist, so I decided to bring the concept back with the Backroads Blues

Festival. Those were very special shows, and once that ended, there was a void. Our Backroads Blues Festival Tour is firmly rooted in that same tradition."

"Really thrilled to be a part of these Backroads Blues Festivals," commented Bonamassa. "Anytime I can make music with my friends, and it all be on one bill is a real treat, not only for the fans but for me personally, as well."

The announcement of the second annual Backroads Blues Festival comes on the heels of Shepherd's latest project *Trouble Is...25*, a top-to-bottom reinterpretation of his seminal album *Trouble Is...*, which struck the match that reignited modern blues upon its release 25 years ago. The release is accompanied by a live DVD filmed at The Strand Theatre in Shepherd's hometown of Shreveport, Louisiana, shot at the launch of his year-long celebration of the 25th anniversary of *Trouble Is...*, which found the band performing the album, in its entirety, across the US. Shepherd's *Trouble Is...25* tour continues this spring and continues for 27 additional shows and starts 2024 aboard the Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise out of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. For more information and to purchase tickets visit kennywayneshepherd.net/tour



Gospel in the NW: SONW choir sings America's oldest roots music

The Sound of the Northwest spiritual choir season kicks off June 3 with new director

by Polly O'Keary, editor

Before blues, there was gospel and before gospel there were spirituals and work songs. Sound of the Northwest, one of a handful of choirs in the nation that focuses on those spirituals and work songs and the only of its kind in Seattle, begins its performing season June 3 with new choir director Vanessa Bruce.

"The theme this year is 'His Story, Her Story, Their Story: Different Perspectives,'" said Bruce, a music teacher with a degree and education from Oberlin who moved to the Northwest from the Midwest 25 years ago and who took the helm of the organization in January.

The theme reflects the choir's work to preserve the music of early African and African-American composers who committed their experiences to music.

"Their message and their hope can be applicable to people's lives today," said Bruce.

When many of those songs were written, they served different purposes than they do today.

Some were composed by slaves as a way to pass the time while working.

"They would sing these songs to make the day go by," said Bruce. "They would sing 'This Old Hammer' and they would smash down the hammer during the rests."

Other songs were more dangerous to sing. Some contained hidden messages about how to escape from slavery. Coded songs like "Deep River" and "Wade In the Water" advised would-be escapees to flee through running water so search dogs couldn't follow them by scent.

"You know the line 'See that man all dressed in red,'" Bruce said, referring to one of many interchangeable verses in the song "Wade in the Water." "They would



Vanessa Bruce, left, directs soloist Jacqueline Hardy and the Sounds of the Northwest Choir at the Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church March 25, 2023. The Sounds of the Northwest is one of just a handful of choirs in the US who perform traditional spirituals, many of which predate gospel music.

(Photo courtesy of Vanessa Bruce)

know to look for someone dressed in red. The verses changed based on the people who helped."

The song "Steal Away to Jesus" contains the lyric "My Lord he calls me, he calls me by the thunder," which meant that thunderstorms were a good time to escape. And a song called "Follow the Drinking Gourd" referred to the African name for the Big Dipper constellation, advising freedom-seekers to use the stars in the constellation to find their way to the north. (Editor's Note: There is a powerful version of Eric Bibb singing this on YouTube).

According to Bruce, many songs doubled as religious songs and coded messages, with heaven referring to the afterlife as well as to the places a person could live free.

Although much of the repertoire of SONW harks from the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries, the choir does perform more contemporary works, including the works

of mid-century composer Moses Hogan and current Indiana University professor and Associate Director of the African American Arts Institute Dr. Raymond Wise.

"This year, we are featuring songs by female composers," Bruce said. "That's what we mean by 'His Story, Her Story, Their Story.' I've been in choirs all my life, and most of the music was written by men, but you think about freedom songs and the things going on today, a lot of that music was written by women."

One of the women whose music SONW performs is Seattle's Cora Jackson, an educator who has written more than 200 songs and three musical plays. Another is Bruce herself, whose song "Declaration of Trouble" addresses the failure of society to extend the benefits of the Constitution equally. One recently written song is "Say Her Name," written for the victims of police violence.

"It sounds like an African chant, like the weeping of women," said Bruce. "In Africa and Asia, you can hear the wailing of women when someone dies. That song is a haunting song."

SONW was begun in 1987 by the internationally renowned choir director Juan Huey-Rey, whose death in 2020 was marked by a motorcade through Seattle. Huey-Rey, who led the choir for 30 years, established the group's ongoing commitment to education and awareness, and performances still include information about history and culture behind the music.

Huey-Ray was followed by director Dr. Stephen Newby, who was followed in turn by Vanessa Bruce.

Many of the choir's performances are geared toward audiences accustomed to classical music, Bruce noted.

"Audiences need to hear more than Beethoven, Bach and Brahms," she said. "Yes, it's beautiful and valid, but we need to sing songs and perform songs that can lift the heart of our audience. European music is well and good, but American music started with spirituals, so if we are educated musicians, we need to appreciate many different cultures."

SONW is successful in that regard. March 25, the choir presented a



Vanessa Bruce, director of the Sounds of the Northwest Choir, says this year's choir repertoire will focus on songs composed by women. (Photo courtesy of Vanessa Bruce)

collaborative performance with the classical Northwest Chamber Chorus at Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church in Seattle.

"Some of the feedback we got from the audience was they were ecstatic, and they left feeling encouraged. it lifted them up," Bruce said. "One lady said she'd never left feeling so moved. She ran out of words."

These are stressful times for many people, Bruce observed. By performing the music of hope and strength that

sustained generations of people struggling under oppression, SONW offers an experience that can sustain people through trying days.

People need some hope," she said. "We want to encourage people to persevere."

Sound of the Northwest's Spring Concert will take place Sat., June 3, at 7 p.m. at Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute, 104 17th Ave. South in Seattle. Learn more about the choir at www.thesonw.org.



Preview: Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival

"... thrilled to announce its 36th annual return to the Blues Ranch July 21-23..."

Courtesy of the Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival

"I even heard my own people say that young Black kids are not into blues music," responds Christone "Kingfish" Ingram – 2023 Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival headliner – to an National Public Radio interviewer inquiring whether he's considered his place in music. "I just want to be the one to shatter the stereotype."

