

# Blindletter

Washington

November 2025



**TAJ MAHAL**  
30TH THANKSGIVING IN SEATTLE

**STEPHANIE ANNE  
JOHNSON** RELEASES  
**SING, BABY**



# Letter from the Editor



Last year, when the nominations for the Washington Blues Society's Best of the Blues came in, we realized we had a problem. The Poulsbo PB&J Blues and Jazz Festival had been nominated in both the Regional Festival and Community Festival categories. We weren't sure what to do.

So over the summer, we started talking about what the difference was between a regional festival and a community festival.

We knew that the purpose of having the two categories was to honor the big festivals with large budgets that bring in national headliners and run several days at a time, while making sure smaller festivals with one-day lineups and mostly in-state bands got recognized, too.

But it's one thing to be able to make that distinction in your head, and another to create a rule. And once we started talking about the awards, we realized there were a bunch of categories for which the rules were unclear. How new does a new band have to be to qualify for the Best New Band award? Can you win Best Songwriter if you have only ever written one song and it was a hit 15 years ago? How many members of a band should live in the state for the band to be a Washington band?

Two months ago, our new WBS Secretary, Dana Lupinacci, was "voluntold" to head a committee on next year's BB Awards. She accepted with cheerful puzzlement, and several weeks ago, Mary McPage, Dana, and I met for coffee to clarify the guidelines for the awards. A couple days ago, we set our recommendations before the board.

It turned into a long meeting.

We are now close to completing a set of guidelines to include with the nomination ballot that comes out next month. We hope these guidelines will help people know which category to nominate their favorite artists and events in.

One thing we plan to do is add a new category for Best Blues Rock band. Historically, bands have been nominated for Best Blues Band that some society members felt were not exactly blues bands. The idea of trying to define blues made me break out in hives, but the new category should make sure there is room for everybody.

We will also run a list of people who have already won those awards that can only be won once, including Hall of Fame, Lifetime Achievement, and Keeping the Blues Alive, so that no one accidentally wastes a nomination that could have gone to an as-yet-unrecognized individual.

If you have thoughts about what guidelines should be in place for the BB Award categories, shoot us an email before the next board meeting and we'll discuss it before the nomination form comes out.

I also want to recognize a tremendous loss faced by one of Washington's most legendary blues-rock artists. From 2008-2012, my husband Tommy Cook and I were lucky enough to serve as the rhythm section for Too Slim and the Taildraggers. There were a lot of great things about working for Tim "Too Slim" Langford. We traveled all over the world. We had a chance to see how a truly

independent artist manages a successful career with professionalism and integrity. We had a lot of fun playing that rowdy, full-tilt set night after night.

One of the things that was charming about that band was the massive amount of affection Tim had for his wife. Nancy was the band manager in those years, and she traveled with us a lot. When she wasn't traveling with us, Tim missed her terribly. It didn't matter where we were when a tour ended; we drove home that night. Once it was Dallas, Texas. Several times, it was Edmonton, Alberta. Twice, it was Franklin, New Hampshire, a 53-hour marathon we did nearly non-stop.

Last week, Tim broke the shocking news that Nancy has died. All of the many thousands of Too Slim fans and friends share a profound horror and sorrow that such a vibrant woman passed so young, and we are all hoping like anything that our concern and affection for Tim can help him through this devastating time.

Our community is strong in its support for each other. Our support will be vital for Tim and his family now, so send him your love.

Regards,



Polly O'Keary, Editor  
Washington Blues Society Bluesletter

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## In This Issue

This month, The Washington Blues Society Bluesletter celebrates the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Taj Mahal's annual Thanksgiving Residency at Seattle's Jazz Alley with in-depth interviews of the artist and Jazz Alley proprietor John Dimitrou by long-term Bluesletter contributor Kirk Anderson. Legendary rock and roll photographer's stunning photo of Taj Mahal graces our cover, and I hope that many Washington Blues Society members and fans attend these exceptional shows.

We've also have some exciting news from blues artist Stephanie Anne Johnson, who will showcase her newest CD, "Sing, Baby!" on November 8 at the Open Space for Arts in Vashon and on November 15 at Seattle's Broadway Performance Hall on Capitol Hill. The issue also includes previews of notable, nationally touring artists in Blues on the Road, an updated live blues calendar, a review of Duffy Bishop's show at the Arcadia Public House in Conway, an informative Carrie's Corner with a report from the North Bend Blues Walk, and reviews of new blues CDs.

Also, please don't forget to nominate candidates for next year's Board of Directors of the Washington Blues Society as Marisue Thomas' summary of leadership opportunities and a members' voting ballot is included in this issue!

*-Eric Steiner*

Above: Taj Mahal aboard the 2024 Fall Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise with Jontavious Willis (Photo by Eric Steiner)

Cover: Taj Mahal (Photo by Linda Wolf) Cover design and layout by Sean Donovan of Gator Boy Productions, [www.gatorboyproductions.com](http://www.gatorboyproductions.com))

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## Washington Blues Society November Board Meeting

**Thursday, November 13**

**5-8 p.m.**

**Location: APEX Everett**

**El Sid Cocktail Lounge**

**Address:**

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**Everett, Washington 98201**

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**EDITOR**

Polly O'Keary (editor@wablues.org)

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**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS**

Eric Steiner, Polly O'Keary, Carrie Parduhn,  
Klrk Anderson, Marisue Thomas, Steve Pearse

**CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Eric Steiner, Carrie Parduhn, Linda Wolf, Tim & Michele Burge

**NOVEMBER BLUESLETTER DEADLINES**

Ad Reservations	5 p.m. on 10/30 to editor@wablues.org
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**Please Note: If we receive enough editorial copy before the 30th, or camera-ready ads before the 5th, space may be filled, and material may be saved for a future issue. Please send ALL contributions early!**

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Please send articles and photos only as attachments only to editor@wablues.org. Please do not embed images or stories in emails and please do not send links.

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

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Vice President, Kevin Young	vicepres@wablues.org
Interim Treasurer, Carrie Parduhn	treasurer@wablues.org
Interim Secretary, Dana Lupinacci	secretary@wablues.org
Editor, Polly O'Keary	editor@wablues.org
Music Director, Angelo Ortiz	music@wablues.org
Membership, Mary McPage	membership@wablues.org

**2025 DIRECTORS**

Education, Kevin Sutton	education@wablues.org
Advertising, Open	advertising@wablues.org
Volunteers, Open	volunteers@wablues.org
Merchandise, Open	merchandise@wablues.org
Seattle Peace Concerts Co-Chairs Sara St. John & Diane Forsyth	TBD

**SPECIAL THANKS**

Webmaster Emeritus, The Sheriff	webmaster@wablues.org
Washington Blues Society Logo, Phil Chesnut	philustr8r@gmail.com
Editor Emeritus, Eric Steiner	ericsteiner@wablues.org

**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](http://www.wablues.org).. The Washington Blues Society received the Keeping the Blues Alive Award from The Blues Foundation in 2009.



**WASHINGTON BLUES SOCIETY**  
**P.O. BOX 70604**  
**SEATTLE, WA 98127**



# Carrie's Corner

## *North Bend Blues Walk and a Farewell to Don and Diane Forsyth of the Blue Healers*

*By Carrie Parduhn*

I finally attended the annual North Bend Blues Walk for the first time. It was held this year on October 4, 2025 in downtown North Bend. It's a lot of music. One ticket gets you, in one night, access to 22 performances at 18 venues.

I want to share my three choices for the night.

Mark Dufresne with Billy Stapleton kicked out the blues at Main Street Pilates. His harmonica with Billy's guitar was an exceptional show.

The Ryan T. Higgins Band sounded great at Twin Peaks. It was standing room only, but we had space to dance to many of his new original songs. A CD release party is in the very near future.

Di and the Blue Hearts seemed to be everyone's favorite at Boxley's. It was a fantastic show yet bittersweet because it was their final show. Don and Diane will be relocating to the San Diego area. We will all miss them as the Blue Healers Band too. All I can say right now is, "Don't it Make my Brown Eyes Blue." On a happy note, they said will be back periodically next year for a few gigs. See you there!

### **Images:**

Top: Mark Dufresne is joined by Billy Stapleton on guitar at the North Bend Blues Walk October 4. The band performed in a pilates studio, as many downtown businesses are repurposed for music shows for the event.

Middle: The Ryan T. Higgins Band play to a standing room only audience at North Bend's Twin Peaks restaurant.

