

Bluesletter

Washington Blues

February 2025

RONNIE BAKER BROOKS'
BLUES IN MY DNA @ JAZZ ALLEY

BLUES NEWS & PREVIEWS

BLUES QUILT
ALL WRAPPED UP IN BLUE



Hello Blues Fans

The International Blues Challenge has come and gone, and our representatives did us proud. Each Washington Blues Society act, including Joel Astley in the band category and Brian Butler in the solo/duo category, made the semi-finals. And I am also chuffed because, hot diggity dog, my friend Josh Hoyer went and won the thing with his incredible blues and soul band.

I first met Josh when he played keyboards and I played bass on a Midwest tour with a band called The Soul of John Black. Through many wintery miles in a white Econoline van, I found him to be hilarious, personable, and insanely talented.

A resident of Lincoln, Nebraska, he was a mighty figure in the fantastic Midwest blues scene, and he also booked one of its top clubs, Lincoln's legendary Zoo Bar. We stayed in touch over the years as he helped us out with Zoo Bar dates on our summer tours and as I tried to find him work on the West Coast.

Josh's first album, Josh Hoyer and the Shadowboxers, was a revelation. It felt like I was hearing The Commitments play a set of all originals with Curtis Salgado and the Blues Brothers thrown in. I wondered when he was going to make his way to the top of the national scene like others I've seen over the years, including John Nemeth and Seattle blues rocker Ayrton Jones.

It kept not happening. He toured, played great festivals, even the Portland Waterfront Festival, won awards, got great reviews, and even appeared for several episodes on The Voice. He regularly got new albums out, each equally fantastic. I'm as prone to professional envy as the next artist, but it literally made me mad at the world to see Josh continuously get overlooked by the star-making blues labels and booking agencies. If anybody deserved success, he did.

He even thought about packing it in once in a while. He was out there trying to tour with a six-piece band, which is financially tough, especially when you've got a family. Last summer, I caught up with him at the Omaha In The Market For Blues Festival and we sat down for a bit and talked. He had just put out an album called Green Light and, like all the other stuff he'd done, it was remarkable. I recently noticed he'd won a cool award for it in Nebraska, and that, at least, was good.

Then I heard about his band's win in Memphis. Winning the IBC has launched other notable careers, including that of Danielle Nicole and Mr. Sipp. I hope this is the break he's overdue for.

And I hope we can get him to Washington this summer, as we did a couple of years ago with our other IBC-winning friend from Nebraska, Hector Anchondo. If we do, I'll be sure to let you all know. In the meantime, if you aren't familiar with his work, Google him up.

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4
CULTURE

Congratulations to all the musicians who put in the hard work to make it to Memphis. You hard-working, original writing, road dog players keep the blues growing strong.

Polly O'Keary, Editor
Washington Blues Society Bluesletter

This month's Bluesletter welcomes Ronnie Baker Brooks to Jazz Alley and Joe Bonamassa to Climate Pledge Arena. The issue also salutes this year's International Blues Challenge winners honored by The Blues Foundation in Memphis and celebrates select blues Grammy nominations at The Recording Academy in Los Angeles. South Sound Blues Association President Susie Campbell's first article in print offers information on an important and new resource for musicians, the Seattle Musicians Access to Sustainable Healthcare (SMASH), and frequent contributor Kirk Anderson gives readers reasons to see Joe Bonamassa at Seattle's Climate Pledge Arena. The Washington Blues Society is also grateful to *Big City Rhythm & Blues Magazine* for permission to reprint Blues DJ Steve Daniels' article on Bellingham's own Leo Schumaker, Professor of the Blues, in this issue. The issue also features reviews of Ronnie Baker Brooks' CD, *Blues in My DNA* and Mitch Woods' CD, *Happy Hour*. Finally, due to a technical glitch with our website, we have extended the nomination period of our 2025 Best of the Blues ("BB Awards") process with an updated nomination ballot on page 31 of this issue. Please turn in your nomination ballot to a board member no later than Tuesday, February 11th at our blues bash at Aurora Borealis in Shoreline featuring the Ryan Hardin Band and Reji Marc. (Eric Steiner)

In This Issue...

BLUES RIFFS

- 2 Letter from the President
- 5 Letter from the Editor

BLUES NEWS, REVIEWS & FEATURES

- 6 Preview: Joe Bonamassa US Tour
- 7 Ronnie Baker Brooks at Jazz Alley!
- 7 Northwest Blues All Stars Are Back
- 8 Meet Casey Sutton!
- 10 Blues on the Road
- 14 In Memoriam: Artists We Lost in 2024
- 16 Around the Sound with LTD Presents
- 17 CD Reviews
- 18 Congratulations to the IBC Winners
- 20 Duffy Bishop at the Salmon Bay Eagles' 35th
- 21 Congratulations to 2025 KBA Recipients
- 25 Leo Schumaker: Professor of the Blues
- 26 SMASH: A New Resource for Musicians
- 30 Department of Corrections

WASHINGTON BLUES SOCIETY STUFF!

- 4 2025 Blues Society Officers & Directors
- 5 Quilting for the Blues
- 20 Membership Form
- 22 February Live Music Calendar
- 24 Blues Jams & Open Mic Listings
- 28 Updated Blues Talent Guide
- 31 2025 Best of the Blues Voting Ballot

Cover: Ronnie Baker Brooks aboard the 41st Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise (Photo by Eric Steiner and cover design and layout by Sean Donovan of Gator Boy Productions www.gatorboyproductions.com)

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THANKS TO OUR 2024 STREET TEAM

(NOTE: UNDER RECONSTRUCTION MORE DETAILS IN A FUTURE ISSUE)

SPECIAL THANKS

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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.. The Washington Blues Society received the Keeping the Blues Alive Award from The Blues Foundation in 2009.



WASHINGTON BLUES SOCIETY
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Quilting for the Blues

Quilt raised funds for IBC contestants



By Amy MacNaughton, Photo courtesy of Amy McNaughton

I attended the December Blues Bash at the Aurora Borealis on December 10. It was the send off party for the musicians who were selected to go to the International Blues Challenge in Memphis in January.

The entrants this year were Brian Butler in the solo/duo category and the Joel Astley Band in the band category. The Washington Blues Society supports musicians by paying for the travel expenses to Memphis. Several items were auctioned from the stage at the Blues Bash.

I wondered if I could contribute in some way. I am a prolific quilter.

Could I possibly design, find fabrics and construct a music themed quilt in time to be auctioned at the WBS Holiday Party on December 22?

I searched fabric stores from Lynnwood to Everett and was able to find some music themed fabrics. I worked ten days straight to construct the quilt on my home sewing machine.

After sewing the quilt, I asked Brian Butler, Joel Astley and his band members to sign the labels which I stitched onto the quilt. Joel added some of his artwork to the labels and I printed some information about the IBC.

At the WBC Holiday Party on December 22, the music themed quilt was auctioned from the stage and raised \$150 for the travel fund for the IBC musicians. The woman who bought the quilt planned to send it to her grandson as a holiday gift.

I may make another music themed quilt at the end of 2025 for the next IBC travel fund but next time, I will have more than ten days to complete it!

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Preview: Joe Bonamassa US Spring Tour 2025

This year's tour opens at Seattle's Climate Pledge Arena on February 16th!

By Kirk Anderson

We are lucky to be living in a time of talented, blues guitarists who have been practicing their craft for more than 25 years. These devoted and talented musicians are in the lineage of Robert Johnson > Charley Patton > Muddy Waters > Buddy Guy > Duane Allman > Eric Clapton (I am sure you can add your favorites into this list without too much thought!).

Bonnie Raitt > Derek Trucks > Robben Ford > Kenny Wayne Shepherd all have started playing guitar very early in life and remained true to the music, the studio, the road, and to the fans. Another one of these musicians continuing to help satisfy our blues jones and further the art form of blues is Joe Bonamassa.

The Pacific Northwest has been chosen to be the first gig kicking off a major 2025 tour as Joe will be at the Climate Pledge Arena in Seattle on February 16, 2025. In Joe's last tour, he played the much smaller but among the largest theatre offerings in Seattle at the Paramount Theatre and in Portland at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall. By playing the 18,300 seat Climate Pledge Arena, Joe moves up to a venue that touring heavyweights occupy.

A one off gig on the West Coast as Joe's tour then plays Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The tour then moves to the East Coast to tour through the end of winter winding its way down to Miami for Joe's "Keeping the Blues Alive at Sea X" super lineup 10th anniversary cruise followed by Joe and his band playing several weeks in Europe.

Although still in Europe, Joe shifts gears from touring with his band to the hard rock super group Black Country Communion. Consisting of bassist Glenn Hughes, drummer Jason Bonham and keyboardist Derek Serinian, Black Country Communion formed in Los Angeles back in 2009 playing on again off again as the members find time to come back to an obviously symbiotic relationship. This is in support of Black Country Communion's

recently released album titled "V".

July 1st sees Joe back with his band as they continue to criss-cross Europe. Then, on September 15-21 sees Joe back in Seattle not for a gig to bookend the year but for the Keeping the Blues Alive at Sea Alaska blues cruise.

Bluesletter readers were turned onto an awesome gig preview cover story by Rick Bowen in the November 2022 *Bluesletter*. As I usually do, I encourage you to check out the *Bluesletter* online archive at www.wablues.org.

I personally first met Joe when he was "Joey" Bonamassa of Bloodline. Exposed to the guitar greats from England by his parents, Danny Gatton was a large influence on Joe when he was starting out gigging as "Smokin' Joe" Bonamassa outside of his school schedule. At 12, he opened for multiple B.B. King gigs. To this day as Sirius/XM's B.B. King's Bluesville channel replays interviews with its namesake where B.B. talks about how impressed he was with the young Bonamassa...AT 12 YEARS OLD!!!!.

Bloodline formed later in 1991 as a vehicle for Joe to step into the adult world of music. The name Bloodline's muse was the makeup of the band. Lead guitar-Joey Bonamassa, Berry Oakley, Jr {aka Berry Duane Oakley on lead vocals and bass (son of Berry Oakley, bassist for the Allman Brothers Band), drummer Erin Davis (Miles Davis' son), Waylon Krieger (The Doors' guitarist Robby Krieger's son), and keyboardist Lou Segreti (from "Smokin' Joe" Bonamassa's band).

As is the case in the music industry, differing ideas of follow up were too big to overcome and Joey started his solo careers as the other band members left to follow other endeavors.

I noticed that on his website and press kit, he is called a "Blues Titan." Looking at his steady growth into a venue size to the likes of Climate Pledge Arena, to his podcast "Live From Nerdsville with Joe Bonamassa," to

his weekly hour long show on Sirius/XM's "Different Shades of Blue," to his newest live album *Live from Hollywood Bowl - With Orchestra*, to major presences on all social media and streaming platforms, to a first class merchandise presences to his consistent desire to help the communities that he plays in to pass along the blues to those coming up behind him. In 2022, one of Joe's charitable activities, the Fueling Musicians Initiative, received a prestigious Keeping the Blues Alive Award from The Blues Foundation. This initiative is one facet of Joe's Keeping the Blues Alive Foundation.

According to The Blues Foundation's award announcement at the time, "Award-winning blues guitarist Joe Bonamassa founded the Keeping the Blues Alive Foundation in 2011. The foundation aims to support arts and music education through grants, scholarships, and donations to schools, colleges, and other nonprofit organizations. One of the most notable programs funded by the foundation is the Fueling Musicians initiative, designed to provide critically needed assistance to musicians whose income has been eliminated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Since its inception in 2020, this initiative has raised over \$500,000, distributing over 300 cash awards. Fueling Musicians has attracted the attention and support of Gibson, Fender, Guitar Center, Ernie Ball Music Man, and George Thorogood and the Destroyers. Since it began in 2011, the Keeping the Blues Alive Foundation has raised over \$2.7M through 680 projects that have impacted over 110,000 youth through music education.

See the next stage of Joe's career as he honors Seattle with his 2025 tour opener at the Climate Pledge Arena, or if you've never seen him live, treat yourself to a fun, mid-February concert steeped in the blues.

