

# BLUES NEWS

THE BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF

THE BLUES SOCIETY OF TULSA



## Blues Society of Tulsa Celebrating 17 Years!

2002 - 2019

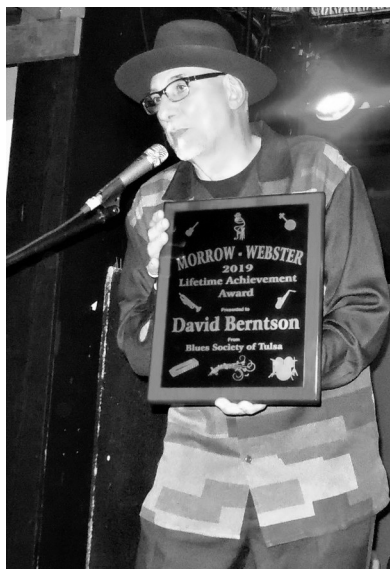
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[www.bluessocietyoftulsa.com](http://www.bluessocietyoftulsa.com)

March/April 2019

### DAVID BERNTSON RECEIVES MORROW-WEBSTER LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

*Story by Bill Martin*



*David Berntson accepting the Morrow-Webster Award - photo by Bill Martin.*

DAVID BERNTSON was presented the Blues Society's 3rd Annual Morrow-Webster Lifetime Achievement Award February 15th at Blackbird on Pearl. The award recognizes the work and achievements of Northeastern Oklahoma blues artists as well as others who have made special contributions to the blues. The award was created in 2017 by the BST's **Freddie Morrow** who passed away in June 2018. It is named after his father **Wiley Morrow**, a blues lover, who taught his son so much about music and life. The award also honors the late Blues Sister **Jeannie Webster**, who was an inspiration to everyone in the

blues community, and invited countless musicians coming through Tulsa to share her home and meals. With Freddie's passing, this award also now honors him. The award this year was appropriately presented by Freddie's son, **John Morrow** of Grove, who has a passion for the blues as well.

David is known in blues circles, not only in this area, but nationally and internationally. He has received two Keeping the Blues Alive Awards from the Blues Foundation, was a co-founder of the old Tulsa Blues Club, and is an ardent supporter of the Blues Society of Tulsa, Route 66 Harmonica Club, the Pinetop Perkins Foundation and many other causes. His Blues in Schools programs are legendary. A master harmonica player and vocalist, David heads the Tulsa band, The Hydramatics, and teams up with **Bobby Parker** in the Duo Sonics.

### BIXBY BLUES & BBQ

The Rotary Club of Bixby is hosting the 18th Annual BBQ n' Blues Festival on May 3 and 4 at Washington Irving Park (S. Memorial, just north of the river). This "family friendly" event continues to grow each year attracting over 12,000 people annually that enjoy the good BBQ, great live blues music and more.

The line up for this year's festival includes 6 local bands, an OKC band and a band from Memphis. Kicking off the live music Friday evening will be **The Hydramatics** at 5pm followed by **KALO** (from OKC) at 7pm. The Headliner Friday will be **John Nemeth and the Blue Dreamers** (from Memphis). John Nemeth, lead singer, harmonica, and his band will bring their unique style of blues to the stage and put on a fun and entertaining show for those in attendance. On Saturday, the live music begins at 1pm and continues until 10:30pm. Each band will play a 90 minute set with a 30 minute intermission. The line up features some of the very best local blues talent. At 1pm will be **Selby Blues on the Move**. At 3pm will be **Ronnie Pyle and the Drivers**. At 5pm will be **The 29th Street Band**. At 7pm will be the **Seth Lee Jones**. The final act for the evening will be **The Dylan Whitney Band**. It's rumored that a guest guitarist or two may appear on stage during the final hour. Putting together this 8 band line up was the collaborative efforts between the Bixby Rotary Club, Radio IDL and the Blues Society of Tulsa. With over 30 band submissions and so many good bands in the area, selecting the 8 bands is challenging. This year we've invited bands that did not play at last year's festival... an entirely new line up.

