

Capital Blues Messenger

Celebrating the Blues in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia

November 2009 Volume 3 Issue 10



Homemade Jamz Blues Band

Saturday, November 7
College Park Blues Festival

Big Boy Little Band
wins Battle of the Bands
and more inside....



Photo © Homemade Jamz Blues Band



THE DC BLUES SOCIETY

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The DC Blues Society is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to keeping the Blues alive through outreach and education.



The Capital Blues Messenger is published monthly (unless otherwise noted). Past newsletters are available at www.dcblues.org.

Send changes in name, address or membership status to membership@dcblues.org or mail to DCBS Attn: Membership at the address listed above.

The Capital Blues Messenger is your publication and members are encouraged to submit articles and ideas for articles, reviews, cartoons and photography.

Blues listings for bands should be sent to calendar@dcblues.org or mail to Steve Levine, 5910 Bryn Mawr Rd. College Park, MD 20740.

Note: The deadline for all submissions is the 15th of the month prior to publication. DCBS reserves the right to edit or refuse any content, including advertising, that it deems inappropriate.

Table with 2 columns: Article Title and Page Number. Includes President's Drum (3), Battle of the Bands (4-5), Bret Littlehales Interview (5), Homemade Jamz Blues Band (6), November Calendar (10).

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Time is running out — new members signing up at DCBS events or at the DCBS exhibit booth will receive a special, limited edition CD featuring 17 tunes by some of the best bands in the DC area.

Becoming a member is simple, quick and easy:

- Use the mail-in application
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Dues play an important part in helping DCBS fulfill its mission to promote the Blues and the musicians who keep the music alive, exciting and accessible.

ADVERTISE IN THE DCBS CAPITAL BLUES MESSENGER. Includes AD RATES table and advertising information.

President's Drum

Battle of the Bands: We Have a Winner!

And the winner is.....The Big Boy Little Band!

Big Boy Little (Bret Littlehales) and his band won the favor of the judges and was a big crowd pleaser, filling the floor with dancers during his set. The band included Big Boy on vocals and harp, Matt Kelley on guitar, Robby Leebrick on drums and Steve "Wolf" Crescenze dropping the bottom out on bass. See the Big Boy Little Band do its winning-style stuff on November 7 at the College Park Blues Festival at Ritchie Coliseum on the University of MD campus in College Park—for free. This performance will help pay for the band's trip to Memphis, TN for the International Blues Challenge (IBC), January 20-23, 2010 where the band will represent the DCBS and the Washington, DC region.

Show your support for the band by coming out to the College Park Blues Festival and making plans to cheer on the band at the IBC. If you've never been to Memphis for the IBC, don't miss another year. It is a Blues total immersion experience with hundreds of musicians from around the world vying for perks and promotions that each one hopes will launch a more lucrative Blues music career. For more IBC information, go to the Blues Foundation website www.blues.org.



Top: Matt Kelley, Bret Littlehales, Felix McClairen, Steve "Wolf" Crescenze, Robby Leebrick Middle (l-r) Timekeeper Tina McCloud; judges Mae Brooks and Douglas Dorsey. Bottom: (l-r) Score keeper Mona Kotlarsky; judges Steve Trow and Robin Kessler. Photos: Mary Knieser. Top Right: Sylvia Kiser Photo: Crawlin' Kingsnake

Thanks to all the bands that competed in the Battle before a full house: Stack O' Blues, The Andy Poxon Band, Dirty Pool Blues, Karl Stoll and The Danger Zone, Gina DeSimone & The Moaners, The Mike Lucci Band, and Blue Dog. All the bands were worthy contenders and I strongly recommend you check out their shows.

Thanks, too, to the judges: Douglas Dorsey, Steve Trow, Robin Kessler, and Mae Brooks. Big thanks also to "Blackie" & the Wheaton American



Legion, DCBS Board members and volunteers who helped publicize and made the event flow smoothly, chief among them Sam'i Nuriddin for his flawless stage management; Dr. S.O. Feel-good for his sound equipment setup; Mona Kotlarsky for keeping score; Tina McCloud, who kept time; and the volunteers who helped strike the stage. Let me mention Sylvia Kiser (left), too, who was on hand for the Battle and deftly handles the door and its attendant drama for most of our events. Last but not least, shout out to the many

attendees, who packed the Wheaton American Legion for the Battle and filled the joint with enthusiasm and dancing. Thanks for your support of the bands and the DCBS.

College Park Blues Festival

The DCBS is helping to sponsor and produce the College Park Blues Festival. As I mentioned, the festival will feature the Battle of the Bands winner, The Big Boy Little Band. Also performing is the DC Blues Society Band. Headlining the festival is the youngest Blues band in the country, Homemade Jamz Blues Band. The oldest member of this sibling trio is 17. The band's meteoric rise to national prominence began with its second place win at the 2007 IBC, further reinforcing the significance and value of the local Battle of the Bands and the IBC. Since then, they have made two recordings, performed at major festivals and appeared on national broadcasts. There will also be vendors selling merchandise and food. See what all the hubbub is about on November 7 from 7- 11 pm. Your support of this free festival may help make it an annual event and I hope to see you there.

Capital Blues Messenger Signs Off!