Bottom: Di and the Blue Hearts wow the crowd at Boxley's. The show was one of the last that the band will play in the area before founding members Don (far left) and Diane Forsyth move to California.

(All photos by Carrie Parduhn)



# Taj Mahal: 30 Years of Thanksgiving Magic at Jazz Alley

*"Seeing Taj every year marks the start of the holiday season for us."*

By Kirk Anderson

As the holiday season begins, there's something powerful about coming together for music that's rooted in connection, tradition, and joy. And few artists embody that spirit like Taj Mahal, whose decades-long residency at Dimitriou's Jazz Alley in Seattle has become a beloved Thanksgiving tradition. From November 21-30, Washington Blues Society members and blues fans can experience the Taj Mahal Quintet at his annual residency of 12 shows over nine nights.

Six decades have seen Taj Mahal grow from a young musician trying to find a way to an incredibly well-rounded musician, promoter of the blues, sharer of the magic of world music, never-tiring advocate for musical access for our youth, family man, and friend to thousands across the world.

For 45 years, John Dimitriou and his staff have presented some of the world's best jazz performances, using that same stage to provide a place for growing musicians to explore the music that fills their souls as well as ours. Since 1980, John has also rolled with the punches of the economy, musical taste, and changing demographics while continuing to offer a world-class venue for musicians and patrons alike.

This isn't just a concert series. It's a reunion, a ritual, and a reminder of how music grounds us in community.

## ***Taj Mahal: A Bridge Across Worlds***

Taj Mahal's career is rooted in the blues, but always reaches across oceans and cultures. Long before "world music" was a category, Taj was fusing delta blues with Caribbean rhythms, African folk, calypso, reggae, and zydeco.

He has lived his life as a bridge between worlds. Bridges must have solid bases, and Taj is no exception. Before he turned full-time to music, Taj studied agriculture and animal husbandry, envisioning a life as a tropical agriculturist. That grounding in the

land shaped the way he approaches music: deeply rooted, but always expansive.

In the 1960s, he brought instruments from what would become world music to the blues and exposed us all to the music that we didn't associate with the blues. He breathed more life into the roots of the blues, stretching back to the Caribbean and back to Mali and Congo. In the 1970s and 1980s, Taj stayed away from copying the burgeoning Chicago blues and added zydeco, reggae, and calypso to the delta blues.

In 1995, *Mumtaz Mahal*, a collaboration with Indian classical musicians, pushed those boundaries even further, showcasing his signature voice and guitar in a rich cross-cultural setting.

I have always thought that I couldn't bring my own preconceived notions of his music

to his performances and recordings. I have to just come in, open my mind, and revel in the music and show he creates.

Over the years, Taj has garnered five Grammy awards (out of 17 nominations), Lifetime Achievement Awards from the Recording Academy and the Americana Music Association, The Blues Foundation's B.B. King Entertainer of the Year Award, and induction into the Blues Hall of Fame in Memphis.

The Blues Foundation defines the B.B. King Entertainer of the Year award: "...honors a performer who has best promoted blues music through their recordings and performances..."

"This award specifically recognizes an individual entertainer for their outstanding contributions to the blues genre." Continues

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The Blues Foundation. “The award highlights the performer’s role in not only making music, but also in promoting the blues to a wider audience through their work.”

Yet no list of accolades fully captures the essence of Taj Mahal: a generous performer, a cultural ambassador, and an artist who makes the blues feel brand new every time.

### ***Dimitriou’s Jazz Alley: Seattle’s Home for Jazz & More***

Behind every great residency is a great venue. For 45 years, Jazz Alley has been one of the premier homes for live music in the country.

For a better view of John Dimitriou, the founder and co-owner of Jazz Alley, I reached out to writer and musician Paul de Barros. Paul shared in an excellent article in *The Seattle Times* from October 6, 2023, “How Seattle’s Jazz Alley, Now 43, Became a Premier Destination,” that featured research and interviews that tell the stories of John Dimitriou and Jazz Alley that I would never have known.

Paul’s ability to captivate and inform the

reader is also evident in his book *Jackson Street After Hours: The Roots of Jazz in Seattle*. He has contributed to America’s jazz magazine, *DownBeat*, and was also kind enough to accept my invitation for an interview.

Jazz Alley began in John Dimitriou’s early experiences with his mother and father. He was influenced by his father, who was a restaurant proprietor. In 1980, John wanted to strike out on his own. He found a jazz club that had closed its doors. He took over the lease. The name of that club? Jazz Alley. It was a tough slog, and people said that the effort wouldn’t last. They were right! Continuous hard work and business savvy caused John to move to a larger location. Since those days, John’s son Ari has become co-owner and leaves us in good hands. They have added more seats, created excellent sightlines, and upgraded the sound system.

What was John looking for?

Paul quotes John: “...an upgraded space and experience for musicians, patrons, and staff, John continued on his quest for a top-class venue that attracted top-class musicians that

also had a superior food offering.”

I have talked to several staff members who recount the tough year and a half during the pandemic shutdown, but also shared that most of the staff came back to work at Jazz Alley when it again welcomed musicians and patrons (masked, of course).

Over the decades, Jazz Alley has weathered changing musical tastes, economic downturns, and even a pandemic.

Paul shared with me that John was driven to succeed by his upbringing and family. In working hard for 40-odd years to run Jazz Alley, he wanted and has made a successful restaurant and jazz club. John played piano and loved jazz pianist and composer Bill Evans. His son Ari has been working at Jazz Alley with a similar passion. His staff at the venue really loves the music. Musicians love the venue and the people of Jazz Alley. John’s passion and the drive that his parents instilled in him have driven him to make Jazz Alley one of the premier music clubs not only in Seattle or the nation, but Jazz Alley is known around the world.

Together, the Dimitriou’s have kept Jazz Alley both a sanctuary for serious musicians and a welcoming room for fans, offering great sightlines, top-tier sound, and excellent food.

So, our stage here at the November *Bluesletter* is set.

Coming on our stage are Taj Mahal and John Dimitriou. No, not in person, but as they told their own perspectives of this 30-year holiday tradition to me so that I could pass them around our table and share them with you. Our own holiday feast. I asked some similar questions to both Taj and John. I put their answers together with each question so you could see the individuals and the synergies.

(Left: Taj Mahal Aboard the Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise (Photo by Eric Steiner)

(Continued on Page 8)



# Taj Mahal: 30 Years of Thanksgiving Magic at Jazz Alley (cont'd)

*"Come for the blues. Stay for the tradition. Leave with a full heart."*

(Continued from Page 7)

## **The Tradition: How Taj and Jazz Alley Became a Thanksgiving Staple**

For three decades, Taj Mahal's Thanksgiving residency has been more than just a gig. It's become a seasonal pilgrimage for fans from across the country — some returning year after year, now bringing kids and grandkids.

We spoke with both Taj and John to hear how it all began and what it means today.

## **How did all of this start?**

Taj Mahal: *"Seattle's always had a great energy. I've been playing up here since the late '60s — Ballard, the zoo, The Paramount. But when Jazz Alley started doing shows around Thanksgiving, it just clicked. The people got it. Great audience, great town. The people got it!"*

John Dimitriou: *"We started booking Taj 30 years ago with Paul Goldman from Monterey Artists. He was instrumental in creating this residency. Back then, 'residency' wasn't even a common term. Now it's everywhere — and we like to think we helped start that."*

## **Why Thanksgiving?**

Taj Mahal: *"I deep fry turkeys every year. Family comes to town. The people at Jazz Alley are like family too — it's a team effort. And it's beautiful seeing longtime fans come back with their kids, now teenagers or adults. It's a tradition for all of us."*

John Dimitriou: *"Thanksgiving worked out well since we could book Taj across two weekends. We close on Thanksgiving Day, so it gives everyone a break. Plus, Taj loves to cook — he prepares dinner for the band, staff, and family. It became a full-on celebration."*

## **Favorite Memories?**

Taj Mahal: *"Getting into town early to see Mose Allison. Running into Maria Muldaur. I remember meeting Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Tavis Smiley backstage. There's always someone interesting around — like the photographer from Walla Walla who used to shoot death row portraits. I hope he comes*

*back. And takes some more photos."*

John Dimitriou: *"That first show with Taj — I was floored by his musicality. Another one that stands out was a few years ago, after he was injured by a dog bite. He was injured to the point that he couldn't hold a guitar. He came with a couple of guys from Memphis to play along with his band and even though you could tell he was hurting, he sang his ass off. It was amazing!"*

## **Through the Lens of Linda Wolf**

As this article came together, something serendipitous happened. While volunteering in Seattle, I mentioned the story to a fellow volunteer, Linda Wolf. I learned that she was a renowned photographer. Turns out, Linda is a longtime friend of Taj Mahal and has attended many of these Thanksgiving shows as his guest.