This event is Bixby Rotary's one big fundraiser. The proceeds go back to the communities we serve, Bixby and the surrounding area. There is a \$10 parking fee. Otherwise, access to the festival is free, including the live music. We hope to see you there! - **Jim Robinson**

*Again this year, The Blues Society of Tulsa and RadioIDL.com will be on hand at the Blues Concert area. Come relax and show your support for local and national Blues acts.*

### INSIDE:

Leon Russell Tribute, Charlie Patton, CD Reviews and more ...

## Welcome Our New Members!

Sunny Stephens, Carla Britton Gregory,  
Andrew Rethmeyer, Doug Parks, Abbie Rose

## Blues Society Officers Are Unanimously Re-elected



Photo by Bill Martin

Officers for the Blues Society of Tulsa were unanimously re-elected at the monthly meeting, held February 26th at the Centennial Lounge. President **Christina Rybacki** begins her second one-year term, after previously serving as treasurer for three years. Vice president **Amber Pittsley** begins her fifth year as vice president. Secretary **Kevin Payne** enters his second year in that post. Meanwhile, **Tammy Hodges**, who served as BST secretary since the organization's founding in 2002, begins her second year as treasurer. - **Bill Martin**

## HAMILTON LOOMIS 'BLOWS' INTO TULSA

Tulsa hosted a two day blues harmonica workshop with Hamilton Loomis at Soul City of Tulsa. Hamilton is from Houston Texas, and he is not only an engaging and informative blues harp instructor, he's also one heck of a blues guitarist and well worth checking out. The Blues Society of Tulsa sponsored a young Matt Lake, age 15, who was interested in participating in the workshop. Soul City is a great spot, and it was a terrific session with over thirty blues harmonica aficionados doing their best Sonny Boy Williamson and Little Walter. Long Live the Blues. - **Andrew Rethmeyer**

### BST OFFICERS:

**President:** Christina Rybacki  
**Vice President:** Amber Pittsley  
**Secretary:** Kevin Payne  
**Treasurer:** Tammy Hodges

### BLUES NEWS STAFF:

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### COMMITTEE

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Bridget Kenyon Wood, Bill Martin,  
Andrew Rethmeyer, eLiz Hollis,  
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Blues Society of Tulsa, P.O. Box 2836, Tulsa, OK 74101, is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization with the purpose of preserving and promoting the blues in Tulsa and Northeastern Oklahoma. Blues News is published bi-monthly and encourages your support through personalized membership card and the Blues News newsletter. BST members are encouraged to submit articles, photos and other materials for publication. Deadline for both editorial items and advertising is the 1st of the month (30 days) prior to publication.

## PAST BST MONTHLY MEETINGS



Photo by Christina Rybacki

**February 19th meeting** was at Centennial Lounge 1109 E. 6th St., performing after the meeting was Eric "Little Brother" Walker.

## LOCAL BIRTHDAYS

**March:** 1 – Rob McLerran; 5 – Pat Cook, Johnny Paul Adams; 10 – Polly Ess; 11 – Calvin Youngblood, Josef Glaude; 13 – Jordan Hanson; 16 – Junior Markham; 18 – Wanda Watson; 22 – Rusti Love (2009); 23 – Mat Donaldson; 25 – Virgil Broyles; 27 – Steve Elmore; 28 – Mark Bruner; 31 – Lowell Fulson (1995);  
**April:** 1 – Randy Crouch; 2 – Leon Russell (2016); 4 – Dave Russell, Rockin' John Henry (2004); 6 – Larry Bell (2015), Steve Fields; 7 – Bill Pitcock IV (2011); 9 – Gus Hardin (1996); 15 – Roy Clark; 18 – Walt Richmond; 22 – Bob Childers (2008); 25 – Earl Bostic; 27 – Jim Keltner; 29 – Debbie Campbell (2004)

## BST MONTHLY MEETINGS

**BST MONTHLY MEETINGS HELD THE 3RD TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH (Check our website for venue)**

**The next two meetings are:**

**Tuesday, March 19th, 2019 & Tuesday, April 16th, 2019**





# A SONG FOR YOU LEON

Sixty years ago, **Claude Leon Bridges** honed his rock and roll chops entertaining his fellow classmate during their lunch period at Will Rogers High School in Tulsa Oklahoma while tickling the ivories of a 1937 Baldwin Model F grand piano.

