**BSCP Annual General Meeting**

**Tuesday, December 14, 2021**

**Minutes and Annual Report**

**ATTENDANCE**

**BOD:** JD Drudul, Kathy Gregoire, Buster Grubb, Dot Grubb, Betty Heckert, Greg Hogg, Mike Knott, John Rignani, Gary “Rocky” Rothrock, Hannah Sherman, Sherman Smith

**Excused:** Dan Mowery, Rosemary Witzel, Rebecca Young

**MEMBERS**: Johnny Hall, Mike Heiman, Keshav Rao

**CALL TO ORDER** President called the meeting to order. The meeting was recorded.

**MINUTES** Motion (Rothrock/Knott) to accept minutes of November 9, 2021, approved unanimously.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**President’s Report** by Kathryn Gregoire

BSCP BOD

BSCP Board of Directors Membership: 14 members.

Dot and Buster Grubb resigned their positions as Board Directors at the December 14, 2021, meeting. There are two vacant positions going into January 2022.

Monthly meetings continue to be held the second Tuesday of the month at 7 pm on Zoom.

Backyard Blues

Gary “Rocky” Rothrock, BSCP Jam Coordinator, called upon Central PA talent to create the BSCP album “Backyard Blues.” Bobby Gentilo co-produced, recorded, and mixed Backyard Blues in Right Coast studio in Columbia, PA.

In February 2021, BSCP entered into an agreement with Blue Heart Records label, owned by Sally Bengtson and Betsie brown, to distribute the BSCP Backyard Blues CD with three bonus tracks nationwide in digital form with an official release date of March 19, 2021. This was made possible largely through an anonymous donation.

The first Backyard Blues airplay reported to Betsie Brown was by Jack Kidd with the show “Messin’ with the Kidd” on lionheartsradio.com playing a track of Bob Wineland & The House Band on February 23, 2021. Since the week of March 6, 2021, airplay of the CD was consistently active on the Roots Music Report Charts through the summer of 2021, with the album peaking at #10 for the Top 50 Traditional Blues Albums, #6 for the Top 50 Contemporary Blues Albums.

Backyard Blues peaked at #1 for the Top 50 PA Albums. As recently as November 27, 2021, the album ranked #16 for airplay in PA.

All 16 songs on the album charted in the top 50 PA Songs and four of them charted nationwide: “Bad Influence” by Blues On The Loose, “Trouble All Over The World” by Bob Wineland and The House Band, “Love or Money” by Roger Hammer, and “Ball and Chain” by Rocky and The House Band. The House Band consisted of Tom Lowry, keyboards; David Harris, bass; and Gordy Keeney, drums. Marianna Schaeffer provided backing vocals for “Trouble All Over The World” and Marianna and Bob Wineland provided backing vocals for “Ball and Chain.”

Backyard Blues reviews have shown up all over the U.S. and the world, with the album received airplay in such diverse countries as France, the UK, Spain, Australia, and Croatia.

The end-of-the year Roots Music Reports ranked “Backyard Blues” at #48 for Contemporary Blues Albums and #109 for Blues Albums.

BSCP Support

BSCP supported music events in Central PA in 2021, most notably the East Petersburg Blues Festival and various Susquehanna Folk Music events, BSCP had booths at the East Petersburg Blues Festival and the Lancaster Roots and Blues Festival.

BSCP is a member of The Blues Foundation and financially contributes to Music Makers.

BSCP Virtual Blues Shows

BSCP held virtual blues shows every Thursday evening on the BSCP Facebook Group page until BSCP returned to the weekly live blues jam on June 17. BSCP held a virtual blues show on December 31, 2021, to enable blues lovers to safely enjoy a virtual blues show on New Year’s evening. Videos of the shows can be viewed on bscpblues.com.

**BSCP By-Laws Committee** by Kathryn Gregoire

No changes made in the BSCP By-Laws during 2021.

