

# Bluesletter

Washington

September 2025



**DUFFY BISHOP** CELEBRATES 50 YEARS IN MUSIC WITH NW TOUR

**KEITH SCOTT** JAPAN TOUR REPORT

**NORTH BEND BLUES WALK** PREVIEW



# Letter from the Editor



On our way out of Idaho the morning after our first gig of an eight-show tour last month, I checked the news on my phone.

"You guys," I said to Dave, who was driving, and Tommy, who was in the other front seat. "There's been a mass shooting in Montana."

Just as their heads swiveled around, I read the first sentence of the story.

"In ANACONDA!" I yelled.

That's where we were going to play that night.

Stunned, I started reading aloud.

"It was yesterday morning...I guess some guy shot four people in a bar...some place called the Owl Bar...looks like the guy got away..."

We weren't playing the Owl Bar, but that is a small town. It had to be somewhere close.

"I'll call Lindzy," Tommy said.

The Anaconda show had been added to the tour at the last minute. Our longtime friend Lindzy, who is a singer-songwriter, lives in Anaconda and had found us a double bill with her opening. It seemed quite reasonable that the show would be cancelled, especially since a shooter who targeted a bar the day before was still on the loose.

Lindzy got right back to us.

The venue wanted to go ahead with the show, but the mood in town was heavy, Lindzy reported.

We kept driving, and I kept checking the news as I could.

It seemed the shooter had been mentally ill for a long time, a veteran, just 45, with PTSD and a whole bunch of other issues. He lived next to the bar and had just walked in at 10:30 in the morning, shot the bartender and three people who were in the place. He'd stripped to his underwear after the shooting and fled in a stolen truck.

Coming into Anaconda, a small and isolated town of about 9,000 people, I kept looking out at the dry hills and thinking about the day some people were having. Four families in shock. One crazy man, out there running somewhere, newly a murderer.

We went to scope out the club, and before we had even opened the truck doors, there was Lindzy. We hugged, joked around a bit. Then she told us what she knew. The shooter was well known around town. He was sometimes ok. Other times, he thought he was a time traveler, that he had shot Kennedy, that there were government tracking devices in his body. The people of the town were saying he had just snapped.

We couldn't find a hotel room for miles around. Of course. The media. The agencies involved with hunting the guy. There would be a lot of strangers in town. I finally found a hostel with bunk beds in a tiny room at \$100 apiece. As we gathered our suitcases we heard the whoop-whoop of a police car, and a local officer pulled up and got out.

2 Books by NW  
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It was Lindy's husband, Bryce. He was a truck driver when he met him, but since then he went to the police academy. He'd only been a police officer for a couple weeks. He was having a rough introduction to law enforcement. He knew the shooter and all the victims. He'd been to the scene.

At the club, a Mexican place called Jordi's, the owner said she thought the people in the town could use a little....she gestured a lifting motion with one hand. No one seemed to know quite what to say. As soon as anyone started talking about the shooting, their voices dropped.

Despite the grim situation, Jordi's was mostly full for the show. Bryce was there in civilian clothes. He told us he had to go back to work in an hour and half. It was all hands on deck for the foreseeable future.

We did our set without ever acknowledging the shooting at all. Everyone was thinking about it, but no one was talking about it. It felt like a taboo. I thought about it the whole set, looking at the people at the tables and wondering if expressing concern and well wishes would be welcome, or if everyone was just trying not to think about it. Finally, during the last song, Dave thanked everyone for coming even though it was a strange time, and I stepped up and added that we loved Anaconda and the people who lived there and we would be thinking of them as we traveled. There were appreciative nods, and one woman crossed her arms over her heart as if she could feel a warm hug.

After the show we crawled into our bunk beds. I went to the Washington Post to get the latest news. As of midnight, the shooter was still missing.

(Continued on Page 5)



This month, The Washington Blues Society Bluesletter welcomes Duffy Bishop back to the Pacific Northwest! Let's celebrate Duffy's 50 years in music and support each of her shows, including the Kitsap Blues Music Festival on August 31st, followed by Portland's Jack London Revue on September 6th and Boise's Sapphire Room on September 16th. On September 18th, Duffy Bishop returns to Seattle's Triple Door, and on the 21st, she plays the Spanish Ballroom at McMenamin's Elk Temple in Tacoma. Send her off on the 28th at the Arcadian Public House (formerly the Conway Muse) in Conway! This issue also remembers the legacy of Little Bill Engelhart at his Celebration of Life in his home town of Tacoma with a special note from long-time Blue Note Randy Oxford. Washington Blues Society member Keith Scott files a report from his first tour of Japan, and Blues on the Road features some pretty special shows in Washington, Oregon and British Columbia's Lower Mainland. Last, but certainly not least, this issue includes Ruthie Foster's recent visit to Bluesland with Leo Schumaker and Kirk Anderson's insightful profile of bluesman (and luthier... who knew?), John Stephan (Eric Steiner).

Above: Randy McDonald and Tommy Castro aboard the 41st Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise (Photo by Eric Steiner).

Cover: Duffy Bishop at the Winthrop Rhythm & Blues Festival (Photo by Mitchell Image) Cover design and layout by Sean Donovan of Gator Boy Productions, [www.gatorboyproductions.com](http://www.gatorboyproductions.com))

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# Letter from the Editor (Continued)

(Continued from Page 2)

The next morning, we met Lindzy at a coffee shop that, as we tried to enter, remained locked. It was closed during its usual business hours, likely because of the tense situation the whole town was in. We heard the loud whoop-whoop of a police car. Up pulled Bryce. A drive-through was open around the corner and up a block. We could at least walk through, and Bryce would meet us there to chat a bit before we left town.

We walked through and got coffee, but Bryce never showed up. Instead, we heard sirens. It turned out that Bryce had been called to attend a serious car accident, multiple injuries.

We finished our Montana shows and headed off to Omaha. The shooter was finally caught a week later, flushed out of the mountains after a manhunt that involved more than 30 agencies. He was captured a few hundred yards from another local bar.

Cheers,

Polly O'Keary, Editor  
Washington Blues Society Bluesletter

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# Little Bill: Remembering a True Blues Giant

*"I just wished I could have seen Little Bill and the Blue Notes play Tacoma one more time."*

By Eric Steiner

Shortly before 1 p.m. on Sunday, July 13th, singer-songwriter Billy Stoops opened the Celebration of Life honoring Little Bill Engelhart in the Spanish Ballroom at McMenamin's Elks Temple in downtown Tacoma. Little Bill's home town. The event featured six songs from Little Bill and the

Blue Notes, remembrances from bandmates, children, grandchildren, and from Jan Engelhart, Little Bill's wife of 62 years.

Billy read a eulogy by Little Bill's son Tony, who was grateful for his father's love, guidance, and friendship.

"Dad was always the life of the party," wrote Tony. "He was my best friend. Dad achieved more than most people ever will, and for his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday, many musicians recorded his songs on a very special CD, 'Big Blues for Little Bill' to celebrate his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. The City of Tacoma issued a proclamation for Little Bill Day that year, too. He received countless awards and national recognition, played with B.B. King and Buddy Guy, and he never gave up."

Tony's friends would meet his dad and say: "He's not just a dad. He's cool as shit!"

Long-time Blue Note Billy Stapleton thanked Little Bill for 25+ years as a Blue Note and recalled a Fat Tuesday show in Pioneer Square when the Blue Notes hoisted Little Bill up onto the stage at Seattle's New Orleans Creole Restaurant in the 1980s.

That night, the venue was filled with college kids who were very skeptical of the evening's entertainment.

"We're gonna ruin this old man," yelled a young voice from the crowd as the band

began to play.

Two hours later, after a non-stop set of soul, rock and blues, Little Bill and the Blue Notes were drenched in sweat. Billy noticed a line of college kids standing across the front of the stage. They stood and looked up to the bandstand, bowed repeatedly, and shouted "We are not worthy... we are not worthy."

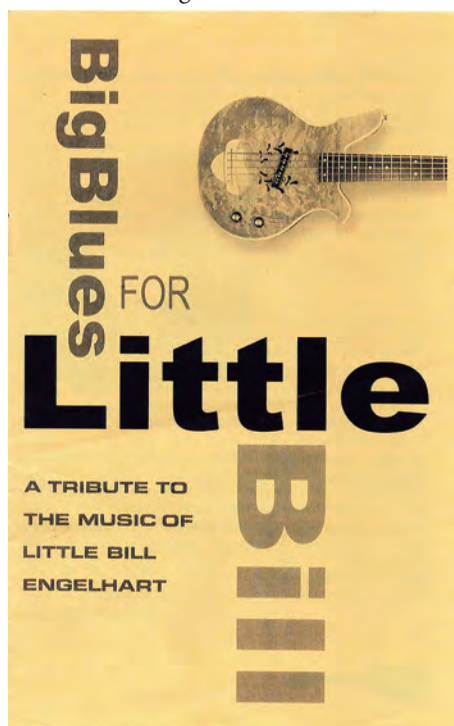
"That was Little Bill," said Billy. "He killed them."

"Playing with Little Bill was a master class in rhythm and blues," said Stapleton. "He taught me so much about music theory and I loved playing with him."