At the risk of sounding melodramatic, the headline does signal an imminent alarm that will ring true very soon. I have been beseeching, cajoling, urging, pleading and otherwise begging for help from those of you who have the skills and time to keep the *Capital Blues Messenger* coming your way. The newsletter is one of the important products/services the DCBS offers its members. Because it is a key offering we cannot afford to let it die or deteriorate into a few well-intentioned but tacky emails throwing at you a hodgepodge of events without context and maybe an article every now and then. This is the future of the *CBM* unless we get some folks to help with editing and laying out the newsletter.

I've mentioned that our hardworking co-editors, Donna Shoulders and Mary Knieser, are moving on. They have done a spectacular job and replacing them is a monumental challenge under the best conditions. Originally, their last edition was to be the October issue. They graciously and generously agreed to stay on long enough to deliver this issue but their largesse has limits. All of us are indebted to Donna and Mary for their tenacity and dedication. Much thanks to them for their hands-on work with the *CBM* and other DCBS communications.

As I've explained in the past, only since our increase in membership fees a couple years ago were we able to come close to covering the cost of *CBM* publication. Most DCBS events are planned to be self-supporting (and revenue-generating) with the notable exceptions of the annual free festival, special educational events, and sometimes our Blues in the Schools programs. [Thanks to all who supported our BITS fundraiser with Eric Bibb on October 31.]

There are few funds for paying professional rates to produce the *CBM*. However, the DCBS can offer a stipend and letter of tax deductibility for the difference in the stipend and the going rate. It is also important that the editor is someone who has the skills and the affection for the Blues to produce an interesting and entertaining newsletter.

Until some of you step up, the future of the *CBM* is cloudy. It is very likely that we will not be able to deliver a full edition of the *CBM* in the coming months. We will keep you informed via email, the website, and mailings. Call it the *CBM Express*.

Holiday Party

Our annual Holiday party is scheduled for December 19 at the American Legion at 11225 Fern St. Wheaton, MD 20902. Update: *Hardway Connection* has just been signed — see Page 8 for more information. Last year's party was a blowout success and we'll do everything possible to make this one even better.

Blues Always,

Mike Flagg Reviews The Bands That Battled

Well, we now know who's going to compete in Memphis thanks to a panel of judges who rated it one of the best blues bands in the region. It's the Big Boy Little Band, a classic blues quartet that people know best as the hosts of the Thursday open-mic night at the Zoo Bar in DC.

The eight bands that competed during the five hours on Saturday October 10 provided an interesting cross-section of what's going on in the blues hereabouts. The prognosis: there's a lot of excellent music being made but there was one troubling aspect clearly evident in the event. There were hardly any people under 30. In fact much of the crowd easily looked eligible for an AARP card. Like newspaper readers and cigarette smokers, blues fans seem to be in danger of dying off and leaving the market without customers.



There was one bit of good news on the age front in the form of Mr. Andy Poxon. Poised, self-assured yet disarmingly self-effacing, the 15-year-old guitarist/vocalist displayed a familiarity far beyond his years with the language of the old blues-rock licks Eric Clapton was trotting out 30 years before Mr. Poxon was born. One notable example of his talent was evident in slower songs and especially on a Curtis-Mayfield-sounding number where he deployed rolling, chunky gospel chords and kept adding wood to the fire of his guitar solo.

The Andy Poxon Band tied for third with Karl Stoll and The Danger Zone, a polished, classic Chicago-style blues outfit. Mr. John Dickson stole the set with some high-pitched, sweet and extremely fluid harmonica lines. They ended with a shuffle that packed the dance floor.

[As a side note, bands have time limits and playing these short sets is extremely challenging. Typically, they use one song to warm up and a couple more to nail the thing. It's not easy as we've seen many veteran bands take an entire set just to warm up and get in the groove so kudos to all of these contenders!]

Placing second was The Mike Lucci Band from Richmond, VA. Mr. Lucci had a key advantage in the form of Ms. Shelly Thiss, an appealing young vocalist with a lot of presence. This helped put her songs over despite the fact she doesn't have a great big voice. I'd rank her as more in the style of a Bonnie Raitt than a blues shouter like Koko Taylor. It didn't hurt that the band started with a Charlie Musselwhite arrangement of a cooking Washboard Sam boogie called "River Hip Mama." As sung by Mr. Musselwhite, it is one of the most salacious songs ever recorded. Mr. Rick Manson on vocals and harp did it justice.

Ms. Thiss made a dramatic stage entrance, singing as she emerged from the crowded dance floor, mic in her hand, a flower in her hair (ala Billie Holliday), to sing a slinky, sensuous song around which Mr. Manson wove his precise, articulate harp lines. If simplicity is the essence of the blues - after all, the art form is usually three chords and twelve bars, as rigid in its construction as a haiku - then Mr. Lucci got the memo. The arrangements were stripped down, featuring the vocals and the instruments at precisely the right time - and they swung. The dance floor was packed again after a few songs.

An honorable mention from my little contingent over in the corner went out to Gina DeSimone & the Moaners. It's nice to see women playing guitar and bass instead of the usual dude in a fedora plus they swing like nobody's business. They feature a kickin' rhythm section and vocal harmonies that were highly distinctive in this field of Chicago-style quartets. Particularly hot was the old Louis Prima jump tune "Jump Jive and Wail" with its slick jitterbug harmonies. Hopefully we'll see more of these kinds of outfits in future competitions.