At just 24 years of age, Ingram has decidedly been doing some shattering. He played his first "old-school style" juke joint at age 11 and by the time he turned 18, Ingram – hailing from the "Birthplace of the Blues," Clarksdale, Mississippi – had already toured the US and six other countries and performed at the White House for Michelle Obama. His debut release, *Kingfish* (2019), garnered a Grammy Nomination in the "Best Traditional Blues Album" category before he turned 21. "A stunning debut from a young bluesman with an ancient soul and a large presence in the here-and-now" is how *No Depression* described it. Two years later, Ingram's second release, *662*, won a Grammy Award for "Best Contemporary Blues Album," a collection *Rock & Blues Muse* says "blows past all expectations."

Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival – no stranger to winning awards – is thrilled to announce its 36th Annual return to the Blues Ranch July 21-23, featuring young blues phenomenon Christone "Kingfish" Ingram, New Orleans blue-eyed soul singer Marc Broussard, gospel-blues vocalist Ruthie Foster, the Grammy Award winning blues rockers North Mississippi Allstars, and more.

Headliner and blues guitar virtuoso **Christone "Kingfish" Ingram** is becoming the defining blues voice of his generation. NPR Music states: "*Ingram plays guitar with dramatic, searing tone and sure-handed authority. And that's just in the studio; he's even scarier live.*"



Christone "Kingfish" Ingram (Photo Courtesy of The Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival)

Ingram already has recording collaborations and shared stage time with musical icons including Buddy Guy, Bootsy Collins, Gary Clark, Jr., Keb' Mo', Robert Randolph, and Brad Whitford (Aerosmith), as well as a Grammy Award and Grammy Nomination plus nine Blues Music Association awards. Get ready for a powerful, passionate performance from an artist who Buddy Guy dubs "the next explosion of the blues."



North Mississippi All Stars (Photo Courtesy of the Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival)

"Profound organic Southern rocking groove" is how *American Songwriter* describes the Grammy Award-winning **North Mississippi Allstars** while *AllMusic* praises their latest release, *Set Sail* (2022), as being "as infectiously danceable as it is life affirming." Anchored by brothers Luther and Cody Dickinson, sons of legendary Memphis producer Jim Dickinson, the band creates "modern Mississippi music inspired by the ancients and reaching into the future" (*AllMusic*) with an astonishing talent and range including Southern blues, rock, funk, and soul.



Ruthie Foster (Photo Courtesy of the Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival)

Four-time Grammy nominee **Ruthie Foster** is one of roots music's great songwriters and voices, creating potent, soulful music with a wide palette of American song forms, from gospel and blues to jazz, folk and soul. *Pop Matters* says of Foster: "The singer will take you to 'Paradise', or maybe it's more accurate to say she'll show you that you're already there."



Marc Broussard (Photo Courtesy of the Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival)

Marc Broussard, a legendary Lafayette, Louisiana native and New Orleans star, channels his distinct "Bayou Soul" brand – of funk, blues, R&B, rock, and pop, with distinct Southern roots – into a delightfully deep and satisfying groove. *No Depression* states: "Broussard delivers in a fashion that'll seriously shake up your soul sensibilities, old-school and new."



Judith Hill (Photo Courtesy of the Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival)

Judith Hill has a distinctive style described alternately as soulful, earthy, powerful, and beautiful, and is a thoughtful, Grammy Award-winning artist who moves easily from R&B to funk to hip-hop to jazz. *Atwood Magazine*: “Judith Hill’s voice is a sucker punch. It is powerful and raspy and beautiful and soulful and everything else that comes with being a musician of her caliber. It’s the kind of voice that rings out from a stage and makes you stop in your tracks, set down your drink, and listen.”



Eddie 9V
(Photo by Charla Harvey)

Eddie 9V is an “unabashed soul-blues revivalist who specializes in conjuring the sounds of the 1960s, punctuating his testifying with the steely sting of a Fender Esquire” (*AllMusic*). *Rolling Stone* proclaims, “This is a deeply American sound, rich in tradition, and joyful to hear” while *Americana Highways* describes 9V’s music as “Gallons of soul, spiced up with charges of sax, snarky lead guitars, greasy burger bass, tight drums & a pinch of Dr. John humid blues-funk.”



Rick Estrin & The Nightcats
(Photo by Rachel Kumar)

Rick Estrin & the Nightcats lay down one of blues music’s best shows, a full-blast performance with masterful storytelling. *DownBeat* says “Rick Estrin sings and writes songs like the brightest wiseguy in all of bluesland and blows harmonica as if he learned at the knee of Little Walter.”



Dwayne Dopsie
(Photo Courtesy of the Artist)

Grammy Award nominated **Dwayne Dopsie & the Zydeco Hellraisers** bring sheer zydeco fun with the most dynamic and creative artists on the scene. From *Rolling Stone*, “He has no competition in his genres, he’s the Jimmy Hendrix of the accordion.”



Veronica Lewis (Photo Courtesy of the Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival)

Call it roots, call it the blues, call it what you will, it’s 100% **Veronica Lewis**, who *Pop Matters* calls “a virtuoso, and her record is custom-made for road trips, sock hops, juke joints, and backyard picnics.”



Too Slim of Too Slim & The Taildraggers (Photo Courtesy of the Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival)

Straight whiskey blues with a southern rock beer chaser sums up **Too Slim & the Taildraggers**, and *Blues Review Magazine* calls them “One of the finest original Blues Rock trios performing today.”

(Continued on Page 22)

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May 2023 Live Blues Music Calendar!

Our website has the most up-to-date live music calendar & listings online @ www.wablues.org!

MAY 1

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Mad Bojo 7 PM
Royal Room, Seattle: Royal Room Collective 7:30 PM
Blue Moon, Seattle: Andy Coe Band 9 PM

MAY 2

Capitol Cider, Seattle: John Pinetree Tuesday Blues Showcase 6:30 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Lee Howard 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Billy Childs Quartet 7:30 PM
Blue Moon, Seattle: Song Swap Meet 8 PM
Tim's Tavern, White Center: Left Hand Smoke 8 PM
Billy Blues Bar, Vancouver: Ben Rice & The Hustle 8 PM

MAY 3

The Spar, Tacoma: Annie Eastwood Quartet 6 PM
CCR, Snohomish: The Usual Suspects 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Billy Childs Quartet 7:30 PM
Engel's Pub, Edmonds: Dee's Motown Jazz 8 PM

MAY 4

Slippery Pig, Poulsbo: Front St Blues Revue 7 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Kevin Sutton w/guests 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Spyro Gyra 7:30 PM