Little Bill's daughter Lisa and granddaughter Makayla shared some pretty special memories of Little Bill.

"He was an artist first. With or without polio," said Lisa. "His favorite role, though, was Grandpa."

Little Bill wrote the chorus for the state song of the Washington Special Olympics, which is celebrating its 50 anniversary this year. When I learned that Special Olympics athlete commit to an oath, "Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt," I immediately thought of Little Bill. In my memory, he was always brave. Three hour sets? No problem. Requests? Absolutely. One night at Grinders Hot Sands in Shoreline as



Remembering Little Bill Englehart: Left > Right: Rod Cook, Stickshift Annie, Billy Stoops, Tommy Morgan, Mark DuFresne & Jimmy Bayless  
(Photo by Eric Steiner)

the band packed up, Little Bill remained on stage and talked to fans long after proprietor Mitch Gilbert closed the doors. Thanks to Little Bill, I miss those shows at Grinders in Shoreline.

Fortunately, for blues fans like me, he never gave up. Two of his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday shows featuring the "Big Blues for Little Bill" CD remain two of my top live blues shows in the Evergreen State.

Lisa recalled an afternoon when Little Bill was delivering CDs to sell at Pike Place Market. Little Bill asked Lisa to dress up as Miss Piggy as the market's signature pig statue, Rachel, was a popular meeting place just off 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

Granddaughters Camille and Mariah remembered their Grandpa with a poem, "The Brightest Star," and before I knew it, I noticed tears falling down my cheeks.

Drummer Tommy Morgan described Tacoma's burgeoning teen dance scene at Wells Hall in the mid-1950s.

"There was a distinct change in the way people danced," he said. "From the foxtrot to swing dancing, then rock and roll-inspired moves. I think it was called 'The Itch,' and I looked in the center of the hall, and there was a little guy with braces on his arms dancing. I immediately could tell he was one of the cool guys."

Tommy then mimicked Little Bill's outstretched arms to the delight of the audience.

"I joined the Blue Notes in 1963," he continued. "We logged thousands of miles and played thousands of gigs. As a bass player, Little Bill's tone was fat, warm and solid as a rock. Together, the bass player and the drummer are the pulse of the band."

"Even though Little Bill may have had a limited vocal range as a singer, he could express the emotion of the song perfectly. In a single evening, Little Bill could have crowds dancing, crying and laughing - just through his vocals."

"As a bandleader, he always worked with the best musicians in the region," continued Tommy. "The best guitar players, including

Joe Johansen, Hans Ipsen, Jho Blenis, John Carmody, Rod Cook, Billy Stapleton, and for a time, Jerry Miller, Lloyd Jones and Rich Dangel. On keyboards, Little Bill had the best of the best in Buck England and Dick Powell, too."

Tommy recalled some special gigs with Little Bill and the Blue Notes, including regular shows at the Mural Amphitheater at Seattle Center, the Winthrop Rhythm and Blues Festival, the Sunbanks Festival, Portland's Waterfront Blues Festival, the Western Washington Fair, and Seattle's Kingdome.

Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen invited the band to celebrate his birthday aboard his 414-foot superyacht named Octopus.

"We were on this huge yacht with three other bands," said Tommy. "It was a week-long cruise with celebrities, artists and billionaires."

"Little Bill was our booker, promoter and agent. Every single day, he was on the phone getting gigs. He stressed every single day that 'We weren't a cover band. We made art and we made money.'"

Tommy recapped the 26 awards that Little Bill and the Blue Notes, and its members, received from the Washington Blues Society, the Inland Empire Blues Society, and the South Sound Blues Association. Little Bill had also received several awards from the Tacoma Music Foundation ("Summy Awards," named in honor of pioneering African American DJ Bob Sumerrise on KTAC Radio).

"Tacoma loved Little Bill," said Tommy. "The City of Tacoma honors Little Bill every March 17<sup>th</sup> as Little Bill Day, and one year, he was the Grand Marshall of the famous Daffodil Parade. There we were, riding in the back of a big Cadillac. You should have seen Little Bill work on his 'royal wave.'"

"Little Bill was a little guy, with a big heart, and a huge impact," said Tommy.

Tommy then introduced guitarist Rod Cook, who recalled his first gig with Little Bill.

"In June of 2002, I got a call from Little Bill," said Rod. "Mark Riley recommended me for my first gig with Little Bill in Gig Harbor.

I was a little nervous because I've followed him since the late 1980s with his classic Blue Notes big band.

"Little Bill called for a 'Shuffle in G,' and off we went!"

Rod described the exceptional groove he found with Little Bill in his duo and trio, recognized him as a founding father of Pacific Northwest rock and roll.

Vocalist Patti Allen worked with Little Bill for five years but taught her lessons far beyond that.

"We were working in Fife at an old motel that had live music," she said. "It was a six-week contract that Little Bill negotiated. He always ensured that we were paid fairly, promptly, and well."

"After the first gig, the manager called Little Bill. Something was wrong. The manager said, 'You're just not quite right for our crowd.' Little Bill then told him: 'That's fine, you'll just need to pay us, then.' Little Bill heard silence on the other end of the phone."

"You're going to pay us," said Little Bill. "We have a contract. Besides, I don't think you want to go to court with a cripple and a black girl."

The manager wanted to pay Little Bill with a check, but Little Bill asked him to cash the check first and then give him cash. It all worked out.

Patti then took her family to Ocean Shores for a brief vacation.

Patti then thanked Little Bill's wife Jen for her steadfast support of her husband. For over 62 years.

"We've heard a lot about Little Bill's awards," she said. "There's no award for Jan. Raising really nice kids and running the household. Every night, she waited for him to come home after every gig. One night, he couldn't get out of the van, so she worked with him and his wheelchair to get him inside the house."

Before Patti finished, the audience rose to give Jan a standing ovation.

*(Continued on Page 8)*



# Little Bill: Remembering a True Blues Giant (Continued)

*"I just wished I could have seen Little Bill and the Blue Notes play Tacoma one more time."*

(Continued from Page 7)

Jan and Billy Stapleton had planned this Celebration of Life and the band began to set up. Bassist John Bayliss joined Tommy Morgan on drums, Rod Cook and Billy Stapleton plugged into their guitar amps, Stickshift Annie tested her tambourine and mic, and Mark DuFresne picked just the right harp.

Mark sang Little Bill and the Blue Notes' signature tune from 1959, "I Love an Angel," and Billy Stoops took center stage to read a message from Blue Note alumnus Randy Oxford.

"Little Bill changed my life in some many positive ways," wrote Randy. "In my eight years with Little Bill, he taught me how to handle the music business, he was my mentor and friend. Little Bill was an inspiration to many in the Pacific Northwest and beyond, and he was one of our own. He was the real deal. Thank you for the ride, Little Bill. There will never be another Little Bill."

As Stapleton traded his Gibson for a Fender, Stoops laughed with Stickshift Annie as he started to sing "Texas," punctuated by Stapes' stinging slide guitar, DuFresne's soulful harp fills, and Stickshift Annie's percussion.

Stickshift Annie then sang a slow and soulful version of "Another Rainy Day," followed by "Wine and Whisky," with Stoops and DuFresne sharing vocals.

The fifth and sixth songs were two of Little Bill's favorite songs performed by Ray Charles: "Hallelujah (I Just Love Her So)" and "Drown in My Own Tears."

Jan thanked the audience after recognizing

Pat Lee, Merri Sutton, Alex Brikoff and Dennis "Blues Boss" Dudley for their photographs of Little Bill.

"Little Bill only had two requests for today's event," she said. "That it would be held in Tacoma, and there would be a big crowd. Many events like this call for a moment of silence, but, since he's here, let's give Little Bill a round of applause."

This ovation echoed from the rafters of the Spanish Ballroom.

Billy Stoops thanked the audience to close the Celebration of Life.

"Seattle and Tacoma have their own music communities," he said. "But down here in Tacoma, we have something really special. Right here in Tacoma!"

I left McMenamins for one night at the Tacoma Marriott across from Union Station before returning home to Whidbey Island.

Little Bill would be pretty proud of downtown Tacoma's revitalization. It's a work in progress, and I'm heartened by the number of new restaurants, post-COVID hotels (like the Marriott), an expanded convention center, and a decidedly urban vibe that I enjoyed.

I just wished I could have seen Little Bill and the Blue Notes play Tacoma one more time.

Author's Note: A different version of this article first appeared online with the South Sound Blues Association at <https://southsoundblues.org/little-bill-a-true-blues-giant-by-eric-steiner/>, and I encourage Bluesletter readers to visit this link and support the South Sound Blues Association.



Top:  
Billy Stapleton, Stickshift Annie  
& Tommy Morgan

Above:  
Remembering Little Bill at  
McMenamin's Elk Temple in Tacoma

(Photos by Eric Steiner)

## Remembering a Mentor, Friend & Icon

*"... taught me how to handle the music business and how to put together a top notch band..."*

By Randy Oxford

Little Bill changed my life in so many positive ways. Having spent eight years touring with Little Bill and the Bluenotes, he taught me how to handle the music business and how to put together a top notch band and showcase everyone in the band. He was my mentor, and I watched him master the art of performance at the highest level regardless

of the size of the audience. His inspiration to so many musicians along the way was amazing to witness.