On February 9, 2019 a wonderfully amazing Tribute Concert and Piano Dedication was held at Will Rogers High School honoring and recognizing Oklahoma rock and roll legend Claude Leon Bridges (aka Leon Russell) and the recent restoration of the historic Baldwin piano. All in attendance at the beautiful ornate art deco style auditorium were treated to the memorable music of Leon performed by a world-class group of musicians who played and toured with Leon. **Paul Benjamin** channeling his best Leon led the group which included **Ann Bell** (vocals), **Brian Lee** (piano), **Johnny Williams** (sax) and **David Teegarden** (drums), **Pete Marriott** (guitar/back-up vocals), **Wanda Watson** (back-up vocals), **Jennifer Marriott** (back-up vocals) and **Brandon Holden** (drums - who toured with Leon for the last 7 years) along with other notable musicians. They performed a number of Leon classics including "Tight Rope", "Stranger in a Strange Land", "This Masquerade", "Humming Bird", and my personal favorite "A Song for You". Local journalist and music historian John Wooley hosted the event which benefited The Will Rogers High School Community Foundation. Also on display at the tribute were several very cool items from The Church Studio Archive. The historic Church Studio, which when open in 2019, will house over 4,000 artifacts, documents, recordings and other memorabilia associated with Leon Russell, Shelter Records and Tulsa Sound musicians.

Grammy award winning Leon Russell, born in Lawton Oklahoma, recorded 33 albums and well over 400 songs and is a member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Song Writers Hall of Fame. A young Claude Bridges began playing night clubs and other venues in and around Tulsa along with other classmates and friends including **J.J. Cale**, **Jimmy Markham**, and **David Gates**. They played a style of music which soon became known as "The Tulsa Sound". The story has it that Claude Bridges took the name Leon Russell from a friend who lent him an ID to get into clubs under age to perform. After graduating from high school Leon Russell relocated to Los Angeles where he played piano as a sessions player with the **Wrecking Crew** recording with the likes of **Frank Sinatra**, the **Rolling Stones**, and **Bob Dylan**. Like many of you, I first heard Leon in the 70's initially with **Joe Cocker**, and then I saw him in the "Concert for Bangladesh" and I have been a fan ever since.

Leon Russell is an Oklahoma treasure and legend, and the tribute was not only well deserved, it was well done and fitting for someone who's music has touched so many. I'm pretty sure I wasn't the only one in the crowd during the course of the concert who closed their eyes, and who opened their ears a little wider, and who felt a flood of great and joyous memories with the soundtrack of Leon playing in the background. - **Andrew Rethmeyer**

## 35th International Blues Challenge

The Blues Society is very proud of **The Dylan Whitney Band** and **The Deadletter Kings** who represented Tulsa/Northeast Oklahoma at the 35th International Blues Challenge in Memphis, January 22-26. They performed wonderfully and were able to meet and play with other musicians who participated in the event.

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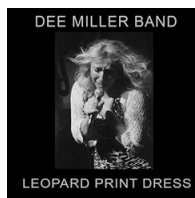


# CD REVIEWS



## **Benny Turner and Cash McCall: GOING BACK HOME** (Nola Blue Records)

Here's a sweet, new, Chicago-Blues record that deserves to be listened to - often. BMA nominee Benny Turner is an American blues bass guitarist and younger brother of **Freddie King**, and has been recording blues music since 1965. Cash McCall is an American elect. blues guitarist, singer/songwriter, and Grammy-winning producer and has been recording blues music since 1966. Why rest on your laurels when you can reunite with another blues legend and record an amazing blues record? With each playing their respected instruments and trading off on the lead vocals, they're joined by a session band of veteran, expert musicians, to perform an album of hand-picked favorites from the songbook of Blues Standards, including these standouts: "Got to Find a Way" (Fet: **Carla Davis** and a horn section), A really cool style on the Wolf's "Spoonful", Awesome harmonica, slide guitar, and organ on "It Hurts Me Too", And some great piano and organ on "It's a Man Down There". Collection Worthy! An Excellent Blues Album. - **Curt Fillmore** (CurtsList.Com)