Linda's career is remarkable in its own right. She was the first female rock photographer, touring with *Joe Cocker's Mad Dogs & Englishmen*, an accomplished documentarian of public art, street culture, and women's stories around the world, and created the definitive photo book on the *Mad Dogs* tour and its 2015 revival by Tedeschi Trucks Band.

Linda met Taj in 1969 but grew close in 2017 during a group trip to Cuba. She taught photography while Taj performed, and their bond deepened around shared passions.

One of her most personal memories? Watching her daughter, Heather, a folk singer, perform with Taj on the Jazz Alley stage during Thanksgiving.

Her stunning photographs, such as the cover image for this article, capture the emotion and energy of these performances in a way words can't. See more of Linda's work at [www.lindawolf.net](http://www.lindawolf.net)

## **The Taj Mahal Quintet**

The current Taj Mahal Quintet features Taj Mahal on vocals, guitar, piano, banjo; bassist Bill Rich, steel drummer Robert Greenidge



Look who's reading the Bluesletter in 2008 at Seattle's Woodland Park Zoo!  
(Photo by Tim & Michele Burge)

(Jimmy Buffet's Coral Reefer Band), percussionist Tony Durham, and keyboard player Jim Pugh (Etta James, D.K. Harrell, Robert Cray)

## **A Final Word from Taj Mahal**

*"Jazz will give you back your mind. Reggae will give you back your body. But the blues will give you back your soul."*

## **A Final Word from John Dimitriou**

*"Seeing Taj every year marks the start of the holiday season for us. He brings joy and depth to our stage, and we're grateful every year for what he gives — not just musically, but spiritually."*

## **Don't Miss It!**

Taj Mahal Quintet: 30th Anniversary Thanksgiving Residency, November 21–30, 2025, Dimitriou's Jazz Alley, Seattle,

Tickets at: [www.jazzalley.com](http://www.jazzalley.com), Supported by KNKX, KBCS, and the Washington Blues Society

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WASHINGTON BLUES SOCIETY

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# Election Season: Board Nominations Now Open

*Please nominate candidates for your 2026 Washington Blues Society Board of Directors*

*By Marisue Thomas*

It's nomination time already? What happened to spring and summer?

It's nomination time! Every November, Washington Blues Society members have an opportunity to nominate members to serve on the Board of Directors. Paper nominations must be turned in no later than the November Blues Bash at Aurora Borealis in Shoreline, on November 11, 2025, online nominations must be submitted before midnight on November 11, 2025. Nominations are only valid if you are a current member of the Washington Blues Society.

Official voting takes place during December based on the slate of candidates nominated at, or before, the first November Blues Bash that is held at 7:00 pm on the second Tuesday of the month at Aurora Borealis. Votes are only valid if you are a current member of the Washington Blues Society.

There are seven elected positions of the Washington Blues Society. These descriptions align with the organization's official Bylaws and any registration documentation on file with the State of Washington or the Internal Revenue Service. The Washington Blues Society is a nonprofit organization under IRS Section 501(c)3.

**•President:** The position of President is the public face of the Washington Blues Society. The President is the official signatory of the Washington Blues Society on all official documents, including any financial commitments, grants and contracts, and agreements between the Washington Blues Society and any festival or special event. Our Presidents is expected to manage multiple, and often competing priorities in an environment that is often challenging and fast-paced.

**Vice President:** The position of Vice President supports the President and often acts in place of the President when he or

she is engaged in official Washington Blues Society business. Each Vice President has brought specific skill sets to the Washington Blues Society Board of Directors. Our Vice Presidents have had the ability to be flexible in an environment filled with uncertainty and stress.

**Secretary:** The Secretary keeps and maintains minutes of Washington Blues Society Board of Directors meetings. The Secretary also provides a written agenda and helps run the board meeting in an organized fashion, keeping ongoing notes from one board meeting to board meeting on tabled issues and upcoming events. Key to the success of every Secretary is the ability to quickly document discussions and Board of Directors' votes during regularly scheduled board meetings.

**Treasurer:** The position of Treasurer includes responsibilities above and beyond keeping track of Washington Blues Society finances. The Washington Blues Society Treasurer, not only balance the financial records of the Washington Blues Society, but also has the ability to forecast the needs of festival-related expenses like insurance and state-required permits.

**Bluesletter Editor:** The Washington Bluesletter Editor is responsible for creating and producing a 24-page, full-color magazine using Adobe InDesign. The editor must have strong design and layout skills, attention to detail, and the ability to manage all aspects of magazine production from concept to print.

**Music Director:** The Music Director recruits both paid and volunteer musicians throughout the year to play at fundraising events, the holiday party, twice monthly Washington Blues Society Blues Bashes, and other sponsored shows.

**Membership Director:** The Membership Director manages and updates the Washington Blues Society's member

database. They notify members about upcoming expirations and renewal dates. The director also plans and leads membership drives to recruit new members and retain existing ones.

## **Appointed Volunteer Directors**

*The elected Board of Directors appoints Washington Blues Society volunteer directors in the following positions. Currently, we need an advertising director,*

**Advertising Director:** The Advertising Director is responsible for selling advertising in the printed Bluesletter magazine and on the Washington Blues Society website. The Advertising Director will have the ability to solicit ads, format them according to our printer's requirements and maintain positive relationships with current and former advertisers.

**Education Director:** The Education Director position is being updated. The Washington Blues Society has some new funding opportunities to develop a new education program. The program will include guidance from established Blues Foundation programs, blues music instructors and the WBS Pass the Torch program to further promote blues music education and to ensure students have positive interactive experiences to learn the history and culture of blues music.

**IT Director:** The IT Director will be responsible for maintaining the Washington Blues Society Website.

**Media Director:** The Media and Online Director will be responsible for social media announcements and maintaining the Washington Blues Society content on Facebook, Instagram and other social media platforms.

**Merchandise Director:** The Merchandise Director duties include setting up the Washington Blues Society booth at festivals and events and keeping an inventory of all blues society merchandise for sale.

*(Continued on page 15)*

# CD Reviews

New CDs from Nick Wade, Lisa Mann's Northwestern All Stars with Terrie Odabi, Tinsley Ellis &



**Lisa Mann's  
Northwestern All Stars**  
**The Great Women in  
Blues feat. Terrie Odabi**  
(JayRay & Roseleaf  
Records)

By Eric Steiner

I tend to gravitate to live music CDs more often than not, because these types of audio documents represent what I'd hear at a blues club. They often include noise from the audience, maybe a few missed notes, but that's the nature of live shows. Live recordings force musicians to "up their game" considerably, because there are fewer opportunities for re-takes and other protective embellishments available in the studio.

Well, I was more than thrilled with the 11-track Lisa Mann's Northwestern Blues All-Stars' CD "The Great Women in Blues," recorded at the 2023 Groove Now blues week in Basel, Switzerland. The CD features not only great blues standards from Rosetta Tharpe, "Big Mama" Thornton, Willie Dixon and Etta James, but also songs that I'd consider more recent blues classics from Roebuck Staples and Vashti Jackson. Terrie Odabi's soulful a cappella "Wade in the Water" opens the CD, and just a few songs later, Lisa Mann uncannily channels Dinah Washington on "I Don't Hurt Anymore."

My favorites include "I'd Rather Go Blind" and the rousing closer, "Wang Dang Doodle," reminds me of another live blues CD of a ChicagoFest show from my youth, WXRT-FM Records' "Blues Deluxe" with Willie Dixon's impassioned version of one of his most popular songs.