The Pacific Northwest, and beyond, was privileged to call him one of our own. Bill was the real deal. He showed us how it's done while making us laugh, cry and respect the privilege of being able to play music for a living.

Thanks for the ride, Bill.

There will never be another Little Bill and we are all very fortunate to know you as a friend, mentor and icon!



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# Blues Tour Report: My First Japan Tour!

*"All the players seem to be well versed in the blues."*

By Keith Scott

Last summer, my band backed a Japanese blues star named "Mr. Oh Yeah" at Reggie's in Chicago. At the time, I would never have guessed it would lead to my own Japan tour this year.

My guitar player Tony McQuaid's partner Mako managed the tour with "Mr. Oh Yeah" that included several club gigs and one of "Mr. Oh Yeah's" own festivals. We started planning last winter, waited for reasonable airfares for me, Tony and Mako, and the tour set in stone!

Mako was born in Japan, and it would have been nearly impossible to navigate this first-time tour without her. For me, Asia differed so much from my prior Europe or Australia tours (due to the language barrier). I spent some time reading up on Japanese culture, and learned that being polite, taking your shoes off, and not talking on the phone are important cultural aspects.

Our direct, 14-hour flight on United partner ANA Air was full. I watched movies from my aisle seat and managed my restless energy. We landed the next day in Tokyo, home to 37M people. It was a smooth flight over the Arctic Circle and down along the Russian coast. Customs was a breeze and we took a shuttle to our hotel in the Narita area. We went out to the Narita Shrine (Naritasan Shinsho-Ji), my first shrine of the trip.

We were up early for some sightseeing and I was surprised to see Tony's friend Richard Farrell and his wife Katherine in the lobby. They joined us for the entire tour. Richard is a well-known blues artist from Niagara Falls and has been living in Europe for the last 20 years. He's played with R.L. Burnside, Frank Frost and Big Jack Johnson.

Our first show was at The Cloud 9 nightclub in Narita with "Mr. Oh Yeah" hosting the event. It had a real blues club ambience down a back alley. After soundcheck, the place filled up!

Tony, Richard and I opened the show before

"Mr. Oh Yeah" joined us on guitar with a fabulous drummer, bassist and piano player. We played a long set and closed with Muddy Waters classic "I Got My Mojo Working". Everyone was dancing and we all had drinks before heading back on a bus to the hotel.

The next day, we took the bullet train to Atami Beach resort area, about 45 minutes from Tokyo, where Mako's parents have a condo. It was our home for a couple of nights and overlooked the Sea of Japan.

Richard Farrell is an authority on Piedmont blues and he tried to pass on his knowledge before we headed out for a late-night sushi dinner.

We played Joynt Brewing in Ito Beach the next day and took a regular train there. Before leaving for the gig, we visited the Kinomiya Shrine, a Plum Garden and at an udon specialty shop for lunch. Ito Beach reminded me of California. The club was right on the water. The owner was from Sacramento and his wife had attended Michigan State in Lansing. It was surprising how many expats were living there.

That night, we performed as an acoustic trio with two acoustic guitars and Richard on harmonica. It was a perfect setting with the ocean in the background, and once again, the club was full. I had a few of the local musicians sit in towards the end. All the players in Japan seem to be well versed in the blues. After the show Mako's friend Toru, a Chicago Cubs fan extraordinaire from her company's office in Japan, took us to a late night izakaya bar where they serve sushi and lots of sake. You take your shoes off and gather around a big table. It wasn't easy getting up after a couple of hours.

Instead of the train, Toru drove us expertly through the mountains back to Atami Beach. Its opposite traffic lanes are just like most of Europe.

Saturday was our first actual night in Tokyo before Sunday's festival. When we arrived in Tokyo, Mako guided us on the subway to the music store district in Chiyoda City where



Top: "Mr. Oh Yeah" & Keith Scott  
Above: Tony Mac & Keith Scott  
(Artist Courtesy Photos)

we browsed dozens of guitar shops. I bought a lot of accessories, and Tony bought a beautiful Japanese acoustic guitar. We headed back to our hotel then headed out to the fabled Ginza district for another incredible meal. Believe it or not, a driver left his or her \$400K Ferrari running unattended outside the Ginza mall.

While on the subway, I did keep my hand on my passport in my pocket out of caution (since I'm from Chicago). No need: The subway, and the city, were extremely safe.

One of my favorite experiences in Japan were the laundry machines, they load the soap automatically and most of the hotel rooms had a modern machine in them with unlimited use!

Waking up in downtown Tokyo on Sunday was a real eye opener. To me, the city





Top: With The Parrots  
(Artist Courtesy Photo)

is 10 New Yorks, Seattles and Chicagos in one long continuous display of office buildings, high rise residences and restaurants. At night, the neon lights are on full display like London's Piccadilly Circus or New York's Times Square.

On Sunday, we rode the subway to "Oh Yeah Fest" at the Ale House in the Toshima City area of Tokyo. It was another packed, cavernous, New York style club with a 1 p.m. sharp sound check (Everything and everyone is on time in Japan). There were six bands, we would open for "Mr. Oh Yeah" himself at 5:10 p.m. With three free hours, I disappeared to a street café where I discovered a Japanese egg salad sandwich. It is a tradition there. At the café, I met a man from St. Louis who was a Cubs Fan and his wife. He was a big blues fan and promised to keep in touch.

Back at the Ale House, we had a full back up band and launched into some Chicago blues classics ending with "Boogie Chillin" by John Lee Hooker. "Mr. Oh Yeah" then joined us for a raucous version of Elmore James' "Shake Your Money Maker," and half the audience tried to get up on the stage.

Over 800 people attended the festival. It seemed much more personal in these small venues. We didn't leave till midnight, caught a Subway back to downtown. The train stations are packed all night and are an endless maze of twists and turns.

We were on the way to the historic city of

Kyoto on Monday for sightseeing and relaxation. After a great 200 mph bullet train ride, we checked into a hotel and headed out to a famous Ramen house. All the restaurants in Japan specialize in a certain array of foods. It's not all mixed up like it is back home. After lunch, we took our first packed bus from Kyoto to a famous shrine called Kiyomizu-Dera, a Buddhist temple built in 778 AD.

Later that night I branched out on my own and found an incredible jazz quartet playing in a Mexican restaurant. The food was surprisingly good and the Corona's were even better! The rest of my group found me and were also impressed with the music.

Tuesday was our last day and it was packed with adventure. It started out at a Seattle's Best Coffee in Kyoto and then we were on to the famous Arashiyama Bamboo Forest and the Golden Temple (Kinkaku-Ji) before returning to Tokyo.

At the temple, I met a tour guide from Michigan who said his dad was the guitarist in Parliament Funkadelic (I had to take his word).

We just made our 2 p.m. train and it nice to sit back and enjoy the countryside full of rice paddies and mountain scenery. Once we approached Yokohama, there was nothing but endless cityscape punctuated by the massive Tokyo Tower. We made it through another maze of a train stations back to our hotel for our final night and what a night it was.

We headed to Abbey Road to see the famous Japanese Beatles tribute band "The Parrots." We took another subway there, and on the way, accidentally found a specialty sashimi 10-seat restaurant (Abura-Ya) known as one of the best in Japan. Our personal chef served black cod, squid, seafood salad, rice balls, and fresh tuna.

Everything was prepared in front of us, and we were treated warmly when we told the chef we were from Chicago. The chef's son owns a famous Japanese restaurant in New York, and an enthusiastic New York Times review was proudly displayed.

We then went to the famous Abbey Road in the Roppongi District, another basement club beautifully appointed with great Beatles paraphernalia on display everywhere. To our surprise, Mako's work colleague (and Cubs fan), Toru, joined us again!

We made it to our table just in time for the first of four sets. The band covered "Paperback Writer," "Yellow Submarine," "Nowhere Man," and "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" brilliantly.

As a bonus, I requested John Lennon's "Yer Blues." The Parrots nailed it.

Later, I learned Paul McCartney himself had joined the band a few years back and Sting performed with them as well. They also placed second in the Beatles competition in Liverpool.

It was a great way to end our trip and we took the subway home and stopped at a great 7-11 for sandwiches (7-11s are a go to in Tokyo). We left Wednesday and had plenty of time for shopping and lunch before our 5 p.m. flight. It was another subway to the Haneda Airport at the end of the line with plenty of shops and restaurants but I settled for another Japanese egg salad sandwich before boarding.

The return flight was full, and I was back in an aisle seat. After arriving in Chicago on the same day we left Tokyo, O'Hare customs was a breeze (despite any negative stuff you've heard). The customs agent was a guitar player, so it was a fitting end to a "Once in a Lifetime" trip!

I look forward to returning to Seattle this November, and I must say "Arigato" (Thank you) to all Washington blues fans!

# John Stephan: "I Just Love Music"

*"... and became the first band to perform at the Liquid Lounge at the Experience Music Project (now MoPop)*  
By Kirk Anderson

2025 has been a banner year for John Stephan. His band has played a range of standout Pacific Northwest venues, including Sumner's Purdy's Publix House, Gig Harbor's Kimball Coffeehouse, and a July 4th weekend kickoff at Seattle's prestigious Royal Room.

