



Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania
www.bscpblues.com

BLUES NEWS

Jan - Mar 2023

THE BLUES SOCIETY OF CENTRAL PA PROUDLY PRESENTS



CHARLIE OWEN & POCKET CHANGE

WITH SPECIAL GUEST
TERRY HANCK



SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 19, 2023



Nate Myers
& the Aces



Neil Tapp

CHAMPIONS SPORTS BAR

300 2nd St. Highspire, PA 17034



Doors open 12:30 \$20 Advance
Show 1:15 \$25 Door



BSCP WINTER SHOW (see page 4)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From your President	2
In Memoriam	3
Winter Show	4
Jammin' with JD	5
Blues Mandolins	6/7
BSCP Partnerships	7
In Case You Missed It	8
Blues Bands Beat	9
Save the Dates	9
Blues Biz - Underground Live	10
Meet Board Members	11
All Roads Lead to the Blues	11
In the Spotlight	12
A Peek at the Past	13
Book Corner	14
Baltimore Field Trip	15
Music Instruments/Gear	16

**BSCP BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

BSCP BOD welcomes our newest board member, Lewis Bechtold. Thank you for taking on the responsibility of being secretary

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Kathryn Gregoire – Membership, Newsletter

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From your President...

'Tis the season of giving...

December started out with a joyous BSCP Christmas Party where members came together to share their food, music, and friendship. Like any good party, preparation was key. As soon as the 2021 party was over, the board swung into action. The Treasurer reserved the fire hall a year in advance. The Events Committee started thinking about which band would work best in 2022 to keep everyone dancing and enjoying the blues. The menu was assessed with plans for continuous improvement.

When we got closer to the event, the Public Relations, Newsletter, and Technology Committees started getting information about the event out to the members. The Events Committee sought out volunteers and starting shopping for the food and having marathon baking sessions.

The day of the event the Jam Committee made sure the stage was set up. This year Gary "Rocky" Rothrock volunteered his time and expertise to provide sound and Don Intriери donated use of equipment from his business, Reliable Backline. The Merchandise Committee set up a table of carefully curated products. The Membership Committee provided the opportunity to purchase 2023 memberships. Many volunteers came early to help make food, work in the kitchen and food line and to sell tickets. Some stayed late to help clean up. Much of the food, especially deserts, was donated by members.

One thing that has struck me every Christmas Party is how impressed the bands are with our Blues Society members. They love your enthusiasm, generosity of spirit, good food and dancing. You make them feel welcomed and appreciated.

Members got a special party favor this year when Dot Grubb met them at the door with a blues book marker

full of music notes and hearts, handmade by her with love. Dot wants to encourage others to join the Blues Book Club (pps. 8 and 13).

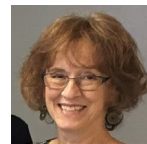
Reflecting on the Christmas Party and, really, all the events, jam sessions, and experiences of the past year with the many hours of service by volunteers, one can't help but marvel at the magic of the blues, music that brings us together in a shared love.

Now take that times 25. Yes, 25 years of the Blues Society of Central PA which BSCP will be joyously celebrating in 2023. Happy 25th Anniversary to BSCP and the Thursday Night Blues Jam!

BSCP also has a special anniversary coming up to celebrate in March: 10 years of jams at Champions. Marianna Schaffer shares her memories in A Peek at the Past of how the BSCP jam found its most recent home (p. 13).

I want to end with a special shout out to thank the two volunteer board members who are going off the board December 31, 2022: Tyler Faulkner, who served as secretary, and Joe Kambic, who served as chair of the Education Committee and the By-Laws Committee. BSCP greatly appreciates your dedication, creativity and hard-work during this past year.

May your holidays be filled with the spirit of giving!



Kathryn Gregoire
bluesmunga@gmail.com

Mission Statement

The Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania is a non-profit corporation dedicated to the preservation, promotion, support and enjoyment of the truly original American art form, the blues.

In Memoriam

by Jackson Fogel



Marty Sammon

October 14, 1977 - October 15, 2022

Marty Sammon brought energy and excitement to his keyboard performance since he started playing the blues when he was 15. Sammon toured the world, both as a headliner and as the keyboardist for such greats as Otis Rush and Buddy Guy. He contributed to many Grammy winning albums and had an extensive discography of his own. Sammon played with Buddy Guy at the White House in 2015 for the 50th anniversary of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



Robert Gordon

March 29, 1947 - October 18, 2022

Robert Gordon's storied career started when he was 17 years old. Inspired by Elvis, Gordon would span through R&B, punk rock, rock and roll and rockabilly. A vocalist by trade, he harmonized with the best: Marco DiMaggio, Donny Gaston, and Chris Spedding to name a few. A star of both stage and screen, Gordon loved performing to the end.



Jerry Lee Lewis

September 29, 1935 - October 28, 2022

Described as rock and roll's "first wild man," Jerry Lee Lewis took the world by storm with his rockabilly hits. Launching to stardom in 1957 with "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On," the hits didn't stop. An inaugural member of the Memphis Music Hall of Fame, inductee of many others, holder of multiple Grammy awards and gold records, Lewis's impact on rockabilly, country, and the blues won't be forgotten.



Danny Kalb

September 9, 1942 - November 19, 2022

When Danny Kalb's career started as a protege of Dave Van Ronk and playing with Bob Dylan, he must've known he was in the right spot. Best known as a founder of the Blues Project in 1965, Kalb was an accomplished guitarist and vocalist in his own right. He was critically acclaimed as both a soloist and part of the Danny Kalb Trio, and always remembered his roots, playing on his vintage early 60s Gibson J-200 through his whole career.



Tom Walling

March 15, 1971 - November 25, 2022

Tom Walling was a powerful force on the track. As the house drummer for Sonic recording Studios, he cut his time between playing on various songs, commercials, and full length albums while he played with various local bands including Symphony X, Deb Callahan, and Greg Stover. Walling was also a percussion faculty at The University for the Arts for more than 15 years, where he inspired and aided countless young musicians.



James Stewart

July 29, 1930 - December 13, 2022

When James Stewart founded Stax Records in 1957, he was hoping to focus on country. He quickly saw the cultural relevance of R&B though and sought to define the "Memphis sound" for the rest of his career. Stewart provided a platform for African-American musicians and was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2002 as a result. You can still enjoy Stewart at the Stax Museum of American Soul Music, built on the same spot that Stax was founded in so long ago.



Kim Simmonds

December 5, 1947 - December 13, 2022

The Welsh-born Kim Simmons was the founder and guitarist of Savoy Brown, a late-stage addition to the Blues Invasion but no less influential for it. Savoy Brown mixed British rock with American blues and played together for more than 55 years. Amid pumping out hits with millions of plays on platforms like Spotify, Simmonds performed at the BSCP co-sponsored The Lost, The Found and The Dearly Departed Picnic in 2009 and we will forever cherish those memories.