Joining Lisa and Terrie is a Northwestern "dream team" of drummer Jimi Bott, guitarists Ben Rice and Jason "JT" Thomas, and keyboard player "King Louie" Pain. The more I learned about next year's Groove Now Blues Week, the more I wanted to add it to my 2026 calendar, as producer Patrick Kaiser's first class lineup features the Nick Moss All-Star Band, the Ben Levin Blues Piano Summit with Bob Welsh, Candice Ivory's Blues All-Stars, Southern Hospitality, Victor Wainwright & The Train, music

from The Last Waltz, Sugaray Rayford singing Otis Redding, and The Blues Giants (a supergroup with Jimmy Carpenter, Sugaray Rayford, Mike Zito and Albert Castiglia). I highly recommend Lisa Mann's Northwestern All-Stars latest CD and hope that it keeps the legacy of Etta James, Dinah Washington, Mavis Staples, Rosetta Tharpe, Ruth Brown, "Big Mama" Thornton, Big Maybelle and Koko Taylor very much alive. More importantly, each of these groundbreaking blueswomen deserve it.

**Reviewer's Note:** Experience Lisa Mann's Northwestern Blues All-Stars featuring Terrie Odabi at two very special shows this month sponsored by LTD Presents. On November 6, the All-Stars play the Blue Mouse Theatre in Tacoma, and the next night, the All-Stars play the Palindrome in Port Townsend. Please consider supporting this exceptional ensemble dedicated to keeping the legacy of some pretty special blueswomen alive in South Puget Sound and Jefferson County!



**Nick Wade**  
**Feeling Good Is Good  
Enough**  
(Extrasensory  
Productions)

By Steve Pearse

Nick Wade is an old blues soul, and "Feeling Good is Good Enough" is his first released album, but it's not his first acoustic blues rodeo. Wade first became acquainted with the guitar at the age of five and has been plucking a 1936 Gibson-made Kalamazoo, followed by a 2022 Goodman Grand Concert, pretty much ever since.

The purveyor of a rich, organic voice, Wade's pitch-perfect, down-home blues vocals evoke the best of Muddy Waters, with echoes of Robert Johnson and Jimmy "Duck" Holmes. Think Bentonina (Mississippi) blues!

Nick Wade distills his often spare, but never static, picking down to blues-centric six-string tones. Listen with care to each cut:

Wade's expertise and control as a guitarist complements his pure, engaging voice.

A now-religious man who admits to having lived the party life in his teens, Wade counts his West Virginia-raised mother's country singing and his paternal grandfather, jazzman Johnny Wade, for his musical bent. Wade's deep faith is foundational to many of this album's cuts.

These 12 tunes, all originals, vary in tempo, topic, and tone, but each displays Nick's confident, accomplished musicianship. The first cut, "Sky Line Drive," features precise old-school picking, interspersed with homespun verses ('... Woke up the next mornin', ask my friend to tell me the time of day ...it feel like cold steel rain...'), following a subdued but solid rollin' blues groove.

The next song, "Sing with the Angels," is an engaging exploration of the speaker's wishes once he has departed this world for the next. The CD's third cut, "Broke and Busted," a taut 2.5-minute number, opens with Wade's artful strumming, then shifts to a quicker tempo as he tells his story: 'I rode the bus cause I ain't got no place to go...I had no place 'til she gave me a place to sing.' Wade's crisp picking in the Robert Johnson style of one man singing the blues on porches, in country stores, and at those highway crossroads, works like magic!

Throughout the CD, Wade establishes himself as an unalloyed, genuine inheritor of those great acoustic players. The fifth cut, "Lonesome Copperhead Snake," features the only other musician on this CD: harp wizard Ronnie Owens. Owens' evocative riffs wrap around Wade's storytelling ("I'm a lonesome copperhead snake; I make my home down in the ground; I'm the snake that crawls when the moon shines bright in the sky"), building an emotional passage where the speaker's relationship lives and grows. Wade's acoustic artistry glows brightly here!

There is much more here to enjoy, including "Engineer Blues" ("That train's rollin on down the tracks; that's when I'm gone, woman, I'm never comin' back"), and the soulful "When You Bury My Body," Wade's inward looking, prayerful look at his eventual life's end. The extended guitar solo strikes just



the right tone, neither morbid nor sardonic, as this devout Christian speaks (“And when you bury my body, I’m goin’ offer you ... when my God calls them home.”) Then, the picking slows, and the 12-bar blues number returns with a resplendent minor chord.

Nick Wade’s “Feeling Good Is Good Enough” packs more than enough guitar virtuosity, vocal skill, authenticity, and just plain listenability to earn a prominent place in every blues lover’s collection!



*Tinsley Ellis*  
*Naked Truth*  
(Alligator Records)

*By Eric Steiner*

During the “deadline dash” of the November issue, I learned that Tinsley Ellis returns this month for a few special shows in Oregon and Washington, and I wanted to shout about one of my favorite blues artist’s 21<sup>st</sup> album, “Naked Truth” (Alligator Records) one more time. This CD features a master bluesman at the top of his game in a sparse, pared-down set.

It’s just Tinsley Ellis on guitar producing his own record, with a little help from Atlanta’s first-call producer Eddie 9V on one song. “Naked Truth” is crisply mixed and mastered by Tony Terrebone, who captures every nuance (ranging from the sound of Tinsley’s fingers on the frets, handclaps, toe tapping, or other movement in the studio). The disc opens with the hypnotic original, “Devil in the Room,” recalling Tinsley’s friend Col. Bruce Hampton, who told him “it was the musician’s job” to bring the lord of Hades into the studio.

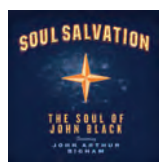
“Naked Truth” features a mix of nine originals and three covers, and my favorite is Tinsley’s heartfelt take on Son House’s “Death Letter Blues” produced by Eddie 9V and mixed by Lane Kelly. Alligator Records featured “Death Letter Blues” as the first official music video from the CD, and it captures all the raucous playing and plaintive emotion behind the original. Chicago blues is well-represented on the disc with Willie Dixon’s “Don’t Go No Further” and a humorous original about a woman “who just

can’t stand serious love” from “A Grown Ass Man.” Both “Tallahassee Blues” and “Windowpane” sound like they could have easily been recorded by “race record labels” in the 1930s for their authentic, old school blues sound. From start to finish, I marveled at just how “Naked Truth” got (and held) my attention through each of the CD’s 12 songs.

The set’s closing instrumental, “Easter Song,” is a welcome, uplifting and contemplative cut that’s a world away from the traditional blues on this CD and it surprises many of my guests who listen to the CD when I play it at home for them. I’ve played “Naked Truth” for friends more than any other acoustic blues CD since I first heard it last year.

I know that my fellow blues society volunteers like frequent Bluesletter contributor Kirk Anderson and “Bluesland” DJ Leo Schumaker have sung Tinsley’s praises in these pages pretty frequently over the past few years, and with releases like “Naked Truth,” I share their enthusiasm and highly recommend this CD.

**Reviewer’s Note:** This month, welcome Tinsley Ellis back to the Evergreen State with some very special solo acoustic shows. On November 13, he’ll play The Churchill School in Butler City, Oregon, followed by a return show at Brewminatti in Prosser, Washington the next night. On November 15, Tinsley will play the McIntyre Hall Performing Arts & Conference Center at Skagit Valley College in Mt. Vernon. On November 17, he’ll turn the Vashon Center for the Arts on Vashon Island into a Southern juke before returning to Portland’s stately Alberta Rose Theatre on November 18.



*The Soul of John Black*  
*Soul Salvation*  
(Yellow Dog Records)

*By Eric Steiner*

Last month, I received a welcome and surprise email from Yellow Dog Records founder and producer Michael Powers in Memphis.

Yes, he shares the same name of the former Seattle-based guitarist who returns to the

Pacific Northwest from time to time from his home in the Southwest. I met Memphis’ Michael when I served on the Board of The Blues Foundation from 2010-2013 and I always enjoyed CDs from Yellow Dog Records. It’s a niche blues label that includes a diverse array of artists such as William Lee Ellis, Eden Brent, and the Asylum Street Spankers (among others).

“Soul Salvation” is the newest CD from The Soul of John Black, the stage name of John “JB” Bingham, whose musical career includes work as a percussionist for Miles Davis and sessions with Dr. Dre, Everlast, Eminem, as well as a long tenure with the ska-funk unit Fishbone.

The 10-song CD is a diverse collection of soul, R&B and blues influenced by the likes of Albert King, Mavis Staples and Wilson Pickett. The CD launches with “Begging You Baby,” fueled by a strong bass and drum foundation that sends sonic shock waves that ripple throughout the CD. Bingham plays all the instruments on the CD in his own JB’s Black Box Los Angeles studio with Oliver Charles on drums and Christine Rosander on background vocals.