Ronnie Baker Brooks Brings the Blues Back to Jazz Alley

"Blues-rock never sounded so outrageous" Blues Blast Magazine

By Polly O'Keary

Chicago guitarist, vocalist, and songwriter Ronnie Baker Brooks, one of the world's most talented and electrifying bluesmen, will bring his band to Seattle's Jazz Alley on Tuesday, Feb. 25, and Wednesday, Feb. 26.

Ronnie was born into Chicago blues royalty as the son of legendary multiple GRAMMY Award nominee, Blues Hall Of Famer, and longtime Alligator Records recording star Lonnie Brooks. He is among the few contemporary blues artists who learned his craft directly from many of the genre's icons, including Albert Collins, B.B. King, Willie Dixon, Koko Taylor and, most significantly, his father.

"I'm blessed to have played with and learned from the best. I'm carrying them within me," he says of all the legends he knew growing up and the journey he's been on.

Brooks received his first guitar from his famous father at age 9 and learned the instrument as he got older, sharing his time between playing basketball and focusing on his music. After high school, he joined his father's band – as a roadie. He earned his way slowly up the ladder, listening, watch-

ing and learning. At one show, Koko Taylor pulled him aside as he was loading the gear into the van and told him, "You learn from your daddy everything you can. And one day, it'll be up to you to carry the blues forward."

Lonnie eventually allowed Ronnie to play bass with the band before bringing him on as his full-time second guitarist. In 1991, he hit the road as part of The Alligator Records 20th Anniversary Tour band, backing Lonnie, Elvin Bishop, and Katie Webster. Each night, he'd join them, along with Koko Taylor and Lil' Ed Williams, for unforgettable blues jams.

Ronnie performed with his father for 12 years, gaining valuable experience and sharing stages with artists including Taj Mahal, Eric Clapton, Buddy Guy, and many others. During this time, his guitar skills continued to grow, along with his songwriting and performing confidence.

Among the many lessons Ronnie learned growing up was to forge his own identity, to write his own songs, to play his own brand of blues and not to imitate anyone else. Willie Dixon taught him the importance of "delivering" the song, so the people know you



Ronnie Baker Brooks on the Blues Cruise!
(Photo by Eric Steiner)

believe it. Albert Collins, almost a second father to Ronnie, would say, "Take what you like from what we do and make it you."

Like all the great blues artists before him, Ronnie Baker Brooks has, through hard work, perseverance and gritty determination – along with his prodigious, natural talent and charisma – has earned his place in the upper echelons of the blues world.

The Northwest Blues All-Stars Are Back!

Save the Date of March 1st to "... ride the blues train to Chicago, Memphis and New Orleans..."

Courtesy of the Northwest Blues All-Stars

Following up on their sold out show last February, the Northwest Blues Stars return to Seattle's Triple Door on Saturday, March 1st for one night only at 7:30 PM. While focused on the blues, this time the all-star six-piece band will ride the blues train to Chicago, Memphis and New Orleans and feature some of the greatest songs to come out of each of those cities.

The Northwest Blues Stars is produced by Steve Sarkowsky, who was the founder and primary talent buyer for the award-winning Highway 99 Blues Club in Seattle. He has produced a variety of all-star shows over the

past 20 years and brings the latest version of the Northwest Blues Stars to the Triple Door next month.

"This show gives the band a chance to play some of the best known and admired songs from each of those vital cities" said Sarkowsky. "Each of those cities has a rich history and tradition of fantastic music, legendary artists and a unique sound" he added. Artists such as The Meters; Dr. John; Irma Thomas; Albert King; Otis Redding; Junior Wells; Little Walter; Buddy Guy and Elmore James, just to name a few, to be featured.

Scheduled to appear with the Northwest Blues Stars this time will be Kevin Sutton on

guitar and vocals, Robin Moxey on guitar and vocals, Tommy Wall on bass and vocals, Jeff Conlin on keys, and Steve Sarkowsky on drums, and Mark Dufresne on harp and vocals. This is a lineup heavy on experience and that has played throughout the Pacific Northwest over the years.

The last show sold out and tickets are now on sale thru the Triple Door website at tickets.tripledoor.net.

Special thanks to the Washington Blues Society and radio station KNKX for all they do for keeping the blues alive.

Meet Casey Sutton!

The Washington Blues Society's incoming president brings a lot to the table

By Polly O'Keary

Charles Sutton, Casey to his friends, has done just about everything in blues music but serve as president of a blues society. He has owned vintage guitar stores in Hawaii and St. Louis, he has been a professional sound engineer for many bands and venues, he has managed bands, toured with bands, played with bands, been a booking agent for blues artists and venues, helped organize festivals, and he has extensive connections all over the nation.

So when he moved to Washington five years ago to be closer to his brothers, including his immensely talented brother Kevin Sutton, he thought he might be ready to move to a new chapter in his life, to charter his beloved boat and hang out with his friends and family.

"I had zero interest," Casey said. "I was like, I'm cool. I loved what I did."

But Washington Blues Society officers were not as eager to let such prodigious skills languish. Chief among them was sitting president Tony Fredrickson, who was thinking of retiring after many years at the helm. Rick Bowen, who has filled several roles in the society, including vice president, also had designs on Casey's abilities.

Finally, Rick took Casey to a ball game and the two got talking. The Blues Society had recently taken responsibility for organizing Seattle's long-running Peace Concert series, a complex task involving immense coordination between many different volunteers and professionals. Rick wondered, would Casey be interested in helping out?

"That set the hook," Casey said. He built a committee to organize the Peace Concerts and attended all the Blues Society board meetings. Inevitably, he started to notice things he thought he could contribute. So when Tony and Rick prevailed on him to consent to being nominated for president, he relented. The members voted, and the deed was done. Casey assumed the role in January.

Shortly thereafter, he shared his history with music and his visions for the future of the

society with the Washington Bluesletter.

Casey grew up with his brother Kevin in Moscow, Idaho, which, as a college town, offered the brothers their first brushes with music.

"It's a small college town," Casey said. "College towns always have radio stations and money for festivals." They also had eclectic music stores, and Casey and Kevin discovered Janis Joplin and, as so many do, worked their way back through the influences of modern artists until they arrived at the originators, such as Sister Rosetta Tharpe.

"That's how we got to the blues," Casey said.

The bug bit early; Casey described recently finding a home movie made when he and Kevin were about 5 and 7 years old. Casey was playing a drum set made of paper plates, and Kevin was playing a guitar fashioned from a paper towel tube.

A decade later, the roles the brothers would occupy in music took shape. Kevin wanted a guitar, and Casey helped him start his first band, which he then started booking. Casey's then-girlfriend and later wife was also a singer, and he booked her act as well.

After high school, Casey left for Hawaii, and as soon as Kevin graduated, he followed. By then, Casey had discovered that he could buy vintage guitars in the United States and sell them at a profit in Hawaii. He began flying all over the country, trading in guitars and meeting musicians everywhere he went.

Then Casey's wife got accepted to Washington University in St. Louis, and the Suttons moved to that cradle of blues music.

"That's where we got exposed to the total real blues," Casey said.

He opened a vintage guitar store called West End Music and held events there, including a jam session that featured many national artists and an original music night that got a write-up in *Billboard Magazine*. Kevin went to college and helped tend the store.

The brothers soon became integral to the rich music scene of the Midwest. Kevin



L>R: New Washington Blues Society President Casey Sutton and Vice President Kevin Young, (Photo by Rob Bramlett)

worked in multiple bands, including the St. Louis All-Stars. Casey became quite busy as a soundman and booking agent. When Stevie Ray Vaughn exploded into fame in the late 1980s, the flagging blues scene suddenly flourished.

"We were lucky," Casey said. "We rode that wave." Casey had been booking top-level artists into 300-seat rooms, but now he was selling out 700-seat theaters with the same artists.

"So many guys who were broke and desperate got back into the industry," Casey recalled.

In the next years, Casey mixed sound extensively in Chicago and other mid-west cities, managed bands, and helped organize festivals. He served on panels at SXSW as a blues promoter and later as a manager.

Kevin returned to the Pacific Northwest, started a band called Wired, rocketed to the top of the local scene, and then, in 2012, won the International Blues Challenge with his trio. Through the next years, Casey frequently came up to visit for several weeks at a time.

Then, after his youngest son graduated from high school, Casey moved to Washington to

be close to his brothers again, including a brother who serves as a public defender in Mt. Vernon. He also estimates that he has about 70 cousins around Washington and Idaho, and a sister in Moscow.

Once he took on the role of director of the Peace Concerts, he recruited a committee that over time came to include Lee Sutton, Marysue Richards Thomas, Angelo and Alicia Ortiz, Mary McPage, and Kevin Young. As of January, the committee's co-chairs are Diane Forsythe of the popular Blue Healers and folk artist Sarah St. John, both of whom have been involved with Peace Concerts for over 20 years.

Now, Casey is charting a course for the future of the Blues Society. One thing he plans to do is get more people involved. Things once relegated to individuals will soon become tasks for committees. More directors are being sought to help modernize and professionalize the organization. More income streams are being sought, especially in the

wake of COVID-19.

"We need to regroup for a post-COVID environment," Casey said. "Our mission statement is to preserve, protect, and advance the blues, and we need to find new ways to do that."

The Washington Blues Society has depended on merchandising and running beer gardens at blues festivals for much of its income. But festivals have struggled to recover in the post-pandemic years.

Also, Casey is thinking about new ways to support young blues artists, such as paying for scholarships to music seminars for promising young artists who otherwise could not afford to attend. He is in discussion with Ben Hunter and Joe Seamons of the Rhapsody Project to identify possible avenues by which that could be done.

He also hopes to identify and recruit the next generation of blues fans to carry the society into the future. And he hopes to continue to

inspire Washington's many blues artists and fans to offer the skills in support of a strong society and a thriving blues scene.

"Everybody loves to get behind a team," he said. "We need to get everybody behind our local scene."



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Previews: February 2025 Blues on the Road

Great live music in the Evergreen State & Lower Mainland this month!

By Eric Steiner

This month offers many opportunities to see a number of live blues bands on tour in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia's Lower Mainland. I've selected several shows that I'd enjoy. However, I'll be on my first 35 day cruise on the Holland America Line from mid-February to late March (and I'll be looking for live blues when I'm in port in Hawaii and the South Pacific and look forward to writing about the music I find in a future issue).

Welcome Back, Mindi Abair!



Dimitriou's Jazz Alley welcomes 2x Grammy nominated saxophonist Mindi Abair for four nights and six shows playing favorites from her 20+ year career. Band members are Mindi Abair (sax and vocals), Arthur Thompson (drums and vocals), Tony Pulizzi (guitar), Uriah Duffy (bass, vocals) and Walter English (keys). Show times Thursday at 7:30 PM. Friday and Saturday at 7:30 PM and 9:30 PM and Sunday at 7:30 PM Doors open at 6 PM. Thursday and 5:30 PM. Friday – Sunday. The Washington Blues Society is proud to support this show and encourages this magazine's readership to fill the room! After Seattle Mindi performs on the Botti at Sea '25 cruise departing Ft. Lauderdale on the 4th for a week followed by two weeks at sea sailing from Miami on the Smooth Jazz Cruise, billed as "The Greatest Party at Sea!" (Photo Courtesy of Jazz Alley).

Los Lobos

Fresh from their shows on Delbert McClinton's Sandy Beaches cruise, "just another band from East LA," Los Lobos, plays Seattle Triple Door from the 5th to the 8th. Los Lobos is in the middle of a

40+ date tour that began last October, and the Seattle shows will feature sets acoustic sets billed as "Disconnected," which will feature many of the band's signature songs from its stored 50-year career.