## **Dee Miller Band: LEOPARD PRINT DRESS** (Dee Miller Band)

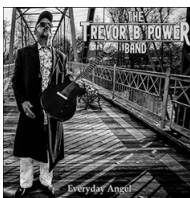
The Dee Miller Band is an American blues band from St. Paul Minnesota and semi-finalists in Memphis, TN at the 2019 IBC. This is Dee Miller Band's first album and I immediately have to point out Dee Miller is an amazing vocalist. She has a powerful, gritty, **Annie Lennox** kind of voice that can cut through any mix. The multi award winning band is comprised of musicians known throughout this part of the nation and together they've produced an outstanding album of rockin' blues music with standouts like; "Strongest Weakness" with amazing funky keys and guitar, Sweet piano in "Back in the Saddle", Killer harp and guitar in "I Sing the Blues", Bad-ass jammin' guitar, keys, and vocals in "Black Cat Bone", And the Hoochie Coochie style "Steppin"; Featuring another incredible discussion between those keys and guitar. Excellent, Rockin' Debut!! You may have to purchase this one! - **Curt Fillmore** (CurtsList.Com)



## **Vinn Mott: ROGUE HUNTER** (Vin Mott)

New Jersey's Vin Mott & The Boys have a second album of sweet harmonica driven, all original blues under their belt featuring excellent performances on every song. Every instrument on the album is played, what I call, straight-line, which is without pedals or effects. Vinn doubles on harp and vocals and seems to have nailed them both especially on these tracks that stand out: "Car Troubles Made Me a Good Blues Singer"; Wailing harp and guitar provide an excellent start to this album, "Give Me Cornbread"; A perfect little blues shuffle guaranteed to make you hungry, The newest bar anthem song; "Ice Cold Beer"; "Countin' on Them Chickens"; Has that rooster

telling that chicken what's what, And "Greaser"; An instrumental that **Quentin Tarantino** might like. Superb Blues Music! Excellent Job Vinn! - **Curt Fillmore** (CurtsList.Com)



## **The Trevor B. Power Band: EVERYDAY ANGEL** (The Trevor B. Power Band)

Here's another guitar driven first album from Northern New Jersey natives containing ten new, original blues songs featuring guitarist, singer/songwriter and radio personality Trevor B. Power, who was inspired by his friend **Bobby Whitlock** of **Derek and the Dominos** fame to start writing and recording his own music. Also co-produced by the renowned **Anthony Krizan** (L. Kravitz, N. Redding) who even helped write the standout: "I Wrote it Down" by creating the chain-gang rhythm section and adding his own slide guitar. Other standout tracks include the B3 Hammond organ laced "You Ain't Acting Right", And amazing guitar playing in "Saddest Thing". Well Done - especially for a debut album! - **Curt Fillmore** (CurtsList.Com)



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Of all the musical instruments in the world, the harmonica is loved by so many. This musical mighty mite has a long and colorful history as a friend of travelers, cowboys, presidents and younger generations. The forerunner of the harmonica dates back to 3000 BC with a free-swinging reed instrument called the “sheng”. By the 18th century the sheng became ancestor of the reed organ, the accordion, the saxophone and the harmonica. The harmonica, as we know it today was invented in 1821 by **Christian Friedrich Ludwig Buschmann**, a German clockmaker what was only 16 at the time. He put 15 pitch pipes together. Only four inches in diameter and equally high, with 21 notes with piano and crescendo playing possibilities but without piano keys ... with harmonies of six tones, which can be held as long as the player has breath. He named it mund-aeoline”, German for “mouth harp. **Christian Messner** and later **Matthian Hohner** of Germany created harmonicas that can be found today, world over.