The CD marks a return to the Memphis-based label for JB, who released his debut in 2002, followed by releases on Eclecto-Groove I fondly remember many of his earlier Yellow Dog releases, including “The Good Girl Blues” (2007), “Good Thang,” (2011), and “The Soul of Christmas” (2011) as well as CDs on the No Mayo and Cadabra imprints.

Bingham has garnered praise from “The New Yorker,” the “Wall Street Journal,” National Public Radio, songwriting awards from the Independent Music Awards, and a Blues Music Award nomination, and I hope Soul Salvation attracts more, well-deserved acclaim for this innovative and genre-bending blues artist. I keep coming back to the Memphis-infused “Take Your Time” and the soulful “Get Closer,” and I hope Washington Blues Society Bluesletter readers and fans check out this innovative soul, R & B and blues CD.

# Stephanie Anne Johnson releases new album

*The veteran of The Voice and popular radio DJ to host two CD release parties this month*

*By Polly O'Keary, Editor*

Stephanie Anne Johnson, whose tremendous blues and soul voice was a standout on *The Voice* and who is a popular DJ on KNKX's show *The Grooveyard*, is celebrating a new album with two November release parties.

Stephanie, who released a live album in January and whose last studio album came out in 2023, said that this nine-track album, titled *Sing, Baby*, represents an uplifting musical turn.

"In 2023, I was getting really emotional, getting to the heart of the matter. There were songs about me quitting drinking and the pain of losing my grandmother's house, and the feeling was heavy with some of that album," they said. "This album is really fun. I want to encourage people to sing along and to use their voices. I have a lot of joyful music on this record."

Some of the tracks on the album celebrate courage and the importance of authentic identity.

"The last tune on the record is called 'Don't Stop Calling My Name,' they said. 'I feel like it's a wonderful and powerful thing to have the courage to name yourself, and another wonderful thing to be in community with people who will call you what you want to be called.'"



One part of claiming identity for Stephanie has meant being public about not identifying with a specific gender.

"Outwardly, people looking at me are going to see a woman," they said. "But my spirit is bigger and more expansive, so someone willing to use my correct pronouns says they are willing to recognize my physical self, but also my spirit."

Not everyone is willing to accord non-traditional identities acceptance in America, though. Rather, division over the possibilities of identity are part of the rancorous politics that plague the nation. Stephanie sees music as an important part of helping society negotiate turbulent times.

"I remember that a lot of my favorite music from the 60s and 70s and what was going on at that time," they said. "It was not good. There was war on, there was a change sweeping across the nation. New laws made people feel differently about their neighbors, to say nothing of what was going on with labor rights. I know James Brown lived through the assassination of Dr. King and was still able to get on stage and perform in a way that gave people an outlet for their very strong emotions. In my opinion, that is holy work."

The release parties for Stephanie's new album, including November 8 at the Open Space for Arts and Community in Vashon and November 15 at the Broadway Performance Hall in Capitol Hill, will offer a similar experience, they said.

"I am trying in my small way to give people room and permission to come to my show, to laugh, to cry, to scream for joy if they want to," they said. "It's my pleasure to offer that kind of space."

Stephanie is also bringing that joyous, expressive show to Spokane and then to other states in the coming weeks, including Montana, Oregon, California, and opening for Mavis Staples in Arizona.



Then it's back home for the holidays.

"In December, I will be doing a barrage of Christmas singing at the Center for Spiritual Living, and it's going to be a really beautiful time of having a lot of music going through my body," they said.

Stephanie encourages fans to buy her new album through Bandcamp, rather than playing it on subscription services.

"The folks at Spotify and Apple, they don't pay artists what they are worth. So it's time for fans to go ahead and vote with their dollar. As I say from the stage quite frequently, the moment you buy an album from me, they'll send me an email with your money" they said. "To add to that, many venues won't book you unless you have a certain number of streams on Spotify, so you are roped into having this conglomerate making you give your art for free. And as music lovers, I think we can make better choices."

## Images:

Above: Stephanie Anne Johnson's new album *Sing, Baby* (left) is a more joyous album than previous works.

A theme of the new album is the importance of the names people carry, including those given by loved ones, the artist said.

Images courtesy of the artist.



# Jazz Alley finishes 2025 with strong lineup

*Selected events for fans of blues, funk, R&B, and blues rock, and roots music*

## **Elvin Bishop's Big Fun Trio with Special Guest Cedric Burnside**

Legendary Rock & Roll and Blues Hall of Famer guitarist and singer joined by Grammy-winning blues guitarist/singer/drummer for double blues trouble in the highest order. October 30 – November 2

## **Stanley Jordan Plays Jimi & The Dead**

World-renowned touch-tap guitarist plays a Jimi and Grateful Dead tribute show, but it's not pure imitation. Instead, Stanley builds on the legacy of both in a creative way, re-imagining their music. Nov. 4 – 5

## **Tower of Power**

Legendary horn driven urban soul music and perennial favorite! November 6 – 9

## **The Taj Mahal Quintet 30th Anniversary performing at Jazz Alley**

See article this issue. November 21 – November 30

## **Smokey Robinson: Up Close - Hits and More**

Acclaimed singer-songwriter Smokey Robinson's career spans over 4 decades of hits. He's received numerous awards including the Grammy Living Legend Award, Kennedy Center Honors and the National Medal of Arts Award from the

President of the United States. He's also in the Rock 'n' Roll and Songwriters' Hall of Fame. Dec. 1 – 2

## **Blind Boys of Alabama Christmas Show**

Recognized worldwide as living legends of gospel music. Celebrated by The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and The Recording Academy/Grammy's with Lifetime Achievement Awards, inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame, and winners of six Grammy Awards, they have attained the highest levels of achievement in a career that spans over 70 years. December 15 – 17

## Board Elections

*Please vote for your 2026 Board volunteers by November 11*

*(Continued from page 11)*

**Seattle Peace Concerts Director:** The Seattle Peace Concerts director works directly with new and established producers of the Seattle Peace Concerts that were established in 1981 and have their own specific guidelines.

**Volunteer Director:** The Volunteer Director obtains competent volunteers for blues society activities, including Blues Bashes, festivals, and special events.

For a list of the current Board and volunteer directors, please see



page 4.



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4-5 Stanley Jordan

6-9 Tower of Power

11-12 Avery Sunshine

13-16 Lettuce

18-20 Cherry Poppin Daddies

21 -30 Taj Mahal Quintet



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# Duffy Bishop: Live at the Arcadian Public House!

*"I wish I had seen her at other stops like Seattle, or in her long-time home city of Portland, or Boise or Tacoma."*

By Eric Steiner

This past September, I caught the final show of Duffy Bishop's 2025 regional tour as she celebrated 50 years as a performing artist. As I left the Arcadian Public House (formerly the Conway Muse) in Skagit County, I wished had seen her at other stops like Seattle, or in her long-time home city of Portland, or Boise, or Tacoma.

Duffy's lively 2+ hour set featured a diverse range of originals and covers, and it had been years since I even thought of NRBQ, The Band or Leon Russell, but the band's versions "Greenlight," "Ophelia" and "Tight Rope" really showcased bassist Keith Lowe, guitarist Chris Carlson, drummer and harmonica player Kelly Dunn and keyboard player Bruce Slavin as each offered solos that built around Duffy's powerful vocals.

The lawn at the Arcadian Public House

was nearly full, and I met a couple of blues fans that worked at Seattle's legendary Owl Tavern. We talked about my early days in Seattle when I frequented the Owl, and I first experienced Duffy's show there. Since then, she's been inducted to the Halls of Fame for the Washington Blues Society, The Cascade Blues Association and the Oregon Music Hall of Fame.

With good reason. I enjoyed originals like "Please Mr. Jailer" and "Wild Weekend" and she sang to award-winning graphic artist Phil Chesnut, who sat with harmonica ace Jeff Herzog and frequent Salmon Bay Eagles performer Daddy Treetops. Throughout the set, Duffy wandered throughout the audience and ask fans to sing with her, and on one spirited song, she danced with Keith as they ran the length of the stage in a spirited ango. Some of the silliest songs engaged the audience, like "Monkey Pants"



Duffy Bishop in Conway (Photo by Eric Steiner)

and "The Weenie Man," and with each song, Duffy masterfully and playfully led her band through a rousing set of memorable music!