Reggie Watts



I've written about award winning artist Reggie Watts when I first saw him with the the Seattle funk band Maktub in earlier Blues on the Road previews, long before he landed in New York as bandleader and announcer for *The Late Late Show with James Corden*, as Music Man on PBS' legendary children's show *The Electric Company*, or his 2023 autobiography, *Great Falls, MT; Fast Times, Post-Punk Weirdos, and a Tale of Coming Home Again* (Tiny Reparations Books/Penguin Random House). This month, Reggie Watts will perform at the Alladdin Theatre in Portland on the 6th, at the Showbox at the Market in Seattle on the 7th, and at The Pearl in Vancouver, British Columbia on the 8th. (Photo from United Talent Agency Website).

Jefferson Starship

Frequent contributor (and Portland Street Team volunteer) Kathy Rankin shouted about this 60s and 70s juggernaut of a band (and rock and roll brand) in the December, 2024 issue, and I share Kathy's enthusiasm for Jefferson Starship. The band's *Red Octopus* was one of my favorite LPs I bought with my *Park Forest Star* paper route money in high school. While David Freiberg is the sole surviving member of Jefferson Airplane, Kathy eloquently captured Starship's most recent show at the Emerald Queen Casino with keyboardist Chris Smith, guitarist Jude Gold, vocalist/ guitarist Cathy Richardson, and drummer Danny Baldwin. On February 11th, celebrate rock and roll history with Jefferson Starship at the Taper Auditorium at Seattle's Benaroya Hall.

Joe Bonamassa



On the 16th, award winning blues guitarist Joe Bonamassa kicks off a 19-date Spring 2025 tour at Seattle's Climate Pledge Arena, followed by his 10th Keeping the Blues Alive at Sea out of Miami in March, before a 13-night European tour with stops in Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Austria. After a short European Summer tour, Joe's 11th Keeping the Blues Alive at Sea will depart from Seattle in September of 2025. Please consider not only supporting the tour's debut date at Seattle's Climate Pledge Arena this month on the 16th, but also add Keeping the Blues Alive at Sea on your blues calendar later this year! (Photo from Joe Bonamassa Seated Website).

The Washington Blues Society Musicians Relief Fund Concert Featuring Lee Oskar



Also on the 16th, the Washington Blues Society hosts its annual Musicians Relief Fund benefit concert headlined by award winning virtuoso Lee Oskar at the Historic Everett Theatre in Everett, Washington. The blues society's Musicians Relief Fund is a service that provides help to musicians in need through a confidential application process to help working musicians respond to challenges associated with medical expenses, unexpected housing costs, transportation and other barriers that musicians may encounter in their careers. The blues society also refers applicants to existing resources at the state, county and city levels – where appropriate – and when it makes sense, to local resources like SMASH (Seattle Musicians Access to Sustainable Healthcare) profiled in last month's online issue and this month's print edition. (Photo of Lee Oskar by Michael Weintrob).

Lyle Lovett

This month, we have three rare and special opportunities to see Lyle Lovett live in the

Evergreen State. On the 19th, the band will play Seattle's Moore Theatre, followed by a show in Bellingham at the Mount Baker Theatre in Bellingham on the 20th, and a show in Olympia at the Washington Center for the Performing Arts in Olympia. For those readers who'd question my inclusion of this artist in this month's Blues on the Road Preview, I'd ask them to just listen to Lyle Lovett singing "White Boy Lost in the Blues," "If I Had a Boat," or many of the songs on his 1992 CD, *Joshua Judges Ruth*.

Ayron Jones & The Deadman Theory



Several years ago, when the Washington Blues Society hosted Blues Bashes at the Red Crane restaurant above the Club Hollywood casino in Shoreline, Washington, and we featured young blues talent like Seattle's Ayron Jones and Bellingham's Miles Harris. This month, Ayron Jones is touring nationally with The Deadman Theory, with shows at Seattle's Moore Theatre on the 23rd, Portland's Revolution Hall on the 24th, and Spokane's Spokane Live showcase on the 25th. Ayron's latest single, "Blood in the Water," is an emotional, personal and powerful reflection, and I'm pleased that he's aligned with Detroit-based fashion and media polymath John Varvatos. Ayron's got 15 dates booked nationally between February and May, and I just wish he played locally more! (Photo of Ayron Jones from his website).

Ronnie Baker Brooks

Welcome Ronnie Baker Brooks to the Pacific Northwest this month with shows at Dimitrou's Jazz Alley in Seattle on February 25th & 26th and at the Alberta Rose Theatre in Portland on the 27th. In



this issue, check out Polly O'Keary's preview plus Eric Steiner's review of Ronnie Baker Brooks' Alligator Records debut, *Blues in My DNA!* (Photo of Ronnie Baker Brooks by Paul Natkin/Photo Reserve).

Keith Scott (Heavy Blues)

Finally, Blues on the Road this month would not be complete if it didn't recognize Chicagoland's peripatetic bluesman Keith Scott on his return to the Pacific Northwest. On the 13th, Keith returns to the Rattlesnake Brewery in Richland, followed by two shows at the Seven Cedars Resort in Sequim on the 14th and 15th. On the 16th, he'll play the Eagle Harbor Winery on Bainbridge Island, and on the 18th, he'll play the Icicle Brewery in Leavenworth. Keith worked for many years with Jimmy Dawkins, "King of the West Side Guitar" in Chicago as well as Hip Linkchain, and each of these artists not only were part of Keith's blues apprenticeship, but they also have informed my blues education. Keith Scott is a direct link to artists like Muddy Waters, Jimmy Dawkins and Hip Linkchain, and each one of his shows has surprised me. Once at the Seven Cedars, when he learned about my penchant for hot sauce, he improvised a song about the stuff from the bandstand!

Saturday
The LARGE Show
 Chris Cain
 Sammy Eubanks
 Coyote Kings w/Tiph
 Lionel Young

Friday
Opening Concert
 Albert Castiglia

Saturday
The Guitar Crawl

Multiple venues in Downtown Walla Walla!

Sunday
Jazz At The Fest

Friday
Kick-off Party

Sunday
Gospel Brunch
 Rae Gordon

Saturday
Tarwater Allstar Jam



Featuring...

Chris Cain
Albert Castiglia
Lionel Young - Sammy Eubanks
Coyote Kings w/Tiph - Diego Romero
Rae Gordon - Bennett Matteo Band
Polly O'Keary & The Rhythm Method
Kevin Selfe & The Tornadoes - Gary Winston
Mike Agidius - Vaughn Jensen - Mike Mendoza
Wasteland Kings - Sum People - Stereo Bird
NW Songwriter Experience: Cory Peterson, Scotty Wilson, Ty Lane, Randy Woody, Aaron "Dog Bite" Harris and many more TBA!

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 Henry Earl Estates - T-Post Tavern - Plumb Cellars



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In Memoriam: Artists We Lost in 2024

A personal look back...

Compiled by Eric Steiner

This must be my fourth or fifth compilation of an “In Memoriam” summary of musicians we have lost in the last calendar year, 2024.

As I’ve typed in these pages before, please go see “musicians of a certain age” (Read: Rockers I’ve enjoyed ever since I got my first Realistic turntable at Radio Shack in the 70s).

My sources for these listings include Billboard, Los Angeles Times, New York Times, Black America Web: Rest in Power, Soultracks, Mike Lynch’s Jet City Blues Blog, The Seattle Times, CBC.ca, The Blues Foundation, The Delta Blues Museum, NME, Skynews.com BBC.com, and as in year’s past, I’ve also included artists and DJs that influenced me before I left Chicagoland for the Pacific Northwest (like the late JD Souther, Donald Kinsey and

Again, this list admittedly is a personal remembrance that stretches far beyond the blues genre.

Alfa Anderson, “Freak,” Le Chic

Angela Bofill, “Angel of the Night”

Angela McCluskey, The Wild Colonial

Aston “Family Man” Barrett, Bob Marley & The Wailers

Bob “Slim” Dunlap, The Replacements

Bob Heil, The Grateful Dead

Bob West, KRAB Radio & Arcola Records

Brit Turner, Blackberry Smoke

Dean Brown, Eddie Harris Band

Casey Benjamin, Black Radio

Cat Janice “Gonna Dance You Outta My Head”

Charles R. Cross, The Rocket

Clarence “Frogman” Henry, Bourbon Street

Dan Morganstern, Downbeat Magazine

Dave Loggins, “Please Come to Boston”

David Sanborn, “All I Need is You” & The Little Milton Band

Dennis Thompson, The MC5

Derrick McIntire, Jamiroquai

Dickey Betts, The Allman Brothers Band

Don Wise, Delbert McClinton Band

Donald Kinsey, The Kinsey Report

Duane Eddy, Theme from “Peter Gunn”

Ernie Fields Jr., The Voice

Eleanor Collins, “Canada’s First Lady of Jazz”

Eric Carmen, The Raspberries

Frank Farian, Milli Vanilli

Gerry Conway, Jethro Tull

Greg Kihn, ‘Jeopardy’

Hank Cicalo, Colgems Records & Carole King

Herbie Flowers, T.Rex & “Walk on the Wild Side.”

Henry Farnborough, The Spinners

James Earl Jones, Storyteller

JD Souther, Souther, Hillman & Furay

Jerry Miller, Moby Grape

Jim Beard, Mahavishnu Orchestra

Jimmy Maxwell, Peter Duchin Big Band

Jimmy Van Eaton, Jerry Lee Lewis

Joe Chambers, The Chambers Brothers

Joe Flaherty, Second City TV

Joey Gilmore, 2005+ & 2006 International Blues Challenge Best Band Winner

John Barbata, CSNY

John Harken, The Strawbs

John Lowe, The Quarrymen

John Mayall, John Mayall & The Blues Breakers

Jon Landau, Titanic

Kenny “Fat Man” Hunter, The New Orleans Nightcrawlers

Kinky Friedman, Kinky Friedman & The Texas Jewboys

Kris Kristofferson, “Me & Bobby McGee”



Jerry Miller at Grinder’s Hot Sands in Shoreline
(Photo by Eric Steiner)

Lou “Sweet Poppa Lou” Donaldson, “Blues Walk”

Malcolm Holcomb, “A Hundred Lies”

Mark James, “Suspicious Minds”

Marlena Shaw, “Blue Note & Verve Records

Martin Mull, Fernwood 2 Night & FM

Maurice Williams, “Stay (Just a Little Bit Longer)”

Mary Weiss, The Shangri-Las

Melanie, “Brand New Key”

Michael Ward, John Hiatt & The Goners

Mojo Nixon, “Elvis is Everywhere”

Nick Daniels III, Dumpstaphunk

Patrick McDonald, The Seattle Times

Paul Brett, K-Tel Records, The Strawbs

Paul Cameron Nelson, Cascade Blues Association

Paul Nelson, Johnny Winter Band



John Mayall at Seattle's Jazz Alley in 2014
(Photo by Paul Steiner)

Peter "Peetah" Morgan, Morgan Heritage
 Peter Sinfield, King Crimson
 Phil Lesh, The Grateful Dead
 Quincy Jones, Renaissance Man
 Randy Sparks, The New Christy Minstrels
 REO Speedwagon (Band retired the name

due to "creative differences."
 Ric "Mad Dog" Howell, Nitelife
 Robert Perry, "You're So Vain"
 Sergio Mendes, Sergio Mendes & Brasil 66
 "Spider" John Koerner, Koerner, Ray & Glover
 Steve Alaimo, Sam & Dave, KC & The Sunshine Band
 Steve Albini, Nirvana and Page & Plant
 Steve Harley, Cockney Rebel
 Steve Lawrence, Steve & Eyedie
 Sugar Pie De Santo, "I Want to Know" & The Johnny Otis Revue
 Tito Jackson, The Jackson 5
 Toby Keith, "I Love This Bar"
 Tony Cedras, Miriam Makeba, Paul Simon (Graceland)

W.C. Clark, "Godfather of Austin Blues"
 Warren Benbow, James "Blood" Ulmer & Nina Simone
 Wayne Kramer, The MC5
 Will Jennings, "My Heart Will Go On" and "Tears in Heaven."
 *Joey Gilmore initially finished first in the 2005 International Blues Challenge but was later reclassified due to a technicality. He returned in 2006 and won the band competition.