BSCP WINTER SHOW

By Kathryn Gregoire

The BSCP Winter Show features Charlie Owen & Pocket Change with special guest Terry Hanck, Nate Myers & the Aces, and soloist Neil Tapp. Doors open at 1 pm, Sunday, February 19, at Champions Sports Bar and Grille at 300 2nd Street, Highspire, PA. Advance tickets \$20. Door tickets \$25.

Charlie Owen & Pocket Change with Terry Hanck. Charlie Owen, born in Birmingham, Alabama, was raised in Washington, D.C. and is now based in Annapolis MD. In the 80s he moved to the SF Bay area, fronting the well-known R & B Dynatones, opening for James Brown, Etta James, Roomful of Blues, Bonnie Bramlett, the Drifters and others. In 2013, he released Worth The Wait, which demonstrates his ability to sing a wide range of R&B songs..

Keyboard player Tam Sullivan is currently touring with Billy Price & Charm City Rhythm Band, Roger Girke & The Wandering Souls and many others.

'Guitar Pete' Kanaras is a veteran journeyman guitarist, former longtime member of The Nighthawks, who is currently on tour with the Billy Price Charm City Rhythm Band, which is based in Baltimore, and The Chris O'Leary Band, based in New York.

Bass player Steve Potter started his gigging in the Baltimore/DC area, soon playing with well-known area performers Big Joe and The Dynafloes (Jump Swing and Blues), Arty Hill (Honky Tonk Country) and Billy Price (Soul & Blues) among many others.

Drummer Nick Ruggieri studied at Berklee School of Music and is a long-time percussion instructor. A veteran of the Washington DC music scene, he toured nationally with Pacific Orchestra out of Key West and Mama Jama out of Annapolis, MD

Terry Hanck is a Chicago-born, American electric blues saxophonist, singer, songwriter and record producer. He won Blues Music Awards in 2012 and 2016 for Instrumentalist – Horn and a Living Blues Award for 'Best Horn' in 2012. In May 2015, he won the International Songwriting

Competition for his soul ballad, "I Keep On Holding On." His influences include Junior Walker, Fats Domino, Ray Charles, B. B. King, Lee Allen and King Curtis. He toured with Elvin Bishop for over a decade and now has his own band. Hanck has recorded a total of 8 albums, the first, Live & Raw in 2002 and the most recent, I Still Get Excited, in 2019.

Nate Myers & the Aces (Central Pennsylvania Music 2020 Award: Best Blues Band). Nate Myers is an excellent musician (vocals, harmonica, acoustic guitar), songwriter, and performer – the consummate story teller and entertainer who keeps the audience's attention throughout the entire performance. He has been billed with many national and regional artists such as Styx, Cheap Trick, Johnny Winter, Edgar Winter, Rick Derringer, Kim Simmonds/Savoy Brown, Kansas, Kenny Wayne Shepherd, G Love & Special Sauce, Lil' Ed & The Blues Imperials, Big Jack Johnson, Jason Ricci, Steve Guyger, Dennis Gruenling, E.G. Kight, The Nighthawks, Charlie Sayles, Bruce Katz, Billy Price, Carey Bell and Luther Allison.

In 2000, he moved from Northumberland to Harrisburg, PA, to work with Krypton City Blues Revue. In 2004, after recording with Big Jack Johnson in Clarksdale, MS, he set up his own band, which has played over a thousand shows in front of a variety of crowds.

The trio has a faithful audience every Tuesday evening at the Grotto Pub, 104 Market Street, Enola, PA and local Harrisburg area taverns. They are also active on the regional scene, traveling to such venues as Bethany Blues, Lewes, DE, Cats Eye Pub, Baltimore MD, and the Fredericksburg Eagle Hotel, Fredericksburg PA,

The Blues Festival Guide selected them as a finalist for their "Blues Artists on the Rise" and featured them in their e-newsletter (12/5/2008, Vol. 3, Issue 46). The band represented Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania in 2012 and Billtown Blues Association (Williamsport, PA) in 2015 at the Blues Foundation's International Blues

Challenge in Memphis, TN.

The band performed "Sweet Romance" live in the independent film SoulMate: True Evil Never Dies in 2014. They have released numerous songs, most recently "Catfish Blues/It's My Music" and "Is That What You Want?" in the 2019 BSCP Backyard Blues CD.

Nate will be playing with Pete Netznik and John Tuzza. Netznik has been playing bass with Nate Myers & the Aces since its inception. He has studied music since childhood and performed professionally for over 30 years. In addition to bass, Pete also plays acoustic and electric guitars and mandolin in duo and trio shows. His musical influences include Big Jack Johnson, Grateful Dead, Paul Simon, Willie Nelson, among so many others. If pressed to name a favorite bassist, it would have to be John Paul Jones. (See p. 12 for more info on Netznik).

John Tuzza, the drummer of the Aces is a recent addition, joining in February 2021. A freelance musician and composer/arranger in the Harrisburg area, he studied Music Performance and Music Production and Engineering at Berklee College of Music. John has performed and recorded with many local, regional, and national artists as well as with numerous local and regional theater companies. He has taught both privately and in local high schools for over 20 years.

Neil Tapp. A guitarist, singer, songwriter, Neil Tapp started playing guitar when he was 12 and got his first gig at 14. His early influences are country blues, ragtime, folk and early jazz. His passion for the art of fingerstyle guitar is obvious as he traces the history and developing styles from the 1920's to today. His repertoire starts with his own songs and ranges from Doc Watson to Leo Kottke to Ry Cooder to Lightnin' Hopkins, Tampa Red and more. David Bromberg says of Tapp "Sounds like we went to the same school." Tapp will be representing the Billstown Blues Society at the 2023 International Blues Competition in Memphis.

Jammin' with JD

By John 'JD' Drudul

Travelling down the east coast takes you through a few towns with weekly scheduled blues jams. I checked out 3 east coast jams during my travels.



The 4w5 Blues Jam in Wilmington, DE is held every Wednesday night at

The Reef Steak & Seafood Restaurant in North Wilmington. It is advertised as the longest running blues jam in Delaware.

I rolled in early to get situated and to order dinner. Lo and behold, Mr. Greg Hogg was sitting at a front table waiting for me, as he heard I would be attending. Greg seems to know everyone at various blues venues and he introduced me to some of the musicians.

The stage was setup with a decent PA, monitors, and lights. Musicians check in on a sign up sheet and are called up to play by the host.

Tonight's jam was hosted by Roger Girke, who has previously played for a BSCP event. Roger is an awesome player who formerly played with the Sharks out of Harrisburg.

The host band had some seasoned musicians, notably a pedal steel player that played some awesome blues riffs. 'Tequilla' Mike Phouts, another friend of Greg's, was on the drums.