John's electric slide guitar blends decades of experience in performance, songwriting, vocals, and luthier work. But The John Stephan Band is no solo act with backing players; the current four-piece lineup, formed in 2022, is a cohesive unit, each member contributing deeply to the group's sound and feel.

Bassist and vocalist Walter White brings Chicago roots and a cross-genre approach that builds on the band's blues and jazz foundation. Keyboardist and vocalist Billy Reed adds depth with three Washington Blues Society Best of the Blues nominations and work with multiple Seattle-based groups. Drummer Zak Stoldt injects energy and style influenced by 1960s Memphis and New Orleans grooves.

I caught up with John on an off night at Seattle's Triple Door, before a show originally set for Rick Estrin & the Nightcats. When Rick had to postpone due to a medical issue, Mark Dufresne and his band graciously stepped in: A fitting backdrop for a conversation with a man who's all about keeping the music moving forward.

While John's resume stretches back through some major regional music milestones, he remains firmly rooted in the present.

A recent highlight was The John Stephan Band's Royal Room gig, where The Blues Healers opened.

The Blue Healers duo represented Washington state at this year's International Blues Challenge in Memphis and took home the blues society's Best of the Blues ("BB Award") in the Solo/Duo category.

That performance came just weeks after the blues society's B.B. Awards, where John was nominated in three categories and won the Best Songwriter award. As he walked to the podium, the outpouring of support

from fellow musicians and fans alike spoke volumes about the respect he commands in the community.

The band continues to perform in support of their latest album, "Talking Out Loud." The award for Best Songwriter draws a clear line to this release, showcasing the band's chemistry and John's lyrical chops. "Blues Blast Magazine" reviewer John Sacksteder praised the album for its production and songwriting (further proof it belongs in your collection, whether on CD or streaming).

Seeing John at the recent memorial for Little Bill at the Spanish Ballroom in Tacoma reminded me how deeply he's embedded in the Pacific Northwest music scene.

Conversations with other musicians revealed stories I hadn't heard before (far beyond John's known history with the legendary Isaac Scott, which earned John a spot in the Washington Blues Society's Hall of Fame).

John also had ties with Albert Collins, a huge influence on both him and Isaac, and one more thread in the web of blues lineage that runs through John's career.

Before Alligator Records founder Bruce Iglauer formed the Icebreakers as Albert's full-time touring band, John would often be called upon to tour the region, with Albert switching out for Robert Cray and Brian Butler.

A memorable interview with veteran DJ Jon Kertzer on KEXP offered another side of John.

Kertzer, known for his deep knowledge of ethnomusicology, delved into John's work in genre-spanning groups such as the Matinee Idols (New Wave/pop) and Je Ka Jo (Afro-pop), as well as his time in the art-rock/funk group Red Dress with Gary Minkler and Rich Riggins. Jon Kertzer referred to John Stephan as one of the best blues guitar players around.

The original John Stephan Band debuted in 2000, and by 2002, they released their first album, "99 Degrees."

Over the years, they've released three other records, appeared at Bumbershoot and the Mt. Baker Blues Festival, and became the



The John Stephan Band  
Left > Right: John Stephan, Zak Stoldt,  
Walter White & Billy Reed  
(Artist Courtesy Photo)

first band to perform at the Liquid Lounge at the Experience Music Project (now MoPop).

True to his motto, "I just love music," John's passion extends beyond the stage.

He's also a respected luthier, a skill rooted in his upbringing on a farm where repairing things was part of daily life. That hands-on experience evolved into guitar repair and maintenance, making John a go-to figure in the local scene, especially when someone needed a quick fix (such as Bonnie Raitt) before a gig. Between performances and day-to-day life, he's stayed devoted to the care of the instruments that carry the music.

As of press time, The John Stephan Band is scheduled to play The Spar in Tacoma on September 28, followed by the North Bend Blues Walk on October 4, and the Zen Arts Group in Seattle on October 25.

Don't miss a chance to see a regional treasure doing what he does best: Sharing songs, stories, and soul.



# Ruthie Foster in Bluesland!

*Ruthie Foster talks about her recent album on Bellingham's Bluesland radio show!*

By Leo Schumaker

Ruthie Foster is a 2025 Grammy Award winner for Best Contemporary Blues Album with her album "Mileage" on Sun Records.

In advance of two shows at Dimitriou's Jazz Alley in Seattle at the end of July, she talked with me, Bellingham's KMRE 88.3 FM Bluesland DJ Leo Schumaker, about her most recent album, what it was like to tell a major label "no," and how being from Texas shaped the music she makes today.

**Leo:** Welcome to Bluesland, Ruthie. When I hear your album "Mileage" on Sun Records, I think of love.

**Ruthie:** Hi, Leo. I like that. Thank you.

**Leo:** Whenever I see you live, I am always amazed by how you command a stage. When I saw you on The Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise, everyone in the audience was listening to your performance in wonder and amazement.

**Ruthie:** When I was in the Navy, I learned how to influence an audience with the Naval Band Pride that played pop and funk hits at recruitment drives.

**Leo:** How did your home state of Texas influence your music?

**Ruthie:** Texas influenced my music because down there I was exposed to all kinds of music from Tejano (Tex-Mex), Conjunto, gospel, and blues. I'm definitely from Austin, where I live now. In my household growing up we listened to everything. My mother was a beautiful gospel singer and my dad had music in his family. After I moved out and went to college and the Navy, I learned how

to mix it up. I was in a band for a while that was mostly Hispanic.

**Leo:** Your newest album, "Mileage," is on Sun Records and you won a Grammy. Who produced it?

**Ruthie:** It was produced by Tyler Bryant, who also has a band, Tyler Bryant and the Shakedown, from Paris, Texas. Tyler's wife, Rebecca Lovell, from her band Larkin Poe, also plays on the song "Done" on my album.

**Leo:** You play blues, soul, folk, jazz and so much more. Is this your seventh album?

**Ruthie:** It's actually my 10th album. I have two other albums I put out on my own label before I was signed to a record label, so to all you musicians and songwriters out there, it's alright to do it yourself. I'm very proud of all of them and this album, "Mileage," is the pinnacle of it all. It was my sixth nomination for a Grammy and winning it was big.

**Leo:** I like that you were asked by Atlantic Records to record a pop album and you said no, because you wanted to record your own music. What gave you the courage to turn down a big record company?

**Ruthie:** Yeah, people weren't doing that, huh? When Atlantic Records asked me to put out an album, I was a full adult. I had been through bands and the U.S. Navy, where I traveled throughout the world, and had been married. I was excited to be asked by Atlantic Records, but I was being very smart by getting great lawyers who gave me great advice on how to not get locked in so I could walk away with my own songs. So, I did it my way and I'm glad I learned how to deal with it. The record deal lasted only

as long as the contract was. Some bands get locked in to a lifetime contract.

**Leo:** Have you played at Dimitriou's Jazz Alley before?

**Ruthie:** I haven't played there before. I'm coming with my full band and looking forward to some Hallelujah times at Jazz Alley. I'll be the girl singer out front handling my own guitar, Pearl. I must say it's wonderful to be back on the West Coast again.

**Leo:** Is there a website for the listeners to look up your music and will you have merchandise at the July 22 and 23 shows at Jazz Alley?

**Ruthie:** Yes. We will bring CDs and we actually have vinyl with us. I must say I made a vinyl record available for selfish reasons. I love the sound of vinyl. There's nothing like that sound of a needle drop on a record.

**Leo:** Thank you, Ruthie. We look forward to your shows here July 22 and 23 at Dimitriou's Jazz Alley.

**Ruthie:** Thank you.

**Editor's Note:** Leo Schumaker's radio show, "Bluesland," is on KMRE 88.3 FM in Bellingham, Washington, from 7 to 9 p.m. on Thursdays. It is also available as a podcast on Leo's Facebook page.

**Preserving & Promoting Blues Music**

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# Carrie's Corner: Focus on Blues Society Volunteers

*Why volunteer for Washington Blues Society, and what does it mean to me?*

By Carrie Parduhn

The Washington Blues Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting and preserving the blues music genre in Washington State. Volunteering for the Washington Blues Society is a great way to get involved with the blues community, help with events, and support local blues musicians.

If you're really passionate about blues music and community-building, volunteering can be an excellent way to contribute and meet like-minded people.

The best way to find out about current volunteer opportunities is to contact the Washington Blues Society directly. You can reach out via their official website, social media channels, or email, or you can always just ask me!

I want to introduce one of our many blues society volunteers. Susan Dodd, AKA Duchess, is a volunteer for the Washington Blues Society, and other local organizations, because it keeps her involved in the things she enjoys.

"Find a cause you care about and you'll feel happy about getting involved," she said.

Say hello to the Duchess at the Blues Bash and receive your free raffle ticket!

The annual Washington Blues Society's Regional International Blues Challenge tryouts could not have been successful without our volunteers, such as the panel of judges, the timekeeper for each act, and the MC for all the important announcements.

Get immersed in Seattle's blues community and make music happen!