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Take Six 6-9

Alex Cuba 11-12

Lucia Micarelli 13-16

Karrin Allyson 18-19

Honnie Baker Brooks 25-26

WAR 27 -Mar 2










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Around the South Sound and Beyond with LTD Presents

Keep love of the blues alive in February

By Tanya Lee Hodel

It's February, and during these winter months it's sometimes hard to rouse yourself out of that cold weather malaise and get out to see a show, but here are some exciting performances happening around the South Sound you won't want to miss.

In Old Town Tacoma, The Spar Tavern's Sunday Blues series has a power-packed February with Billy Stapleton's aptly named Powerhouse Band on Sunday, February 2nd. Tim Turner Band makes an appearance on the 9th and with King Kom Beaux on the 16th and McPage & Powell on the 23rd, it's a great month to head to The Spar for Sunday Blues. Music starts at 7 PM but arrive early for the best seat.



The LTD Presents Spotlight Series at The Spar features Bennett/Matteo Band on Wednesday, February 19th. Bennett Matteo Band (BMB) is led by guitarist and writer Gino Matteo and vocal powerhouse Jade Bennett. Gino and Jade were in Sugaray Rayford's band for several years and their witty repartee and great vocal and guitar chops are not to be missed. This series is sponsored in part by Kat McNeill and Lance Bowman. The show starts early at 6 PM. The Spar Tavern is at 2121 N. 30th Street, Tacoma. (Artist Courtesy Photo).

February 22nd brings Mark Hummel's Harmonica Blowout to Tacoma's Airport Tavern. Recently renovated, the Airport Tavern is a great venue to see artists like Mark Hummel and there will be more shows this year. Check out the calendar of

events at airporttavern.com and grab your tickets for this outstanding event. Airport Tavern is at 5406 S Tacoma Way.

This month's South Sound Blues Association Tuesday Blues Showcase brings in the Billy Shew Band to Purdy's Public House in Sumner on Tuesday, February 25th at 7 PM.. Check out the SSBA's master calendar at southsoundblues.org, too!

On Friday, February 28th the Spanish Ballroom in Tacoma has Rev. Horton Heat. In their own words, "Loaded guns, space heaters, and big skies. Welcome to the lethal littered landscape of Jim Heath's imagination. True to his high evangelical calling, Jim is a Revelator, both revealing & reinterpreting the country-blues-rock roots of American music. He's a time-travelling space-cowboy on an endless interstellar musical tour, and we are all the richer & "psychobillier" for getting to tag along." More information: www.reverendhortonheat.com or www.spanishballroomtac.com for a ticket link.



Not quite South Sound but adjacent, Heather Jones & The Groove Masters are at Stockton's in Maple Valley on Saturday, February 1st and Cory Wilds Band will be there on Saturday, February 15th. Both shows start at 8:00pm. Stockton's is at 23220 Maple Valley-Black Diamond Road, and Stockton's is known for good food and fun live music. (Artist Courtesy Photo)

Heather Jones & The Groove Masters will also be performing at The Roundup in Graham this month on February 15th from 8:00pm to 11:30pm. The Roundup is at 30411 Mountain Highway East, Graham.



Kimball Coffeehouse in Gig Harbor continues to be a fantastic supporter of the South Sound Blues scene with the debut of the John Stephan Band there on Friday, February 7th. (Artist Courtesy Photo).

Billy Stapleton's Powerhouse Band will be bringing the Valentine love for all on Friday, February 14th. The Soulful 88s helmed by Sweet Billy Spaulding with guitar hero Tom Boyle will be hitting the Kimball Stage on Friday the 21st. Check out their calendar at www.kimballcoffeehouse.com and other events such as their weekly open mic Thursdays.

Another fun Gig Harbor bar is The Float. Located at 14511 Sherman Dr NW, it hosts bands on Saturday nights. This month Mark Hurwitz and Gin Creek will be there on Saturday, February 22nd. Music runs from 9-11 PM. It's a fun and friendly place with good food and room to dance.

Mark Hurwitz & Gin Creek is also performing on Friday, February 15th at 8 PM at Rock the Dock in Tacoma. The venue regularly hosts an open mic on Thursday nights at 7 PM as well. Rock the Dock is at 535 Dock Street and will have blues bands in their rotation.

February is not the month to hibernate in the South Sound and beyond. There are too many good 'not to miss' performances on the horizon. See you out there!

CD Reviews



Mitch Woods
Happy Hour
(MoMojo Records)

Mitch Woods' newest, and 14th (!) CD features a baker's dozen of original songs inspired by class jump blues and boogie woogie bands dating back to the 1940s. It's an infectious and diverse collection that ranges from the quietly introspective blues of "Cryin' for My Baby" (complete with Rockin 88 saxophone player Dave Somers' first class solos) to the full throttle paens to fast cars and uptempo boogie woogie of "Sold Gold Cadillac" and "Jukebox Drive." Recorded at the fabled Greaseland Studios in California, Christoffer "Kid" Anderson joins the Rockin 88s as engineer and guitarist and complements the exceptional engine room of Kedar Roy on bass and Larry Vann on drums. When I saw Mitch Woods hold court this past October at Club 88 on the 41st Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise aboard MS Eurodam of the Holland America Line, several songs from this CD were true crowd pleasers, such as "Mojo Mambo," "Boogie Woogie Bar-B-Q," and "Broke." That last song is about a blues fan who has more month than money at the end of the month, and it got a lot of people dancing in the Billboard Onboard lounge! (Eric Steiner)

Co-Editor's Note: *This month, after hosting Club 88 aboard the 42nd Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise, Mitch Woods will play select venues in Cruz Bay and on St. John in the US Virgin Islands and enjoy a seven day residency at Myett's Restaurant and Hotel in Leonards on the island of Tortola in the British Virgin Islands from February 4th through the 19th. These shows would be a nice alternative to traditionally dreary February weather of the Pacific Northwest!*



Ronnie Baker Brooks
Blues in My DNA
(Alligator Records)

Ronnie Baker Brooks' 2024 debut on Alligator Records, *Blues in My DNA*, is a cause for celebration. It was one of my favorite blues releases of the year, and when I saw him play many of the songs from this CD on my first Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise last October, I knew I'd absolutely enjoy this record. With this CD, Ronnie joins his father's storied, award-winning record label, Alligator Records, and builds upon his prior releases on the Provogue label and his own independent Watchdog Records. I had the privilege of meeting his father, Lonnie Brooks, a number of times, initially at ChicagoFest in the 70s and then an outstanding Blues Blast Music Awards many years ago at Buddy Guy's in Chicago, and the CD includes an audio snippet of Lonnie's blessing after the rousing, opening cut "I'm Feeling You." Look at 2006 Keeping the Blues Alive Award recipient Paul Natkin's CD cover photo: Ronnie's playing his father's guitar that was featured on the cover of his father's 1979 debut on Alligator Records, *Bayou Lightning*. The CD is a collection of 12 strong and powerful, guitar-fueled original blues songs, and my favorite cuts include the title cut, the upbeat "I Got to Make You Mine," the soulful "Accept My Love," and the eight-minute barn burner "Stuck on Stupid" (which reminded me at times of the Boz Scaggs and Duane "Sky Dog" Allman classic "Lone Me a Dime," first recorded by Alligator recording artist Fenton Robinson in 1974). During the COVID-19 pandemic, Ronnie effectively used social media to pivot away from live blues shows to weekly, virtual Facebook concerts, and he made it work, gaining new followers' online week after week. Joining Ronnie on this CD are Will McFarlane on rhythm guitar, Dave Smith on bass and Steve Potts on drums with Rick Steff on electric piano, Clayton Ivey on the Hammond B3, Brad

Quinn on saxophone, Drew White on trumpet, and Trenicia Hodges and Kimberlie Helton on background vocals. I think that *Blues in My DNA* is an exceptionally good CD of contemporary Chicago blues, and I wish that Ronnie Baker Brooks would return to the Pacific Northwest (and British Columbia's Lower Mainland) more often. I know that, for many of my fellow Washington Blues Society blues fans, blues is in our DNA, too. (Eric Steiner).

Co-Editor's Note: *Ronnie Baker Brooks plays Dimitrou's Jazz Alley in Seattle on February 25th & 26th before a show at the Alberta Rose Theatre in Portland on the 27th. Welcome Ronnie Baker Brooks to the Pacific Northwest this month!*

Congratulations to the International Blues Challenge Winners

Another exceptional year of great live music on Beale Street in 2025

Story and Photos Courtesy of Doug Deutsch and The Blues Foundation*

After a memorable 40th International Blues Challenge from January 7th through the 11th in Memphis, Tennessee, attended by several thousand from around the globe, The Blues Foundation is pleased to announce the 2025 International Blues Challenge winners:

Best Self-Produced CD: Piper & The Hard Times: *Revelation* (Nashville Roots & Blues Alliance)

Best Harmonica: Jock Webb Sr., Ra'Shad The Blues Kid (Magic City Blues Society)

Solo/Duo Guitar: Nick Charles (Melbourne Blues Appreciation Society)

Solo/Duo Second Place: 2 Blue for You (Mississippi Delta Blues Society of Indianola)

Solo/Duo First Place: Joce Reyome (East Coast Blues Society)

Most Promising Guitar: Dylan Salfer (Minnesota Blues Society)

Band Third Place: Dylan Salfer Band (Minnesota Blues Society)

Band Second Place: Ra'Shad The Blues Kid (Magic City Blues Society)

Band First Place: Josh Hoyer & Soul Colossal (Blues Society of Omaha)

About The Blues Foundation

The Blues Foundation is a world-renowned Memphis-based organization whose mission is to preserve blues heritage, celebrate blues recording and performance, expand worldwide awareness of the blues, and ensure the future of this uniquely American art form. Founded in 1980, the Foundation has approximately 4,000 individual members and 180 affiliated blues societies representing another 50,000 fans and professionals worldwide.

The Blues Foundation's signature honors and events — the Blues Music Awards, Blues Hall of Fame Inductions, International

Blues Challenge, and Keeping the Blues Alive Awards — make it the international hub of blues music. Its HART Fund provides the blues community with medical assistance for musicians in need, while Blues in the Schools programs and Generation Blues Scholarships expose new generations to blues music. The Blues Hall of Fame Museum, located in Downtown Memphis, adds the opportunity for blues lovers of all ages to interact with blues music and history.

Throughout the year, the Blues Foundation staff serves the global blues community with answers, information, and news.

*Washington Blues Society *Bluesletter* Editor Emeritus Eric Steiner added each winner's affiliation



Kimberly Horton, CEO/President, The Blues Foundation; Stephen Hull, 2024 Best Guitarist winner; Dylan Salfer, 2025 Best Guitarist winner; Joe Witmer



2025 IBC First Place Band Winner, Josh Hoyer & Soul Colossal. Far right, Kimberly Horton, CEO/President, The Blues Foundation



Kimberly Horton, CEO/President, The Blues Foundation; 2025 IBC Third Place Band Winner, Dylan Salfer Band



Kimberly Horton, CEO/President, The Blues Foundation, 2025 IBC Best Harmonica player, Jock Webb Sr.



Kimberly Horton, CEO/President, The Blues Foundation; 2025 IBC Second Place Band, Ra'shad The Blues Kid



Kimberly Horton, CEO/President, The Blues Foundation; and Solo/Duo First Place, Jocie Reyome

A large promotional poster for Joe Bonamassa. On the left, a photograph of Joe Bonamassa playing an electric guitar. The background is a bright yellow. The text reads: 'JOE BONAMASSA' in large red letters, 'LIVE IN CONCERT' in smaller black letters, 'FEBRUARY 16' in large red letters, 'CLIMATE PLEDGE ARENA' in large black letters, and 'BUY TICKETS!' in white letters on a red background. At the bottom, a black banner contains the text 'EVERY SHOW IS A NEW EXPERIENCE!' in white.

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Blues Bash Showcase



Taylor Hardin Band

&

Reji Marc

February 11th Aurora Borealis, Shoreline

7pm All Ages Welcome - Free



February 2025 Live Blues Music Calendar!