I was able to play 2 sets with these awesome musicians. If you're in the area, spend a night at the 4w5. Mike Phouts has also started streaming this jam on his FB live page.

<https://www.4w5bluesjam.com/>
<https://youtu.be/cPARnnxDhyE>
<https://rogergirke.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/4w5bluesjam>



The Central Delaware Blues Society holds a weekly jam in Dover. When I attended, the jam was held at the American Legion, but has since moved to The Boulevard Live Entertainment Restaurant in Dover.

The stage setup included monitors, amps, drums, lights, and PA with a soundman. The Legion was selling food and drinks.

I walked in and was immediately greeted by name. Apparently Greg Hogg gave them a heads up that I would be attending.

Kenny Belmont greeted me and had me sign up. After talking with Ken, we realized that I played in a Harrisburg band with his bass player cousin Frank back in 1991. It's a small world. Ken also ran the sound and was the MC for the night. He plays bass in the local band Bad JuJu.

Tonight's host was Joey Fulkerson. His trio played some cool tunes and Joey did some nice extended jams. Joey plays in many venues all around the Delaware east coast, both solo and in a band setting.

I played the second set with Joey, trading leads back and forth with him. He came over to my side of the stage and we had dueling guitars going for a while. Joey also does stringed instrument repair in his shop and gives music lessons.

While listening to the other jams, Jim Martin joined our table to welcome me and to discuss the blues. Jim was a past president and board member of the CDBS. They're a friendly bunch of folks out there on the coast!

Check out Joey Fulkerson if you're in the area, and don't miss the CDBS weekly jam!

<https://centraldelawareblues.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/centraldelawareblues/>

<https://youtu.be/QRBff5F95CU>
<https://fulkersonmusicservices.com/>



The Cape Fear Blues Society in Wilmington, NC has a weekly blues jam every Tuesday at the Rusty Nail. The Nail has a great juke joint atmosphere with a bar down the left side of the room, tables and chairs down the right side, and a nice stage area at the end. There is outdoor seating on the back patio with interesting art works and sculptures scattered about. There is no air conditioning and two large floor fans pointed at the audience were working overtime.

The equipment was all set with a drum set, Peavey guitar amps, bass amp, and keyboards. PA speakers were at each side of the stage with 3 monitors for the musicians. A sound man ran the mixing board located half way back among the tables.

Sign up was similar to BSCP jams with a white board hung on the left wall, but there is no host. Musicians pick a spot on the board when they arrive. It could be any spot in any set.

The jam starts at 8:00 with the first set taking the stage. I had a good jam with some talented musicians and enjoyed the other sets throughout the night.

The Cape Fear Blues Society is a very active organization. They also have an acoustic jam, an annual blues cruise with 3 bands on 3 different levels of the ship, an annual blues festival covering 3 days, and an annual Cape Fear Blues Challenge with winners heading to the IBC in Memphis.

<http://www.capefearblues.org/>

These were all some fun jams with great people and musicians. The east coast represents the blues well.

My next jam article will highlight some southern blues jams.

The Mandolin and the Blues

By Thomas Cook



Yank Rachel (1919-1997)
Greatest of all blues mandolin players

The mandolin was a very popular instrument in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that was used extensively by Black blues musicians, as evidenced in the blues literature.

W. C. Handy writes in "Blues Encounter" in Cleveland, Mississippi in 1905: "I was leading the orchestra when I was asked if I would object if a local band played a few dances...their band consisted of three pieces: a battered guitar, a mandolin and a worn out bass.

Robert Johnson's mother describes blues musicians: "I never did have no trouble with him until he got big enough to be round with bigger boys and off from home. Then he used to follow all those harp blowers, mandolin and guitar players." (Alan Lomax, *The Land Where the Blues Began*, 1993).

The instrument can be thought of as a cross between a violin and a lute. It generally has 8 strings in four courses and is tuned like a violin in fifths. Mandolins were available in the first half of the 20th Century from mail order catalogs and usually cost the same as guitars.

The commercial "race" blues records of the 1920s and 1930s showcase the mandolin in different styles including 12 bar blues and ragtime. The recordings are primitive but the mixes are surprisingly good. These recordings demonstrate that acoustic mandolin in the blues style has a good blend with acoustic guitar, bass, cello and piano. Good gracious, the mandolins sound fine!

Here are some of the blues mandolin records of the era which can be found on YouTube:

1926 Cora Perkins "When I Rise Blues." This recording has a nice mandolin counterpoint in tremolo-style playing a continuous melody line behind the singer.

1926 Al Miller "Mister Mary Blues." Nifty blues mandolin playing which sounds fresh almost 100

years later.

1927 Dallas String Band "Dallas Rag/Sweet Mama Blues." Strong stuff here. The mandolin plays some chromatic runs and is nicely complimented by a cello. "Dallas Rag" is a classic: dynamic and syncopated.

1927 Furry Lewis "Everybody's Blues." Nice lead vocal with tasty mandolin playing by Charles Johnson

1927 Memphis Jug Band "Evergreen Money Blues." This recording features a guitar and a mandolin, which based on the loud percussive sound is a mando-banjo, an instrument played in Mummers Parades.

1928 Ishman Bracey "Brown Mama Blues." Charlie McCoy (not the Nashville session harmonica player) provides nice blues mandolin behind the strong vocal. Charlie McCoy (aka Poppa Charlie) was the brother of Kansas Joe McCoy who was married to Memphis Minnie and played mandolin on many of her recordings. He is reputed to have used a National Steel mandolin which would have given him some needed volume to keep up with the redoubtable Ms. Minnie who was an early proponent of the distorted electric guitar sound. He was also known to play the banjo-mandolin as well as a standard flat top wooden instrument.

1930 Mississippi Mud Steppers "Vicksburg Stomp." Great sophisticated and articulate playing by Charlie McCoy; probably a banjo mandolin. Worth a listen!

1930 Poppa Charlie's Boys "Gypsy Woman Blues/You Can't Play Me Cheap." More great playing by my personal favorite blues mandolin player Charlie McCoy.

1931 Mississippi Mud Steppers (Charlie McCoy and Bo Carter) "That Lonesome Train That Took My Baby Away/Jackson Stomp." This is a justly famous recording; please give it a listen. The mandolin hook on "Jackson Stomp" is memorable.

1938 Memphis Minnie "Good Biscuits" and "Long As I Can See You Smile."

Memphis Minnie used the mandolin extensively on her great records. Willie Brown and Charlie McCoy recorded with her.

This is not a complete list of mandolin blues recordings; there are many other musicians worth a listen. such as The Two Poor Boys' "Two White Horses in a Line" and Prater and Hayes "Easy Winner."

No discussion of blues mandolin playing would be complete without recognition of Yank Rachel, who is generally considered to be the

greatest of the blues mandolin players. He sang and played the mandolin both as a solo artist and backing other greats, such as Sonny Boy Williamson and Sleepy John Estes, for over four decades. He was born in Texas in 1910 and was self-taught.