Stack O' Blues, which drew the unfortunate assignment of starting first, deserves big props for writing their own songs. Dirty Pool Blues, a power trio





Big Boy Little Band's Bret Littlehailes as interviewed by Jenny Miller

When the Big Boy Little Band, featuring Bret Littlehailes aka Big Boy Little (harmonica and vocals), Matt Kelley (guitar and vocals), Robby Leebrick (drums) and Steve "Wolf" Crescenze (bass), won this year's DCBS Battle of the Bands, I caught up with Bret to talk about it. Here's what he had to say:

"I really wanted to get up and sing the blues. Going into it, I didn't think we'd win. I have a lot of respect for the bands that were in it. I thought that Andy Poxon or The Mike Lucci Band would win, but I knew that we'd do our best. I really love my band, so I knew they would come through.

"As I listened to the other three bands that preceded us, I felt like there were things that we could do that they maybe weren't doing. I thought it might help if we tapped a deeper vein of the blues, so I changed our set at the last minute to include a B.B. King song, "How Blue Can You Get." I also didn't want to change what we normally do at our gigs, like talk to the audience. I wanted to do our songs the way we always do. We usually like to play a set for an hour and a half and we only had thirty minutes that night. I felt we started connecting right from the start, though. By the time we got half way through "How Blue Can You Get," and people were on their feet and screaming, I figured we were doing okay.

A DC Native

"This has been 42 years coming for me. I started off in a blues band when I was 16 here in DC – about 1967 or 68. I played with Bobby Radcliffe. I was friends with Mark Wenner who started The Nighthawks. After college I got focused on my (photography) career, got married and had three daughters, so in the last 15 or so years I had to kind of relearn everything. I was playing acoustic harmonica in my living room. When I started to play out again I had to learn how to play amplified harmonica. The rules are different – it's different licks – it's a whole different way of thinking. There's a big difference between singing and singing on stage professionally – there's a way of breathing and phrasing. Especially with the blues – you're communicating deep feeling if you're doing it correctly.

Blues Influences

"When I was a kid, I used to listen to the African-American radios stations in DC. There was a DJ called The Nighthawk. I think his name was Bob Terry. He used to play blues every once in awhile – people like Jimmy Reed and BB King. He used to flip out when he played sets. I loved it.

"I was learning to sing to Otis Redding records at the time. My father had some old LPs of blues giants like Sonny Terry, and Lead Belly. They were great. I listened to those records and along the line I discovered Robert Johnson, who twisted my head around. I also used to go see Muddy Waters all the time.

"First I learned to play country blues guitar, then I taught myself how to play harmonica. Paul Butterfield was a huge inspiration to me. I was much better on the harmonica than the blues guitar. That's when I started listen-

ing to a lot of Sonny Boy Williamson and Little Walter. Then I heard Junior Wells on "Hoodoo Man Blues" and well, I just thought, this is really tough stuff. It was so direct and simple and they left out a whole bunch of notes because I figured they already knew them and the people who listened to it already knew the notes, so they played in this spare, beautiful way.

A Moment of Thanks

"The one thing I really want to say about winning the Battle of the Bands is that I'm really grateful to my band and to all of the musicians that I've had a chance to play with over the years. I can't stress that enough – I've been really really lucky. I've played with some great people and I've learned from every one of them."

Catch Big Boy Little at the Zoo Bar

To see how Bret has managed to incorporate all these influences into the unique sound that is the Big Boy Little, head to the Thursday night jam at the Zoo Bar. The band starts at 8:30 and at 9:30 musicians are invited up for an open blues jam. "People can come down and sign up," says Littlehailes. "I'll make a band out of the people in the audience. It's never the same thing twice." They can also be heard every first Saturday. The Zoo Bar is located at 3000 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington D.C. 20008 (directly across from Washington National Zoo's main entrance). Tel: 202-232-4225; website: www.zoobar.com

For the band's schedule, visit: www.myspace.com/bigboylittleband and www.wolfsmusicweekly.com...Jenny Miller

Ed. Note: Seems like every musician has a day job and Bret and Steve are no different. Well, maybe.... Take a look at some of Bret's fine photography on his website: www.littlehailes.com. As for Steve – this master of carousel restoration has worked on over 450 carousel figures (many rare and unusual pieces) and his work has been featured numerous times on the covers of *Carousel News and Trader*. See examples of his work at www.carouselrestorations.com.



Help Big Boy Little Band get to the IBC

They won the right to represent the DC area at the International Blues Challenge (IBC) in Memphis, TN, now let's help get the Big Boy Little Band there. The first fundraiser is Saturday, November 7 at the College Park Blues Festival (see Page 7). Others are planned including JVs Nov. 16 and Old Bowie Town Grille, Jan. 9. There is also a send off party at Wolf's Sunday Jam at the Bangkok Blues Falls Church, VA, Sunday, Jan. 17.

For information and updates, go to www.wolfsmusicweekly.com.

with guitar player Obrad (he goes by one name, at least on stage) was channeling Stevie Ray Vaughan and Blue Dog, with female vocalist Pat Kennelly, turned in a nice set and had a way with slow blues.