Our www.wablues.org calendar is the most current & contact the venue for start time + any additional details.

FEBRUARY 1

Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Stage One 7 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Mindi Abair 7:30 PM

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Long And Strange 7:30 PM

Pub 282, Camano: Mary Ellen Lykins & the CC Adams Band 7:30 PM

Rockfish, Anacortes: Red House 7:30 PM

Neptune, Seattle: MOE 8 PM

Aurora Borealis, Shoreline: Third Stage 8 PM

North City Bistro, Shoreline: Youfourc 8 PM

Jazzbones, Tacoma: Lonely Hearts Club 8 PM

Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: VuDudes 8 PM

FEBRUARY 2

Cellar Cat, Kingston: Dimitri Metheny Trio w Gail Pettis 4:30 PM

Peabo's, Mill Creek: Sunday Music Revue 7 PM

Spar, Tacoma: Sunday Blues 7 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Mindi Abair 7:30 PM

FEBRUARY 3

Angel of the Winds Casino, Arlington: Fat Fridays 11 AM

Royal Room, Seattle: New Music Mondays: Royal Room Collective Music Ensemble 7:30 PM

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Mad Bojo 7 PM

Blue Moon, Seattle: Andy Coe Band 9 PM

Owl n Thistle, Seattle: Aquilizer 9 PM

FEBRUARY 4

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: T Rust Trio 7 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Brubeck Brothers 7:30 PM

Billy Blues Bar and Grill, Vancouver: Ben Rice and the Hustle 8 PM

FEBRUARY 5

Royal Room, Seattle: Genghis Barbie 6 PM

Molten Works, Woodinville: Annie Eastwood and Billy Stapleton 7 PM

CCR, Snohomish: Usual Suspects 7 PM

Triple Door, Seattle: Los Lobos 7:30 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Brubeck Brothers 7:30 PM

FEBRUARY 6

Royal Room, Seattle: New Music Mondays: Royal Lyne Wine Bar, Kirkland: Annie Eastwood with Kimball and the Fugitives 7 PM

Flight Path, Burien: Billy Joe's Roadhouse 6 PM

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Songwriter Showcase 7 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Take 6 7:30 PM

Triple Door, Seattle: Los Lobos 7:30 PM

North City Bistro, Shoreline: Heather Ward 7:30 PM

Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: Jeff and the Jet City Fliers 8 PM

Snapdragon, Vashon: Steve Itterly and Friends 8 PM

FEBRUARY 7

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Barela Brothers 7 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Richard Bona 7:30 PM

Billy Blues Bar and Grill, Vancouver: Ben Rice and the Hustle 8 PM

FEBRUARY 7

Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Stacy Jones Band 7 PM

Kimball Coffeehouse, Gig Harbor: John Stephan Band 7 PM

Triple Door, Seattle: Los Lobos 7:30 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Take 6 7:30 PM

North City Bistro, Shoreline: Pearl Django 8 PM

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Supertonix 8 PM

Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: Johnny Atomic and the Silver Tongued Devils 8 PM

Bake's Place, Bellevue: Eden 8 PM

FEBRUARY 8

St. Basil's Cultural Center, Edmonton AB: Edmonton Winter Blues Festival 4 PM

Royal Room, Seattle: Center Piece Jazz Band 5 PM

The Repp, Snohomish: Annie Eastwood and Billy Stapleton 6:30 PM

Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Swing nuts 7 PM

Triple Door, Seattle: Los Lobos 7:30 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Take 6 7:30 PM

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Stevie and the Blue Flames 7:30 PM

Pub 282, Camano: Rock Radio 7:30 PM

Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: Zach Tupper and Murphy's Law 8 PM

Sons of Norway, Poulsbo: Poulsbo Blues and Jazz

FEBRUARY 9

Seattle Drum School, Seattle Youth Music Showcase 3 PM

Peabo's, Mill Creek: Sunday Music Revue 7 PM

Spar, Tacoma: Sunday Blues 7 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Take 6 7:30 PM

FEBRUARY 10

Royal Room, Seattle: New Music Mondays: Royal oom Collective Music Ensemble 7:30 PM

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Mad Bojo 7 PM

Blue Moon, Seattle: Andy Coe Band 9 PM

Owl n Thistle, Seattle: Aquilizer 9 PM

FEBRUARY 11

Aurora Borealis, Shoreline: Washington Blues Society Blues Bash w Reji Marc and Taylor Hardin

Band 7 PM

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Two Trains Running 7 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Alex Cuba 7:30 PM

Billy Blues Bar and Grill, Vancouver: Ben Rice and the Hustle 8 PM

FEBRUARY 12

Aurora Borealis, Shoreline: 4 Each Other 7 PM

CCR, Snohomish: Usual Suspects 7 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Alex Cuba 7:30 PM

FEBRUARY 13

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

Flight Path, Burien: Billy Joe's Roadhouse 6 PM

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Songwriter Showcase 7 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Lucia Micarelli 7:30 PM

Royal Room, Seattle Aberdeen 7:30 PM

Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: Polly O'Keary and the Rhythm Method 8 PM

Snapdragon, Vashon: Steve Itterly and Friends 8 PM

FEBRUARY 14

Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Monica Finney Trio 7 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Lucia Micarelli 7:30 PM

Eagles Mother Aerie, Seattle: Casey MacGill and Birch Pereira 7:30 PM

Showbox, Seattle: Dark Star Orchestra 8 PM

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Cloud Cover 8 PM

Miller's Carnation: Angela Petrucci's Jazzy Vintage Valentine's Cabaret 8 PM

Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: Ryan Higgins Band 8 PM

FEBRUARY 15

Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Chris Sevens Band 7 PM

North City Bistro, Shoreline: Cary's Marie 7 PM

Climate Pledge Arena, Seattle: Nathaniel Rateliff and the Night Sweats 7:30 PM

Jazz Alley, Seattle: Lucia Micarelli 7:30 PM

Royal Room, Seattle: Eugenie Jones 7:30 PM

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Nick Vigarino's Meantown Blues 7:30 PM

Aurora Borealis, Shoreline: Blue Velvet Groove 8 PM

Conway Muse, Conway: Stacy Jones Band 8 PM

Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: Trouble At Home 8 PM

FEBRUARY 16

Kilworth Memorial Chapel, Tacoma: Blues Vespers w Annie Eastwood & Her All-Star Band Featuring Billy Stapleton 5 PM

Climate Pledge Arena, Seattle: Joe Bonamassa 7 PM

Peabo's, Mill Creek: Sunday Music Revue 7 PM

Spar, Tacoma: Sunday Blues 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Lucia Micarelli 7:30 PM

FEBRUARY 17

Royal Room, Seattle: New Music Mondays: Royal Room Collective Music Ensemble 7:30 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Mad Bojo 7 PM
Blue Moon, Seattle: Andy Coe Band 9 PM
Owl n Thistle, Seattle: Aquilizer 9 PM

FEBRUARY 18

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Unbound 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Karrin Allyson 7:30 PM
Lincoln Theater, Mt Vernon: Mark Hummel's Blues Harmonica Blowout 7:30 PM
Billy Blues Bar and Grill, Vancouver: Ben Rice and the Hustle 8 PM

FEBRUARY 19

CCR, Snohomish: Usual Suspects 7 PM
Moore Theater, Seattle: Lyle Lovett 7:30 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Karrin Allyson 7:30 PM
Triple Door, Seattle: Mark Hummel's Blues Harmonica Blowout 7:30 PM
Aurora Borealis, Shoreline: Roadside Attraction 8 PM

FEBRUARY 20

Flight Path, Burien: Billy Joe's Roadhouse 6 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Songwriter Showcase 7 PM
Triple Door, Seattle: Mark Hummel's Blues Harmonica Blowout 7:30 PM
Pub 282, Camano: Chris Eger 7:30 PM
Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: Mark Dufresne Band 8 PM
Snapdragon, Vashon: Steve Itterly and Friends 8 PM

FEBRUARY 21

Sons of Norway, Poulsbo: Poulsbo Blues and Jazz Festival 6 PM
Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Midnight Hour 7 PM
Aurora Borealis, Shoreline: Curly Taylor and Zydeco Trouble 7 PM
McPherson Playhouse, Victoria B.C.: Blue Moon Marquee 8 PM
North City Bistro, Shoreline: 8 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: James Carr Band 8 PM
Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: 8 PM
Conway Muse, Conway: 8 PM

FEBRUARY 22

Sons of Norway, Poulsbo: Poulsbo Blues and Jazz Festival 6 PM
The Repp, Snohomish: Annie Eastwood and Chris

Stevens 6:30 PM
Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Two Eyes Jazz 7 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Joe Cook Band 7:30 PM
Historic Everett Theater, Everett: George Fest 7:30 PM
Pub 282, Camano: Mark Dufresne 7:30 PM
Hollywood Theatre, Vancouver B.C.: Blue Moon Marquee 7:30 PM
Town Hall, Seattle: Teri Lynn Carrington 8 PM
Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: Burn Band 8 PM
Aurora Borealis, Shoreline: Doctor Funk 8 PM
Airport Tavern, Tacoma: Mark Hummel's Blues Harmonica Blowout 8 PM
The Spar, Tacoma: Twang Junkies 8 PM

FEBRUARY 23

Sea Monster, Seattle: Kimball and the Fugitives 5 PM
Peabo's, Mill Creek: Sunday Music Revue 7 PM
Spar, Tacoma: McPage and Powell 7 PM

FEBRUARY 24

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Mad Bojo 7 PM
Blue Moon, Seattle: Andy Coe Band 9 PM
Owl n Thistle, Seattle: Aquilizer 9 PM

FEBRUARY 25

Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Reji Marc 7 PM
Purdy's Sumner: Billy Shew Band 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Ronnie Baker Brooks 7:30 PM
Billy Blues Bar and Grill, Vancouver: Ben Rice and the Hustle 8 PM

FEBRUARY 26

CCR, Snohomish: Usual Suspects 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: Ronnie Baker Brooks 7:30 PM

FEBRUARY 27

Bad Albert's, Seattle: Annie Eastwood and Friends 6 PM
Flight Path, Burien: Billy Joe's Roadhouse 6 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Songwriter Showcase 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: WAR 7:30 PM
Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: Salmon Dan 8 PM
Snapdragon, Vashon: Steve Itterly and Friends 8 PM

FEBRUARY 28

Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park: Hopscotch 7 PM
Jazz Alley, Seattle: WAR 7:30 PM
Showbox, Seattle: Devil Makes Three 8 PM
Aurora Borealis, Shoreline: Eden 8 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Stoned America 8 PM

Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: Market Street Dixieland Band 8 PM

Bake's Place, Bellevue: Massy Ferguson 8 PM
Conway Muse, Conway: 8 PM

El Capitan's, Bellingham: Phoenix in Furs 8 PM
Miller's, Carnation: Brittany Daniels w Jaws of Brooklyn 8 PM

Updated 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: 192 Blues Jam with The Groove Tramps 3-7 PM, All Ages Welcome
Bullhead Saloon, Four Lakes: Open Mic/Jam 5PM
Collector's Choice Restaurant (CCR), Snohomish: Acoustic Open Mic 7PM
Couth Buzzard Cafe, Seattle: Jazz Jam 2PM Every other Sunday
Darrell's Tavern, Shoreline: Jazz Jam 7-10PM
Dawson's, Tacoma: Tim Hall Band Jam 7-11 PM
The Boom Boom Room at the Point Casino, Kingston: Duff's Rockin' Jam 7-10PM
Lucky 7 Bar & Grill, Kirkland: Tommy Wall Sunday Blues Jam 7PM
Brother Don's, Bremerton: Jam w/Joe Faker Band 4-8 PM, All Ages
The Loft Pub, Victoria B.C.: Open Jam 3-7 PM