Rachell used his own tuning: E - B - F# - C# instead of the normal G - D - A - E. He had a wonderful and ethereal "ragged but right" style of playing on his Harmony "Batwing" electric mandolin. You can see his restless approach on display in a video shot at the Chicago Blues Festival 5/28/93 with Homesick James. Yank Rachel was a unique stylist on the mandolin and an effective singer. Check out his many recordings such as "Smokey Joe," "Rainy Day Blues," "Diving Duck Blues" (with Sleepy John Estes) and "Shotgun Blues."

There is a dearth of mandolin playing in Black blues recordings from the 1940s on as blues shifted to the up-tempo electric Chicago style. There may be several explanations for this. Musicologist Dick Spottswood reminded me that the mandolin stopped being popular. It also may be that electric guitar, the mainstay of Chicago blues, is a difficult sonic fit with the 8 string electric mandolin. The two instruments played together can clash in the treble range. The five string electric mandolin pioneered by Tiny Moore and Paul Bigsby solved that problem but does not seem to have been extensively used by Black blues players.

The few times that the mandolin did show up in blues recordings (for example, "Bring It With You When You Come" by the Siegel-Schwall band or "Going to My Hometown" by Rory Gallagher), the mandolins used were electrified acoustics rather than solid body electrics. It also could be that A&R men felt that the mandolin by that point was too closely associated with country music to be attractive on Black blues recordings.

One of the few post-World War II blues mandolin players was the great Johnny Young. Born in Mississippi in 1917, he learned blues music from Muddy Waters, Sonny Boy Williamson and Memphis Slim. He played guitar and mandolin and sang an authoritative lead. His first record was "Money Talking Woman" in 1947. He recorded on the Arhoolie, Vanguard, Blues Way and Swing Master labels and led his own band as well as playing with Muddy Waters and Otis Spann. He was well respected by his peers although he never received the acclaim he deserved. He died in 1974.

Note should be taken of two musicians

The Mandolin and the Blues Cont.

By Thomas Cook

from the 1940s: Bill Monroe and Tiny Moore. Bill Monroe's mandolin playing reflects a genuine blues influence. As a young boy, he played back-up guitar behind Black musician Arnold Shultz and Monroe's mandolin playing reflects that influence along with fiddle dance tunes and swing. One could make the argument that Bill Monroe was the most visible blues mandolin player of the last century. Check out his playing on "Columbus Stockade Blues" and "Out in the Cold World," to name a few. He was also a powerful singer in the country blues tradition. His recording of "Rocky Road Blues" demonstrates why he was elected to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Tiny Moore, a 20th Century 5 string swing electric mandolin player, delivered a remarkable solo on "Brain Cloudy Blues" by Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys in a seminal recording from 1946. The eclectic Bob Wills band here adapts an earlier recording of "Milk Cow Blues" released by Kokomo Arnold in 1934. Tommy Duncan delivers credible smooth blues vocal and Tiny Moore plays a remarkable growling electric mandolin solo, anticipating the keening, string-bending sustain that is the hallmark of contemporary electric guitar playing. Chuck Berry must have heard this record!

Recent decades have seen a revival of blues mandolin playing by musicians such as Ry

Cooder and Rich DelGrosso. Mr. Cooder is known for his excellent signature electric guitar style and occasionally plays fine acoustic mandolin in the style of Yank Rachel. Rich DelGrosso deserves special mention here; he is a touring, teaching blues mandolin stylist and a great singer who plays a National steel mandolin and Gibson mandola for that lower sound. Check out "Get Your Nose Outta My Bizness!", "Time Slips On By" and "Live From Bluesville."

It is interesting that the use of the mandolin in blues music was common in the acoustic era prior to WWII and is less common now even though the instrument is frequently heard in other genres of music.

BSCP PARTNERS WITH SFMS AND XL LIVE

By Kathryn Gregoire



For those of us who can't go south this winter, we are in luck. Even though it is cold in Central PA, we will have lots of opportunities for dancing to keep us warm. BSCP has their Winter Show Sunday, February 19, with fabulous local and national musicians (p. 4). We are also partnering with the Susquehanna Folk Music Society (SFMS) and XL Live to get special prices for our 2023 BSCP members at their blues events.

Susquehanna Folk Music Society presents Buffalo Nichols on January 5, 2023, at The Englewood, 1219 W End Ave, Hershey, PA. Doors open at 6:30 pm and the concert starts at 7:30 pm.

Ticket Site: <https://sfmsfolk.org/concerts/BuffaloNichols.html>

Artist Site: <https://www.buffalo-nichols.com/>

Ticket Prices:

\$24 General Admission

\$20 SFMS Members and Blues Society Members

\$10 Students

Susquehanna Folk is excited to collaborate with The Englewood in Hershey and WXPN to bring you one of the most exciting rising names in Blues Music-Buffalo Nichols!

Guitarist, songwriter, and vocalist Carl "Buffalo" Nichols combines virtuosic blues guitar playing, rich lyricism and frank observations, offering perspectives that nudge the narrative past stereotypes of culture, color and class.

Nichols has always looked for connection between the music of the past and the people of the future. For him, this is the missing link: Black stories aren't being told responsibly in the genre anymore. To begin changing that, Buffalo Nichols is telling his own story in the right way. Making space for Black voices, Black stories and Black listeners is a step toward an American culture where "folkways" reflect all folks.

Raised in a predominantly Black section of Milwaukee, Nichols grew up with a fascination for the guitar and for the blues. He spent countless hours combing through his family's music collections, listening to songs over and over, learning the riffs as well as the way the music told stories. The first solo Blues Artist to be signed to acclaimed label Fat Possum Records in almost 20 years, SFMS is thrilled to get to present Buffalo Nichols

XL Live Presents Winter Blues @ XL Live on Friday, January 20. Doors open at 6 pm and the show starts at 7 pm. Advance tickets are \$15. Door tickets are \$20.

2023 BSCP Members can get a discount code to purchase \$10 tickets by emailing bluesmunga@gmail.com to get the discount code which must be used by 10 pm on 12/31/2022.

Ticketmaster link:

<https://www.ticketmaster.com/event/02005D8C9A5D3812>

In Case You Missed It!