MAY 5

Engel's Pub, Edmonds: Karlito & Squirrel 6 PM, Matlock & Keys 8 PM
Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Honky Tonk Sweethearts 7 PM
Black Angus, Puyallup: Max Renshaw 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Spyro Gyra 7:30 PM
Tim's Tavern, White Center: Andy Coe & Clinton Fearon 8 PM
Mirkwood, Arlington: Dangerous Curves & Hot Flash 8 PM

MAY 6

Paramount Theater, Seattle: DOORS: Opening Doors to the Arts Seattle Theatre Group's Annual Fundraiser & Online Auction! Mavis Staples w/ special guests 6 PM
Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Yeti Chasers Swing 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Spyro Gyra 7:30 PM
Grape and Grain, Everett: Norris & Nicely 7 PM
Brewminati, Prosser: Terry Robb Trio 7 PM
Rockfish, Anacortes: Joel Astley 7:30 PM
Engel's Pub, Edmonds: Tim Turner 8 PM
Dawson's, Tacoma: King Kon Beaux 8 PM
Doc's Riverside, Snohomish: Nick Vigarino 8 PM

Conway Muse, Conway: Joe Cook Blues Band 8 PM

MAY 7

The Spar, Tacoma: Highway 16 Band 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Spyro Gyra 7:30 PM
Peabo's, Mill Creek: Peabo's Sunday Music Revue 8 PM
The Lime, Kirkland: Herding Cats 9 PM

MAY 8

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Mad Bojo 7 PM
Royal Room, Seattle: Royal Room Collective 7:30 PM
Blue Moon, Seattle: Andy Coe Band 9 PM
The Central Saloon, Seattle: JP Falcon Band 8 PM

MAY 9

Capitol Cider, Seattle: John Pinetree Tuesday Blues Showcase 6:30 PM
Aurora Borealis, Shoreline: Washington Blues Society Blues Bash w/Crushed Velvet & CC Adams Band 7 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Jill Newman & Margrett Wilder 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Bill Charlap Trio 7:30 PM
Tim's Tavern, White Center: Big Kitty 8 PM
Engel's Pub, Edmonds: John Case 8 PM
Billy Blues Bar, Vancouver: Ben Rice & The Hustle 8 PM

MAY 10

The Spar, Tacoma: Velocity 6 PM
CCR, Snohomish: The Usual Suspects 7 PM
Rockfish, Anacortes: Newton's Law 6 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Bill Charlap Trio 7:30 PM
Engel's Pub, Edmonds: Sheri & da Boyz 8 PM

MAY 11

Slippery Pig, Poulsbo: Front St Blues Revue 7 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Kevin Sutton 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Ottmar Liebert 7:30 PM

MAY 12

Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Ranger & the Re-Arrangers 7 PM
Black Angus, Puyallup: Daniel Pellegrini 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Ottmar Liebert 7:30 PM
Engel's Pub, Edmonds: Fast Nasties 9 PM
Zola, Spokane: Justyn Priest 9 PM

MAY 13

The Repp, Snohomish: Norris & Nicely 6:30 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: La Rocca Boom 7 PM
Bits, Mukilteo: Blue Healers 7 PM

Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: 24 Madison 7 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Ottmar Liebert 7:30 PM
Historic Everett Theater, Everett: Peter Rivera w/ Toby Brady 7:30 PM
Stars Bar, Federal Way: CD Woodbury 8 PM
The Mill, Milton: King Kom Beaux 8pm
Engel's Pub, Edmonds: Lone State 9pm

MAY 14

The Spar, Tacoma: Blues Redemption w/Doug Skoog 7pm
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Ottmar Liebert 7:30 PM
Peabo's, Mill Creek: Peabo's Sunday Music Revue 8 PM
The Lime, Kirkland: Herding Cats 9 PM

MAY 15

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Mad Bojo 7 PM
Royal Room, Seattle: Royal Room Collective 7:30 PM
Blue Moon, Seattle: Andy Coe Band 9 PM

MAY 16

Capitol Cider, Seattle: John Pinetree Tuesday Blues Showcase 6:30 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: JP Falcon w/David Tondi 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Veronica Swift 7:30 PM
Engel's Pub, Edmonds: Dee's Motown Jazz 8 PM
Billy Blues Bar, Vancouver: Ben Rice & The Hustle 8 PM

MAY 17

The Spar, Tacoma: Apollo Suns (Special Event) 6 PM
CCR, Snohomish: The Usual Suspects 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Veronica Swift 7:30 PM
Engel's Pub, Edmonds: The Go 2's 8 PM

MAY 18

Sunbanks, Electric City: Sunbanks Festival 5 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Kevin Sutton 7 PM
Slippery Pig, Poulsbo: Front Street Blues Revue 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Take 6 7:30 PM
The Historic Everett Theater, Everett: Blood Brothers w/Stacy Jones Band 7:30 PM

MAY 19

Sunbanks, Electric City: Sunbanks Festival 5 PM
WIT Cellars, Prosser: Tyron Benoit Band 6 PM
Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: The Wayside 7 PM
Grape and Grain, Everett: Blue Healers 7 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Take 6 7:30 PM
Engel's Pub, Edmonds: Eric's Maine Connection 9 PM
Chan's, Spokane: Justyn Priest 8 PM
Joseppi's, Tacoma: Linda Carol & Retro Gruve 8 PM

MAY 20

Sunbanks, Electric City: Sunbanks Festival 12 PM
Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Moonlight Swing
Orchestra 7 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: James Howard Band 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Take 6 7:30 PM
Historic Everett Theater, Everett: Jimmy Messina 7:30 PM
Easy Monkey, Shoreline: Annie Eastwood All Star Band 8 PM
Conway Muse, Conway: Polly O'Keary & the Rhythm Method 8 PM
Engel's Pub, Edmonds: Weatherheads 9 PM
219 Lounge, Sandpoint: Justyn Priest 9 PM

MAY 21

Sunbanks, Electric City: Sunbanks Festival 12 PM
The Spar, Tacoma: Joe T. Cook Band w/Tim Sherman 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Take 6 7:30 PM
Peabo's, Mill Creek: Peabo's Sunday Music Revue 8 PM
The Lime, Kirkland: Herding Cats 9 PM

MAY 22

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Mad Bojo 7 PM
Royal Room, Seattle: Royal Room Collective 7:30 PM
Blue Moon, Seattle: Andy Coe Band 9 PM