## 2025 Regional International Blues Challenge Update

*Congratulations to the winners!*

By Carrie Parduhn

The Washington Blues Society has selected the acts that will represent the society at the International Blues Challenge in Memphis in January. The Band and Single/Duo tryouts were held at Aurora Borealis, Shoreline, Washington on Sunday July 27, 2025. If you were there supporting our local musicians,

then you enjoyed a musical treat from the performances of four duos and four bands.

The Washington Blues Society sends one local act from each category every year to the International Blues Challenge in Memphis, Tennessee. Each act competed to perform on Beale Street where blues talent from all over the world comes together for one week.

Over 20 Memphis clubs will participate January 13-17, 2026.

Donations are welcome to send Kevin Charles Sutton and Jonathan Pitman in the duo category and the Joel Astley Band for the band category. We wish them the best. Just another way we are keeping the blues alive!

## Preview: Annual North Bend Blues Walk

*"Now's your chance to live the old days of music in Pioneer Square!"*

By Kirk Anderson

Where are you going to be on Saturday, October 4? Just 30 minutes east of Seattle, straight out Interstate 90, from 6 p.m. to midnight at 18 various venues featuring 27 bands with 90+ musicians... and YOU!

Get a hotel. Or not.

Just don't miss it!

Six months earlier, the annual North Bend Jazz Walk featured the same multi-venue, multi-band format, but centered around jazz. Each event is designed to promote their respective art forms, spotlight local musicians, and support the businesses of North Bend that open their doors to all of us.

Now's your chance to relive the old days of music in Pioneer Square. One ticket gives

you access to **all** the music and festivities!

At press time, the lineup was still in the planning stages, but if you pay any attention to the Seattle blues scene, you've probably seen or at least heard of many of these bands.

Each one has played multiple sets at your favorite local clubs. Now, you can catch all your favorites in one glorious fall night for the price of a single ticket.

Expect to see current and past International Blues Challenge participants, as well as many Washington Blues Society Best of the Blues award winners and nominees.

Please make a plan. Pick a few of your favorite bands, then wander down the street to catch one you've heard about but haven't seen live.

Check out the group your friend's been raving about. Or, let yourself be pulled into a venue by the sweet sounds of a blues band you've never heard before. And don't be surprised if you catch your favorite musicians sitting in with their friends as it's all about live, local, and spontaneous music magic.

The Washington Blues Society's own Tommy Wall has been leading talent acquisition for about five years now. His work on the Blues Walk is yet another reason his Sunday Night Blues Jam at the Lucky Seven Bar & Grill in Kirkland is so consistently good — and so much fun.

See you in North Bend in October!



# Highlights from Winthrop

*Music photographers share images from Washington's oldest blues festival*



The Winthrop Rhythm and Blues Festival, held July 18-20, was blessedly free this year of the crises that have beset it in recent years, such as windstorms, pandemic, and a wildfire that won the festival a 2015 Keeping the Blues Alive award from the Blues Foundation for sheltering displaced families and hosting emergency workers. Instead, the weather was mild, the crowds large, and the shows flawless. Here, local photographers share some of their best images from the festival.

Above left: Legendary Washington singer Patti Allen presents Methow Juke Joint Allstars singer Lady A with the Washington Blues Society Patti Allen Performer of the Year Award during the nightly allstar jam session on the beer garden stage Saturday, July 19. (Photo by Tim and Michelle Burge).

Top right: Tim "Too Slim" Langford joins Tab Benoit on stage during Benmoit's headlining performance Sunday, July 20. Langford, whose band Too Slim and the Taildraggers is a regular feature of the festival, opened several of Tab Benoit's shows over the summer. (Photo by Michael Galloway).

Above: Multi-instrumentalist Angelique Francis wowed the Winthrop crowd with an exciting set Saturday. Her band, including two of her sisters and her father, later joined the allstar jam in the tent for a rousing set. (Photo by Tim and Michelle Burge).

Left: Winthrop festival music director Erika Olsen maintains a vigil over the mainstage. (Photo by Tim and Michelle Burge).

# Duffy Bishop celebrates 50 years in Music With a PNW tour

*"The Pacific Northwest is the birth of who we are"*

By Polly O'Keary, Editor

When Duffy Bishop, legend and powerhouse of Pacific Northwest blues, first made her mark on the region, it was with a band called Duffy Bishop and the Rhythm Dogs, a band that made two albums in the 1980s. This year, Duffy and her husband and longtime musical partner Chris Carlson, now living in Florida, decided to release those two albums, as well as another from 2003, on digital streaming platforms for the first time.

They considered calling it a 40th anniversary release, to commemorate the 1985 formation of that band, Chris said.

"But Duffy said, 'I've been doing it a lot longer than that,'" Chris said.

With that, Duffy and Chris decided to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Duffy Bishop's career in music not only with a digital release of some of their earlier music, but a tour of the Pacific Northwest in September.

It is a celebration not only for Duffy's many fans, but also for herself, a moment to reflect on the often hilarious, sometimes tragic, always interesting events of a life committed to making art.

Duffy's performing career started early; at age 10 she was playing folk music on guitar and appearing at weddings and other events. While still in school, she also got involved in theater. Upon graduation, she joined her first band, an 11-piece horn band called Coda. College proved too difficult to maintain while singing full time, so Duffy dropped out of UC Davis with one quarter left to go before earning her degree in art with a minor in theater.

Then Duffy married a musician in a band called Barrelhouse, which got signed to Warner Brothers.

"He and I moved to Los Angeles, where the record company changed the name to Hot Cakes and put them on a kids' show in mylar outfits," Duffy remembered with a laugh.

Duffy went to work as a costumer in L.A., then found work as a background singer on a project that she would never forget.

"I did back up vocals on Disco Bill, a Bill Cosby record," she said. "It was a weird experience."

She and four other women found themselves harmonizing on the titular lyric of the song "What Ya Think 'Bout Lickin' My Chicken." The song, which can be found on YouTube, lists "Patty Bishop" in the performance credits, because Duffy didn't want to be known as a background singer.

In 1979, she and her then-husband moved to Seattle in an unsuccessful effort to help him quit a drug habit.

The pair did form a band called Skeeze, however, that crossed paths with the man that would become Duffy's life partner, several years before they actually met.

Chris had a band called Jammin' Salmon that had a show at a club on Seattle's Pioneer Square. The band pulled up at the show to find Skeeze already there. Although the two didn't meet during that event, the double booking became "a source of amusement" when Duffy and Chris finally did meet in 1983.

While working in Seattle theater in the early 1980s, Duffy worked with a woman who mentioned that a guy putting cupboards in her house was holding auditions for a band.

The band was a motown outfit called Cool Ray and the Shades, with Chris on guitar, and Cool Ray was quitting. Duffy showed up for the audition and got the job even though the band had been looking for a male singer. That led to a long stint playing at the Sheraton six nights a week, with everyone but Duffy dressed in tuxedos and berets.

Duffy bought one of the earliest versions of a cordless mic for that project, and remembers that it would pick up transmissions from truckers at awkward moments.

"It was brutal," said Chris.

Then John Lee, who played saxophone in Cool Ray, pitched Duffy and Chris the idea of starting a band that could do more originals. He thought he knew just the bass player for the job, and brought the pair to meet Keith Lowe.



Duffy Bishop sings as her husband and long time musical partner Chris Carlson plays guitar.  
(Photo by Kat Rose).

The young bassist, then about 21, was a striking musician. He was first chair in a youth symphony orchestra, wore his hair long, and went barefoot on stage, a habit he maintains to this day.

Lowe joined the band, and Duffy Bishop and the Rhythm Dogs was formed. The band was eclectic, rooted primarily in blues but incorporating many other styles. The band's first album, "Dogs Run Cheap," came out in 1985, followed two years later by "On A Journey," produced in part by longtime Nick Vigarino bassist Rob Moitoza.

The band enjoyed considerable success in the Pacific Northwest and around the nation for the next six years. Then, in 1991, Chris and Duffy pivoted back to theater.

"We put the dogs to sleep to work on a play," Duffy said.

The play, "Janis," was a locally-written musical theater piece about the life of Janis Joplin, produced by Jimmy Allen and Gaye Anderson, the then-owners of the Pioneer Square club The New Orleans Creole



Restaurant.

At the time, former Big Brother and the Holding Company guitarist Sam Andrew was working with Chris on a project called "The Queens of Denial," and liked the play well enough to recommend it to Janis Joplin's sister Laura Joplin.

Laura Joplin was not as congenial. She sued the producers in a case that attracted major legal and media attention, as it addressed the question of how much of a celebrity's persona can be considered copyrightable property. Ultimately, the producers won the lawsuit. In the meantime, the show proved popular, but the producers were exhausted by the legal battle and ended the play's run.

However, Duffy's performance as Janis Joplin won her a spot touring Japan with Big Brother and the Holding Company.

Soon thereafter, Duffy and Chris brought in guitarist Henry Cooper and drummer Dave Jette and formed the Duffy Bishop Band, releasing the first of three albums on Portland's Burnside label in 1994.

At the same time, Duffy and Chris married in a ceremony in Seattle's Carkeek Park officiated by roots guitarist extraordinaire Orville Johnson, then moved to Portland, a city they had grown to love while recording for Burnside.