BSCP Memorial Jam October 20 - Champions, Highspire PA - Photos by Marianna Schaffer

Host	1	2	3	4	5	6
VOCALS	Rocky	Yes	Nate		Greg	Drett
GUITAR	Rocky	Jason	Pete	Dave S.	Greg	Nick
GUITAR	George	Dan	Mark	MAC	Ken S.	Colin
BASS	Marianna	Keith	Dave H.	Vinny		Warren
DRUMS	Goody	Tom D.	John	Max	Jamie	Jimmy
KEYS				Trent	Fred	
HARP	MIKE		Nate	Dave	Steve	Joe
HORN						

Memorial Jam Board

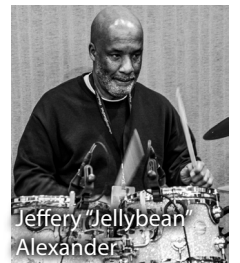


Slide show honoring BSCP recently departed musicians

BSCP 2022 Memorial Jam		
Blaine Weisser	66	1953 - 2020
Chad Salvaggio	53	1967 - 2021
Gary Harrington	67	1954 - 2021
Pete Sheridan	84	1937 - 2021
Tony Formica	59	1963 - 2022

Reading Blues Festival November 19

Double Tree by Hilton – Reading PA
 Photos by Larry Fogelson



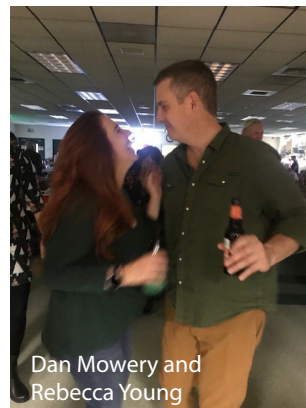
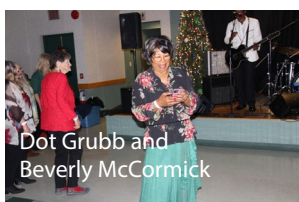
Photos by Kathryn Gregoire

BSCP Christmas Party December 4 – Hummelstown Fire Hall Photos by Larry Fogelson



Photos by Ken Rimondi

Photos by Kathryn Gregoire



Blues Bands Beat

by Jack Roberts



Get ready for the **Winter Blues Mini-Fest** event at XL Live Harrisburg on January 20 featuring **Gabe Stillman, Nate Myers & The Aces, Soul Minors Union and Switch Fu**. Doors open at 7 pm and the show starts at 7:30 pm. Advance tickets will be available on Ticketmaster. The good news is that BSCP is one of the sponsors and BSCP members will get a reduced rate (see p. 7).

And we've got more good news for you. Remember how we told you in our last article that **Ian Aston and The Missing Peace** would be playing at the Hershey Area Pilots' Rock Out Chrons and Colitis (ROCC) Benefit Concert at Reigle Airport in Palmyra? Well, the concert came off just fine, and the results are in. \$1,100 raised! Talk about rockin'! And all that cash will go to the Hershey Medical Center IBD Department.

And there's a bit of history to the story as well. The Missing Peace's first gig was an R.O.C.C. Benefit Concert, held about 10 years ago at The Columbia Fire House. "We've been playing and organizing the ROCC every year except 2019," Aston said in a recent message, noting that the benefit wasn't held in 2019 because of COVID.

That most recent lineup includes longtime members Ian Aston, acoustic guitar and vocals; John Aston, congas and background vocals; Elija Aston, bass; Chris Clark, djembe; Steve Service, harmonica; Mike Martin on lead &

backing guitar; Eric Frey on drums, and session keyboardist Steve Saur, whose newest project is the instrumental trio DC3-Jazz. Occasionally local lead guitarist Gabbie Bonet, aka Guitar Gabbie, joins them.

"We play rock & roll, blues, folk and more, that are mostly originals," Ian said. "We have played mostly benefits for people in need, and where we can help is where we love to play."

And then there's **Benjamin Vo** and his band, who've been spending some time in the studio. "We're almost done with recording our new album, just tying up some loose ends here and there," he said, noting that they were hoping to have it ready to release in December.

The new album will be available to download on the Bandcamp website, Benjamin said. And they'll have CDs for sale at their shows. As for an album release show, the band is still deciding if they should hold one. I for one say, "Heck yeah!"

And there's new news from **Blues on the Loose**.

"Blues on the Loose has added drummer Connor Stoehr to our lineup," BOTL front man and harmonica player Lewis Bechtold told us in a recent email, noting that "Connor is from the greater Lancaster area and brings a jazz influence and discipline to our swing." "He also performs with Dave Wilson, Tony Wayne Pieruccini and other area jazz players," Bechtold said. Blues on the Loose and jazz. That could be an interesting combination.

They'll also be getting some help from Lancaster native Glenn Redcay, who, Bechtold said, recently relocated to Lancaster, where he grew up and helped create the early Lancaster roots music band Big Red. "He brings broad experience to the band's rhythm and lead guitar work," Bechtold added.

As for 2023, their goal is to bring authentic house-rocking blues music to eager ears and dancing feet. We're all good with that, right? And where will they be doing that? On Saturday, January 7, they will be at 551 West, Lancaster, at 9 pm. And on Saturday, January 21, they'll

be at a new venue, playing at Brews, Blues and Bar-B-Que at The Switchboard on the 2nd floor of The Columbia Kettle Works on 3rd Street in Columbia. Tunes - and dancing - will kick off at 7 pm.

Randy Bucksner of Mystic Alpacas fame - and band booker for the East Petersburg Blues Festival - messaged us to say that he'll be playing at a benefit for blues harp master Mark Kenneally - better known to blues fans as Dr. Harmonica of Rocket 88 - who is suffering serious health issues following a recent accident.

The benefit will be held Wednesday, December 28, from 6-9 p.m. at 111 W. 11th St. in Wilmington, DL. Money from ticket sales will go to Mark to help him pay his medical bills. For more information or reservations, call 302-777-2040.

And we've got some word from blues master **Albie von Schaaf**. After six years with Moe Blues, Albie says he's stepping away from them. "I'm currently performing solo," Albie told us recently, "but I am gathering musicians together for something new: Albie and the Homemade Boogie Band." "It'll be badder than badass. Watch out for it in 2023." And watch out we will.

And finally, what would a blues column be without a word or two from **Rose Hudson**. Rose checked in with us to say she'll be playing at Granfalloons Tavern in York on Feb. 11. And yes, she's played there before, but with Ken Lending from Copenhagen.

This time she'll be jamming' with a different band: Paul Colombo on guitar, John Gingeritch on bass and Jeff Stabley on drums. Music starts at 8 and goes until 11. And you won't want to miss it!

Be sure to check out the BSCP website [BSCPblues.com](http://www.bscplblues.com) for current events and gigs in Central PA. Got news for Blues Bands Beat? Feel free to email me at ragtime.willi@hotmail.com or message me on Facebook.

SAVE THE DATES

BSCP Winter Show - 02/19/23 - Charlie Owen & Pocket Change w/ Special Guest, Terry Hanck
Plus: Nate Myers the Aces and Neil Tapp

BSCP Spring Show 04/23/23 - Peter Veteska & Blues Train
Plus: Fast Eddie & the Slowpokes and Blues Bizness

Mom I Picnic - 5/28/23 - TBA
Mississippi Railroad 07/09/23 - TBA
Fall Show - TBA
Christmas Party - 12/03/23 - TBA

Please visit our website @
<http://www.bscplblues.com/news&events.html>
for further information

BLUES BIZ: Underground Live

By Kathryn Gregoire

Central PA is abuzz with the news about a new venue for blues music. I talked with the owner, John Stover, who is actively involved with the BSCP Blues Jam as a musician, host, and crew member.

