

BLUES NEWS

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May/June 2017



Victor Wainwright and the Wildroot will rock Chautauqua Hills Blues Festival May 28th. See schedule on page 6.

17th Chautauqua Blues Festival with Award Winning Lineup

By Bill Martin

Kudos to Sedan's native son **Greg Wilkinson** who in the tradition of **Larry Schaeffer** (who put on 12 wonderful Oklahoma Blues Festivals) risks his financial well being and sanity every spring to hold one of the finest little festivals you could ever want to attend. The Chautauqua Hills Blues Festival is a non-profit that will be held May 27-28, 90 minutes northwest of Tulsa in the beautiful hills surrounding the city of Sedan in Southern most Kansas.

Chautauqua Hills Festivals Inc, holds the annual blues festival to promote local business and tourism in Chautauqua County with all proceeds going to benefit the children of Chautauqua County.

Every year the winners of the Tulsa and Wichita blues challenges are invited to perform at the festival, which means the return of Tulsa's own **Dustin Pittsley Band** (who has won 11 best band of the year awards), as well Wichita's **Old Engine No. 5**, who were International Blues Challenge semi-finalists this year. (Continued on page 6)

Call for Entries: 2017 Blues Challenges

BAND COMPETITION: Saturday, August 26th at Cain's Ballroom. **Entry Deadline:** Wednesday, July 26th, 6 p.m. Entry fee: \$50.

This is your band's chance to shine on one of the most historic stages in the USA! You will feel the vibes of past performances ranging from **Bob Wills to Muddy Waters and Jack White**. This also is a chance to showcase your talent for the hundreds of music lovers in attendance, as well as some of the movers and shakers in the local live music scene.

SOLO/DUO COMPETITION: Saturday September 30th at Soul City. **Entry Deadline:** Friday, September 8th, 6 p.m. The deadline was purposely set to allow time for any interested non winners of the band blues challenge to enter.

This will be the Blues Society's first event at this venue. Soul City is a unique dining and nightlife experience unlike any other in Tulsa! Capturing the heart and vibe of the local music scene in Tulsa and pairing it with great food and craft drinks, Soul City provides the music and art lover with an experience.

The winners of both challenges will represent the BST and Northeastern Oklahoma in the International Blues Challenge, January 16 – 20 in Memphis.

As an affiliate of the Blues Foundation, BST can sponsor the winners of a local competition to compete in the IBC. We encourage you to support live music by joining the Blues Foundation (blues.org), and the BST.

BST challenge rules are very similar to those of the Blues Foundation, which hosts the IBC. You can view BST challenge rules and get your entry form at: bluessocietyoftulsa.com You also are encouraged to visit the Blues Foundation website for IBC rules at: blues.org. For more info contact Bill at: bluessociety@peoplepc.com or at 918-288-7574.

INSIDE:

Billy's Blues, Elvin Bishop, Coco Montoya, Patty Reese, Sugar Ray and the Bluetones, Blues Choice Awards/Birthday Celebration Pictorial, David Thayer, Junior Markham, Jamie Oldaker, Marc Benno, Steve Pryor and Stan Reed, plus more!

Welcome Our New Members!

Steve Antry, Bixby; David Thayer, and Bob Hanna, all of Broken Arrow; Pam Elvington, Bartlesville; Nathan Alessi, Owasso; Jim Paynter, Sperry; Daniel Hitzman, Tulsa; Korena Nicely, Peru, KS.

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LOCAL BIRTHDAYS

May 1 – Bill Raffensperger (2010), 2 – Susan Herndon 4 – Jim Strader (2009), 5 – Heather Buckley, 6 – Steve Munson (1990), Barney Kessel (2004), D.C. Minner (2009), 11 – Ernie Fields (1997), 13 – Perry Thomas, 15 – Pete Marriott, 16 -- James Groves, 22 – Doug Wehmeyer, 24 Frank McPeters (2009), 26 Rocky Frisco (2015), 29 – John Mabry, 30 – Dustin Pittsley. **June 1** – Ronnie Dunn, 2 – Donnie Wood, 5 – Scott Musick, 6 – Dwight Twilley, Dale Shipman, 9 – Glenn Sears (2015), 13 – Scott Ellison and Pat Murray (2007), 17 – Annie Walser, Glenn R. Townsend, Alan Thompson, Flash Terry (2004), 18 – Carl Radle (1980), Buddy Jones (2011) 28 – Kent Swepston, Earl Clark (2010) 29 – Gary Busey, 22 -- Jesse Ed Davis (1988), 23 -- Kenny Cheek (2011)

BST MONTHLY MEETINGS

are held the second Monday of the month at 7 p.m. The May 8th meeting is at Blackbird on Pearl, 1336 E. 6th St. and the June 12th will be held at the Cimarron Bar, 26th Street and South Memorial. Nonmembers are always welcome! It's a fun and informative gathering of music lovers!