**Treasurer’s Report** by Gary “Rocky” Rothrock

Thanks to the generous support of our members, 2021 was a good year for BSCP financially. We were not able to hold our major fundraiser, the Mom I Picnic, for the second year in a row, but we have few overhead expenses due to being an all-volunteer organization and so we were able to sustain our activities this year. We started up the jam again in June and held a couple of shows at Champions and had a great (and safe) Christmas party which was free for 2021 members. We are going into 2022 in good shape and looking forward a better year ahead.

**Membership Committee Report** by Clark “Buster” Grubb

The total number of members for 2021 is 224. The first six months memberships were sold only online or by mail orders. Once BSCP was able to return to Champions, memberships were also sold at the Thursday jams and BSCP events.

**Archives Committee Report** by Clark “Buster” Grubb

The BSCP archives continue to expand with donations by members. For example, Dave Snyder, the first BSCP President, contributed items from the very early years of the blues society. Archive items are featured in “A Peek at the Past” in the BSCP Blues News.

**Jam Committee Report** by Gary “Rocky” Rothrock

Our virtual jam continued from 2020 until June 2021, when we started up electric jam again. After a slow start and some equipment repairs, things got rolling and we had a really fun year, seeing many old friends and some new faces too. We have been especially pleased to see so many young musicians coming out and sharing their talents with us these past months. And special thanks to the folks who host the jam, and the stage crew who set up and tear down every week! We are going into our 24th year of continuous operation of the jam (except when the clubs were closed due to COVID) and still going strong!

**Website Committee Report** by Dan Mowery

## Website Enhancements

* Online store expansion to include apparel with inventory tracking
* Addition of credit card and apple pay payment options
* Added Gift card purchase to our store
* BSCP Photo archive
* Automation to remind customers of abandoned carts

## Website Traffic

* Total Sessions: 4305 (up 45% from last year)
* Unique Visitors: 2506 (up 58% from last year)
* Sessions by Device: Desktop (2131), Mobile (2086), Tablet (86)
* New vs: Returning Visitors: New (2416), Returning (90)

## Top Pages

* Homepage: 3143 (up 32%)
* Upcoming Events: 843 (up 393%)
* Zoom Jam: 682 (up 24%)

## Top Traffic Sources

* Direct: 1303 (down 22%)
* Google.com: 1295 (up 122%)
* Facebook: 552 (up 37%)

## eCommerce

* Total Sales: $2146 (up 228%)
* Avg Order: $25.86 (up 89%)
* Total Orders: 83 (up 73%)
* Top Selling Items
	+ 2021 Membership: $600
	+ 2021 Membership CD Bundle: $400
* Sales by Traffic Source
	+ Google: $356
	+ Other: $283
	+ Facebook: $195
	+ Direct: $133
	+ Unknown: $118

## Visitors

* Customers: 81 (up 113%)
* Customer Retention: New 88.89%, Returning 11.11%
* New Site Members: 12 (down 58%)
* Active Leads: 44 (up 38%)

## Opportunities

1. 85% more people are visiting the site
2. People spend more time on the Newsletters page than other pages
3. Featured Event page has had a big rise in traffic
4. Visitors from google.com spend more time on our site that visitors from Facebook.com

**IT Consultant Report** by John “JD” Drudul

IT has supported 24 Virtual BSCP shows in 2021 and the development and maintenance of the BSCP website.

**Newsletter Committee Report** by Kathryn Gregoire

BSCP created and distributed four issues of Blues News during 2021 in digital and paper format.

**Merchandise Committee Report** by John Rignani

BSCP returned to hosting live music events this year after being mostly “virtual” in 2020. The gross revenue generated from merchandise sales trend looks like:

**2017 - $1,900 2018 - $2,000 2019 - $2,300 2020 - $500 2021 - $1,200**

Forty percent of our 2021 merchandise sales were via on-line through the BSCP web-site STORE. In 2020 it was over 80 percent on-line. Most of this amount was in the form of “bundling” our merchandise with Membership renewals on-line. To clarify, the numbers above do not include Membership dues amounts collected. We were able to maintain on-line profit margins similar to “live” sales by adjusting the item’s pricing on-line to cover shipment and fulfillment charges.