KG: John, please tell me about the club.
John: The Underground Live is located at 1104 Carlisle Rd. Camp Hill, PA 17011. At this time it is only open on Wednesdays for an open jam, and during scheduled shows. We have Lydian Stone Brewery providing alcohol and will either be bringing in different food vendors or inviting some of our neighboring restaurants to sell food here. For now we will use the Underground Live as the name, mainly because of the history of the place. I am hoping to eventually have shows on Fridays and Saturdays with at least one blues show per month.

KG: What inspired/promoted you to set up a club? Why did you pick this building?

John: I currently own a pool and spa company. My retail store is in the same plaza as the club. During the Covid lockdown I did an open jam in the parking lot of my store. I was able to store all the music gear in a vacant building. Eventually someone rented that space and my landlord offered me the basement of the old Guiliftys for storage. The place had been vacant for several years and was in very bad shape, almost to the point it wasn't fit to use for storage. But one walk down there was enough to see the potential, mainly because of the history of the place. I've been to many good shows there in the

past. And at that point it was getting too cold out for the outdoor jam and I thought, wouldn't it be nice to clean this up for the Wednesday jam. With the permission from my landlord, I started cleaning it to use on Wednesdays.

KG: How much time did it take to get it set up? What did you have to do to get it ready?

John: It took a while to get it to the point where you could even stand to be down there for any length of time just due to the smell. But little by little it got better. I've got to thank George Bressler, Jimmy Speck and a few other guys for braving the conditions in the beginning to jam down there. That was my motivation to keep working on the place. Cleaning was first priority, sanitizing everything, fixing all the ceiling tiles that disintegrated from leaks, getting the bathrooms workable. The list is endless it seems

KG: What challenges have you had in getting it ready?

John: The first part was all labor; that was the easy part. The challenges were the sound and lighting, neither of which I knew anything about. Along with that was finding people I could trust that had the same vision. Another person that needs thanked is Don Intrieri for the endless questions he answered for me. And also, Warren Prescott for his expertise in sound and lighting, and John Russ, the Mighty Klucks keyboard player for stepping in and doing the sound at the last minute.

KG: Did you work in a club previously?

John: I never worked in a club. I just

love music. It was by chance I found the blues jam. It was a bumper sticker on Rocky's car. I attended as a spectator and really that's when I started learning to play guitar. That led to the open jam in my parking lot, which led to moving it inside, which led to actually opening the club. It's funny what a little sticker can do.

KG: When was opening night? What shows have you had since it opened?

John: Thanks to the support from the blues society the first show on Nov 12, 2022, was a successful first show. With our friends from the Mighty Klucks being the first act to play at the new club (kinda fitting since guitar lessons from Todd taught me enough to start playing at the blues jam) followed by Blue Voodoo and Skyla Burrell, it was an awesome night of music. The 2nd show also had great music from Blues on the Loose and the Quentin Jones Trio.

KG: What is your next show scheduled?

John: Dec 16th, we are having LeadFoot, an 80's rock band play

KG: What challenges do you have now and/or foresee for the future?

John: I think the main challenge is going to be consistently providing great music

KG: What is your vision for the club now and in the future?

John: That is the goal, to keep providing music that people want to see. I think as it started with chance encounters and meeting the right people at the right time, it will grow.



Before



After



Owner John Stover with Bob Noble & George Bressler

Meet Your Board Members: Sherman Smith

By Hannah Sherman



Two years before Sherm was born, his father started a business operating juke boxes. He purchased juke boxes, bought records for them and serviced them. In the mid-60s, Sherm started working in the business which also included pinball machines and pool tables. I never thought about how all that worked. I just knew you put the coins in and played. His dad owned all the equipment and went in 50/50 with the business owners and it was his dad's job to service and maintain the machines. Sherm and his brother, Doug, now own and operate amusement equipment for a fifty-mile radius around Harrisburg and has been doing it for fifty years.

That is how Sherm was exposed to all kinds of music, although at around twelve years old he got interested in his older sister's choices of the Four Tops and The Four Seasons saying, "I loved them!" His musical experience expanded when, at fifteen, he started working for a company that promoted shows at the Forum and a couple of other locations in the area. Then he got to see The Temptations and many other soul and R&B groups, which were his

first musical love. He really loved Dianna Ross and the Supremes, but says he always liked all music including rock, country and bluegrass.

Performers who pushed Sherm into the Blues were the above bands but also Fats Domino, Aretha Franklin, Tina Turner, BB King and, although he didn't realize it at the time (as many of us later learned), the British Invasion, including The Rolling Stones. Again, "The Thrill is Gone" was another catapult that threw him directly into the Blues.

Sherm knew about The Lochiel and later the 40&8 but never made it to either. He started attending the BSCP jam at the Liquid 891 and got pulled into the music and the scene because that's what happens when one is exposed to it! Sherm loves going to all blues events – "it doesn't matter where or when."

He brought his new bride, Lynne, to the BSCP jam at Champion's on their first date. She also got pulled into the scene and helps at events when her schedule allows. They have traveled to Wheeling, WV, for the Heritage Music Blues Festival and enjoy going to the Briggs Farm Blues Festival in Nescopeck, PA. They also enjoyed the Chesapeake Bay Blues Festival when it was happening.

When asked "What is something people don't know about you?" Sherm replied, "I'm a very kind person, I go to church. I love God." I think it's very interesting that one's first self-evaluation is to believe to be a very kind person and it supports my firm belief in the innate good in us all.

Sherm and Lynne's favorite thing about the BSCP – the people. "We're happy and proud to

be part of this Blues family. It is a family thing. We always see people we know when we go to events and festivals and it's really fun even if we haven't seen them for a long time. I'd rather listen to music on the back porch than watch TV or movies. This music keeps you goin'!"

Mike Knott: "Ahh yes, Sherman. He's one of those "nicest guy you'll ever meet" types. I always look forward to exchanging thoughts on who we liked and why when we attend the same blues festivals. At some point in the conversation, he always adds, 'Maybe we can get them for one of our shows.' I know one thing; he has good taste."

Hannah Sherman: "I've been thinking more about being kind and Sherm's self-evaluation became even deeper when I started to read my new book "The Light We Carry" by Michelle Obama. She states, "If you know your own light, you know yourself. You know your own story in an honest way." I think it's wonderful that Sherm recognizes his own light which leads to meaningfully connecting with others."

Ken Rimondi: "Sherman is one of the nicest people I have gotten to know."