Then there was Big Boy Little. Opening the set with a "Killing Floor" type song, guitarist Matt Kelley took a minimalist, Jimmy Vaughan-style approach, playing much of his solo on the lower frets of his guitar. Next the band quoted Clarence Clemons' sinuous sax lick from the old Springsteen song "Spirit in the Night" on a sexy minor-key number. A tribute to B.B. King followed in the form of the slow blues "Downhearted," (...I let you live in my penthouse/You said it just a shack/I gave you seven children/And now you wanna give 'em back...) although Mr. Kelley's solo was occasionally more colored by chunky blues-rocker licks courtesy of Johnny Winter than Mr. King's more precise, delicate, single-note lines; still, it all worked, and Mr. Kelley artfully built the suspense in his solo through several choruses before bursting into flame.

Bret Littlehailes, the eponymous Big Boy Little, did this classic tune justice on vocals and harp and then led the tight quartet into the old Little Walter classic "Mellow Down Easy," a crowd-pleaser with a bumpy but com-

pellingly danceable rhythm adapted from Bo Diddley, and a song Paul Butterfield popularized in the 1960s. So there you have it. It's off to Memphis in January for the Big Boy Little Band and a shot at a wider audience.

As another great blues year draws to a close, let's be thankful for the embarrassment of riches in the DC area. Thanks to the DC Blues Society for continuing to sponsor this annual event. Hopefully, musicians will think hard about making the music even more interesting and blues fans will continue to support efforts by the bands and DCBS to make this music available to a wider audience in the coming years – especially the younger ones. — Mike Flagg

Photos Page 4: Left column top to bottom—Big Boy Little Band, Andy Poxon (l), Dirty Pool Blues' Obrad (r), Gina DeSimone and The Moaners. Right column top to bottom: Karl Stoll and The Danger Zone; Shelly Thiss and Rick Manson of the Mike Lucci Band; Pete Lancaster of Stack O' Blues; Pat Kennelly of Blue Dog. Page 5: Bret Littlehailes aka Big Boy Little. Battle of the Band photos by Crawlin' Kingsnake and Mary Knieser. To see more photos, go to the DCBS website www.dcblues.org and click on the photo links.

Homemade Jamz Blues Band performs at College Park Blues Festival

"These young kids have got energy, talent and do the blues proud with their own flavor. I believe they've got a GREAT future ahead." – B.B. King

How does a seven-year-old kid get the blues? Ryan Perry, now 17, laughs heartily at the notion—like he's a father himself, maybe even a grandfather, as if fondly recalling his precocious past self. "We haven't had any bad experiences as a family," says Perry, who sings and plays guitar in the Homemade Jamz Blues Band (HJBB) with his brother Kyle (15, bass) and sister Taya (10, drums). He understands the irony of a world-weary ankle biter but more importantly the simple, youthful concept of doing what comes naturally.

HJBB started in Baumholder, Germany when father Renaud Perry returned from military service in Korea. Young Ryan found a Stratocaster copy among dad's bags. A week later, Ryan had composed a short instrumental tune (which he'd play at a school talent show) and was playing along to commercials. When the family relocated to Tupelo, the passion stayed with him. Returning home, Ryan (11 at the time) dove head first into the blues.

"I heard B.B. King, Albert King and Stevie Ray Vaughan," he recalls, "and I would listen to them all the time and try to emulate them." Having found his muse, Ryan's playing progressed "like, tenfold. As soon as I knew which direction to go, it really took off."

Two years later, Ryan was playing with a drum machine and little brother Kyle, then nine years old, wanted in on the action. After first trying piano and becoming frustrated that he didn't progress as fast as Ryan, Kyle switched to bass, teaching himself the nuances of the instrument and its role in the blues. Soon he was playing out with his brother, as confident as any wizened old pro and digging his role. "I keep the timing and lock down the beat along with the drummer, which allows the lead guitar player to do his own thing while everyone is juking to the beat."

Eventually proud papa Renaud called Robert Stolle of Clarksdale's storied Ground Zero Blues Club and insisted on an audition, HJBB—Ryan, Kyle and an unrelated drummer wowed Stolle enough to get a booking. When that drummer didn't work out, their seven year old sister Taya wanted to

give it a shot. Already possessing a rhythmic sense from playing tambourine, she settled onto the stool and in two months was providing the beat behind Ryan and Kyle. "It's very exciting to play drums," she says.

It's likewise energizing to watch HJBB work out, and soon the cherubic trio was a hot ticket. Ryan's gruff vocals and visceral, stinging, guitar licks, Kyle's solid rumble and Taya's cool stomp have electrified crowds across the country, up and down Memphis's famed Beale Street and on the festival and blues cruise circuit. The band saturated their local media, appearing numerous times in several local papers and national blues magazines, and on local and national TV—including a feature segment on *CBS Sunday Morning*. Even B.B. King said in a YouTube video, "In my 82 years, I've never seen something musically... so remarkable."

As well, HJBB won the 3rd Annual MS Delta Blues Society of Indianola's Blues Challenge (2006), and were the youngest band ever to compete in the International Blues Challenge (IBC) in 2007, taking second in a field of 157 bands. Fred Litwin, president of Northern Blues Music and a judge for the event, called HJBB and announced he was eager to make them the youngest blues band to sign with a major record label. "Mister Fred," as the Perrys call him, made it happen. True to their name, the band recorded *Pay Me No Mind* at home, over three days in January 2008.