The Duffy Bishop Band was a great success and toured nationally for several years. Then, upon the release of the third Burnside album, "Fly the Rocket," Duffy got a call inviting her to sing for Teatro ZinZanni, a circus dinner theater operating in San Francisco, Seattle, and Europe. Chris ended up getting hired, too, and the two decided to step away from the band for a while to travel with the show.

They did make another Duffy Bishop album, titled "Ooh Wee," in 2003, on Trillion Records. The album was recorded live in the studio with drummer Jeff Minnick, keyboardist Dover Weinberg, and bassist Phil Haxton.

"It was released just as Phil was dying of cancer," Duffy said. "He got to hear it before he died."

That year, Chris and Duffy were invited

to perform in Vienna in a show similar to the one they did with Teatro ZinZanni. They spent five months there, working with an orchestra composed mostly of Polish musicians who gleefully taught Chris how to swear in Polish.

"It was cool living in a neighborhood for five months, so you got to know the place, and feel a little bit a part of it," Chris said.

"We had an apartment that was part of a hotel," Duffy added.

"And the breakfast!" Chris interjected. "A buffet with three kinds of caviar! Three kinds of pickled herring!"

The temptations of hotel cuisine in Vienna weren't enough to keep the couple in Europe, however, and the pair returned to Portland in 2004. For the next seven years, they recorded and played music around the Pacific Northwest and across the United States, touring with musicians including bassists Dave Kahl and Lissa Ramaglia and horn player Jon Goforth, among others.

They also maintained their ties to Seattle, frequently driving up to join Northwest blues legend Little Bill at the Scarlet Tree, a club in Seattle's Roosevelt neighborhood that was noted for blues jam sessions before it suffered a fire in 2005.

By 2010, Duffy's extraordinary talent and adventurous career led film producer Bryan Johnstone to make the short documentary "Who is Duffy Bishop and Why Is She Not World Famous?"

Duffy had wondered the same thing herself as a younger artist.

"When you're 20, you think, if I don't make it by the time I'm 30, what's the point? And then you think, I still have a chance, and carrots get dangled," she said.

But in time, Duffy said, her idea of what constituted success changed.

"You start realizing, it's about the family you create along the way, the connection you create with fans," she said. "You become something to them as family. Their children grow up with you. They grow up and have kids. You are part of what people go through."

Duffy did one more album in Portland titled "Find Your Way Home," and then she and Chris began thinking about where their next home might be. Chris grew up in Florida and Duffy had come to love the state on visits to Chris's family.

"I love the weather," she said. "I've never done really well with the grey. I tried sitting under sun lights and they don't work for me."

Duffy and Chris moved to St. Augustine, Florida, and since then have built a following there while maintaining their ties to the Northwest.

This year, Chris and Duffy decided to release Duffy Bishop and the Rhythm Dogs' first two albums, as well as 2003's "Ooh Wee," on streaming platforms for the first time. To celebrate, and to mark the occasion of Duffy's half century in music, they decided to return to the Pacific Northwest for a month-long tour.

"The Pacific Northwest is the birth of who we are," she said. "The West Coast is the birth of who we are."

The tour, scheduled from August 31 through September 28, includes stops in Boise, Portland, Tacoma, Gig Harbor, Seattle, Bremerton, and Conway, among other places. (For complete tour details, see [duffybishop.com](http://duffybishop.com).)

Although the tour marks a milestone in Duffy's career, it in no way marks the end, she said.

"I won't quit until I have to," she said.

But her goals have changed somewhat. She and Chris have eased away from the grind of full time gigging. Instead, they play shows for the joy of it, and for the connection they make with audiences.

"I just continue to make people smile," she said. "I try to make the music touch them in some way."

# Blues on the Road

Welcome nationally touring blues artists to Washington, Oregon & British Columbia's Lower Mainland!

By Eric Steiner

After last month's column promoting Bluesletter Editor Polly O'Keary and The Rhythm Method's summer tour, I'm pleased to bring back a more traditional Blues on the Road preview highlighting select nationally touring acts who will visit our region this month. Regular readers know that I broadly define our region, and this month, I've picked several shows in Washington and Oregon, as well as British Columbia's Lower Mainland to add to readers' blues calendars.



## Celebrating Duffy Bishop

Join the Washington Blues Society and celebrate Duffy Bishop's 50 years in the music business and support each of her shows in the greater Pacific Northwest, including the Kitsap Blues Music Festival on August 31st, followed by a return to her musical roots at Portland's Jack London Revue on September 6th and Boise's Sapphire Room on September 16th. On September 18th, Duffy Bishop returns to Seattle's Triple Door, and on the 21st, she plays the Spanish Ballroom at McMenamin's Elk Temple in Tacoma. Send her off on the 28th at the Arcadian Public House (formerly the Conway Muse)

in Conway! (Photo of Duffy Bishop on the Bluesletter Cover by M. Kitaoka).

## Kitsap Blues Music Festival

Bremerton's Admiral Theatre Foundation and Kitsap Fair and Stampede Association present the second annual Kitsap Blues Music Festival on Labor Day Weekend from Friday, August 29 through Sunday, August 31, 2025 at the Kitsap Fairgrounds in Bremerton, Washington. The festival features Christone "Kingfish" Ingram, Eric Gales, Shemekia Copeland, Ally Venable, Zach Person, Blues Beatles, Duffy Bishop, Tim Hall Band, James Howard Band, Kim Archer Band, Rafael Tranquilino, and more. Media sponsor KNKX offers listeners receive 25% off with the discount embedded in the radio station's ticket link: <https://ci.ovationtix.com/36645/production/1226135?performanceId=11578906>



## Hot Tuna

Hot Tuna open a 20+ date national tour at the Seattle Theatre Group's Neptune Theatre on September 10. Former Jefferson Airplane guitarist Jorma Kaukonen and bassist Jack Casady bring rock and roll history to the Pacific Northwest with additional shows in Spokane on September 11 at the Bing Crosby Theatre in Spokane, and then in Montana on September 13 and 14. I understand Jorma and Jack hung up their electric instruments last tour, and their set lists frequently include songs from the Rev. Gary Davis, Blind Blake and Leroy Carr (in addition to songs from the early days of the Airplane). (Photo by Erik Kabik MediaPunch).



## Tony Furtado

Roots blues banjo player extraordinaire Tony Furtado brings his trio to the New Prospect Theatre in Bellingham on September 10, followed by shows up in British Columbia. On September 11, the trio plays Song Sparrow Hall in Salmon Arm, on September 12, the historic Grist Mill Gardens in Keremos, and on September 13, BEZ Arts in Langley. I first experienced a Tony Furtado show decades ago at Seattle's Tractor Tavern, and am glad he's kept the blues burning brightly on his banjo. (Photo by Alicia J. Rose).

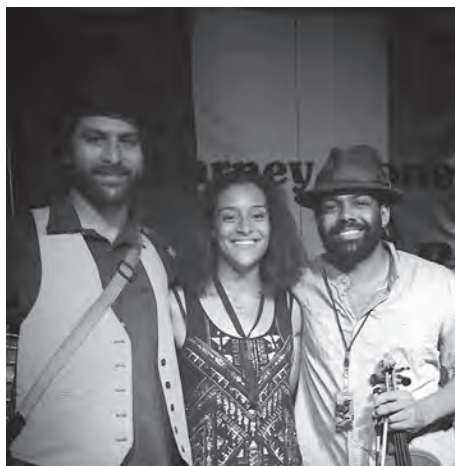


## Ottmar Liebert

Ottmar Liebert, one of my favorite Flamenco guitarists, returns to our region on September 9 at the Tower Theatre in Bend, Oregon, followed by a show at the Alberta Rose Theatre in Portland the next night. From September 11 through 14, he plays at Seattle's Jazz Alley before heading down South to Texas. While I'm impressed that he's been an advertising-free blogger for over 30 years, his stats from the Recording Industry Association of America are far more impressive. His records have certified Platinum 21 times –



selling 1M units each – and Gold 7 times – selling 500K units. New to Ottmar Liebert? Please check out my favorites: “Solo Para Ti” and “!Viva!” (Photo by Mike Lane).



**Joe Bonamassa's Keeping the Blues Alive in Alaska Cruise**

On September 15, the Norwegian Cruise Line will depart from Seattle for Ketchikan and Sitka in Alaska and Victoria, British Columbia as Joe Bonamassa will celebrate 10 years at sea on the popular Keeping the Blue Alive blues cruise. Twenty-two blues acts, many with ties to the Washington Blues Society and the Winthrop Rhythm and Blues Festival, will play six days of live blues across eight different venues aboard the Norwegian Jade. On September 16, the cruise will honor B.B. King's centenary with special shows and a screening of a new film, “B.B. King: The Life of Riley.” I wish I had planned my blues year better, because I really would have enjoyed seeing Shemekia Copeland, The Record Company, former Washington Blues Society International Blues Challenge representative Blue Moon Marquee, Nikki Allen, Joanne Shaw Taylor, Vanessa Collier, and Joe Bonamassa himself, on the cruise. I hope that blues society leadership will consider hosting a pre-party in future blues cruises that depart from the Emerald City, just like the South Florida Blues Society hosted one at my first Legendary Rhythm and Blues

Cruise last year in Florida! (Photo of Joe Seamons, Vanessa Collier & Ben Hunter from Vanessa Collier Website).