Kathryn Gregoire: An enthusiastic lover of blues, Sherman is well-qualified to be a BSCP Member at Large. He treats everyone with respect and consideration. One of my earliest memories of getting to know him was the first time we washed down the tables together before and after a picnic. He is always willing to help behind the scenes. A bonus in knowing Sherman has been getting to know Lynne, who is an equally caring, loving person.

All Roads Lead to the Blues

by Lewis Bechtold

My favorite road trip this past fall was to the Bucks County Blues Society Fall Footstomper held at Terchon Post VFW, Levittown, PA, Sunday, October 16th. This event honored Bluesman Steve Guyger of Philadelphia and his 50 years of singing and playing blues harmonica and, additionally, his 70th birthday.

On the bandstand with Guyger was his trusted sideman, guitarist "Filthy" Rich MacPherson, along with Rich Yescalis, rhythm guitar; Gary Phillips, double bass and bass guitar; Kenny Robinson, drums and Dave Homan, saxophone. The group performed many blues favorites by Johnny Rivers, Sonny

Rhoades, Otis Rush, James Cotton and B.B. King, along with several original songs.

In attendance for the event were bluesmen from the greater Philadelphia, Bucks County and Northern Delaware area. Derek "Slim" Matteson, Bob Margolis, Mikey Jr., Rondo Branning, Shakey Lyman, Mark Berkowitz and Kevin McCann were seen in the crowd of blues music fans.

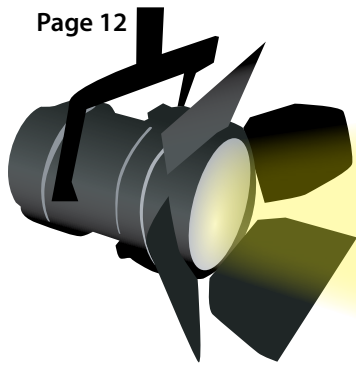
Several of these guests performed with Guyger throughout the show along with close friend guitarist Steve Solotist in a song where Guyger showed off his skills using multiple instruments and alternating in 2nd and 3rd



Steve Guyger

positions. They performed songs "Little By Little," "Rooster Blues," "One Way Out," "Teenie Weenie Bit" and a swinging version of "Every Day I Have The Blues."

The event was a great success with seats being hard to find. To learn more about Blues Harmonica Master and 2009 Handy Award nominee, Steve Guyger, go to steveguyger.com.



In the Spotlight...

Pete "Cheese" Netznik

By Hannah Sherman



One way to get into music is to love a movie so much as a kid that the soundtrack inspires you to become a conductor. Star Wars was it for Pete. The "depth and super cool sound" of the music was something he'd never heard before. He started with the violin in elementary school but became "devoted to music" when his class made a field trip to the Philadelphia Philharmonic Orchestra and he was amazed at how the conductor could control the sound of the orchestra. A major decision came about in high school when Pete sold his violin and bought a Peavey T15 guitar with the amp built into the case. Now he wanted to be a rock star. He got into metal, then blues and country.

Going to HACC he took classes in music theory where his professor told him he could never really play blues unless he had been born to it. The prof said, "A music degree and 50 cents will get you a cup of coffee unless you're a teacher." Pete eventually deduced there were probably not too many openings for a conductor and making sound tracks would be even tougher; therefore, he would have more fun playing gigs and seeing bands and concerts. He has worked pretty steady at music while keeping a job for 30 years.

Out of high school, he was at a truck stop and stopped to look at the bargain bin of cassettes. He had heard about the blues but didn't know anything about the genre, although (like most of us at the time) he had heard of BB King. He found 2 K-tel compilation tapes of BB's for \$2.99 each and was "...blown away. I thought 'Got My Mojo Workin'' was the coolest thing I ever heard. On my 21st birthday my buddy said, 'You

got to come see this band" and it turned out to be the early Krypton City Blues Revue. We were hangin' there all night and I walked up to Mitch at the break and asked, "Do you happen to know Mojo?" and he said, "Right on, brother." "I was blown away - nobody else I knew had ever even heard of the song. Flash forward 10 years, I'm in that band and we're playing it as the last song every gig."

Big influences: "In the top three are Jerry Garcia and Bob Weir for bluegrass, jam, and blues but the big #1 has to be Big Jack Johnson along with BB King. Jack was so real - not even a little bit of a poser. Recording with him in Mississippi made me start playing guitar again. I had played bass for 30 years until Big Jack. So genuine - so real. Hearing Cedell Davis, I was kinda disappointed when he started playing, but then he opened his mouth and started singing and the band followed him. It was like a lightning bolt - an honest to God epiphany. If you don't feel the music is from the heart, it's not real. So #4 is Cedell Davis."

Cheese continues, "I would rather play original music. I can enjoy a cover band - don't care what kind - metal, Latin, country, etc. I really enjoy the BSCP picnic - hangin' out with other musicians. You get to socialize, eat and hear other bands. I don't understand why musicians don't go to see other musicians. I love to see their equipment, their interpretation and their music. I'm happy to see more young people come out for the jam. They're nice kids and show respect." Pete has been a steady jammer since the beginning and is one of the jam hosts. He likes the format because it's a true jam - not an open mic. He says, "There is such a loyalty to the jam. The jam is the life blood of the BSCP."

Something you may not know about Pete: "My family were all Marines and in high school I wanted to go to Annapolis and join the Marines. I also feel obligated to say there is no real story to the origin of "Cheese" - it just started in high school. My friends called everything "cheesy" whether it was good or bad - like a shirt or movie. A friend called

me "Cheeser", it went to "Cheese" and that's either good or bad."

After Krypton City Blues Revue, Pete joined up with Nate Myers and Nate and the Aces are now into their 21st year. He says, "We appreciate all the support from the Blues Society - going to the IBC, playing every picnic. We always look forward to it."

Hannah Sherman: "I consider him an exceptional human being. He's devoted to his family, his music, and BSCP. He's always cheerful and humble and loves to laugh. I've enjoyed watching him evolve through the decades."

Mike Easton: Pete is a friend to everyone with a charismatic smile and a reserved musicianship that is enjoyed by everyone he shares the stage with.

Nate Myers: "Pete Netznik? He's the guy you want to make music with, period! Playing live he keeps it all together. In the studio, he's got the ear! He gets the right sounds and plays the right parts. A great song writer. Making music is a burning passion for him. He's faithful! He's an encourager and he likes people. He's got a great sense of humor! I'm honored to call him a brother. I owe him more than I could ever repay. If you don't know him, you're missing out. If you get a chance to play some music with him, take it!"

John Tuzza, Jr. "The first time I met Pete (our paths must have crossed years before based on us being in the same small area, but neither of us remember any specifics) was in 2013 or 2014. We met to just go over a few things. I was thinking it would be a 15 to 30 minute meet up. Almost three hours later, we had to end our conversation because they were closing up shop. It was like old friends that just met. Pete is someone that you just want to sit and talk with. He's a great storyteller, a great listener, and just that person you want to just hang and talk with. And the same goes with playing. The first time we played together, it felt familiar and comfortable. That is not as common of an occurrence as one would imagine. So yeah, to me, Pete is like that hat that fits just right, and it has from the very first time. Familiar, even when new, and as time goes by, that feeling doesn't diminish, you fully appreciate that in him."