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# Blues on the Road: Thankful for Great Live Blues in November

*November features Taj Mahal, Tower of Power, The Fabulous Thunderbirds, Samantha Fish, Robert Cray & many more*

*By Eric Steiner*

This month's issue prominently features the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of blues and roots legend Taj Mahal's annual residency at Dimitriou's Jazz Alley in Seattle thanks to frequent contributor Kirk Anderson's feature interview, Jazz Alley proprietor John Dimitriou and Taj Mahal himself. Jazz Alley will also celebrate 57 years of "East Bay Grease" courtesy of Tower of Power, and Robert Cray returns to our region for some special shows. My preview column also includes one of my favorite Americana-roots bands from Ohio, Over the Rhine, and "the fishin' blues musician," Keith Scott.

Before I forget, I featured Elvin Bishop's Big Fun Trio with special guest Cedric Burnside in last month's Blues on the Road preview, and I strongly recommend Bluesletter readers to check out these shows at Seattle's Jazz Alley from October 30 through November 2. These shows provide rare opportunities to see some exceptional live music with two of my favorite live blues acts!

Let's get started!

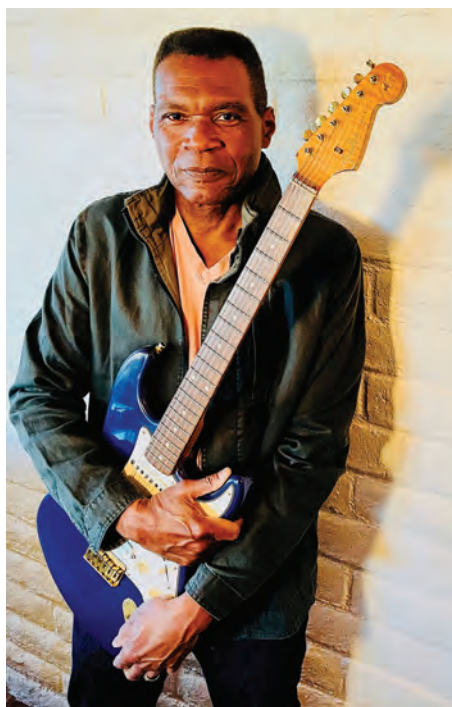
## **Keith Scott**

Washington Blues Society member, and frequent Bluesletter contributor, Keith Scott returns to the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia's Lower Mainland this month. He begins his regional tour November 4 playing for the Carlin Hall Community Association in Tappen, B.C., before two nights at the Jamestown S'Klallam tribe's 7 Cedars Casino in Sequim on November 7. On Sunday, November 9, Keith returns to Seattle's legendary Salmon Bay Eagles followed by a drive over the pass to Leavenworth's Icicle Brewing Company on November 11 and Bainbridge Island's Fletcher Bay Winery the next night. On November 14, this road warrior returns to Kimo's Sports Bar & Brewpub in Richland before heading down to Gratitude Brewing in Eugene, Oregon on November 15. Keith wraps up his Fall tour back on Bainbridge Island at the Eagle Harbor Winery on November 16 before

returning home to finish the year with 18+ gigs in his home state of Michigan and nearby Illinois and Indiana.

## **Tower of Power**

Dimitriou's Jazz Alley welcomes Tower of Power for four nights and four shows beginning November 6. This enduring, Oakland-based soul and funk band continues to play some of their most popular songs from its storied 57-year history, such as "Soul With a Capital 'S'," "You're Still a Young Man," and "What Is Hip?" Tower of Power features Emilio Castillo, Tom Politzer and Stephen "Doc" Kupka on sax, Mike Jerel on keys, Adolfo Acosta and Dave Richards on trumpet, Jerry Cortez on guitar, Marc van Wageningen on bass, and Jordan John on vocals. Show times from Thursday to Sunday at 7:30 pm. Doors open at 6 pm on Thursday and at 5:30 pm Friday thru Sunday.



## **Robert Cray**

This month, Robert Cray, 5x Grammy winner and recipient of the Americana Music Awards Lifetime Achievement Award for Live Performance, plays five shows in

four states in our region. On November 7, he'll play the McDonald Theatre in Eugene, Oregon, followed by two shows in Washington: November 8 at the Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon and November 10 at the Federal Way Performing Arts Center in the South Puget Sound. The next night, the Robert Cray Band will play The Wilma in Missoula, Montana and on November 11, the Argyros Performing Arts Center in Ketchum, Idaho. Back in 2011, I was fortunate to attend Robert Cray's induction into the Blues Hall of Fame at The Blues Foundation in Memphis, and I encourage Washington Blues Society members and friends to see the Robert Cray Band whenever they can. I look forward to seeing the show at the Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon this month! (Artist Courtesy Photo).

## **The Fabulous Thunderbirds**

Don't miss two rare opportunities to see the Fabulous Thunderbirds this month! On November 14, our Kitsap Blues Music Festival partners welcome Kim Wilson & Co. to the Admiral Theatre, and the next night, the Kirkland Performance Center, a former home of the Washington Blues Society's Best of the Blues Awards ("BB Awards"), features the band on the East Side.

## **Cherry Poppin' Daddies**

Dimitriou's Jazz Alley welcomes the Cherry Poppin' Daddies for three nights and three shows, November 18-20 at 7:30 pm each night. They burst into the mainstream in 1997 with the release of "Zoot Suit Riot," an album that celebrated the swing revival of the late 1990's. The title track became an instant hit, propelling the band to international fame and selling over two million copies. Their music speaks to both die-hard swing fans and those seeing something new and different. For new fans, Cherry Poppin' Daddies offer an exciting journey through America music, on their latest recording *At The Pink Rat*, a 12-song swing hi-energy album showcasing an exceptional band. The Cherry Poppin' Daddies feature Steve Perry



on vocals, Dana Heitman on trumpet, Willie Matheis on tenor sax, Chris Shuttleworth on trombone, Jason Moss on guitar and the talented engine room of, Dan Schmid on bass and Nik Barber on drums.



### **Taj Mahal**

This month, the Washington Blues Society is proud, along with KBCS and KNKX, to present the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Taj Mahal's annual November residency at Dimitrious's Jazz Alley. Taj Mahal is a 5x Grammy-winner, a recipient of the 2025 Recording Academy Lifetime Achievement Award, and recognized as a B.B. King "Entertainer of the Year" from The Blues Foundation. Joining Taj Mahal (vocals, guitar, piano, banjo and more) in a quintet format are renowned bassist Bill Rich, steel drummer Robert Greenidge (Jimmy Buffett's Coral Reefer Band), percussionist/drummer Tony Durham and Jim Pugh on keyboard/organ (Etta James, Robert Cray, D.K. Harrell). Set times on Fridays and Saturdays 11/22-23 and 11/29-30 are at 7:30 pm and 9:30 pm and set times on Sundays (11/24 & 12/1), Tuesday (11/26) and Wednesday (11/27) at 7:30 pm only. Doors open at 6:00 pm Friday 11/22 and 5:30 pm all other nights. Welcome back, Taj! (Photo of Taj Mahal Courtesy of Jazz Alley).

### **Samantha Fish**

Before she returns to the Midwest on a national tour, Samantha Fish will play Seattle's Crocodile on November 22 followed by Portland's Aladdin Theatre the next night. Southern California blues band Robert Jon and the Wreck open each night, and I'm pleased that they will get some well-deserved national exposure on their ninth CD, Heartbreaks & Last Goodbyes, on Joe



Bonamassa's Journeyman Records. I expect Samantha will play some pretty hard-edged blues from this year's excellent release on Rounder Records, *Paper Doll*. Samatha's currently taking preorders for a live CD that captures a show at the Bijou Theatre in Knoxville, Tennessee, *Samantha Fish Live*. (Photo of Samantha Fish Courtesy of the Kistap Blues Music Festival).

### **The Rebirth Brass Band**

The award-winning Rebirth Brass Band plays two shows on November 28 at Seattle's Tractor Tavern. In 2012, the band received the Grammy Award for Best Regional Roots Music Album for *Rebirth of New Orleans* on the venerable Basin Street Records label. Drummer Keith "Bassdrumshorty" Frazier, along with his brother Philip Frazier and friend Kermit Ruffins, founded the band in 1983. Keith is the last of the original members, and over the years, has recruited a stellar line up of Crescent City musicians to keep the Rebirth Brass Band alive. The band features Stafford "Freaky Pete" Agee and Caleb Windsay on trombone, Glenn Hall and Eric Gordon on trumpet, Vincent "Vinnny B" Broussard on saxophone, Clifton "Spug" Smith tuba, Jenard Andrews on percussion. On November 29, the band plays the Get Down Music Venue in Portland, Oregon before resuming their 2025 tour on the Eastern seaboard.