Because of the pandemic starting in 2020, merchandise expenses were decreased from previous years as there was less of a need to re-stock inventory levels. End-of-year Inventory Value (cost) trend is:

**2017 $2,900 2018 - $3,500 2019 - $3,900 2020 - $3,700 2021 - $2,300**

As such, 2022 may not produce different results because of the continuing pandemic concerns, the Committee is leaning towards:

1. Increased marketing of our merchandise on-line vs. live sales
2. Expansion of merchandise design variety
3. Continued “bundling” of merchandise with Membership renewals

The Committee’s goal will remain to provide a fun and affordable enhancement

to the growth of the Society and its Members.

**Events Committee Report** by Mike Knott

BSCP did not hold the annual (April) Spring Show and the annual (May) Mom I picnic due to Covid 19.

BSCP held a Summer Show at Champions on July 18 featuring Moonshine Society with Hank Imhof opening.

The annual Mississippi Railroad Project featured Bill Abel backed by The Cornlickers on August 22 was held at the Mechanicsburg Picnic Grounds.

The Fall Show on September 19 at Champions featured Clarence Spady with The Mighty Klucks opening.

BSCP held its annual Christmas Party on Sunday, December 5, at the Hummelstown Fire Hall. Admission was free for 2021 BSCP members. The party featured The Kilborn Alley Blues Band.

**Public Relations/Social Media Committee Report** by Rebecca Young

In January 2020 the BSCP board created the Social Media committee with Rebecca Young leading up the efforts. The goals of this committee are to utilize social media platforms to drive
awareness of BSCP within the local area and blues community, encourage new membership, and
engage with our current membership. Since the committee was created, Facebook followers
have increased 34%! Facebook has been a great tool for us to keep members and friends of
BSCP.

We are using the member created BSCP group Facebook page to gain additional exposure for
BSCP events and news. The page was created as a way for members to communicate and share
relevant content, and it continues to be a forum for conversation regarding all things blue. We
have seen tremendous growth over the past two years on this page. Followers have increased 83%!

In 2021 we began the year still hosting online weekly Jams. These were hosted on Facebook and
could be viewed “on demand” any time after the performance. Since the return to in-person
activities, we have been utilizing Facebook to advertise our weekly Jams and special events as
well as promote our online merchandise sales (merchandise, memberships, CDs, and digital
downloads).

As we approach 2022, we will be focusing on ways to continue to connect and engage with our
current membership. We also need to focus on using social media and other outlets to introduce
BSCP to fellow blues lovers to drive new memberships and attendance at BSCP
sponsored events.

BSCP has a monthly ad in the PA Musician Magazine. It also had an ad in the Lancaster Roots and Blues program.

Make sure that you like and follow us on Facebook to stay up to date on the latest news and
events from the Blues Society of Central PA!

**Education Committee** by Hannah Sherman

During 2021, the BSCP book club met monthly to discuss "Up Jumped the Devil: The Real Life of Robert Johnson" by Bruce Conforth and Dean Wardlow, “ Moanin' at Midnight: The Life and Times of Howlin' Wolf" by James Segrest and Mark Hoffman, "Woman With Guitar: Memphis Minnie's Blues" by Paul Gordon and Beth Garon, "Blues Legacies and Black Feminism: Gertrude "Ma" Rainey, Bessie Smith and Billie Holiday" by Angela Davis. We enjoyed musical input from Hank Imhoff and Tom Cook and learned a great deal from our lively discussions.

BSCP has identified options for our blues in the schools’ programs but plans have been delayed because of Covid-19.

BSCP held Virtual Blues Talks during the pandemic. Recordings are available on the website.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Gregoire reported on the progress of preparation for the virtual New Year’s Eve show.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Dot and Buster Grubb resigned their positions as Board Directors.
2. Treasurer Rothrock conducted the election for 2022. He presented the board nomination: President – Kathryn Gregoire, Vice President – Mike Knott, Secretary – Betty Heckert. He asked for nominations from the floor. There were none. Rothrock asked who was in favor for each nomination. All were in favor of each nomination; non opposed.
3. Rothrock thanked Gregoire, Knott, and Heckert for their service in 2021.
4. The Board appointed Rothrock as Treasurer for 2022.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion (Knott/Grubb) to adjourn approved.