Rife with powerful, puissant songs (lyrics by Renaud, music by HJBB) that lyrically and musically epitomize the blues, *Pay Me No Mind* blends Chicago and Mississippi juke joint blues, copping the gritty slickness of the former and the dirty soul of the latter—never betraying its authors' age. The trio exudes nothing but confidence and attitude as they sing of betrayal, love, hard times and other bad things gone down as if they've lived a life rich in strife. They are, to be sure, a veritable blues explosion poised to make the big sound.

Which again begs the question: how did a seven year old and his younger siblings get the blues? Ryan says they just connected with the music, like it's hard-wired into them. "We all love the blues," he says matter-of-factly. "For some reason it just comes naturally to us."

Visit their website www.hmjamzbluesband.com and see them at the College Park Blues Festival, Saturday, November 7 (see ad Page 7).



DC Blues Society Band

College Park Blues Festival Saturday, November 7

7:00 pm—11:30 pm

- 7:00 pm - Big Boy Little Band
The winner of DCBS Battle of the Bands
- 8:00 pm - DC Blues Society Band
- 9:00 pm - Homemade Jamz Blues Band
- MC - Ida Campbell (*Don't Forget The Blues* on WPFW, 89.3 FM)

Food and beverages (incl. beer and wine) available for purchase
This is a DCBS fundraiser to send the Big Boy Little Band to the IBC in Memphis, TN. Stop by the DCBS booth and show your support!

Sponsors

- DC Blues Society
- University of Maryland
- City of College Park, MD
- Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission
- College Park Arts Exchange



Big Boy Little Band

DC Blues Society Band (top l-r) Sam Brawner, Sam'i Nuriddin. (bottom l-r) Anthony "Swamp Dog" Clark, Dave Jackson. Photos: Raymond Fudge Big Boy Little Band photo courtesy Bret Littlehailes

College Park Blues Festival

Ritchie Coliseum

College Park, MD

Saturday November 7, 2009

7 - 11:30 pm

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Homemade Jamz Blues Band

DC Blues Society Band

Big Boy Little Band

(Winner of the 2009 DCBS Battle of the Bands)

Food – Beverages – Vendors – Free Parking

For more information: www.dcblues.org





Marva Wright Update

We received an update on our dear friend Marva Wright. As many of you know, she suffered two strokes earlier this year. Her recovery is going to be a long process but she is slowly regaining strength and her family and doctors are very optimistic that she'll be back to the things she enjoyed doing prior to her illness. Several fundraisers have been held across the country, the most recent in New Orleans on October 18. A special website has been set up for updates as well as donations: www.friendsofmarvawright.com. Marva's family appreciates your phone calls, cards, flowers, donations and prayers.

N.J. Warren (1933–2009)

The Washington-area Blues community mourns the passing of acoustic Blues musician N.J. Warren. He was a friend and mentor to many musicians who came to know and love him at Archie's Barbershop. An old friend of Archie Edwards, he was a regular at the weekly Barbershop jams for decades.

A transplant from Pine Bluff, AR, he impressed acoustic Blues fans with his slow-down, low-down Delta-style guitar work and his talent for inventing soulful lyrics on the spot. His guitar playing and singing evoked the late Lightnin' Slim and Silas Hogan. He was truly a Blues ambassador, passing along his deep understanding of the music and supporting and encouraging younger musicians. Hear N.J. on the Archie Edwards Blues Heritage Foundation website: www.acousticblues.com/Sounds/mp3/NJsBlues.mp3 — Donna Fletcher



A Tribute to "Bowling Green" John Cephas

Creative Alliance presents a Blues House Party to benefit the National Council for the Traditional Arts on Friday, November 6 at 8 pm. It takes place at the Creative Alliance at The Patterson, 3134 Eastern Ave. Baltimore, MD. For tickets and information, go to www.creativealliance.org.

Many of Piedmont blues best artists such as Phil Wiggins, Eleanor Ellis, Rick Franklin, Warner Williams, Jay Summerour and Blues historian Mark Puryear, will be there to celebrate the life of guitar master "Bowling Green" John Cephas. Clips featuring John Cephas, from Ellis's film, *Blues House Party*, will be screened. The House Party is supported by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive.

Hardway Connection to Headline DCBS Annual Holiday Party

The DCBS annual holiday party takes place on Saturday, December 19, 2009, at American Legion Post 268, 11225 Fern Street, Wheaton, MD 20902. This year's entertainment is the award-winning Hardway Connection whose impeccable musicianship, vocals and crowd-pleasing style will force you to get up and dance the night away.

If you've never seen the Hardway Connection, you're in for a real treat. As an unheralded act from suburban Maryland, they competed and won the 1994 International Blues Challenge (IBC), edging out guitarist/vocalist Susan Tedeschi and her band. Since then, Hardway has performed in numerous venues in the Mid-Atlantic region including the Annual DC Blues Festival and Blue Bird Blues Festivals. The group focuses on a mix of blues, oldies and southern soul music. They have recorded several successful CDs (with mostly original material) and established themselves on the blues/southern soul circuit.