MAY 23

Capitol Cider, Seattle: John Pinetree Tuesday Blues Showcase 6:30 PM
CCR, Snohomish: Washington Blues Society Blues Bash w/Brian Butler & The Cold 102's 7 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Angelfire 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Mathew Whitaker 7:30 PM
Billy Blues Bar, Vancouver: Ben Rice & The Hustle 8 PM

MAY 24

CCR, Snohomish: The Usual Suspects 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Mathew Whitaker 7:30 PM

MAY 25

Bad Albert's, Seattle: Annie Eastwood & Friends 6 PM

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Stacy Jones w/guests 7 PM

Slippery Pig, Poulsbo: Front St Blues Revue 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Poncho Sanchez 7:30 PM
West of the Waterway, Tacoma: Lisa Mann's Portland Blues Showcase 7:30 PM

MAY 26

Seattle Center, Northwest Folklife Festival 11 AM
Juan de Fuca Festival, Port Angelis 12 ON
Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Fat Fridays 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Poncho Sanchez 7:30 PM
Aurora Borealis, Shoreline: CD Woodbury 8pm
Pub 282 Camano Island: Annie Eastwood & All Star Band 8 PM

MAY 27

Seattle Center, Northwest Folklife Festival 11 AM
Juan de Fuca Festival, Port Angeles 12 PM
Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Seattle Solid Gold 7 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Joe Cook Band 7pm
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Poncho Sanchez 730pm

MAY 28

Seattle Center, Northwest Folklife Festival 11 AM
Juan de Fuca Festival, Port Angelis 12 PM
Chateau Ste Michelle, Woodinville: Backroads Blues Festival 6 PM
The Spar, Tacoma: Nick Vigarino 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Poncho Sanchez 7:30 PM
Peabo's, Mill Creek: Peabo's Sunday Music Revue 8 PM
The Lime, Kirkland: Herding Cats 9 PM

MAY 29

Seattle Center, Northwest Folklife Festival 11 AM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Mad Bojo 7 PM
Royal Room, Seattle: Royal Room Collective 7:30pm
Blue Moon, Seattle: Andy Coe Band 9 PM

MAY 30

Capitol Cider, Seattle: John Pinetree Tuesday Blues Showcase 6:30 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Unbound w/Kevin Sutton 7 PM
Purdy's, Sumner: Tuesday Blues Showcase w/Joel Astley 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Keyon Harrold 7:30 PM
Billy Blues Bar, Vancouver: Ben Rice & The Hustle 8 PM

MAY 31

CCR, Snohomish: The Usual Suspects 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Keyon Harrold 7:30 PM



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Preview: Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival (Continued)

"... thrilled to announce its 36th annual return to the Blues Ranch July 21-23..."

(Continued from Page 17)



Yates McKendree
(Photo by A. Scarlotti)

Grammy Award winner **Yates McKendree** offers up searing guitar and silky-smooth vocals from a legend-in-the-making. "*Yates is proof of reincarnation*" claims Gary Nicholson, and continues: "*Only a very old and experienced soul could make his kind of art. Yes, he's been around plenty before, and he's giving it to this world again, just getting started being timeless.*"



Stephanie Anne Johnson (Photo Courtesy of the Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival)

Stephanie Anne Johnson produces music steeped in all that's American, expressing the pain of the past, the roots of the down home, and the hope that hard work will lead to proper reward. *Phantom Power Music* observes of Johnson: "Every note, strum, word, groove – everything drips authenticity."



Tevis Hodge, Jr.
(Photo by Debra Penk)

Tevis Hodge Jr., a solo semi-finalist in the 2014 International Blues Challenge in Memphis, harbors a deep love for Black American music, and for bringing the traditions of his heritage to life. "He's got the right stuff," says *TheCountryBlues.com*, "and more than a motherlode of talent!"



The Methow Juke Joint Allstars (Photo Courtesy of the Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival)

Methow Juke Joint Allstars are a collaboration of top musicians who make the magic happen every night after the show. *American Blues Scene* says of a **Lady A** release, "Standing on the shoulders of giants, Lady A delivers a thunderously powerful new single" while *Blues in Britain* calls **Polly O'Keary** "a powerhouse blues/rock singer whose voice has the resonance and attitude that permeates her impressive bass playing."

A beloved tradition for music fans from across the country and staple of the Pacific Northwest music scene, the **36th Annual Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival** promises to be outstanding, with

its stunning natural setting in the Methow Valley and a commitment to bringing the best in blues, soul, zydeco, roots, and more.

In addition to the fantastic lineup, the festival will feature a wide range of local food and craft booths and, with camping available on-site, festivalgoers can truly immerse themselves in this uniquely intimate musical experience. For Festival tickets, camping, and information, visit WinthropBluesFestival.com.



Blues Jams & Open Mic Listings

Jam hosts listed & open mics are either blues-friendly or full band-friendly. Go out & support live music!

SUNDAY

192 Brewing, Kenmore: All Ages 192 Blues Jam w/ The Groove Tramps 3-7 PM (Times Vary Seahawk Game Days)
Acorn Brewery, Edgewood: Blue Jam w/Retro Gruve
The Bleu Note Restaurant & Lounge, Lakewood: Open Mic 6 PM
The Bennett Craft & Kitchen PoCo, Port Moody, B.C.: Sunday Blues Jam 3-7 PM
Bullhead Saloon, Four Lakes: Open Mic/Jam 5-8 PM
Captain Jacks, Sumner: Open Mic w/Lady Carter & the Gents 7 PM
Collector's Choice Restaurant (CCR), Snohomish: Acoustic Open Mic 7 PM
Club Crow, Cashmere: Jam Session 1st Sun 7-10 PM
Conor Byrne, Seattle: Open Mic 8 PM
Darrell's Tavern, Shoreline: Jazz Jam 7-10 PM
Dawson's, Tacoma: Tim Hall Band 7-11 PM
The Boom Boom Rom at the Point Casino, Kingston: Duff's Rockin' Jam 7-10 PM
El Sarape Cantina, Shelton: Open Jam 3rd Sun 4 PM
Cafe Racer, Seattle: The Foundation Open Jam 4th Sun 7 PM
Headworks Brewery, Enumclaw: Open Mic 6 PM
Joseppi's, Tacoma: Sunday Jam w/Mo Betta Band
Lucky 7 Bar & Grill, Kirkland: Tommy Wall Blues Jam
Mirkwood Public House, Arlington: Open Jam 7 PM
O'Malley's Lounge, Olympia: Blues Jam w/The Pleasure Hounds 6-9 PM
Purdy's, Sumner: Jerry Miller Blues Jam 7 PM
Queen Anne Beer Hall, Seattle: Open Mic 8 PM
Twin Dragon, Duvall: Open Jam w/Doug McGrew
Red Dog Saloon, Maple Valley: Open Jam w/The Walkie Tacos 6 PM