MONDAY

Nectar Lounge, Seattle: Mo Jam Mondays 7:30 PM -Midnight
Seamonster Lounge, Seattle: LUZ Jam 9 PM -1 AM
Badger Mountain Brewery, Wenatchee: North Central Washington Blues Jam (1st, 3rd & 5th Mondays) 6-9 PM
Riverside Pub, Wenatchee: North Central Washington Blues Jam (2nd & 4th Mondays) 7-10 PM
Emerald of Siam, Richland: Open Mic/Band Showcase Hosted by Barefoot Randy/Dirty River Entertainment 8 PM (All Ages Until 10:45 PM)
Headworks Brewery, Enumclaw: Open Mic 6 PM
New Moon Craft Tavern, Port Angeles: Jazz Jam (1st Monday) 6:30-9 PM

TUESDAY

Brother Don's, Bremerton: Jam with Tim Hall Band 7-10 PM, All Ages
Café Racer, Seattle – Open Mic 1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7 PM
El Sarape Cantina, Shelton: Open Mic (1st Tuesday 6-8 PM)
Engels Pub, Edmonds: Open Mic w/Dano Mac 8pm
Burien Eagles, Burien: Jam w/Billy Shew 7-11 PM

Dreadknott Brewery, Monroe: Open Mic 6-10 PM
Grape & Grain, Everett: Acoustic Open Mic 5:30-8:30PM
Green's Corner, Bellingham: Trace Resideux Jam (1st & 3rd Tuesdays 6-8PM)
Allegra Ziffle's Monthly Old-Time Fiddle Jam (2nd Tuesdays 6:30- 8:30PM)
The Hidden Door, Shoreline: Open Mic 7PM
Zeeks Pizza, Bellingham: 1st Tuesday Open Stage 6-9PM

WEDNESDAY

A Stir, Seattle: Open Mic 10 PM
Black Dog Arts Cafe, Snoqualmie: All-Ages Open Mic 7PM
Blue Moon Tavern, Seattle: Open Mic 8-11 PM
Couth Buzzard Cafe, Seattle: Open Mic 7:30-10 PM
Darrell's Tavern, Shoreline: Open Mic 8:30-11 PM
The Hidden Door, Shoreline: Open Jam 7 PM
Jules Mae's Saloon, Seattle: Jazz Open Mic 7 PM
Lake City Pub, Lake Wood: Open Mic 7 PM
Madison Ave Pub, Everett: Unbound Blues Jam 7-10PM
Miller's, Carnation: Open Mic (Last Wednesday 6 PM)
Mirkwood Public House, Arlington: Open Mic & Jam w/Host Jacob Doss 7 PM, All Ages
Peace Of Mind Brewing, Lynnwood: Open Mic 7-9 PM, All Ages
Gordon & Purdy's Pub, Sumner: Outlaw Blues Jam with Boogie Chillin' 7-11 PM
Skylark Café, West Seattle: Open Mic 8-11 PM
Tim's Tavern, White Center/Seattle: Open Mic 6:30-11 PM, All Ages Until 10 PM
Brickhouse, Vancouver WA : Open Mic 7 PM
The Loft Pub, Victoria B.C.: Open Jam 6- 9 PM
The Valley, Tacoma: Jam w The Valley's House Band Mr. Fantasy 7-10 PM

THURSDAY

192 Brewing Company, Kenmore: Open Mic 7-10 PM

Bent Bine Brew Co. Belfair: Open Mic 6-9 PM
Brother Barrel, Seattle: Jazz Jam/Open Mic 7 PM All Ages
Bushell & Barrel Cider house, Poulsbo: Open Mic 6-9 PM
Chan's Red Dragon, Spokane: Jam Night 7 PM
Cruisers, Post Falls ID: Open Mic/Jam Night 6-10 PM
Port Gardner Bay Winery, Everett: Open Mic 6:30-9:30 PM
Dawson's, Tacoma: Blues Jam w/Billy the Pocket 7-11 PM
Flight Path, Burien: Open Mic Jam Night 8:30 PM
Kimball Coffee House, Gig Harbor: All Ages Open Mic 5:30-8 PM
Maltby Pizza, Maltby: Open Mic 6 PM
Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle: Blues Jam (Last Thursday) 8-11 PM
Soul Food Coffee House, Redmond: Open Jazz Night 6-8 PM
The New Moon Craft Tavern, Port Angeles: Blues Jam 7 PM
The Spot, West Seattle: Blues Night 6 PM
The Loft Pub, Victoria B.C.: Open Jam 7-11 PM
The Valley, Tacoma: Open Mic Hosted by Elizabeth Ashbrook 8 PM
Thirsty Badger, Lynden : Open Mic 7-11 PM
Three Bull Brewing, Snohomish: Open Mic 6-9 PM
The Realm Venue, Tacoma: Jam w/Billy Shew 8 PM

FRIDAY

Bryant Corner Cafe, Seattle: Open Mic 6:30 PM
Kana Winery, Yakima: Open Mic 7-10 PM

SATURDAY

Flying Pig, Everett: Open Mic (1st Saturday 9 PM)
The Spot, West Seattle: Open Mic 6 PM
The Hidden Door, Shoreline: Open Mic 7 PM
Kiss the Sky Books, Sultan: Open Mic 7 PM
Soul Food Coffee House, Redmond: Community Open Mic Night (1st Saturday 6 PM)





Leo Schumaker

The Professor of the Blues!

By STEVE DANIELS

In addition to being a writer for this magazine, I am also a blues radio programmer, hosting "Views of the Blues" every Monday afternoon for the last eighteen years on KCSB-FM in Santa Barbara, California (www.kcsb.org). For years before inaugurating my show in January 2007, I was an avid listener of other blues shows on the station hosted by programmers Greg Drust, Matt Cohen, Mike Petrini, and Leo Schumaker. Leo and I met as board members of the Santa Barbara Blues Society (SBBBlues.org) and became friends. When I retired from my "day job" in summer 2006 I was ready to start my own radio show, and Leo encouraged me and was my mentor.

Leo is also a runner and has hosted a "Running a Racing" radio show. He is a lover of vintage cars. He moved to Bellingham, WA, about five years ago, where he has continued to be an avid blues promoter, and a radio programmer on KMRE-FM. He is one of the most knowledgeable blues aficionados that I know, and one of the most personable radio emcees.

Leo, did you listen to radio

when you were young?

"I sure did. Growing up in the San Jose, CA area, I would lie in bed at night with a transistor radio under my pillow, listening to rock, blues, soul, and rhythm-and-blues. I also listened to Wolfman Jack. ["Wolfman Jack" (Robert Smith) was a disc jockey who broadcast from the 1960s to the 1980s, much of the time on Mexican station XERF/XERB. That station was so powerful that it could be heard across much of the U.S.] These days I begin each of my shows with a short clip of Wolfman Jack talking.

When did you begin doing radio?"

"I started on KCSB 91.9 FM in Santa Barbara in 1996. I kept calling the station's disc jockeys that played blues, making requests, and finally one of them, Matt Cohen, said that with my knowledge I should get my own show, and he offered to train me."

What is your station now?

"KMRE-FM in Bellingham, WA; www.kmre.org I always broadcast live on Thursday from 7 to 9 PM Pacific Time from Cascade Hall at the Whatcom Community College studios in Bellingham."

Where do you get the musi-

cal material that you play on your show?

"KMRE has a small music library, so I mostly play tracks from my own collection of CDs and vinyl records, plus new music received by KMRE. I also go to a lot of live shows and buy CDs from the artists. Many of my shows have themes, like a tribute to a certain artist. I also take requests by telephone and through my Facebook page during the show."

Do you regularly schedule live interviews in the studio or on the phone?

"Yes, I interview artists, on the phone and live in the studio, who have new music that is appealing. I also interview blues personalities, including performers, music journalists, and owners of clubs that present blues, who have a story that I feel will be interesting to listeners. In addition, I write articles for the Washington Blues Society "Bluesletter."

Do you do interviews at shows or festivals?

"I do interviews at blues shows, festivals, and in the KMRE studios. I also film interviews and music shows for my TV show, "Adventures with Leo Schumaker," on BTV Channel 10 in Bellingham and on YouTube channel "Leo Schumaker."

What are some of your memorable interviews?

"BB King, Taj Mahal, George Thorogood, Kim Simmonds from Savoy Brown, Randy Chortkoff of Delta Groove Records, and more. My favorite is with Bruce Iglauer of Alligator Records. I wrote it up for the Washington Blues Society and it was published over three issues of their "Bluesletter."

Do you do emcee work for live blues shows?

"I've done emcee work at our local blues shows. I also hosted a "Battle of the Bands" for the Santa Barbara Blues Society for twenty years when I lived there. I've introduced a couple of shows on the Legendary Rhythm & Blues cruises, at the Wild Buffalo in Bellingham, and at other venues as the opportunity presents itself."

Do you listen to other radio, such as streaming like SiriusXM, and if so, what are your favorite shows and why?

"I listen to Steve Daniels on KCSB-FM [thank you, Leo], Jim Ladd, Bill Wax and Tom Petty on Sirius. I listen to Gary "The Wagman" Wagner from the Los Angeles area, John Kessler on KNKX in Seattle, and others."

If you are on public or community radio, how often do you do fundraising?

"KMRE is a community radio station. We have done fundraising once a year for the last three years."

What is your favorite part of being a radio host and why?

"I am inspired by the music to broadcast blues sets that are connected in ideas, beats, and feelings. I like talking to music artists to find out why they are so talented, and having listeners call in to my radio show with requests and ideas on whom to interview next."

Do you have a favorite record store where you get your music?

"Legendary Vinyl Records in Bellingham, Black Noise Records, and every record store I can find."

Where do you go to enjoy live music?

"Ramble Tamble, Mr. Baker Theater, and Shakedown, all in Bellingham. Also, the Lincoln Theater in Mt. Vernon, Conway Muse in Conway, Dmitri's Jazz Alley in Seattle, and Santa Barbara Blues Society events."

Do you have a favorite venue?

"Santa Barbara Blues Society events."

Favorite festival?

"The Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise."

KMRE 88.3 FM is located in Bellingham, WA. It has 2000 watts of power and reaches from Blaine, WA, 21 miles just below the Canadian border to the north and down to Mt. Vernon, 25 miles south. To the east it broadcasts to Mt. Baker 30 east, and to all ships at sea to the west. KMRE is a non-profit 501(c)3 community radio station. Leo Schumaker's show is named "Bluesland," on from 7 to 9 PM Pacific time. His email address is

"leosbluesland@yahoo.com." He has a prominent Facebook page and his own podcast. His phone number is (805) 766-0999 and KMRE's phone number is (360) 398-6150. Its website is <http://www.kmre.org>.

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SMASH: A New Resource for Musicians

“After the concert, I looked into SMASH and found that it was a perfect fit for me...”

By Susie Campbell

Editor’s Note: We are pleased to welcome South Sound Blues Association President Susie Campbell to these pages! This article is an informative article to a new resource for musicians, Seattle Musicians Access to Sustainable Healthcare (SMASH).

When I moved to the Gig Harbor area in 2016, I discovered a vibrant music scene and community. Over the years, I have enjoyed getting to know many of the local bands and their members. These men and women often work a day job in addition to their night and weekend gigs, making them some of the hardest working people I know. Music is definitely a labor of love and, unfortunately, not especially well-paid. Many working musicians find themselves un/under insured for their medical and dental needs.

In my desire to be a supporter of our local music community, I became a member of SSBA, a KNKX sustaining member, and a donor/supporter of SMASH.

I learned about SMASH last November when I attended a KNKX Connects event at the Blue Mouse Theater in Tacoma. Stephanie Anne Johnson and Jeff Fielder performed. In addition to being a performing musician, Stephanie is the host of The Grooveyard program on KNKX, a mix of soul, jazz and blues, at 1 PM on Saturdays. During the show, Stephanie and Jeff talked about SMASH and the services it provides to musicians, including themselves. After the concert, I looked into SMASH and found that it was a perfect fit for me to combine philanthropy with my love of music. I then became a supporter and donor. What surprises me is how few people in the South Sound have heard of SMASH. I’ve been spreading the word.

For this article, I spoke with Stephanie Johnson about their experience with SMASH. Asked how they heard about SMASH, they replied that they were asked to perform at the 2021 annual SMASH benefit concert held at the Moore theater.