Celebrate the season at this year's DC Blues Society Holiday Party! Information and advance tickets are will soon be available at www.dcblues.org. (Ron Weinstock and Donna Shoulders contributed to this article)

Photos: Marva Wright © Ron Weinstock; N.J. Warren courtesy Donna Fletcher; John Cephas courtesy Glenn Thompson; Hardway CD cover ©Hardway Connection



From the Editors

This is *OUR* final newsletter, but hopefully, not *THE* final newsletter. It was loads of fun and lots of hard work but as each issue went to press, there was immense satisfaction knowing we brought news about the Blues to DCBS members and area music lovers. We're hopeful that someone will take up the chal-

lenge to edit future issues, transform it into an on-line version and learn just how satisfying this can be. Here's the pitch:

The fun: "I'm the editor" is guaranteed to open many doors. We met dozens of musicians, hung out with bands and found ourselves getting e-mails from some very interesting people!

The hard work: The decisions on what to include, who to include, where and when to include it gets easier as expertise grows. We had incredible guides along the way like Felix and Jazs and contributions from seasoned writers like Kirk Jackson, Ron Weinstock and DCBS members like Mike Flagg, Jenny Miller, Steve Levine (he also compiles the monthly calendar), Chris DeProperty and others. Writing obits, a necessity given the age of many revered Blues musicians, gave us an opportunity to research, reflect, educate and celebrate the influence of many icons of music, especially our own like John Cephas and Chick Hall, Sr.

The satisfaction: Yup — every month.

With any ending, there are people deserving of thanks: The DCBS board and volunteers, especially Felix. Like I said, he guided but did not interfere, always leaving the final decisions to us. Julie Fanning, our graphic designer who donated her time and talent to help promote several DCBS events. Especially dear to our hearts are the festival poster and t-shirt images she

created in tribute to John Cephas, a DCBS founder and its first president. Ron Weinstock — advice, CD reviews, history lessons and a stockpile of photos. Other photographers who shot DCBS events: Sheryl Adams, Alan Bowser, Jim Byrum (Surf Club Live), Raymond Fudge, Bill Hall, Donnell Jones, Gordon Jones, David Munn, Lance Nuckolls, Fernando Sandoval, Lili Shoulders, Crawlin' Kingsnake (aka David Strickler), Glenn Thompson and Barry Wheeler. The others who sent or allowed downloads of images from www.flickr.com. Family and friends who taught, critiqued, proofed and listened. And, most of all, the readers of *CBM*. A very big *thank you* for your support! *Please remember* that in addition to DCBS, there are other ambassadors of the Blues in need of it too. Turn on WPFW 89.3FM and make a pledge; regardless of your religious views, go to church now and then — Westminster Church — and celebrate its Blue Monday Blues; (re)discover acoustic blues at the weekly jams at Archie's Barbershop; go hear the musicians who call this place home; patronize the clubs and local bars offering live music. Mike Flagg says our local music scene has "an embarrassment of riches." Indulge in those riches — as often as you can — and take others.

Finally — about the photo. Who and why are those people smiling? Can't vouch for the guys but Donna Shoulders (left) and me, Mary Knieser (the other one) are smiling because we spent a memorable afternoon at a Blues show featuring Lil' Ed and The Blues Imperials (Ed w/hat and brother Pookie). Coincidentally, it was at a DCBS festival where I first *encountered* the band (Ed strolled into the audience and sat on my lap playing guitar) and also learned about DCBS. Donna missed that show but it didn't take long for her to have an Ed experience and get involved with DCBS. When I volunteered to edit the *CBM*, Donna didn't hesitate and offered her help with writing, proofing, editing and photography. A true friend is one who, despite caller ID, answers the phone at 2 am because she knows you're on deadline. Thanks Donna for years of friendship and unflinching support especially in those wee hours of the morning. . .MK



THE NIGHTHAWKS

UPCOMING SHOWS

Nov. 27, 2009 The State Theater, Falls Church, VA (703) 237-0300
THE NIGHTHAWKS
Special guest is Bobby Radcliff (301-464-8800 • <http://bobbyradcliff.com/>)

Doors: 7:00 PM / Showtime: 9:00 PM
Tickets: \$13 adv / \$16 day of show

Washington's favorite bad boys, the Nighthawks are masters of electric Chicago Blues and the kings of sh*t kicking roadhouse rock. They're not called America's Best Bar Band for nothing... Check out DC's own amazing Bobby Radcliff here in this rare homecoming show!

Nov. 28, 2009 Old Bowie Town Grille, Bowie, MD (301) 464-8800
THE NIGHTHAWKS
Special guest is Bobby Radcliff (301-464-8800 • <http://bobbyradcliff.com/>)

RetroDeluxe opening for The Nighthawks & Bobby Radcliff starting at 8 PM! This is a DON'T MISS EVENT! TICKETS ON SALE SOON! CALL 301-464-8800 FOR MORE INFORMATION! Old Bowie Town Grille, 8604 Chestnut Avenue, Bowie, MD.

DEC. 28, 2009 Westminster Church, Washington, DC (202) 484-7700
Blues Extravaganza with THE NIGHTHAWKS.

Time: 6:00 to 9:00 PM
Tickets: \$5

Westminster Church, 400 I St, SW, Washington, DC 20024.