**Tommy Castro & The Painkillers**

Welcome one of the hardest working blues bands in the business back to our region on September 18 for a special show on its “Closer to the Bone 2025 Tour” in the Spanish Ballroom at McMenamin's Elks Temple in Tacoma. “Closer to the Bone” is Tommy Castro's eighth release on Alligator Records label, and I think it's his best blues CD yet (even better than “A Bluesman Came to Town” - if that's even possible!). On September 19, the band plays Jack London Revue in Portland, followed by shows at The Belfry in Sisters and WOW Hall in Eugene, before heading back down to California. (Photo of Tommy Castro on the Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise by Eric Steiner).



**Robin Trower**


Another bright spot in the Washington Blues Society's Calendar in this issue is the

return of legendary British guitarist Robin Trower to the Pantages Theatre in Tacoma on September 19, followed by a show at the Roseland Theatre in Portland on September 20. (Photo Courtesy of Manhaton Records).

**Walter Trout**

On September 9-10, KNKX and the Washington Blues Society welcome Walter Trout back to Seattle at Jazz Alley. The shows are CD release parties for “Sign of the Times,” a compelling follow-up to last year's “Broken,” which debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard Blues Charts. Keyboardist Richard T. Bear, drummer Michael Leasure and bassist John Avila join Trout for two very special shows. The incendiary “Sign of the Times” seems to be ripped from the headlines, and when I first heard it (and saw the music video) it broadened my view of blues rock (or blues with a pretty rough rock edge).

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# September 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*

## SEPTEMBER 1

**Riverfront Park, Spokane:** Pig Out in the Park 12 p.m.  
**Ebey Island Freedom Fest, Everett:** Mad Bojo 3 p.m.  
**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Royal Room Collective Music Ensemble 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.

## SEPTEMBER 2

**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:** Jovino Santos 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.

## SEPTEMBER 3

**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** Shape Shifter 4:30 p.m.  
**CCR, Snohomish:** Usual Suspects 7 p.m.  
**Aurora Borealis, Shoreline:** Rebecca Jaymes 7:30 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Jovino Santos 7:30 p.m.  
**Royal Room, Seattle:** Blues Beatles 7:30 p.m.  
**The Spar, Tacoma:** Jazzy Wednesdays 7 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 4

**Sub Pop, SeaTac Airport:** Eric Madis 11:30 a.m.  
**Bellevue Connection Compass Plaza, Bellevue:** Massy Ferguson 12 p.m.  
**Black & Tan, Seattle:** Live Lounge 7 p.m.  
**Cellar Cat, Kingston:** Annie Eastwood Trio 7 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Blue Ambassadors 7 p.m.  
**Sunbanks Resort, Electric City:** Sunbanks Blues and Roots Festival 8 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra 7:30 p.m.  
**The Triple Door, Seattle:** Greta Matassa 7:30 p.m.  
**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** 8 p.m.  
**Snapdragon, Vashon:** Steve Itterly and Friends 8 p.m.  
**Owl and Thistle, Seattle:** Danny Godinez Presents 9 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 5

**Summit, Bellevue:** Chris Eger 12 p.m.  
**Sunbanks Resort, Electric City:** Sunbanks Blues and Roots Festival 4 p.m.  
**Mukilteo Lighthouse Park, Mukilteo:** Lighthouse Festival 4 p.m.  
**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Two Scoops Combo 7 p.m.  
**Kimball Coffeehouse, Gig Harbor:** Powerhouse 7 pm  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra 7:30 p.m.  
**CCR, Snohomish:** Earl Von Hayden 8 p.m.  
**El Capitan's, Bellingham:** Cassandra May and James 8 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Crooked Mile 8 p.m.  
**Pub 282, Camano Island:** Naughty Blokes 7 p.m.  
**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Bale Jumpers 8 p.m.  
**Bake's Place, Bellevue:** Joel Astley Band 8:30 p.m.  
**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Funky2 Death 10 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 6

**Sunbanks Resort, Electric City:** Sunbanks Blues and Roots Festival 1 p.m.  
**Mukilteo Lighthouse Park, Mukilteo:** Lighthouse Festival 12 p.m.  
**Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center, Seattle** Jackson Street Jazz Walk 4 p.m.  
**Legion Park, Arlington:** Jolene Gayle Band 6 p.m.  
**Remlinger Farms, Carnation:** Gregory Alan Isakov 6:30 p.m.  
**Chang Thai, North Bend:** Lonnie Williams and Then and Now 7 p.m.  
**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Mach One Big Band 7 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Slimtones 7 p.m.  
**Pub 282, Camano Island:** Chill Deville 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra 7:30 p.m.  
**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** 7:30 pm  
**Rockfish, Anacortes:** Red House 7:30 p.m.  
**CCR, Snohomish:** Faultline 8 p.m.  
**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Di and the Blues Hearts 8 p.m.  
**Rock the Dock, Tacoma:** Billy Shew Band 8 p.m.  
**SEPTEMBER 7**  
**Mercer Island Farmers Market, Mercer Island:** Kimball and the Fugitives 11 a.m.  
**Mukilteo Lighthouse Park, Mukilteo:** Lighthouse

Festival 12 p.m.

**Sunbanks Resort, Electric City:** Sunbanks Blues and Roots Festival 12 p.m.  
**The Grange, Duvall:** Stacy Jones Band 5:30 p.m.  
**Peabo's, Mill Creek:** Sunday Music Revue w Micheal Powers 7 p.m.  
**The Spar, Tacoma:** Sunday Blues 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra 7:30 p.m.  
**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Randy Weeks 4 p.m., Ron Weinstein Trio 9 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 8

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Mad Bojo 7 p.m.  
**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Royal Room Collective Music Ensemble 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.

## SEPTEMBER 9

**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:** Tom Jones and Friends 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Walter Trout 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.

## SEPTEMBER 10

**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** Shape Shifter 4:30 p.m.  
**CCR, Snohomish:** Usual Suspects 7 p.m.  
**Aurora Borealis, Shoreline:** Jazz Punishments Big Band 7:30 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Walter Trout 7:30 p.m.  
**The Spar, Tacoma:** Jazzy Wednesdays 7 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 11

**Marketplace, SeaTac Airport:** Eric Madis 12:30 p.m.  
**Bad Albert's, Seattle:** Annie Eastwood and Friends 6 p.m.  
**Black & Tan, Seattle:** Live Lounge 7 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Songwriter Showcase 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Ottmar Leibert 7:30 p.m.



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

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

## SEPTEMBER 12

**Sunbanks Resort, Electric City:** Sunbanks Rocks 4 p.m.

**Silver Dollar Bar, White Bird, ID:** Stacy Jones Band 6:30 p.m.

**Couth Buzzard, Seattle:** Godinez Guitar School Showcase 7 p.m.

**Chateau St Michelle, Woodinville:** Jackson Browne 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Ottmar Leibert 7:30 p.m.

**Historic Everett Theater, Everett:** Bell Bottom Blues & Feelin' Alright 7:30 p.m.

**CCR, Snohomish:** Davanos 8 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Supertonix 8 p.m.

**The Paramount Theatre, Seattle:** Thievery Corporation 8 p.m.

**Pub 282 Camano Island:** Moon Pie Ramblers 7 p.m.

**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Annie Eastwood All Stars 8 p.m.

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

## SEPTEMBER 13

**Remlinger Farms, Carnation:** Psychic Salamander Festival 12 p.m.

**Sunbanks Resort, Electric City:** Sunbanks Rocks 12 p.m.

**The Keg and I, Chimaquum:** Michele D'Amour and the Love Dealers 6 p.m.

**The Crocodile, Seattle:** Black and Loud Festival 7 p.m.

**Chateau St Michelle, Woodinville:** Jackson Browne 7 p.m.

**Kimball Coffeehouse, Gig Harbor:** Billy Shew Band 7 p.m.

**Marymoor Live, Redmond:** Smokey Robinson 7 p.m.

**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Solid Gold Swing 7 p.m.

**Summerville's Brewery, Riggins ID:** Stacy Jones Band 7 p.m.

**Eight Ball Café, Everett:** McPage and Powel Duo 7:30 p.m.

**CCR, Snohomish:** Joel Astley Band 8 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Tumbling Dice 7 p.m.

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

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Ottmar Leibert 7:30 p.m.

**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Trouble at Home w Big Fun Trio 8 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 14

**Remlinger Farms, Carnation:** Psychic Salamander Festival 12 p.m.

**Sunbanks Resort, Electric City:** Sunbanks Rocks 12 p.m.

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

**The Spar, Tacoma:** McPage and Powell 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Ottmar Leibert 7:30 p.m.

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

## SEPTEMBER 15

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

**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Royal Room Collective Music Ensemble 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.

## SEPTEMBER 16

**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:** Kenny Garrett 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.

## SEPTEMBER 17

**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** Shape Shifter 4:30 p.m., Mercedes Nicole 7:30 p.m.

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

**Aurora Borealis, Shoreline:** Cascadia Big Band 7:30 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Kenney Garrett 7:30 p.m.