### **Over the Rhine**

Fresh from headlining America's Roots Festival last month in Cincinnati, Over the Rhine returns to the Pacific

Northwest starting with intimate shows at New Community in Spokane on November 15 and the Old Church Concert Hall in Portland on November 19. On November 20-21, welcome the band back to the Triple Door in Seattle, and celebrate their Mt. Baker Theatre debut in Bellingham on November 22 before the band returns home to Ohio. I discovered Karin Berquist and Linford Detweiler, the husband and wife team behind Over the Rhine, decades ago when they opened for the Cowboy Junkies, and since then, the band has released 30+ studio and live CDs and has received the inaugural Bootsy Collins Music Ambassador Award at the 2019 Cincinnati Entertainment Awards. Karin and Linford also were named one of the 100 Best Living Songwriters by *Paste* magazine, and I hope their set includes songs like "Moth," "Poughkeepsie" and "Faithfully Dangerous."

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# November 2025 Live Blues Music Calendar

Our [www.wablues.org](http://www.wablues.org) calendar is the most current & contact the venue for start time + additional details

## NOVEMBER 1

**Third Place Commons, Kenmore:** Portage Bay Big Band 7 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Davanos 7 p.m.  
**Pub 282, Camano Island:** Chil Deville 7 p.m.  
**Port Gardner Bay Winery, Everett:** The McCarters 7 p.m.  
**Johnny's Dock, Tacoma:** Michele D'Amour and the Love Dealers 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Elvin Bishop's Big Fun Trio w Cedric Burnside 7:30 p.m.  
**Rockfish, Anacortes:** Naughty Bokes 7:30 p.m.  
**Nectar, Seattle:** New Master Sound 8 p.m.  
**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Seattle House Rockers 8 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 2

**Chalet Theater, Enumclaw:** The Lonely Hearts Club 1 p.m.  
**Peabo's, Mill Creek:** Sunday Music Revue 7 p.m.  
**The Spar, Tacoma:** Sunday Blues 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Elvin Bishop's Big Fun Trio w Cedric Burnside 7:30 p.m.  
**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Randy Weeks 4 p.m., Ron Weinstein Trio 9 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 3

**El Sid, Everett:** Blues Ambassadors 7 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Mad Bojo 7 p.m.  
**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Yukiko Matsuyama 7:30 p.m.  
**Blue Moon, Seattle:** Andy Coe Band 9 p.m.  
**Owl 'N Thistle, Seattle:** Aquilizer 9 p.m.  
**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** La Luz 10 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 4

**Bishop Block Bottle Shop, Port Townsend:** Jazz w Jonathan Doyle & Friends 5 p.m.  
**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Sofia Goodman Trio 7:30 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** RE-Wired 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Stanley Jordan 7:30 p.m.  
**Moore Theater, Seattle:** Los Lobos 8 p.m.  
**Billy Blues Bar and Grill, Vancouver:** Ben Rice and the Hustle 8 p.m.  
**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Joe Doria Presents 10 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 5

**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** Shape Shifter 4:30 p.m.  
**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Mango Rabbit 7:30 p.m.  
**CCR, Snohomish:** Usual Suspects 7 p.m.  
**The Spar, Tacoma:** Jazzy Wednesdays 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Stanley Jordan 7:30 p.m.  
**Rockfish, Anacortes:** Whistle Lake Quartet 6 p.m.

**Seamonster, Seattle:** Weinstein Wednesday 10 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 6

**Black & Tan, Seattle:** Live Lounge 7 p.m.  
**Cellar Cat, Kingston:** Annie Eastwood Trio 5 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Blues Ambassadors 7 p.m.  
**Blue Mouse, Tacoma:** Lisa Mann's Northwest All-Stars 7 p.m.  
**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** Billy Brandt 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Tower of Power 7:30 p.m.  
**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Robert Deeble and Akemi 7:30 p.m.  
**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Ryan T. Higgins Band 8 p.m.  
**Snapdragon, Vashon:** Steve Itterly and Friends 8 p.m.  
**Owl and Thistle, Seattle:** Danny Godinez Presents 9 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 7

**Port Gardner Bay Winery, Everett:** Deano's Motel 7 p.m.  
**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Five Mile Drive 7 p.m.  
**Palindrome, Port Townsend:** Lisa Mann's Northwest All-Stars 7 p.m.  
**Admiral Theater, Bremerton:** Uptown: A Celebration of Motown Soul 7:30 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Tower of Power 7:30 p.m.  
**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Jaqueline Tabor and Vela 7:30 p.m.  
**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** Tor Dietrichson Band 8 p.m.  
**El Capitan's, Bellingham:** Cassandra May and James 8 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** The Encounter 8 p.m.  
**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Extra Think 8 p.m.  
**Funky2 Death** 10 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 8

**Muckleshoot, Auburn:** Stacy Jones Band 6 p.m.  
**The Repp, Snohomish:** Eastwood & Stevens 6:30 p.m.  
**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Seattle Jazz Network 7 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Polly O'Keary and the Rhythm Method 7 p.m.  
**Pub 282, Camano Island:** Jimmy Wright 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Tower of Power 7:30 p.m.  
**Aurora Borealis, Shoreline:** Doctor Funk 8 p.m.  
**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Redshift Trio 8 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 9

**Peabo's, Mill Creek:** Sunday Music Revue 7 p.m.  
**The Spar, Tacoma:** Sunday Blues 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Tower of Power 7:30 p.m.  
**The Royal Room, Seattle:** We Are Stardust 7:30 p.m.  
**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Randy Weeks 4 p.m., Ron Weinstein Trio 9 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 10

**Angel of the Winds, Arlington:** Fat Fridays 11 a.m.  
**El Sid, Everett:** Blues Ambassadors 7 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Mad Bojo 7 p.m.  
**Blue Moon, Seattle:** Andy Coe Band 9 p.m.  
**Owl 'N Thistle, Seattle:** Aquilizer 9 p.m.  
**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** La Luz 10 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 11

**Bishop Block Bottle Shop, Port Townsend:** Jazz w Jonathan Doyle & Friends 5 p.m.  
**Aurora Borealis, Shoreline:** Washington Blues Society Blues Bash 7 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Neil Young Birthday Bash 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Avey Sunshine 7:30 p.m.  
**Triple Door, Seattle:** Sonny Landreth 7:30 p.m.  
**The Royal Room, Seattle:** E.T.E 7:30 p.m.  
**Billy Blues Bar and Grill, Vancouver:** Ben Rice and the Hustle 8 p.m.  
**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** The 350's 7:30 p.m.  
**Joe Doria Presents** 10 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 12

**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** Shape Shifter 4:30 p.m.  
**CCR, Snohomish:** Usual Suspects 7 p.m.  
**The Spar, Tacoma:** Jazzy Wednesdays 7 p.m.  
**Aurora Borealis, Shoreline:** Jazz Police 7:30 p.m.  
**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** Rebecca Jaymes 7:30 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Avey Sunshine 7:30 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 13

**Sea Tac Sub Pop, Sea Tac Airport:** Eric Madis 11:30 a.m.  
**Black & Tan, Seattle:** Live Lounge 7 p.m.  
**Bad Albert's, Seattle:** Annie Eastwood and Friends 6 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Songwriter Showcase 7 p.m.  
**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** Bill Anschell Trio 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Lettuce 7:30 p.m.  
**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Last Minute Maybes and Func Pro Tunc 7:30 p.m.  
**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** CD Woodbury 8 p.m.  
**Snapdragon, Vashon:** Steve Itterly and Friends 8 p.m.  
**Owl and Thistle, Seattle:** Danny Godinez Presents 9 p.m.



## NOVEMBER 14

**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** The Unknowns 7 p.m.

**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Cyndi Moring and Lucile Street 7 p.m.

**Kimball Coffeehouse, Gig Harbor:** Annie Eastwood All Stars 7 p.m.

**Sheridan Market, Lake Forest Park:** Greg Fulton Band 7 p.m.

**Pub 282, Camano Island:** Ebb, Slack and Flood 7 p.m.

**Port Gardner Bay Winery, Everett:** Rich and Red 7 p.m.

**Admiral Theater, Bremerton:** Fabulous Thunderbirds 7:30 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Lettuce 7:30 p.m.