JAN. 1, 2010 The Birchmere, Alexandria, VA (703) 549-7500
THE NIGHTHAWKS
with the Billy Price Band

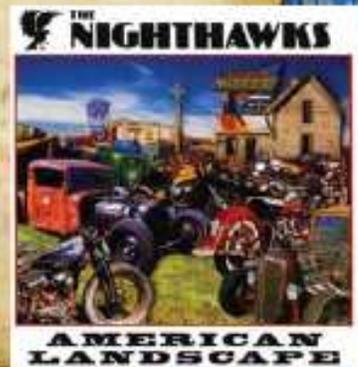
Billy and his band will be on stage with the Nighthawks for the whole show. The two bands will alternate leading the tunes. Two drummers—Hawks with horns, Billy with harp.

Time: 7:30 PM
Tickets: \$25

The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria, VA 22305.

 **THE NIGHTHAWKS**
www.thenighthawks.com

And check out the newest studio release:
American Landscape





November	
1	DCBS Jam @ Silver Spring American Legion;
2	Memphis Gold @ Westminster Church
4	Blue Dog @ New Deal Cafe
5	Susan Tedeschi @ Rams Head; Flatfoot Sam & Educated Fools @ Cat's Eye
6	Creative Alliance & BBS present Blues House Party @ The Patterson; BBQ Bob & Spareribs @ Madam's Organ; Reggie Wayne Morris @ Zoo Bar
7	College Park Blues Festival @ Ritchie Coliseum; Big Boy Little @ Zoo Bar; Nicole Hart @ Madam's Organ; Doug Parks & Lone Wolves @ Dad's; Rude Dog's Rhythm Revue @ Bare Bones; Ursula Ricks Blues Project @ Ebb Tide
8	Eric Lindell @ State Theatre; Homemade Jamz @ Rams Head
9	Daryl Davis Band @ Westminster Church; Johnny Lang, Moreland & Arbuckle @ Birchmere
10	A Tribute To America's Veterans w/ Memphis Gold, Jay Summerour, Jonny Graves @ Round House Theatre, Silver Spring
12	Delbert McClinton @ Rams Head; Janine Wilson Band @ JV's; Skyla Burrell Blues Band @ Cat's Eye; Eric Lindell, Lowercase Blues @ 8X10
13	Big Boy Little @ Lexington Market; Eric Culberson @ Madam's Organ; Sookey Jump Blues Band @ Zoo Bar
14	Fabulous Thunderbirds @ Rams Head; Lisa Lim & Over the Limit w/Andy Poxon @ Ebb Tide; Eric Culberson @ Madam's Organ; Smokin' Polecats w/Marianna Prevetti, Jamie Lynch @ Zoo Bar; Christopher James Band @ Bertha's; Bad Influence Band @ Ice House Cafe; Kelly Bell Band @ Whitlow's
15	Stokley The Clown—aka Ed "The Forkman" Clopien: Special Benefit @ Fish Head Cantina (Noon - 10 PM); Tommy Lepson Band @ JV's
16	Big Boy Little Fundraising Jam @ JVs; C.W. Harrington @ Westminster Church
19	Delbert McClinton @ Birchmere
20	Jason Ricci & New Blood @ Madam's Organ; Liz Briones @ Zoo Bar; Bad Influence Band @ JV's
21	Deb Callahan @ Madam's Organ; Roustabouts @ Zoo Bar; Deanna Bogart @ Carlyle Club; Kelly Bell Band @ Recher Theatre
23	Mac McDonald & Bluz U Can Uze @ Westminster Church
25	Tommy Castro & Coco Montoya @ Birchmere
27	Nighthawks w/Bobby Radcliff @ State Theatre; Tommy Castro & Coco Montoya @ Rams Head; Johnny Artis Band @ Madam's Organ; Reggie Wayne Morris @ Restless Rick's; Ursula Ricks Blues Project @ Slainte's; Swamp Keepers @ Zoo Bar
28	BBS Blues Challenge, Joe Louis Walker @ Rosedale American Legion; Big Boy Little @ Bare Bones; Bobby Parker @ Madam's Organ; Flat Foot Sam & Educated Fools @ Zoo Bar; Nighthawks w/ Bobby Radcliff @ Old Bowie Town Grille
30	Dr. S.O. Feelgood @ Westminster Church; IMT presents Roy Book Binder @ St. Mark Presbyterian Church; Big Boy Little @ JVs
Early December	
3	Hot Tuna @ Birchmere
4	Lex Grey @ Madam's Organ; Reggie Wayne Morris @ Zoo Bar; Bad Influence Band @ Clyde's, Chevy Chase
5	Johnny Winter @ State Theatre; Lex Grey @ Madam's Organ; Bad Influence Band @ Dogfish Head Alehouse, Gaithersburg
7	Tina's Bluz (Earnestine Jackson) @ Westminster Church

Attention bands
 Send your December & January gigs to
calendar@dcblues.org by Nov. 15

Weekly Blues Events/Jams	
Sunday	Wolf's Blues Jam @ Bangkok Blues; Paulverizers Blues Jam @ Old Bowie Town Grille; Z Revue Blues Jam @ JV's (first Sunday)
Tuesday	Blues Jam w/Varsity Grillbillies @ Varsity Grille; Old Man Brown @ Madam's Organ (alternating Tuesdays)
Wednesday	Wolf's Blues Jam @ Beach Cove; Blues Jam @ Old Bowie Town Grille
Thursday	DCBS Thursday Jam/Open Mic w/Sol @ LA Bar & Grill; Patrick Alban or Johnny Artis @ Madam's Organ; Open Mic w/Fast Eddie @ Spanky's Shenanigans
Friday	Glen Moomau & Blue Flames @ Bertha's; Wolf's Blues Jam @ Fat Boys (1st Friday); John Guernsey @ New Deal Cafe
Saturday	Acoustic Blues Jam @ Archie's Barbershop; Wolf's Blues Jam @ Fat Boys (3rd Saturday); Big Boy Little @ Zoo Bar (1st Saturday); John Guernsey @ New Deal Cafe