MONDAY

Conor Byrne, Seattle: BlueGrass Acoustic Jam 8 PM
Nectar Lounge, Seattle: Mo Jam Mondays 9-11 PM
Royal Room, Seattle: Jazz Jam w/Thomas Marriott
Badger Mountain Brewery, Wenatchee: North Central WA Blues Jam 1st, 3rd & 5th Mon 6 PM
Riverside Pub, Wenatchee: North Central Washington Blues Jam 2nd & 4th Mon 7-10 PM
Emerald of Siam, Richland: Open Mic/Band Showcase w/Barefoot Randy/Dirty River Entertainment 8 PM (All Ages until 10:45 PM)
HD's Bar and Grill, Belfair: Joe Faker Jam 6 PM
Headworks Brewery, Enumclaw: Open Mic 6 PM

TUESDAY

Brother Don's, Bremerton: All Ages Jam w/Tim Hall Band 7-10 PM
Café Racer, Seattle: Open Mic 1st & 3rd Tues 7 PM
Capitol Cider, Seattle: Tuesday Blues Jam w/John Pine Tree 6:30-8:30 PM
Royal Esquire Club, Seattle: Sea-Town All-Stars 8 PM
Elmer's, Burien: Jam w/The Cory Wilds Band 8 PM
Engels Pub, Edmonds: Open Mic w/Dano Mac 8 PM

Antique Sandwich Co., Tacoma: Open Mic 7-10 PM
Double J Saloon, Lake City/ Seattle: Open Mic 1st & 3rd Tues 8:30 PM
Burien Eagles: Jam w/Billy Shew 7-11 PM
Grape and Grain, Everett: Acoustic Open Mic 6 PM
The Garages, Lake Oswego, OR: Garages Blues Jam w/The Pat Stillwell Band 7:30 PM
The Hidden Door, Shoreline: Open Mic 7 PM
Odin Brewery, Tacoma: Open Mic 7 PM
Oxford Saloon, Snohomish: Acoustic Open Mic w/Jerry Battista 6 PM
Slippery Pig, Poulsbo: All Ages Open Mic 7 PM
Tweede's Café, North Bend: Open Mic 6:30-9:30 PM
Zeek's Pizza, Bellingham: Live Music 1st Tues 6-9 PM

WEDNESDAY

Acorn Brewery, Edgewood: Blues Jam 7 PM
Capitol Cider, Seattle: Jam Night 9 PM
Bethel Saloon, Port Orchard: Open Mic 8 PM
Black Dog Arts Cafe, Snoqualmie: All Ages Open Mic 7 PM
Black Lab Gallery, Everett: Open Mic w/ Jeff Crookall 6:30-10 PM
Blue Moon Tavern, Seattle: Open Mic 8-11 PM
Couth Buzzard Cafe, Seattle: Open Mic 7:30-10 PM
Stars Bar and Grill, Federal Way: Linda Myers Wicked Wednesday Jam 8-11 PM
Darrell's Tavern, Shoreline: Open Mic 8:30-11 PM
Filling Station, Kingston: All Ages Open Mic All Styles & Instruments Welcome 7PM
The Hidden Door, Shoreline: Open Jam 7 PM
Jules Mae's Saloon, Seattle: Jazz Open Mic 7 PM
Lake City Pub, Lakewood: Open Mic 7 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Unbound Blues Jam
Miller's, Carnation: Open Mic Last Wed 6 PM
Mirkwood Public House, Arlington: One Take Weekly Jam w/Chris Eger & Richard Williams 8-11 PM
Penn Cove Brewing Company, Coupeville: Open Mic 6 PM
Skylark Café, West Seattle: Open Mic 8-11 PM
Soundbite Cider, Everett: Open Mic 7 PM
Stockton's, Maple Valley: Jam Night w/Billy Shew
Tony V's Garage, Everett: Open Mic 9-11 PM
The Tin Hat, Kennewick: Open Mic & Jam w/The Mondo Ray Band 7-11 PM
Brickhouse, Vancouver, WA: Open Mic w/Right as Rain Entertainment 8:30 PM
Whit's End, Seattle: All Ages Open Mic 2nd & 4th Thurs 8 PM

THURSDAY

192 Brewing Company, Kenmore: Open Mic 7 PM
Bent Bine Brew Co., Belfair: Open Mic 6 PM
Bearded Monkey Music, Yakima: Open Mic 6:30 PM
The Blue Room, Bellingham: All Ages Open Mic
Bushell & Barrel Cider House, Poulsbo: Open Mic
Cruisers, Post Falls, ID: Open Mic/Jam Night 6 PM

Pt Gardner Bay Winery, Everett: Open Mic 6:30 PM
Dawson's, Tacoma: Blues Jam w/Billy the Pocket Dog House, Seattle: Jam w/The Uptown All Stars
Flight Path, Burien: Open Mic Jam Night 8:30 PM
The Growler Guys, Lake City, Seattle: Jazz Open Mic
Jack-sons Sports Bar & Clubhouse, Yakima: Open Jam 8 PM
Kimball Coffee House, Gig Harbor: All Ages Open Mic, 5:30 PM
Looking Glass Coffee, Snohomish: Open Mic 2nd & 4th Thurs 7PM
Lucky 7 Bar & Grill, Kirkland: Pro Jam 8 PM
The Village Inn Pub, Bellingham: Jam w/Jimmy D
Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: Blues Jam Last Thurs
Slippery Pig Brewery, Poulsbo: All Ages Front St Blues Review Night w/Thys Wallwork 7 PM
Gordon & Purdy's Pub, Sumner: Outlaw Blues Jam w/Boogie Chillin' 7 PM
Stars Bar & Grill, Federal Way: Jam Night w/Billy Shew 8 PM
The New Moon Craft Tavern, Pt Angeles: Blues Jam
New Frontier Lounge, Tacoma: Open Mic w/ Chuck Muller 7 PM
The Spot, West Seattle: Blues Night 6 PM
San Juan Island Brewing Co., Friday Harbor: Open Mic 6 PM
Station 18, Seattle: Jazz Jam w/Kevin McCarthy Trio 7 PM (All Ages until 10 PM)
Red Dog Saloon, Maple Valley: Open Jam w/The Iron Stallion Band 7 PM
The Loft Pub, Victoria B.C.: Open Jam 7-11 PM
Maverick's, Lakeside, MT: Blues Jam Thurs 8:30 PM
The Valley, Tacoma: Open Mic w/Elizabeth Ashbrook 8 PM
Thirsty Badger, Lynden: Open Mic 7-11 PM