BILLY'S BLUES

Initial plans are underway for the Blues Society's biggest project of the year – the annual blues challenges, with competition being held in two separate events for solo/duo acts, as well as bands. (For more information see page 1 story).

For some band entries their primary goal is to say they've performed on the famous stage at Cain's Ballroom. However, we like to think for most acts it is much more than that. The ultimate goal is to perform well enough to win our challenge, no easy feat. Beyond that I think all of our past challenge winners have went on to Memphis for the International National Blues Challenge with a goal to make the finals, if not win it. **Little Joe McLerran** accomplished this in 2009 taking home the top solo/duo prize.

You can check out the rules and get the entry form at:

bluessocietyoftulsa.com

The Blues Foundation, which puts on the IBC, continues to add new rules. While the BST rules for our competition may not be exactly the same, they are very similar to those of the Blues Foundation.

So we encourage entering acts to carefully read the BST rules before entering, plus go to **blues.org** to get a better feel for what to expect if you are good enough to win the Tulsa challenge.

The combined challenges also are the blues society's biggest money makers of the year to support our many other programs. So start now spreading the word and getting people to set aside August 25th at Cain's for our band competition and September 30th at Blackbird on Pearl for the solo/duo competition. Be there to cheer on your favorite acts.

This is a fun and exciting all ages event for both the contestants and the audience. – **Bill Martin**

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CD REVIEWS



Patty Reese:
LET IN THE SUN
(Azalea City Recordings)

Here's a new, upbeat, blues album from gritty, vocal sensation and Washington area multi-award winner **Patty Reese** that's sure to please her growing fan base and create a lot more. Most people seem to think only men get the blues, but Patty will definitely convince you that everyone gets the blues and those that can, like to sing about it.

If you live locally and are a **Heather Buckley** fan you will love Patty Reese, exhibiting dual musical styles from both **Ella Fitzgerald** and **Janis Joplin**. This is her third album of original music, with great performances from an excellent session band sometimes including a rousing horn section. Stand out tracks include the title track; *Open A Window Let in the Sun*, *Good Neighbor*, *I Hear A Lie*, and the soul-stirring *Goodbye*. I'd say Patty definitely has another award winning album here! - **Curt Fillmore (CurtsList.Com)**



Elvin Bishop:
ELVIN BISHOP'S BIG FUN TRIO
(Alligator Records)

Elvin's created a fun, boogie-woogie style party album with his 28th album of originals and covers. Having moved to Tulsa at age 10, Elvin went on to graduate from Tulsa's Will Rogers High School back in the late 50's. He adamantly claims he's from Oklahoma, and has gone on to share the stage and befriend probably every notable musician you can think of in all of music as well as the blues genre.

Elvin was **Paul Butterfield's** guitar player for five years before **Mike Bloomfield** joined and the latter is credited as a founding member of that historic blues band. Joined here by fellow co-horts **Bob Welsh** and **Willy Jordan**, the trio takes you on a narrated musical journey from Memphis to Louisiana and back hitting every juke joint and eatery along the way. If you're an Elvin Bishop fan - every song here is a stand out! - **Curt Fillmore (CurtsList.Com)**



Sugar Ray and the Bluetones:
SEEING IS BELIEVING
(Severn Records, Inc.)

I've been most happy to have reviewed a lot of blues over the last seven and a half years for the Blues Society of Tulsa and have to say that quite often a lot of the bands and music that I review all pretty-much sound the same. My job, however, is to convince you, dear reader; whom may be listening to the blues for the very first time, that this is the first blues review I've ever written.

That being said; I present to you - multi award winning, Chicago style blues band, **Sugar Ray & The Bluetones'** new album; packed to the brim with excellent songs and sweet performances.

Often reminiscent of the **Fabulous Thunderbirds**, stand out tracks include title cut; *Seeing is Believing*, *Sweet Baby*, *Instrumental: You Know I Love You*, *Got a Gal*, and *Two Hundred Dollars Long*. Like being at a Sugar Ray concert; an excellent album for blues lovers that love to dance. Excellent!!

- **Curt Fillmore (CurtsList.Com)**



Coco Montoya:
HARD TRUTH
(Alligator Records)

Former member of **John Mayall's**

Bluesbreakers, renowned blues guitar slinger, singer, and songwriter **Coco Montoya** offers up his 10th album of rockin', guitar driven blues. Did you know Coco is left-handed and plays a left handed guitar but with a right handed neck (Strings upside down)?

Like previous Coco albums this new one is full of intense and powerful performances, not only from Coco but from an outstanding collection of session players including bassist **Bob Glaub**, keyboardist **Mike Finnigan**, guitarists **Billy Watts** and **Johnny Lee Schell**, drummer/producer **Tony Braunagel**, and slide guitar master **Lee Roy Parnell**.