Attention dancers: See DCBS homepage for link to dance-friendly venues. To subscribe to a weekly e-mail newsletter "So Many Choices" with dance-specific information, often with a blues twist, send an e-mail to DCBS member and Blues fan Robin: hc1829@aol.com

Bolded items are picks by calendar editor, Steve Levine, and include DCBS and BBS events. Send listings to calendar@dcblues.org or mail to Steve Levine, 5910 Bryn Mawr Rd., College Park, MD 20740. **Musicians: Deadline is the 15th of the month prior to publication.** Events listed are based on the best information possible. DCBS cannot be held liable for errors in schedules, places or performances listed. It is recommended that you contact the venues to verify the event will occur. The DCBS homepage has additional music links and information: www.dcblues.org.



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International Songwriting Competition (ISC) Deadline Extended

Due to high demand from entrants, the International Songwriting Competition (ISC) has extended its deadline for entering songs until December 2, 2009. All entries must be postmarked or sent online by midnight, December 2, est. One of the largest and most respected songwriting competitions in the world, ISC gives away over \$150,000 in cash and prizes to 65 winners. Amateur and professional songwriters and musicians are invited to enter their songs. Go to www.songwritingcompetition.com to enter.



Membership means discounts! Show 'em your card

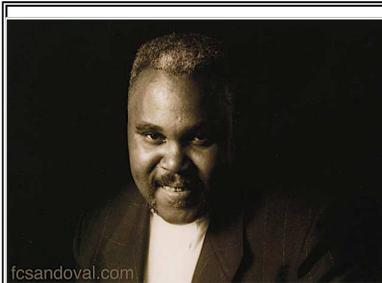
The following companies offer discounts to DCBS members. You must present your current membership card to receive them. Restrictions may apply and discounts may be withdrawn at any time.

<p>Half-price Admission Blues Alley All Blues Shows Sun. - Thurs. 1073 Wisconsin Ave., NW Washington, DC 20007 202-337-4141 www.bluesalley.com</p>	<p>20% Discount Neil Senning Enterprises Quality Painting and Handyman Services: Plastering/Drywall Deck Cleaning/ Power Washing/Staining/Carpentry/Interior & Exterior Work and much more. 301-717-1773</p>	<p>10% discount GOT YOGA? Individual Sessions including gentle yoga, breathing techniques, warm up, poses, meditation and laughter therapy Group Yoga Sessions (minimum of 8) avail- able for above and Laughter Yoga Call to schedule: 301-802-1879</p>
<p>10% Discount Capitol Hill Books Across from Eastern Market 657 C Street, SE Washington, DC 20003 202-544-1621 www.capitolhillbooks-dc.com</p>	<p>15% Discount BOK Custom Framing 5649 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22207 703-534-1866 Hours: M-F 10 -6, Sat. 10-5</p>	<p>10% Discount J & J Automotive 9160 Euclid Court Manassas, VA 20110 703-368-3600 www.jjautoservices.com</p>
<p>15% Discount LA Bar & Grill 2530 Columbia Pike Arlington, VA 22204 703-682-1560 www.lowerarlingtonbarandgrill.com</p>	<p>JV's Restaurant Drink Special Buy one & get 2nd drink free 6666 Arlington Boulevard, Falls Church, VA 22042 703-241-9504 www.jvsrestaurant.com</p>	<p>20% Discount Three Brothers Italian Restaurant 4521 Kenilworth Ave. Bladensburg, MD 20710 301-864-1570 Until 9 pm. Not valid holidays or w/other discounts/restrictions may apply</p>

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Before your next search, go to www.dcblues.org and click on the GoodSearch link and designate DC Blues Society as your favorite cause. DCBS earns a penny each time you search the web using www.GoodSearch.com. It's easy -- just click, search and support. Shopping for that one-of-a-kind gift? Try www.GoodShop.com with over 600 on-line stores. A percentage of each purchase will be donated to DCBS and its mission to preserve and promote the Blues. Grab your mouse, click the link and shop guilt free.



**Thanks to photographer
Fernando C. Sandoval**

A big Blues thanks to Fernando C. Sandoval and Oak Street Studio for providing photographic services at the Eric Bibb show. Studio is located at 1349 Oak St., NW, Washington DC. For information and other examples go to www.fcsandoval.com

The Silver Spring Town Center, Inc.
Montgomery County Commission On Veterans Affairs
Present

A Tribute To America's Veterans

Tuesday, November 10, 2009

7:30 – 9 PM

The Round House Theatre
8641 Colesville Rd., Silver Spring, MD

Featuring

**Memphis Gold & Jay Summerour
Jonny Grave**

Donation \$20.00

Net proceeds will be contributed to a
Montgomery County Veterans service organization
For more information, contact Alan Bowser
(alan.bowser@gmail.com)

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Blues Party

December 31, 2009

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www.dcblues.org

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