**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Seattle Solid Gold 7:30 p.m.

**Paramount Theater, Seattle:** Neko Case 8 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Nick Mardon Trio 8 p.m.

**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Funky2 Death 10 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 15

**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Mark Hurwitz and Gin Creek 7 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Souled Out 7 p.m.

**Pub 282, Camano Island:** Criminal Squirrel Orchestra 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Lettuce 7:30 p.m.

**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** McPage and Powell 7:30 p.m.

**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Asayo Katano 2 p.m.  
What's Going On 2025 7:30 p.m.

**Rockfish, Anacortes:** Fat Fridays 7:30 p.m.

**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Red House 8 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 16

**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Food Stock II 4 p.m.

**UCC, Fox Island:** Blues Vespers w Joe Cook Band 5 p.m.

**Peabo's, Mill Creek:** Sunday Music Revue 7 p.m.

**The Spar, Tacoma:** Sunday Blues 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Lettuce 7:30 p.m.

**The Royal Room, Seattle:** What's Going On 2025 7:30 p.m.

**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Randy Weeks 4 p.m., Ron Weinstein Trio 9 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 17

**El Sid, Everett:** Blues Ambassadors 7 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Mad Bojo 7 p.m.

**Blue Moon, Seattle:** Andy Coe Band 9 p.m.

**Owl 'N Thistle, Seattle:** Aquilizer 9 p.m.

**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** La Luz 10 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 18

**Bishop Block Bottle Shop, Port Townsend:** Jazz w Jonathan Doyle & Friends 5 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Unbound 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Cherry Poppin Daddies 7:30 p.m.

**Moore Theater, Seattle:** Robert Plant's Saving Grace 8 p.m.

**Billy Blues Bar and Grill, Vancouver:** Ben Rice and the Hustle 8 p.m.

**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Joe Doria Presents 10 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 19

**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** Shape Shifter 4:30 p.m.

**CCR, Snohomish:** Usual Suspects 7 p.m.

**The Spar, Tacoma:** Jazzy Wednesdays 7 p.m.

**Aurora Borealis, Shoreline:** Seattle Jazz Network 7:30 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Cherry Poppin Daddies 7:30 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 20

**Black & Tan, Seattle:** Live Lounge 7 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Songwriters Showcase 7 p.m.

**Pub 282, Camano Island:** Chris Eger 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Cherry Poppin Daddies 7:30 p.m.

**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Salmon Dan 8 p.m.

**Snapdragon, Vashon:** Steve Itterly and Friends 8 p.m.

**Owl and Thistle, Seattle:** Danny Godinez Presents 9 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 21

**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Commander Mojo and the Horns of Discontent 7 p.m.

**Port Gardner Bay Winery, Everett:** Jolene Gayle 7 p.m.

**Pub 282, Camano Island:** Jimmy Wright 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Taj Mahal 7:30 p.m.

**Nectar, Seattle:** Delvon Lamar Trio 8 p.m.

**Moore Theater, Seattle:** Steve Hackett 8 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Jimi Lee's All Stars 8 p.m.

**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Mark Dufresne Band 8 p.m.

**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Phoebe Katis 8 p.m.  
Funky2 Death 10 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 22

**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Ray Skjelbred Trio 3 p.m.  
Julia Francis/Seola Station 7:30 p.m.

**Crocodile, Seattle:** Samantha Fish w Robert John

and the Wreck 6 p.m.

**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Blue Notes 7 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Stevie and the Blue Flames 7 p.m.

**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** Foot Stompers 7 p.m.

**Pub 282, Camano Island:** CD Woodbury 7 p.m.

**Port Gardner Bay Winery, Everett:** Rewind 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Taj Mahal 7:30 p.m.

**Rockfish, Anacortes:** Mark DuFresne Band 7:30 p.m.

**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Rod Cook and Toast 8 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 23

**Johnny's Dock, Tacoma:** Blues Redemption 5 p.m.

**Kilworth Chapel at University of Puget Sound, Tacoma:** Blues Vespers w John Kessler Band 5 p.m.

**Aurora Borealis, Shoreline:** Greta Matassa 7 p.m.

**Peabo's, Mill Creek:** Sunday Music Revue 7 p.m.

**The Spar, Tacoma:** Sunday Blues 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Taj Mahal 7:30 p.m.

**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Marriott Brothers 4 p.m., Ron Weinstein Trio 9 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 24

**El Sid, Everett:** Blues Ambassadors 7 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Mad Bojo 7 p.m.

**Blue Moon, Seattle:** Andy Coe Band 9 p.m.

**Owl 'N Thistle, Seattle:** Aquilizer 9 p.m.

**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** La Luz 10 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 25

**Bishop Block Bottle Shop, Port Townsend:** Jazz w Jonathan Doyle & Friends 5 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Reji Marc 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Taj Mahal 7:30 p.m.

**Billy Blues Bar and Grill, Vancouver:** Ben Rice and the Hustle 8 p.m.

**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Joe Doria Presents 10 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 26

**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** Shape Shifter 4:30 p.m.

**CCR, Snohomish:** Usual Suspects 7 p.m.

**The Spar, Tacoma:** Jazzy Wednesdays 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Taj Mahal 7:30 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 27 -

**Happy Thanksgiving!**

**SeaTac Sub Pop, Sea Tac Airport:** Eric Madis 11:30 a.m.

(Continued on Page 22)

# November 2025 Live Blues Music Calendar (Continued)

Our [www.wablues.org](http://www.wablues.org) calendar is the most current & contact the venue for start time + additional details

## NOVEMBER 28

**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** The B Sides 7 p.m.

**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Roxbury Saints / Zaida LaRose Band 7:30 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Crooked Mile 8 p.m.

**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Tim Turner Band 8 p.m.

**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Battlestar Kalakala 8 p.m. Funky2 Death 10 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 29

**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Beggars and Saints 7 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Vera Gogo 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Taj Mahal 7:30 p.m.

**Drum Role Wine, Renton:** Ranger and the Re-Arrangers 8 p.m.

**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Polly O'Keary and the Rhythm Method 8 p.m.

## NOVEMBER 30

**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Good Luck Rabbits 2:30 p.m.

**Peabo's, Mill Creek:** Sunday Music Revue 7 p.m.

**The Spar, Tacoma:** Sunday Blues 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Taj Mahal 7:30 p.m.

**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Kimball & the Fugitives w Annie Eastwood 5 p.m., Ron Weinstein Trio 9 p.m.

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# It's Nomination Time!

*Please nominate candidates for your 2026 Washington Blues Society Board of Directors*

All Washington Blues Society members are invited and encouraged to participate in the nomination process of elected board members who will serve a one-year term beginning on January 1, 2026.

Paper nominations must be turned in no later than the November Blues Bash at Aurora Borealis in Shoreline, Washington, on November 11, 2025, and all online nominations must be submitted before Midnight on November 11, 2025. Nominations are only valid if you are current member of the Washington Blues Society. See the descriptions of each position on page 11.

President

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Vice President

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Secretary

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Treasurer

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Bluesletter Editor

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Music Director

---

Membership Director

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## Madison Ave Pub

**Mondays 7 till 9-ish**  
**Mad Bojo**

**Wednesday Unbound Blues Jam**  
**7 till 10-ish**

11/5 Steve Bailey & Steve Blood  
11/12 Nick Mardon 11/19 Erik Scott  
& Angelo Ortiz 11/26 Mark Riley

**Rockin' Fridays 8-12**

11/7 The Encounter  
11/14 Nick Mardon Trio  
11/21 Jimi Lee's Allstars  
11/28 Crooked Mile

**Sunday Night Karaoke presented by**  
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**Madison Ave Pub** 905 Madison St. Everett 425-348-7402

**Tuesday Night Dinner Show 7-9**  
11/4 Kevin Andrew Sutton with Keith Bakke  
& Rick J Bowen 11/11 Neil Young birthday  
celebration 11/18 Unbound 11/25 Reji Marc

**Thursday's Music**  
11/6 WA Blues Society's Blues Ambassadors  
First Thursday every month!  
**Singer-Songwriter Showcase**  
Stacy Jones with special guest  
11/13 & 11/20. 11/27-Happy Thanksgiving

**Red Hot Saturdays 7:30-11:30**  
11/1 Davanos 11/8 Polly O'Keary & the Rhythm  
Method with the CD Woodbury Band 11/15 Souled Out  
11/22 Stevie & the Blue Flames 11/29 Vera Gogo





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