The entire album is a stand-out with notable tracks including lead-off: *Before The Bullets Fly*, *Lost In The Bottle*, *I'll Find Someone Who Will*, *Hard As Hell*, and *Truth Be Told*. With so much amazing guitar playing in this one I believe I'm going to have to make another blues cd purchase! Awesome!!

- **Curt Fillmore (CurtsList.Com)**



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Blues Choice Awards and 15th Anniversary Celebration!

The Blues Society celebrated its 15th birthday on March 25th at Blackbird on Pearl and bestowed its highest honor on some very special artists. They are recipients of the Blues Choice Awards, they were selected in voting by Blues Society of Tulsa members as part of the organization's mission of promoting, preserving and honoring local blues musicians and their enormous talent.

Photos by Bill Martin



Terry Kirkland and Nicole Kirkland



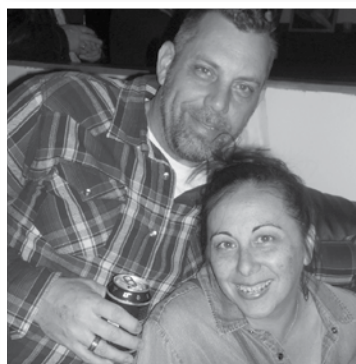
Steve Antry and Lisa Antry



Gene "the Dancin' Machine" Casey



Fred Morrow and Kelly Wilson



Sandi Morrow and David Morrow



2016 Blues Choice Award winners: Pete Marriott, Dustin Pittsley, Chris Kyle, Donnie Wood, Kat Irons, Alexis Crenshaw (accepting on behalf of his son Byron Crenshaw) and David Teegarden Jr.



Otis Eversole and Bill Martin



Marty Thomas



2016 Best Leads: Pete Marriott and Dustin Pittsley



Around Town in Photos...



(1-r) Junior Markam and Jamie Oldaker join Texan Marc Benno on stage at Soul City, 1621 E. 11th, Tulsa, on 3/29/17. All three of these artists have had remarkable careers sharing the stage with some of the best known acts on the planet.



Blues vocalist/guitarist David Thayer has a Blues Jam every Sunday 2 - 5:30, hosted by Four Aces Tavern, 11035 E. 41st St., Tulsa (Photo by Bill Martin)

Chautauqua Blues Fest...(continued from page 1)

Keyboardist **Victor Wainwright** and **Wildroot** were multi-award winners in 2016 - *Blues Music Award Winner*, *BB King Entertainer of the Year*, *Band of the Year*, and *Contemporary Album of the Year (Blues Blast)*.

Danielle Nicole from Kansas City (and formerly with **Trampled Under Foot**) is one of the best vocalists in blues.

From Lawrence, Ks, **Brody Buster** is a harmonica prodigy that placed second this year in the IBC solo/duo competition and 1st place for his "harp" playing. Coffeyville's own **Donnie Miller and the Rude Awakening** will host a jam.

SUNDAY – May 28 - CQ Blues Stage (Festival Grounds 1 Mile North of Sedan) - 2:00 PM to Midnight

2 p.m. – The Old No. 5s
 3:30 p.m. – Dustin Pittsley Band
 5 p.m. – Brody Buster
 6:30 p.m. - Danielle Nicole
 8:30 p.m. – Victor Wainwright and Wildroot
 10:15 p.m. – Donnie Miller and Rude Awakening
 11:00 p.m. – Jam hosted by Donnie Miller
 Midnight – Bonfire

(For the complete schedule of events on Saturday, May 27 that includes **Little Joe McLerran** and **Fiona Boyes**, visit cqbluesfest.com. This has info on tickets, camping, etc.)

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It's Down the Road Apiece in the House of Blue Lights

By Kerry Kudleacek



Ray McKinley 1946

In my years of listening to American popular music, two songs from the 1940s have always jumped out at me because of their origins and content: *Down the Road Apiece* and *House of Blue Lights*.

The songs were recorded by white groups – actually big bands cashing in on the boogie woogie craze of the time. And yet the lyrics clearly contain descriptions of visits to black juke joints or road houses, and the music performed therein. Most significant was the point of view expressed in each song. On records marketed to a white audience, each song's narrator urges the listener to join him at a black night spot, with assurances that the "welcome mat" was always out. Who would write such songs...and why? My interest was heightened when I learned that both songs were composed (at least the lyrics) by the same man, **Don Raye**.

It will be remembered that the popularity of boogie woogie was for the most part generated by **John Hammond's** 1938 and 1939 Spirituals to Swing concerts which were staged at Carnegie Hall in New York City. By 1940 almost every big band had its own boogie woogie pianist and regularly performed songs of that type. Will Bradley's group was typical, performing songs such as *Scrub Me Mama* with a Boogie beat with much success. **Wilbur Schwichtenberg** (obviously not an African-American) was the group's leader and trombonist. **Ray McKinley**, who in later years led the **Glenn Miller Band**, was the drummer. Don Raye was a composer and arranger who worked with them and occasionally did vocals.