From 1879 to 1885 **Matthias Hohner** was honored by his townspeople by being elected Mayor of Trossingen. His entire life was devoted to improving the flavor of life in the town and always following his dream of producing a quality musical instrument that anyone could afford to buy and play. This little instrument is taught alongside piano, violin and accordion at the State Music College of Trossingen (founded in 1932). Its Harmonica department is unique in all the world, graduating more than 3,000 Harmonica players certified to teach this instrument. Forty-three years after starting his company, Mr. Hohner employed 1,000 workers with a production of almost five million harmonicas annually. Mr. Hohner sent a few harmonicas to his cousins, who had immigrated to the United States. Immediately they asked for more (1930) and today over half of Hohner's Harmonica business is in this country. The instrument was spread by American peddlers, soldiers and immigrants. By the time of the Civil War a great many soldiers – North and South – had one in their pocket. The Civil War was, according to historians, a very musical war. It is estimated that as many as 2,000 songs and other compositions were written during the first year alone, and by the end of the conflict more music had been created, played and sung than during all other wars combined. Surely the portability and ruggedness of the harmonica helped to make this so. After all, a soldier could hardly carry a delicate guitar or banjo into battle. Later, in the legends of war and the settling of the frontier, many

The harmonica is therefore, a real folk instrument because it truly belongs to the people. When a person carries a harmonica around with him, music becomes a continuing part of his life. The wailing

I don't have energy to tote around a piano, but right now, I want to learn with others. A little research found Route 66 Harmonica Club [www.route66haromincalub.com](http://www.route66haromincalub.com), folks from our own Blues Society of Tulsa [www.bluessocietyoftulsa.com](http://www.bluessocietyoftulsa.com), The Music Store [www.musicstoreinc.com](http://www.musicstoreinc.com) and Hohner Harmonicas USA [www.hohnerusa.com](http://www.hohnerusa.com) has shown me I can combine their knowledge with lessons on Youtube. - **eLiz Hollis**

### TREMOLO HARMONICA TABS

G		C		E		G		C		E		G		C		E		G		C		E	
	D		F		A		B		D		F		A		B		D		F		A		B

1		3		5		7		9		11		13		15		17		19		21		23	
	2		4		6		8		10		12		14		16		18		20		22		24

E = ENHALE
I = INHALE



# CHARLIE PATTON

## *Father of the Delta Blues*



This is the only known photograph of Charlie Patton, Founding Father of the Delta Blues. But, how many people know his name compared to the superstars of the blues that have become household names. Everyone knows Robert Johnson invented the blues, right? Well, not according to history. It seems that when names have to be left out for whatever reason, accessibility, simplicity, parsimony, Patton's is

amongst the first to go. References to him in popular culture have been fairly restricted to appreciation amongst blues musicians and fans until recent years.

Patton was born in 1891 to Bill and Annie Patton, who lived in Mississippi, east of Vicksburg on the Mississippi River. He was a mixture of African-American, White-American and Cherokee Indian. The Pattons sought a better life by relocating to the Dockery sawmill and cotton plantation, near Indianola. Patton spent much of his early life with the Chatmon family, where he absorbed the foundations of his singing and playing style from mainly living with the Chatmons. Charlie's quest to find a more meaningful music led him to the plantation's bluesmen. One of their number was Henry Sloan, an innovator of the Delta blues way of playing. He began teaching Charlie about 1905. Their playing together lasted for several years.

Charlie was a small man standing 5 foot 5 inches tall and around 135 pounds. He married eight or so times, had many affairs, a heavy smoker and did a lot of drinking. Patton never worked much on Dockery's Plantation, but he lived on and around the farm throughout the rest of his life, earning a good living playing the blues, for both white and black audiences at parties hosted by Dockery. There is hardly a town in the Delta where he is not recalled. His travels took him east and west to Georgia and Texas, south to Jackson, Vicksburg, Natchez, and New Orleans, and north to Memphis, St. Louis and Chicago. Between 1929 and 1934 Charlie Patton recorded over 50 titles which sold exceptionally well and catapulted him to relative stardom. His style was formed by listening to the older blues singers around Dockery Farms. He had a superb touch on the guitar and mastery of the subtleties of tone and timing. He served as a mentor and role model for many other Delta bluesmen, including **Willie Brown**, **Son House** and **Robert Johnson**. Patton's is the earliest blues recording that we have, and the oldest recording of true Delta blues.