It had an impressive lineup of local and international touring musicians, including Dave Matthews, and Chad Smith (Red Hot Chili Peppers), and many others. After that, they attended an informational meeting and was impressed at the number of popular Seattle musicians in the crowd who were affiliated with SMASH. This is what “tipped the scales” for them and prompted them to become a member.

Stephanie received help in acquiring professional ear protection. These specialty devices can cost thousands of dollars. From start to finish, Stephanie felt treated “like a person. Some people think that being a working musician isn’t a viable field of work. Being treated like a human being is very important. I feel good working with the SMASH people.”

Like most working musicians, Stephanie wears multiple hats to make ends meet. In addition to performing and hosting The Grooveyard at KNKX, they do Sunday singing at affirming churches in the area and earn income from sales of music and memberships to their Patreon account. In this way they can “pay the rent and get my teeth cleaned. I am pretty blessed to be a professional musician.”

I also reached out to SMASH with a few questions (Special thanks to Nikki Barron and Karina Kaiwi for their informative replies).

SC: “Who started SMASH and why?”

SMASH: “Ian Moore, a long-time touring and recording artist originally from Austin, TX, considered himself lucky that his music career had allowed him to provide for his family. Like many musicians, money was often tight, causing his access to healthcare to take a backseat to expenses like rent and food. However, while living in Austin, Moore had access to a safety net called the Health Alliance for Austin Musicians (HAAM). This resource allowed him to focus on his life and career without sacrificing his health. When he moved to Vashon Island, he no



longer qualified for HAAM and discovered nothing like it in the region. In 2016, he teamed up with Jacqueline Ryall, a long-time friend, music supporter, attorney, and Gates Foundation employee, to figure out how to bring something similar to the Pacific Northwest. They became the founding members of SMASH and recruited a dedicated group of music and nonprofit industry professionals, community leaders, and friends to make it a reality.”

SC: “SMASH was originally intended to serve Seattle musicians, hence Seattle Musicians Access to Sustainable Healthcare. Now that you serve musicians in King, Snohomish, Pierce, Mason, Kitsap, and Thurston counties, why don’t you call it MASH?”

SMASH: “The name change to “MASH” seems obvious, but when we decided to increase our service area, we opted to keep “SMASH” because it’s more than just geography—it’s about the spirit of Seattle’s music scene. Ask any local musician; our music scene is more than simply a scene; it’s a community. So, the “S” serves as a reminder of that.”

SC: “Free health care?! What’s the catch?”

SMASH: “Actually, there is one catch—musicians have to keep making great music! It’s free to be a member of SMASH, and musicians can still qualify even if they have insurance. Our goal is to lower barriers to access to healthcare services as much as possible. A big part of that is alleviating musicians’ stress when it comes to paying for services. Some services have a small co-pay; for example, custom earplugs have a \$25 fee for members, which was

implemented to help motivate members to pick them up after their appointments. Shout out to our financial supporters, and awesome providers who donate their time. We couldn't provide these services without them."

SC: "The South Sound has a vibrant music community including many talented musicians and bands, and a loyal fanbase. How is SMASH working to expand into this area?"

SMASH: "SMASH recognizes the incredible talent and tight-knit music community in the South Sound, and we're committed to expanding our reach there. We're doing this by partnering with providers in the South Sound; shout out to Dr. Kunal, who is providing dental services to our members in Puyallup! We've got big plans to continue outreach to providers in the area to increase access to more services

in the South Sound. Also, many of our services are not geographically constricted. For example, our mental health program has a telehealth option, and an option for us to pay their preferred mental health provider directly. If we don't have a provider in an easy-to-access location for members, we can support musicians with transportation costs to get to Seattle. However, it's uncommon that we can't find something that works for members close to home."

SMASH membership includes access to:

- Annual primary care visit and associated labs,
- Mental healthcare,
- Preventative and acute dental care,
- Hearing screenings and ear protection,
- Eye exams with glasses,

- Physical therapy,
- Substance use disorder treatment, and
- Healthcare/health insurance navigation.

For musicians who need help with the cost of healthcare, I encourage you to become a member of SMASH. The member application is free, easy, and confidential. For more information about eligibility, click here: <https://www.smashseattle.org/join>. Email: SMASH@SMASHSeattle.org, Phone: (206) 495.1285, Address: PO Box 60204 Seattle, WA 98160

If you are looking for a nonprofit organization to support, please consider becoming a donor, or provider. Let's help our musicians stay healthy so they can do what they love, and we can love what they do.

Madison Ave Pub 905 Madison St. Everett 425-348-7402

Mondays 7 till 9-ish
Mad Bojo

Tuesday Night Dinner Show 7-9
2/4 T Rust Trio 2/11 Two Trains Running
2/18 Unbound 2/25 Reji Marc

Wednesday Unbound Blues Jam
7 till 10-ish

2/5 Billy Stoops 2/12 Lenny Stearns
2/19 Billy Appleton 2/26 Domonic Espinoza
and Kevin Sutton

Thursday Night 7-9
Singer-Songwriter Showcase
Kevin Sutton with special guest 2/6
Stacy Jones with special guest
2/13, 2/20, 2/27

Rockin' Fridays 8-12

2/7 Supertonix 2/14 Cloud Cover
2/21 James Carr Band
2/28 Stoned America

Red Hot Saturdays 7:30-11:30

2/1 Long and Strange
2/8 Stevie & the Blue Flames
2/15 Nick Vigarino's Meantown Blues
2/22 Joe Cook Band

Sunday Night Karaoke presented by
Rob Bramblett Entertainment
Have fun with friends singing your favorites!





Blues Talent Guide

Send updates, additions & corrections to editor@wablues.org by the 10th!

\$

Scratch Daddy (425) 210-1925

#

13 RABBIT 206.849.5311
44th Street Blues Band 206.714.5180 or
206.775.2762

A

A.H.L. 206.935.4592
Al Earick Band 253.278.0330
Albritten McClain & Bridge of Souls 206.650.8254
Alice Stuart & the Formerlys 360.753.8949
Alison Joy Williams & Indigo Edge 615.512.8665
AlleyKatz 425.273.4172
ALTAI BAND goldenguitarman777@gmail.com
Amigos Nobles 425.268.7064
Andrew Norsworthy andrewnorsworthy@yahoo.com
Andy Koch's Badd Dog Blues (formerly Badd Dog
Blues Society) 360.739.6397
Annette Taborn 206.306.3398
Annieville Blues 206.994.9413
Author Unknown 206.355.5952

B

Baby Cakes 206.818.0588
Baby Gramps Trio 425.483.2835
Back Porch Blues 425.299.0468
Backwoods Still 425.330.0702
Badd Dog Blues Society 360.733.7464
Barry Torrence 253.226.1103
Bay Street Blues Band 360.731.1975
B.E.S.T. Band 206.817.1663
Bill Brown & The Kingbees 206.276.6600
Bill Ray Drums 760 803 1686
Billy Barner 253.732.0618
Billy Shew Band 253.514.3637
Billy Stapleton 425.478.2113
Billy Stoops & The Dirt Angels 253.304.1266
Black River Blues 206.396.1563
Blackjack Kerouac 206.697.8428
Blackstone Players 425.327.0018
Blue 55 206.216.0554
Blue Healers 206.940.9128
Blues on Tap 206.618.6210
Blues Playground 425.359.3755
Blues Redemption 253.253.921.7506
Blues Sheriff 206.979.0666
Blues To Do Monthly 206.328.0662
Blues with Benefits 206.459.3278
Bobby Holland & The Breadline 425.681.5644
Boneyard Preachers 206.755.0766 or 206.547.1772
Bobby Patterson & the Two Tones 509.869.0350.
Brian Butler Band 206.450.1262
Brian Hurst 360.708.1653

Brian Lee & The Orbiters 206.390.2408
Bruce Govan 206.817.1663
Bruce Koenigsberg / Fabulous Roof Shakers
425.766.7253
Bruce Ransom 206.618.6210
Bump Kitchen 253.223.4333 or 360.259.1545

C

C.D. Woodbury Band 425.502.1917
CC Adams Band 360.395.8540
Charles White Revue 425.327.0018
Charlie Butts & The Filtertips 509.655.1071
Charlie Saibel 360.357.8553
Chester Dennis Jones 253.797.8937
Children Of The Blues 818.292.2541
Chris Eger Band 360.770.7929
Chris Lord 425.334.5053
Chris Stevens' Surf Monkeys 206.236.0412
Christi Michelle Weiss 425.667.0428
Coyote Blues 360.420.2535
Craig Parrish/Margaret Wilder Band 360.380.2250
Crooked Mile Blues Band 425.238.8548
Curtis Hammond Band 206.696.6134
Cyndi Moring and Lucile Street 206.849.8471

D

Daddy Treetops 206.601.1769
Dan & the Dynos 206.225.9684
Dana Lupinacci Band 206.383.1814
Dave Albert 425.269-3665
Dave Townsend (Midnight Hour) 425.238.4039
David Hudson / Satellite 425.630.5276
Dennis "Juxtamuse" Hacker 509.264.7879
Dick Powell Band 425.742.4108
Don Bird 818.292.2541
Doug McGrew 206.679.2655
Doug Skoog 253.921.7506
Dudley Taft 513.713.6800

E

El Colonel 360.293.7931
Elliott Bay Blues Band 206.300.6802
Ellis Carter 206.935.3188
Eric Madis & Blue Madness 206.251.0339
Eric's Maine Connection 425.299.7496
Eric Rice 425.299.7496

F

Fat Cat 425.487.6139
Filé Gumbo 425.788.2776

G

Gary Frazier 206.851.1169
Gordy Mitchell 425.275.6520
Greenwood Music Collective 646.915.2221

Greg Roberts 206.473.0659
Groove Tramps 720.232.9664
Guided Lily Band 915.222.6401
Gunnar Roads 360.828.1210

H

Hambone Blues Band 360.458.5659
Hambone Wilson 360.739.7740
Heather & the Nearly Homeless Blues Band
425.576.5673
High Note Group 206.214.7977
Hot Mess Duo 206.214.7977
Hot Wired Rhythm Band 206.790.9935
Hungry Dogs 425.299.6435

J

Jack Cook & Phantoms of Soul 206.517.5294
James Howard 206.250.7494
James King & the Southsiders 206.715.6511
Janie Cribbs & the T.Rust Band 360.331.6485
JD Hobson 206.235.3234
Jeffery Alan Olsen & the Blues Choo Train
425.345.5399
Jeff "Drummerboy" Hayes 206.909.6366
Jeff & The Jet City Fliers 206.818.0701
Jeff Menteer and The Beaten Path 425.280.7392
Jeremy Serwer 520.275.9444
Jesse Weston 425.610.0933
Jill Newman Band 206.390.2623
James Brunner 509.457.0762
Jim Barnes 425.343.6996
Jim Caroompas (Rumpus) 925.212.7760
Jim McLaughlin 425.737.4277
Jim Nardo Blues Band 360.779.4300
Jimmy Free's Friends 206.546.3733
Joanne Broh Band 541.228.7812
Joe Blue & the Roof Shakers 425.766.7253
Joe Cook Blues Band 206.547.1772
Joe Guimond 509.423.0032
Joe Morgan 206.769.8579
Joel Astley 206.214.7977
John "Scooch" Cugno's Delta 88 Revival
360.352.3735
John "Greyhound" Maxwell 360.685.6006
John Stephan Band 206.214.7781
John Stephanus 206.459.3278
Jolene Gayle 509.433.4944
JP Hennessy 425.273.4932
Julia Francis & the Secrets of Soul 206.618.4919
Julie Duke Band 206.459.0860
Junkyard Jane 253.219.4070

K

K. G. Jackson & The Shakers 360.896.4175
Keith Nordquist 253.639.3206
Keith Scott 773.213.3239

Kenny James Miller Band 406.253.7439
Kevin & Casey Sutton 314.479.0752
Kid Quagmire 206.412.8212
Kim Archer Band 253.298.5961
Kim Field & The Mighty Titans of Tone 206.295.8306
Kimball Conant & The Fugitives 206.938.6096
King Kom Beaux 253.732.0618
Kosta Panidis (Kosta la Vista) 509.991.7623