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

## SEPTEMBER 18

**Bad Albert's, Seattle:** Annie Eastwood and Friends 6 p.m.

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

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

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

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** John Cleary 7:30 p.m.

**The Triple Door, Seattle:** Duffy Bishop 7:30 p.m.

**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Johnny Atomic and the Silver Tonged Devils 8 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 18

**McMenamin's Spanish Ballroom at Elks Temple, Tacoma:** Tommy Castro and the Painkillers 8 p.m.

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

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

## SEPTEMBER 19

**Lala Land, Lopez Island:** Resonation Festival 5 p.m.

**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Scott Lindenmuth 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** John Cleary 7:30 p.m.

**CCR, Snohomish:** Short Cutz 8 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Donna Ray Band 8 p.m.

**Pantages Theater, Tacoma:** Robin Trower 8 p.m.

**Pub 282 Camano Island:** Groove Doctors 8 p.m.

**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Ron Bailey and the Tangents 8 p.m.

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

## SEPTEMBER 20

**Dusty Strings, Seattle:** Swinging the Blues Guitar Workshop 11 a.m.

**Lala Land, Lopez Island:** Resonation Festival 11 a.m.

**King Street Plaza, Seattle:** Road to One Soul w John Oliver 5 p.m.

**Silver Dollar, White Bird, ID:** Jesse James and the MOB 6:30 p.m.

**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Jack Cook and the Phantoms of Soul 7 p.m.

**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Cold 102's 7 p.m.

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

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** John Cleary 7:30 p.m.

**Eight Ball Café, Everett:** Sheri & Marc 7:30 p.m.

**CCR, Snohomish:** Mystery Date 8 p.m.

**Leif Erikson Hall, Seattle:** Annie Eastwood All Stars 8 p.m.

**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Cheri Adams Band 8 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 21

**Lala Land, Lopez Island:** Resonation Festival 11 a.m.

*(Continued on Page 22)*

# September 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

(Continued from Page 21)

## SEPTEMBER 21

**Neptune, Seattle:** The Waterboys 7 p.m.  
**Peabo's, Mill Creek:** Sunday Music Revue w Justin Kausal-Hayes 7 p.m.  
**The Spar, Tacoma:** Sunday Blues 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** John Cleary 7:30 p.m.  
**McMenamin's Spanish Ballroom at Elks Temple, Tacoma:** Duffy Bishop 8 p.m.  
**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Randy Weeks 4 p.m., Ron Weinstein Trio 9 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 22

**Angel of the Winds, Arlington:** Fat Friday's 11 a.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Mad Bojo 7 p.m.  
**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Royal Room Collective Music Ensemble 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.

## SEPTEMBER 23

**Bishop Block Bottle Shop, Port Townsend:** Jazz w Jonathan Doyle & Friends 5 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Annie Eastwood and Billy Stapleton 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Dominique Fils-Aime 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.

## SEPTEMBER 24

**North City Bistro, Shoreline:** Shape Shifter 4:30 p.m.  
**CCR, Snohomish:** Usual Suspects 7 p.m.  
**Aurora Borealis, Shoreline:** North Sound Jazz 7:30 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Dominique Fils-Aime 7:30 p.m.  
**The Spar, Tacoma:** Jazzy Wednesdays 7 p.m.  
**The Mill, Milton:** Sirsy 7 p.m.  
**The Rabbit Box, Seattle:** Shannon McNalley and Max Gomez 7:30 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 25

**Bad Albert's, Seattle:** Annie Eastwood and Friends 6 p.m.  
**Black & Tan, Seattle:** Live Lounge 7 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Songwriter Showcase 7 p.m.

**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Al Di Meola 7:30 p.m.  
**Pono Ranch, Seattle:** True Romans 8 p.m.  
**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Salmon Dan 8 p.m.  
**Snapdragon, Vashon:** Steve Itterly and Friends 8 p.m.  
**Owl 'N Thistle, Seattle:** Danny Godinez Presents 9 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 26

**Alexandria Nicole Cellars, Woodinville:** Annie Eastwood Duo 5 p.m.  
**Hidden Hall, Seattle:** PBJ Jam Fest 7 p.m.  
**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Swing Street 7 p.m.  
**Blue Mouse Theatre, Tacoma:** Terry Hanck 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Al Di Meola 7:30 p.m.  
**CCR, Snohomish:** Steel Country 8 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Souled Out 8 p.m.  
**Pub 282, Camano Island:** CC Adams Band 7 p.m.  
**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Funky2 Death 10 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 27

**Alki Arts, Seattle:** McPage and Powell 6 p.m.  
**Third Place Commons, Lake Forest Park:** Mark Dufresne Band 7 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Joel Astley Band w Chad Rupp and the Sugar Roots 7 p.m.  
**Palindrome Event Space, Port Townsend:** Terry Hanck 7 p.m.  
**Pub 282, Camano Island:** Rock Radio 7 p.m.  
**Treehouse Café, Bainbridge:** Sirsy 7 p.m.  
**Eightball Café, Everett:** Ryan T Higgins Band 7:30 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Al Di Meola 7:30 p.m.  
**CCR, Snohomish:** Stage Hogs 8 p.m.  
**Salmon Bay Eagles, Seattle:** Karyn Michaelson 8 p.m.  
**Rock the Dock, Tacoma:** Gin Creek 8 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 28

**Aurora Borealis, Shoreline:** Greta Matassa 7 p.m.  
**Peabo's, Mill Creek:** Sunday Music Revue w Joel Astley 7 p.m.  
**The Spar, Tacoma:** Sunday Blues 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Al Di Meola 7:30 p.m.  
**Arcadian Public House, Conway:** Duffy Bishop 7 p.m.  
**Sea Monster Lounge, Seattle:** Randy Weeks 4 p.m., Ron Weinstein Trio 9 p.m.



The Bluesletter welcomes Duffy Bishop back to the Pacific Northwest this month!  
(Photo Courtesy of the Winthrop Rhythm and Blues Festival)

## SEPTEMBER 29

**Angel of the Winds, Arlington:** Fat Friday's 11 a.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** Mad Bojo 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** In Concert for Cancer 7:30 p.m.  
**The Royal Room, Seattle:** Royal Room Collective Music Ensemble 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.

## SEPTEMBER 30

**Bishop Block Bottle Shop, Port Townsend:** Jazz w Jonathan Doyle & Friends 5 p.m.  
**Madison Ave Pub, Everett:** The Problem 7 p.m.  
**Ten 01, Everett:** Blues 101 7 p.m.  
**Jazz Alley, Seattle:** Goldings, Bernstein & Stewart Trio 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.





# Congratulations to the South Sound Blues Association!

*The Blues Foundation recognized the South Sound Blues Association as an "Affiliate of the Week"*



## THE BLUES FOUNDATION — AFFILIATED BLUES SOCIETY —

### Affiliate of the Week Spotlight

July 23, 2025



The Blues Foundation preserves blues heritage, celebrates blues recording and performance, expands worldwide awareness of the blues, and ensures the future of this uniquely American art form. The "Affiliate of the Week Spotlight" will be a wonderful way to highlight the incredible work being done by affiliates, fostering collaboration and sharing best practices. By showcasing the dedication and innovation within the blues community, you'll not only help preserve the genre but also strengthen the bonds between affiliates. This kind of networking can inspire new ideas and approaches, ultimately benefiting the entire blues family. It's truly about coming together to ensure the legacy of the blues continues to thrive for future generations.

#### Meet the South Sound Blues Association

The South Sound Blues Association is committed to preserving and promoting blues music as an American art form on behalf of its performers and fans through education, community involvement, and live performances. Our mission guides our association to include all within our community.

The South Sound Blues Association was founded in 2005 as a volunteer-run nonprofit organization. The following year, the South Sound Blues Association sponsored their first band in the International Blues Challenge in Memphis. It became the goal of the organization for years to send a band or solo/duo to compete in the International Blues Challenge.

The South Sound Blues Association has helped promote incredible musical talent in the South Puget Sound area by backing many of them in the IBC, to name a few: Randy Oxford Band, Michal Miller Band, Blues Redemption, King Kom Beaux, Red Hot Blues Sisters, Arthur Migliazza, JD Hobson, Son Jack Jr, Nolan Garrett, Josh Violette, Steve Itterly, Felicia Agrelius, CD Woodbury and Joel Astley.

The association has had its growing pains over the years. Many volunteers and musicians have been involved in its history as well as its success in Keeping the Blues Alive as an evolving American Art form.

In 2016, the South Sound Blues Association sponsored the Randy Oxford band in the International Blues Challenge (also known as "Back to Beale Street") in Memphis.

Today, they are working with venues to promote more live music in the South Sound area. They sponsor and promote blues festivals, musicians, and concert events south of Seattle to Olympia and even Centralia and the Long Beach Peninsula. They have taken their booth to 6-10 festivals all over the state of Washington each year, making friends and growing the blues community to keep the blues alive in the area.

Recently, the South Sound Blues Association has tried to work more with other Blues organizations wherever they can by sharing information, co-sponsoring events, and helping promote the blues and its community. Since 2019, they have worked with the Inland Empire Blues Society to help the Washington Blues Society, promote their regional competitions and fundraisers for the International Blues Challenge.



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