Donald MacRae Wilhoite, who later shortened his name to **Don Raye**, was born in Washington D.C. in 1909. In the 1920s and later he sang and danced in vaudeville in clubs all over the U.S., and must have visited many after hours back clubs, as did a number of other white performers. Raye also performed at clubs in England and Europe, which surely broadened his cultural perspectives. In the 1940s Raye made his living writing lyrics for boogie woogie tunes. He was no slouch as a lyricist, having written the jazz standard *I'll Remember April* and even *The Ballad of Thunder Road* for the **Robert Mitchum** film in 1957.

But it was Raye's lyrics to the boogie woogie songs which interested me. Raye became the pre-eminent "translator" of black club life and music with his lyrics to songs such as *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy*, *Scrub Me Mama with a Boogie Beat*, *Cow Cow Boogie* and *Mr. Five by Five*. The latter was written for and about **Jimmy Rushing** and became one of his signature songs. I think Don Raye was actually writing "in code" about black clubs and music in a way which would charm American record buyers and not make them uneasy by bringing up the touchy subject of racial relations. The people, places and music in Raye's songs are all witty, charming and very colorful, and yet there is not one word in any of these lyrics which calls attention to race. Remember that the Armed Forces were not desegregated until 1947 and Brown vs. the Topeka Board of Education was another seven years. These songs were all

highly popular and must have gone a long way toward promoting acceptance of blacks and their music. Within two years of the publication, my parents had purchased a piano roll of *House of Blue Lights* for our player piano. Blacks embraced these songs too. **Amos Milburn** recorded "House" when it was published, and, **Chuck Berry** recorded "House" and *Down the Road Apiece*, both of which appear on his MCA/Chess 3 CD boxed set, and also on his new C 2 CD Anthology set. Chuck knew what clubs the lyrics were talking about.



Down the Road Apiece with vocal by **Ray McKinley** charted at #10 in Billboard on 12/2/40. *Beat M Daddy 8 to the Bar* charted at #2 on 08/03/40. Eight beats to the musical bar is a fast blues or boogie woogie tempo, and this song became the national anthem for boogie woogie, staying on the Billboard charts for 22 weeks. *The House of Blue Lights* by **Freddie Slack** (Will Bradley's pianist) charted at #8 on 05/18/1946. I have combined lyrics from these three songs to create a detailed description of a visit to a black road house and its music. All words in quotation marks are lyrics taken directly from these songs.

"Like to catch some boogie. You mean some of that bad boogie? If you want to hear some boogie, I know a place. In a little honky tokin' village in Texas there's a guy who plays the best piano by far. He can play it anyway you like it, but the way he likes it best is 8 to the bar. When he plays, it's a ball: he's the dally of them all..."
"Just an old piano and a knocked-out bass; the drummer-man's a cat called Kickin' McCoy...you remember that rubber-legged boy. Mama's cookin' chicken fried in bacon grease; come on boys, it's down the road apiece."

"When he plays (piano) it's a ball; he's the daddy of them all. The people gather round when he gets on the stand, and when plays he gets a hand. The rhythm put the cats in a trance; nobody there bothers to dance. When he jams with the bass and guitar, they holler 'Beat me daddy, 8 to the bar.' They're riffin' with ease." "They put the 8 beats on you like an old steam drill. So there's a place to get your kicks; it's open from 12 to 6. Get some boogie, get your fill. Come on before they lose their lease...it's just down the road, down the road apiece."

"So pull up your jeans, we'll truck on down. To a knocked out joint at the edge of town. A real homecoming for all you cats; keep walkin' til you see a welcome mat. In the house of blues lights. We'll have a time and cut a rug; dig that jive like should be dug. Fryers, broilers, Detroit bar-b-cue ribs – the treat of the week. When you dig that real fine jive with the welcome beat, it's all in there...at the house of blue lights" "So come on boys, before they lose their lease: it's just down the road, down the road apiece."





Remembering two of Tulsa's finest, Stan Reed and Steve Pryor both who passed within days of each other in the spring of 2016. Stan on bass with Steve's amazing vocals and guitar rounded out the Steve Pryor Band with drummer Damon Daniel. The good die young and way too fast. RIP brothers.

Blues Society of Tulsa

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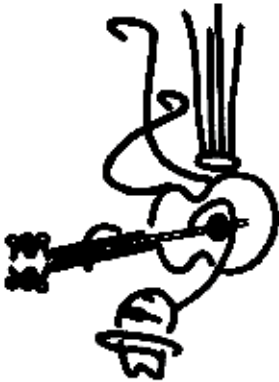
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