I have only provided a glimpse of the depth and richness of his story. Just doing my part to help keep the blues alive! -Larry Watt

## *How Europe Got The Blues*

Appreciation of blues in England and Europe increased rapidly beginning in 1940 when the African-American folk music scene began to tour overseas. **Leadbelly** was engaged for a series of concerts in France. After playing in Paris, Leadbelly, now terminally ill, abandoned the tour and returned home, dying five months later. **Josh White** was said to be the first blues guitarist to play in England. He toured Sweden, Denmark and the United Kingdom in 1950, playing before royalty in each country. He returned in 1951, a year which also saw the first European tour for **Big Bill Broonzy**. Both men, who had been hard-core blues men in the 1930's, presented themselves as folk artists when performing overseas. **Muddy Waters**, with his piano man **Otis Spann**, toured England in 1957 and the British were horrified by his 'noisy' guitar. They were expecting folk blues. When Muddy returned with an acoustic box in 1958, the Brits had caught up and now demanded amplified blues? In the mid 1950's English jazz band leader **Chris Barber** usually allowed his banjo player, **Lonnie Donegan**, to play a set of skiffle music at intermissions. By 1956 **Konegan** was playing his international hit, *DOES YOUR CHEWING GUM LOSE IT FLAVOR*, but he also played Leadbelly songs like *ROCK ISLAND LINE* and *MIDNIGHT SPECIAL*. Liverpool's leading skiffle group was the **Quarrymen**, soon to be renamed the **Silver Beatles**, and finally the **Beatles**.

1962 was a critical year for blues overseas. Musicians and blues fans **Alexis Korner** and **Cyril Davies** formed a group called **Blues Incorporated** with **Charlie Watts** on drums. Over the next 18 months the band's floating personnel included **Mick Jagger**, **Jimmy Pye**, **Eric Burdon**, **Rod Stewart** and **Jack Bruce**. **Keith Richards** met and befriended Mick Jager when he saw Jager with an armful of Muddy and Chuck Berry LPs. Pye Records in England had begun to reissue Chess blues LPs two years earlier. Also by this time **Brownie McGhee** and **Sonny Terry** and **Rosetta Tarpe** had appeared overseas. But the biggest event by far was the decision of two German jazz promoters, **Horst Lippmann** and **Fritz Rau**, to arrange an American Folk Blues festival to tour England and the continent. These tours occurred annually for a decade and sporadically after that. They featured every pre- and post-war artist who could be found from **Sleepy John Estes** and **Skip James** to **Howling Wolf** and **Sonny Boy #2**. In 1963, *BLUES UNLIMITED*, the world's first English language blues magazine, began in England. Another British mag., *BLUES WORLD*, soon followed. In Sweden, *JEFFERSON* (named after Blind Lemon) was published, and Italy offered *IL BLUES*. During these years, a long list of blues pianists toured overseas and eventually chose to live there. These included **Champion Jack Dupree** and **Memphis Slim** (both in Paris), **Eddie Boyd** (Helsinki), **Willie Mabon** (Amsterdam), **Curtis Jones** (Munich) and **Blind John Davis**. Blues record labels also sprung up like **Black & White** (France), **Storyville** (Denmark) and "77" (England). Significantly, the blues boom in England and Europe led to a blues revival in America. This was because the "British Invasion" enabled groups like the **Rolling Stones**, the **Animals** (with Burdon), the **Yardbirds** (with Clapton and Page), **Them** (Van Morrison) and **Taste** (Rory Gallagher's power blues trio) to feed blues and rock-blues back to Americans, many of whom didn't realize the music was theirs in the first place. For a complete telling of this story, I recommend the book *CROSS THE WATER BLUES* edited by **Neil A. Wynn** of the University Press of Mississippi. - **Kerry Kudlacek**



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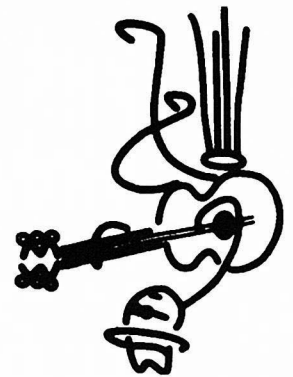
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