L

La Roca Boom 206.920.6776
Lady "A" & The Baby Blues Funk Band 425.518.9100
Larry Hill 206.696.1789
Leanne Trevalyan 253.219.4070
Leanne Trevalyan & Octopus Ballet 253.219.4070
Lee Oskar & Friends 425.258.3585
Leo Muller 206.300.6802
Linda Carroll & Retro Gruve 253.606.1500.
Linda Lee & the Pickups Band 206.295. 8895
Little Bill & the Bluenotes 425.774.7503
Lori Hardman Band 425.218.5341
Lucille Street cynmoring@gmail.com

M

Madison Ave Blues Revue MAD BOJO 425-422-5062
Maia Santell & House Blend 253.983.7071
Margret Wilder Band (360) 380-2250
Mark A. Noftsgar 425.238.3664
Mark Hurwitz & Gin Creek 206.588.1924
Mark Riley 253.307.3475
Marty Vadalabene 206.914.3026
Mary Ellen Lykins Band 360.395.8540
Mary McPage 206.850.4849
Max Campbell 425.218.5603
Melany Peterson 760.662.8130
Michael "Papa Bax" Baxter 425.478.1365
Michael Wilde 425.672.3206 or 206.200.3363
Michal Miller Band 253.222.2538
Michelle D'Amour & The Love Dealers 425.761.3033
Midnight Hour 425.330.5373
Mike Haley 509.393.5838
Miles from Chicago 206.440.8016
Miles Harris 360.708.2166
Mitch Pumpian 206.276.9737
Monster Road Band (253) 797-9503
Moon Daddy Band 425.923.9081
Mule Kick 216.225.1277

N

New Rhythmatics 425.299.3028
Nick Vigarino 360.387.0374
Nick Mardon Trio 425.208-6616
Nancy Veltkamp 915.222.6401
Norm Bellas & the Funkstars 206.722.6551

P

Paul Green 206.795.3694
Phil Mitchell 425.870.5018
Polly O'Keary & The Rhythm Method 206.384.0234
Porterhouse Blues Band 425.381.7649
Powerhouse 425.478.2113

R

Rafael Tranquilino Band 312.953.7808
Randy Norris & Jeff Nicely 425.239.3876 or 425.359.3755
Randy Norris & The Full Degree 425.239.3876
Randy Oxford Band 253.973.9024
Raven Humphres 425.308.3752
The Rece Jay Band (253) 350-9137
Red House 425.377.8097
Reggie Miles 360.793.9577
Reji Marc (206) 486-0386
Richard Allen & The Louisiana Experience 206.369.8114
Richard Evans 206.799.4856
Right Hand Drive 206.496.2419
RJ Knapp & Honey Robin Band 206.612.9145
Rob Cooper 778.875.6512
Rob Moitoza 206.401.2856
Robert Baker 425.870.7683
Robert Patterson 509.869.0350
Robert and Randolph Duo 509.216.0944
Rod Cook & Toast 206.878.7910
Roger Rogers Band 206.255.6427
Ron Hende 425.280.3994
Ron van der Veen 206.849.5311
Roxlide 360.881.0003
Russ Kammerer 206.551.0152
Rusty Williams 206.282.0877
Ryan T. Higgins 360.388.1116

S

Sammy Eubanks 509.879.0340
Scott E. Lind 206.789.8002
Scott Mallard 206.261.4669
Scotty FM and the BroadCasters 206.261.4669
Scotty Harris 206.683.9476
Shadow Creek Project 360.826.4068
Sheri Roberts Greimes 425.220.6474
Smokin' J's 425.746.8186
Spencer Jarrett 510.495.4755
Stacy Jones 206.992.3285
Star Drums & Lady Keys 206.522.2779
Steve Bailey & The Blue Flames 206.779.7466
Steve Cooley & Dangerfields 253.203.8267
Steve Peterson 206.799-8196
Steven J. Lefebvre 509.972.2683 or 509.654.3075
Stickshift Annie Eastwood 206.941.9186
Studio Rob 425.870.7683
Susan Renee "La Roca Soul" Sims 206.920.6776

Suze Sims 206.920.6776

T

TJ Read 206.380.6638
Tamys Hoffman Band 406.570-2303
Teri Derr Band 425.985.9420
Terraplane Band (425)870-5018
Terry Hartness 425.931.5755
The 509s 509.423.0032
The Bret Welty Band 208.703.2097
The EveryLeaf Band 425.369.4588
The Fabulous MoJo Kings 206.412.9503
The Fat Fridays 360.220.2222
The Grayhounds 206.751.7644
The Jason Lane Band 778.875.6512
The Jelly Rollers 206.617.2384
The Mongrels 509.307.0517 or 509.654.3075
The Nate Burch Band 425.457.3506
The Naughty Blokes 360.393.9619
The Pat Stilwell Band 503.481.6823
The Rece Jay Band 253.350.9137
The RooTsters (Acoustic Duo) 206.890.6176
The Soulful 88s/Billy Spaulding 206.310.4153
The Spinoffs/Dawnzella Gearhart 206. 718.1591
The VuDudes 206.999.0729
The Wired Band 206.852.3412
The Wulf Tones 206.367.6186 or 206.604.2829
Tim Hall Band 253.857.8652
Tim Turner Band 206.271.5384
Tommy Wall 206.914.9413
Town Hall Brawl 206.940.9128
Two Scoops Combo 206.933.9566
Two Trains Runnin' 206.225.9684

U

Unbound 425.231.0565
Under the Puddle 425-512-3153

V

Virginia Klemens Band 206.632.6130

W

West Coast Women's Blues Revue 206.940.2589
Whitewing 360.393-1687
Willie B Blues Band 206.451.9060
Willie & The Whips 206.781.0444

Department of Corrections

A few things we're working on behind the scenes (and screens) to improve the Bluesletter.

By Eric Steiner

By the time this issue hits members' mailboxes, we will have learned who won first place at this year's International Blues Challenge in Memphis. Last issue, the Washington Blues Society entrants Brian Butler and the Joel Astley Band were on the cover, and I hope many readers noticed differences between the print and online versions of the January Bluesletter. Let me briefly explain.

First of all, during the production of the January issue in December, Polly and I were unavailable during most of the "deadline dash." Polly cared for a friend recovering from brain surgery and I was with Kirk Anderson at Seattle's historic Camlin Hotel to see the Allman Betts Family Revival at the Moore Theatre.

As a result, the file I sent to Pacific Publishing did not have the usual care, finishing or proofreading that I try to give to this magazine. Due to these other demands that took Polly and me away from our keyboards, there were many areas in need of just a little more TLC (Technical Loving Care) just one day before our print deadline.

Admittedly, part of the challenge has been my usual work style: I've tended to passively rely on editorial copy to arrive no later than the 5th of the month and advertisements to arrive on the 12th. Like last month, I missed another ad in the print issue that former Vice President Rick J. Bowen sent to me in early December: Jesse James and The Mob's CD release party in mid-January.

To prevent this from recurring, I ask advertisers to send their ads to both advertising@wabluessociety.org and editor@wabluessociety.org.

Each of these addresses reach multiple volunteers, and if more eyes are on each submission, there's a greater likelihood that we will ensure that all ads are correctly placed.

I made other changes to the January online reference copy, too. In our Dropbox folder, I noticed that Polly saved an article by first-time contributor Susie Campbell, the newly elected President of the South Sound Blues Association whom I met on the 41st Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise. Reprinted from

the Seattle Musicians Access to Sustainable Healthcare website, Susie's article provides timely and concrete and actionable information on health and medical care for working musicians throughout our region. This is exactly the type of editorial copy that belongs in this publication and it's very similar to the COVID-19 and grant funding and related resources for musicians we have published during the pandemic.

Last issue was only the second time in Bluesletter history in which there was no feature story aligned with the cover photo.

While I appreciated Danno Mac's vibrant and first-ever cover of our 2025 International Blues Challenge competitors, I should have asked each act to simply submit the same short introductory paragraph and high-resolution that they sent in to the International Blues Challenge program book by the deadline. Next year, I'll remind Polly to ask our acts in 2026 to do so.

Secondly, I reformatted Naomi Ishisaka's photo and Selena Guadalupe Rodriguez' excellent news about Seattle's Black and Tan Hall. I also added the venue's logo that founder Ben Hunter sent me several years ago. I also reformatted the listing of Keeping the Blues Alive Award recipients and aligned it with the Adobe In Design template.

Regular readers will also see a "teaser paragraph" and photo next to the Table of Contents on page three of the virtual version. In that paragraph, I summarize what I think are the high points of the issue, and with the page three photo, it leads readers to one of the issue's lead stories. I thought that Keith Scott's photo with Murph at Seattle's Salmon Bay Eagles complemented Keith's "View from the Stage" in the January issue nicely.

I also noticed that we continue to receive far too many photos and ads that are not formatted correctly for print.

Our printer's requirements are always listed on page four of each issue, and I encourage all potential contributors to learn how to format images and graphics as CMYK images (that's a traditional, four color process called Cyan-Magenta-Yellow-Black) instead of using the RGB format (that's a three color pro-

cess reserved for screens called Red-Green-Blue). Please do not just send in photos from your phone with camera-supplied identifiers like "DSC1234.jpg," and these IDs tell us nothing about the subject of your photo. Please take the time to review your photo, make improvements to it, and send it with a file name that lets Polly and me know who is in the picture, like "Mick Jagger at Salmon Bay Eagles by Malcolm Kennedy.pdf."

Finally, I'd be remiss if I didn't ask for new volunteers to take on tasks associated with advertising and image preparation.

We need more depth behind the screens and pages of this publication. Specifically, Polly and I would appreciate new volunteers to format and resize images and photos in the Adobe PhotoShop program according to our printer's specifications.

By the time this issue hits members' mailboxes in February, Polly and I will have met in the Mukilteo Public Library conference room and practiced critical tasks in the Adobe In Design program to produce this magazine, including Separations Previews, Color Swatch Reviews, Over Set Text, Ink Balance, Links, and other, required nit-picky minutiae.

Please email editor@wabluessociety.org (again, an address with multiple eyes on it) if you can help.

Working together well in advance of our regular editorial deadline of the 5th of the month (and advertising deadline of the 12th of the month), we will produce a better *Bluesletter*.



2025 Best of the Blues (“BB Awards”) Nomination Ballot

All nomination ballots must be received no later than Tuesday, February 11, 2025



2025 Washington Blues Society Best of the Blues “BB Awards” Nomination Ballot

All nomination ballots must be received at our PO Box or by a Board member no later than Tuesday, February 11, 2025 (February Blues Bash).

Please nominate one nominee in each category. For more information, please refer to the article in this issue about three renamed categories, the Kathi McDonald Female Vocalist Award, the Patti Allen Blues Performer Award, and the Blues Image Award, and the December 2019 Bluesletter article online at www.wablues.org.

- Mark DuFresne Male Vocalist _____
- Kathi McDonald Female Vocalist _____
- Electric Blues Guitar _____
- Slide Blues Guitar _____
- Acoustic Blues Guitar _____
- Blues Bass _____
- Chris Leighton Blues Drummer _____
- Paul Green Blues Harmonica _____
- Blues Piano/Keyboard _____
- Blues Horn _____
- Blues Instrumentalist - Other _____
- Best Band _____
- Best Little Bill _____
- & The Blue Notes Traditional Act _____
- Best Solo/Duo _____
- Best New Blues Act _____
- Patti Allen Blues Performer _____
- Blues Songwriter _____
- Washington Blues Recording _____
- Best Blues Club _____
- Best Blues Jam _____
- Blues Writer _____
- Blues Image _____
- Best Blues Graphic _____
- Best Blues DJ _____
- Keeping the Blues Alive _____
- Blues Hall of Fame (Individual) _____
- Regional Blues Festival _____
- Community Blues Festival/Event _____
- Lifetime Achievement _____
- Non-Festival Blues Event _____

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