FRIDAY

Bryant Corner Cafe, Seattle: Open Mic 6:30 PM
La Copa Café, Seattle: All Ages Victory Music Open Mic 6:30-9 PM
Dreadknott Brewery, Monroe: Open Mic 7-10 PM
Kana Winery, Yakima: Open Mic 7-10 PM
Wicked Cider, Kennewick: Wicked Jamz/Open Mic Every Other Fri 6-10 PM

SATURDAY

The Spot, West Seattle: Open Mic 6 PM
The Hidden Door, Shoreline: Open Mic 7 PM
Kiss the Sky Books, Sultan: Open Mic 7PM

PLEASE CONTACT THE VENUE WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR BLUES JAM OR OPEN MIC (START TIME, ALL-AGES, ETC). THANK YOU!

Black and Tan Hall to revive the spirit of Seattle's earliest integrated music venue

Slowed by the COVID crisis, the nonprofit arts venue is on track to open by the end of the year

By Sanya Khanna, University of Washington

A century ago, a person of any color could arrive in nearly any major American city and ask for directions to the local black and tan club. Such clubs flourished as places where races could mingle to listen to live music, dance, and drink, in many cases even during prohibition. Seattle's version was literally called the Black and Tan Club, and it operated on 12th and Jackson, in the basement of a Japanese drugstore, where it was a leading blues nightclub in Seattle from the 1920s through 1960s.

A new version of the club will come to life with a reopening later this year as the Black & Tan Hall. Although at a different location, it will preserve the tradition of being a place where all people are welcome to eat, drink, and enjoy entertainment. Live music including blues and jazz and hip hop will be an important part of the club's offerings, as will other performing arts, including poetry readings and more.

Benjamin Hunter, a co-founder of the Black and Tan Hall, said the Hall has taken the name of the historic club because, although legal separation of races is no longer institutionalized, people still tend to spend time almost entirely with those of their own demographic.

"The history of the Black & Tan Club was that it was always an integrated place, a place that addresses segregation," he said. "Only now it's social segregation."

Originally called the Alhambra Cabaret, the club's name was later changed to the Black & Tan

as a nod to the racially diverse clientele, which included rican-Americans, Caucasians, Asians and people of mixed heritage.

From 1922 until about 1966, the Black & Tan Club was at the heart of Seattle's nightlife and promoted the popularity of jazz and later blues in the city. Even during Prohibition, the club remained a prime hangout spot. The Club was eventually asked to close after repeated raids by the Liquor Control Board, but it was able to continue operating as a "members-only" in order to dodge scrutiny, a common tactic used by clubs at the time.

The club's new location in Hillman City, near the intersections of Rainier and Orcas, was chosen because its earlier location, once the heart of Black Seattle, is becoming prohibitively expensive as its cache has grown. This has resulted in a 60% reduction in the Black population in the last decade.

While Hillman City may eventually face the same changes, currently it is home to many of Seattle's people of color, including most of the nonprofit Hall's 25 co-owners.

"Where the existing building is now is kind on the breaking wave of gentrification," said Joe Seamons, a leading organizer and one of the co-owners. "That's one of the reasons we are focused on Hillman City. The majority of owners are people of color and live within a mile of the business."

The Hall's mission is to sustain a thriving and equitable economy through arts and cultural programming, said Seamons, who works on designing and overseeing the various training programs and the general setup for the hall's activities. The Hall will also work to strengthen the community and its network of Black-owned and Black-led spaces.



Several of the Black and Tan Hall's 25 partners celebrate their progress at a block party last summer. The venue is on track to open around the end of the year. Photo credit: Jovelle Tamayo

The building's renovation will preserve part of Seattle's architectural history.

"It's a 100-year-old movie theater, for most of its life if it was a Japanese movie theater," Seamons said. "It's a well-made hall, 30 feet wide, and the cool part is that it's built of timbers milled right there in the Rainier Valley."

The nonprofit organization that owns the venue raised \$1 million to buy the building after negotiations to lease broke down, and then another \$1 million to renovate. Seamons and others had hoped to open months ago, but COVID slowed the project. Now Seamons said the goal is to open by the end of the year.



B&TH partner Karen Toering cleans up the stage post-renovation. The new artworks on the wall are by Walter Peeze. Photo credit: Marcus Warlick.



You Should Have Been There

Kim Field's Harmonica Showcase

By Bear Drury

Reverend Dave Brown has done it again. On March 23, in The Spanish Ballroom at McMenamins Elks Temple in Tacoma, he presented another fabulous harmonica showcase hosted by the great Kim Field featuring the best harmonica artists from the Puget Sound area. It was a beautiful venue for such a soul stirring event.

Backed by a rock-solid trio featuring wildman Tim Sherman on guitar, groovin' Les White on bass, and boppin' David Hudson on drums, the harmonica players gave a master class of how versatile the simple "tin sandwich" can be.

The show started with three numbers from Joe Cook. Joe wasted no time in showing us why The Joe Cook Band is in such demand all over the area. Run, don't walk to their next show in your area. You will not be disappointed.

Kim Field took the stage next, and his three songs once again proved that even though he has moved to Portland, his legacy in the Seattle area will never be forgotten. He is certainly one of the finest of all time.

Joel Astley perfectly illustrated that the future of blues harmonica is in good hands. Through his excellent song writing and playing skills this young man is carrying the torch into the future. His star is still on the rise. We are truly privileged to have him among us.

And then...there was the master himself, Mr. Mark DuFresne, a living legend if there ever was one. Mere words cannot express the impact this man's performances can have on the human soul. His voice is incomparable. His harmonica prowess is otherworldly.

After a brief intermission each artist returned to perform two more numbers. And if you thought their first round was hot the second act was on fire! But just when you thought it couldn't get any hotter, they kicked in the afterburners for the grand finale.



Above, left to right: Joel Astley, Tim Sherman, Joe Cook, Rev. Dave Brown, Kim Field, Mark DuFresne, David Hudson, Les White
Below, left to right: Tim Sherman, Kim Field, David Hudson, Joe Cook, Joel Astley, Les White, Mark DuFresne. Photos by Bear Drury.



With all four masters on stage, Kim counted off an unrehearsed rendition of the Junior Wells classic "Little By Little (I'm Losing You)". Everyone jumped in and took turns singing and playing. It was absolutely glorious! It literally left the audience breathless. It was a perfect ending to a wonderful evening.

In addition to his famous Blues Vespers, Reverend Dave Brown joins forces with Kim Field to host these magical events several times a year. Please attend every chance you get.

You should have been there.

Whom to Hire, Get in Touch

Send updates, additions & corrections to both Editor@wablues.org and ericrichd@aol.com by the 10th!

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Got a Great Shot? Format It & Send It In!

A quick summary of Bluesletter photo, ad art, and graphics requirements.

By Eric Steiner

This issue is unique in two very distinct ways: 1) It has an unprecedented number of feature articles, previews, or reviews – 9!, and 2) It has the largest number of contributing photographers in the history of the magazine – 15!

I wanted to build on prior articles about our magazine's requirements for color photography, advertising art, and graphics in the hopes of encouraging potential contributors to format their work so that our printer can print it.

Before these images can land on the traditional, old school plates in the print shop at Pacific Publishing in South Seattle, Editor Polly O'Keary and I review them as we assemble each issue in the Adobe In Design program. More often than not, we wrestle with the types, formats, and resolutions of images we receive.

Help Us Build a Better Bluesletter!

Each month, we continue to receive many, many color photos that look absolutely perfect on a camera phone, computer screen, or online in social media, but too few of them are formatted correctly for traditional printed paper media (like the magazine you are holding in your hands). Many of them also have file titles automatically generated by the camera or phone, but more about file naming conventions in a little bit.

Where to Start?

For starters, I encourage potential contributors to refer to the Submissions Requirements on page 4 of any recent issue, which lists our printer's required formats. Far too frequently, well-meaning photographers send in excellent pictures direct from their cell phones without pausing to review or edit their images in photo editing software to format their images for print. This important pause does two things: 1) Offers the photographer an opportunity to improve upon lighting, tone, or contrast, and 2) Includes a step to title

the image with the names of the subject and photographer so we can properly give photographers' credit for their work (and correctly identify the subject in the picture).

RGB or CMYK?

If your camera or cell phone saves color images in the RGB (that's Red-Green-Blue) format, that's the preferred image type for screens on computers and cell phones. Social media is filled with RGB images as these tend to be low-resolution (meaning small file size). More about size in a bit. My little iPhone ES saves my images in RGB, and I do not know how to change the camera settings on it. However, I know if I want my new editor, Polly O'Keary, to consider one of my photos for publication, I need to submit the picture according to Pacific Publishing's requirements. Actually, it's not just a requirement of our printer. For traditional, paper print publications, CMYK (that's Cyan-Magenta-Yellow-Black), is the "coin of the realm." The gold standard in traditional, print media. That generally means larger files saved at 300 dots-per-inch (DPI), which is a direct contrast to social media's "lite" photos saved at 72 DPI.

Size is Important!

In addition to file type (RGB or CMYK), Polly and I look at an image's size as we prepare them for print. Many cover color images top 30 MB in size as CMYK is a dense (300 DPI) and large format. As a result, many images for print far exceed email attachment size capacity. When that happens, we ask contributors to send it files through a file sharing service such as Google Drive, Box or DropBox. Regarding an image's size, our partners in printing at Pacific Publishing are prepared to work with images with resolutions at 500 DPI or greater, as this file size may allow for greater detail, clarity, and sharpness. Please also know that short cuts like adding extra DPI to a 72 DPI social media image will not work 99% of the time.

File Type: JPG, PSD or TIF?

When Polly and I double-check the resolution and formatting of images, graphics, and ad art, I look for the file extension. Generally, in my experience, the In Design program seems to prefer Photoshop (PSD) native images instead of JPG or TIF files. As of press time, Polly is using file types that are new to me, like PNG images, and I look forward to learning more about those types of files as she grows into the position of editor.

What's in a (File) Name?

Too many potential contributors submit images using file identifiers automatically supplied by their cell phones or 35mm cameras. When we receive photos with file names like DCS12345.jpg, we are unable to provide a photo credit due the photographer on our magazine's masthead on page 4. So, please, use a file naming convention that allows Polly and me the flexibility to quickly identify the subject in the picture as well as the photographer, like 2023 June B Arnold by K Anderson.psd. Again, this process provides the photographer with an opportunity to review their work and improve or edit it with photo editing software.

A Step-by-Step Guide

To practice formatting, I used the following steps on a photo I took of Jimmy Burns' bass player at the Chicago Blues Festival several years ago. I looked in a file from 2014 and forgot the bass player's name (but I remembered that his dad played guitar in Chicago's legendary Ink Spots band). If I used the photo in print, I wanted to identify him by name (and not just "Jimmy Burns' Bass Player").

1. Open Photoshop and look for photo.
2. File > Open > DSC_0052.JPG (Photo of Jimmy Burns' bass player).
3. File > Move To > Desktop. I make an extra copy just in case work on the image in the desktop.

I call Steps 4, 5, and 6, “The Hunnewell Effect.” The late blues photographer Tom Hunnewell taught me that “Photoshop has already done a lot of work for you. Use three quick automatic improvements when you can, and you’ll find they work more often than not,” he said. I’m forever thankful for Tom’s advice behind the keyboard when I format blues photos for the magazine.

4. File > Image > AutoTone. Save image.
5. File > Image > Auto Contrast. Save image.
6. File > Image > Auto Color. Save image.
7. File > Filter > Sharpen > Smart Sharpen. To refine the image a little bit. Save image.
8. File > Rectangular Marquee Tool > Select area to remove orphan microphone stand at right from image. Save image.
9. File > Image > Crop. Image enlarged and orphan mic stand no longer in picture. Save image.
10. File > Image > Size
 - a. Resize to 2.4 inches wide (one column). Save image.
 - b. Check final size is 2.4 inches by 1.9 inches. Save image.
 - c. Double check resolution is at 300 DPI. Mine was already at 300 DPI. Save

image.

11. Google “Jimmy Burns Bass Player.” It’s E.G. McDaniel. Part of Chicago’s Ink Spots Family.
12. File > Image > Mode > Switch from RGB to CMYK. Save image.
13. File > Save As > 2023 EG McDaniel Bass Eric S (File title)
 - a. Change format to Photoshop. Save image.
 - b. Send 2023 EG McDaniel Bass Eric S.psd to Polly O’Keary for her consideration.



EG McDaniel at the Chicago Blues Festival
(Photo by Eric Steiner)

Next month, I plan to use free, online Adobe tutorials to learn the difference between about raster and vector images, and explore Adobe’s free, online resizing tool.

I hope this article and step-by-step guide provides potential contributors with enough information to correctly format and title photos for traditional, print publication.

Please consider using the free, online tutorials at Adobe’s website or contact your nearest public library (as many Seattle-area libraries may provide patrons free access to Adobe products on-site).

Some public libraries may also provide access to other types of image editing programs, such as GIMP (that’s a free open source photo editing program called GNU Image Manipulation Program).

Polly and I are grateful for each and every

photo that we can use in print, and we are very, very lucky to have so many blues fans who want to share their photos with the Washington Blues Society.

Got a great shot? Format it and send it in!



We Want You!
To Join the
Washington Blues Society

Sign up online at www.WABLUES.org
or scan this QR code with your phone

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- Monthly Bluesletter in your mailbox*
- Monthly All-Ages Blues Bash Email notices
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- \$5.00 off show admission for Friday 9:30 shows at Jazz Alley**

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Robert Johnson

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Washington Blues Society Sets Local Competitions for the 2024 International Blues Challenge in Memphis!

Washington Blues Society Contacts:

Tony Frederickson, President	(206) 612-6055	president@wablues.org
Rick Bowen, Vice President	(425) 422-5062	vicepres@wablues.org

The Washington Blues Society's local competitions for the 2024 International Blues Challenge in Memphis have been set! It's time for bands and solo/duo acts to make their plans to compete. One band and one solo/duo act will represent the Washington Blues Society (WBS) in Memphis at the world's largest gathering of blues musicians on January 16-20, 2024 on Memphis' fabled Beale Street.

We are working with multiple blues societies across the state to hold semi-finals to make it easier for blues acts to participate. We will hold semi-final competitions on Sunday, June 4th in Snohomish (Venue TBA), on Sunday, June, 11th in Purdy (Venue TBA), on Sunday, June, 18th in Yakima (Venue TBA), on Sunday, June, 25th in Spokane (Venue TBA), on Sunday, July, 9th in Seattle (Venue TBA). The finalists will compete on Sunday, August 26th in Seattle at (Venue TBA). If we receive more than 10 applicants for any semi-final event our Board may select applicants via a lottery on May 31st, 2023.

Each competition will follow the rules of The Blues Foundation. Each set will be limited to 25 minutes, and each competitor will be allowed one 15-minute set change. Any blues act that resides in WA, OR, ID, MT, BC or ALB, may enter, and the act must include at least one who is a blues society member of an associated Greater Pacific Northwest Blues Society must be verified as part of the IBC entry. The contest entry application may be downloaded from www.wablues.org, or in

Each applicant is required to pay the non-refundable entry fee, which pays for the backline and a PA system. Each winner will be required to perform at a minimum of two fundraisers in 2023 and one fundraiser in 2024 at no charge. Proceeds from these events and fees, will be deposited into a WBS fund to help defray expenses to get each winning act to and from Memphis, but we cannot guarantee an "all-expense paid" trip. Band entry fee is \$30; Solo/Duo entry fee is \$15. Applications and entry fees must be received no later than Wednesday, May 24th, 2023.

All proceeds will help with expenses for Memphis. The WBS will help winners in fundraising, but cannot guarantee that all expenses for Memphis will be covered. Judges will evaluate each act using Blues Foundation scoring criteria (www.blues.org/ibc/scoring.php) and rules (www.blues.org/ibc/rules.php). Acts may not be affiliated the WBS Board upon application. IBC rules also prohibit any act from competing three consecutive years at the IBC (www.blues.org/ibc/rules.php). Application is an initial statement of interest and not a binding agreement between the applicant and the WBS. Make your plans to enter now! Applications and entry fees must be received no later than Wednesday, May 24th 2023.

**** Please Note:** We need at least two solo/duo acts and two band acts to hold a semi-final event. If we do not have enough entries for one of our semi-finals, we will allow those affected to move to a different semi-final.**



**WASHINGTON BLUES SOCIETY
2024 International Blues Competition (IBC) Contest
Two Categories: Bands (Three Piece and Larger) and Solo/Duo Acts**

CONTESTANT APPLICATION

Please complete this application if you want to compete in the Washington Blues Society (WBS) contest to send a band or a solo/duo act to the IBC in Memphis in January 16-20, 2024. We are working with multiple blues societies across the state to hold semi-finals to make it easier for blues acts to participate. We will hold semi-final competitions on Sunday, June 4th in Snohomish (Venue TBA), on Sunday, June, 11th in Purdy (Venue TBA, on Sunday, June, 18th in Yakima, (Venue TBA), on Sunday, June, 25th in Spokane, (Venue TBA), on Sunday, July, 9th in Seattle (Venue TBA). If we receive 10+ applicants for any event, our Board may select applicants via lottery on May 31st. This form is an initial statement of interest, and not binding. Judges will evaluate acts using the Blues Foundation score sheet (www.blues.org/ibc/scoring.php).

LOCATION (CIRCLE ONE)

Snohomish (6/4)

Purdy (6/11)

Yakima (6/18)

Spokane (6/25)

Seattle (7/9)

Band or Solo Duo (Circle One)	
Contact	
Mailing Address	
Best Phone	
Email	
Signature	

PARTICIPATION CRITERIA, FEES, AND DEADLINE: Contestants must be a blues act, pay the non-refundable entry fee, reside in WA, OR, ID, MT, BC, or ALB, and at least one member must belong to (or join) the WBS upon application. (Membership in the CBA, IEBS or Idaho/Montana based blues society will also meet blues society membership requirement) Entry fees go into a fund for winning Band and Solo/Duo to help with expenses for travel to Memphis, but we cannot guarantee an "all-expenses paid" trip. Band entry fee is \$30; Solo/Duo entry fee is \$15. Applications and entry fees must be received no later than Wednesday, May 24th 2023 by a WBS Board member or at:

**Washington Blues Society
ATTN: President, IBC Entry
PO Box 70604
Seattle, WA 98127**



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Seattle, WA 98127

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