A PEEK AT THE PAST: Making a Home for the Jam at Champions

By Marianna Schaffer | Photos by Greg Hogg

I was 6 weeks into my reign as President of the Blues Society. Everything had been humming along smoothly until the morning of Wednesday, February 13, 2013. The day the music died. That morning we were informed that Liquid 891, the home of the Thursday night Blues Society Jam, was closing immediately. The doors were padlocked, the locks were being changed, and we needed to get our gear out ASAP. The shock of getting that communication had barely sunk in when the BSCP Board had to spring into action. The first matter of business was to rescue our gear and find a place to store it while we were homeless. Thanks to Rocky and other volunteers, we succeeded in getting it all out of there by noon, except for the Hammond organ, which required professional movers. They subsequently informed us they got a 30-day reprieve, but we were reluctant to move our gear back there primarily because we didn't want to risk it being seized in a legal battle. That gave us time to get the organ safely out.

After the initial flurry of activity to claim our gear, the reality of our situation sunk in. No home for the Jam <mic drop - let's have a moment of silence>.

A communication was sent to the BSCP membership by mid-afternoon notifying the membership about the news and asking for venue suggestions. The Board quickly formed a search committee consisting of Rocky Rothrock, Dale Roat, Ryan Bannister, and myself, with assistance from Tony Formica, Don Johnson, and Pete Netznik. Fellow musicians and members started flooding us with suggestions for new venues. We developed a venue checklist and narrowed the list down to those in the Harrisburg Area who met the basic criteria for parking and storage and that either had house sound systems or would permit us to permanently install our system to reduce the amount of work required by BSCP volunteers and assure the best possible sound for both the musicians and the audience. Other priorities included capacity, stage/dancefloor, drink prices, non-smoking environment, and "jukeness".

The search committee collected all the tips and, after elimination of venues that could not meet some of our principal requirements, consideration was given to 10 different venues, with the top contenders being Rod's Roadhouse, Gullifty's, and Drinkin' Bone in Wormleysburg. Rick Hefelfinger, owner of the Blue Front Lounge in Steelton, was trying to lease Liquid 891

as a solution but this would not have come into fruition quickly and his club "River City Blues" was not yet a reality.

After contacting the venues to see if they would be interested in permanently hosting the Jam, the search committee kicked into high gear, visiting those sites and others, meeting with management and detailing our concerns and needs for a permanent site that met our requirements. There were many underlying factors that were pro and con locations being selected: No storage for our equipment, no house sound, renovations being considered at Drinkin' Bone, owners considering retirement at Rod's which could have made the venue temporary upon sale, and the stairs at Gullifty's, which did not have appropriate accessibility accommodations for those who needed them.

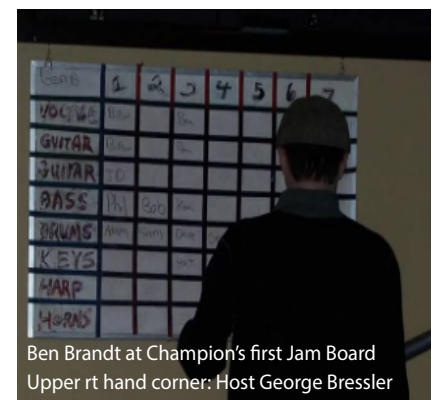
As the search committee continued the evaluation process by visiting these establishments, search committee member Dale Roat sent us an email with a subject line that we couldn't ignore: "Stop the Presses!!" Dale excitedly told us about visiting Champions Sports Bar in Highspire, a venue that had not been previously mentioned (how did we miss this??). They were interested in talking to us, so we planned a visit the same night we made our final visit to the already top contenders. I remember walking in there and seeing the curvy couch (now replaced with pinball machines) the big stage and dance floor, and the awesome bar which opened to the big outdoor space that would allow us to still be connected to the music while hanging out in an outdoor space. Also, having house sound (with sound man!) meant Rocky didn't have to set up and tear down sound every week, and spend his evenings behind the board. We ran through our venue checklist and Champions met every single requirement we had!

After finalizing our extensive evaluation of all the top venues, we presented our findings to the BSCP board, and a vote was made to unanimously choose Champions Sports Bar as our new home! Communication was sent to the members with an invite for a special general membership meeting at Champions on February 28th to see the new digs, as well as to allow everyone to hear the results of the Search Committee and how the search was conducted.

All of this was done in 10 days from the moment we received notice that Liquid was closed to the unanimous vote by the Board

to choose the recommendation of the search committee to make Champions our new home! In going down memory lane and looking at all the correspondence I received from members at large, musicians, and search members, I'm reminded how special our Blues community is and am so grateful to be a part of this amazing community of Blues lovers! Our first jam at Champions was held on March 7th, 2013, and it was a hit.

We are most grateful to Champions, Jason and their amazing staff who have not only served us with love all these years, but who have become our friends. Thank you to the BSCP Board and members at large volunteers who help keep the Blues organization alive in Central PA by organizing the many wonderful events we have every year. Thank you to our setup, tear down and jam host volunteers who take care of this weekly (and without whom the jam would not happen - consider volunteering if you can). Thank you, Don Intriери and crew, for being there week after week to wrangle sound for the jam. We are most grateful for those folks who come out to listen, dance and appreciate the music. Lastly, our awesome musicians - thank you for continuing to share your talents and encouraging creative collaboration with music. Many are no longer with us, including Dale Roat, who helped find Champions for us all. Happy 10th anniversary to the Jam at Champions! May it continue always!



Ben Brandt at Champion's first Jam Board
Upper rt hand corner: Host George Bressler



John "JD" Drudal, Marianna Schaffer, and Bill Wasch. Alan Rothrock on drums.



BLUES BOOK CORNER

By Kathryn Gregoire

BLACK SWAN BLUES By Paul Slade

While reading *Father of the Blues* by W.C. Handy, the book club members were intrigued by the mention of Harry Herbert Pace and the first Black-owned record company, Black Swan. While the company was short-lived, its impact was significant, so the book club decided to learn about Pace through reading *Black Swan Blues* by Paul Slade.

Born in 1884 in Covington, Georgia, Pace was orphaned at an early age. Highly intelligent, he taught himself printing as a means of financial support of his education until he graduated at age 19 as valedictorian of his Atlanta University class, where he was a protégé of the extraordinary Professor WEB DuBois.

Pace and W.C. Handy met in Memphis in 1907 when Handy visited the Solvent Savings Bank on Beale Street where Pace worked.



While reading about W.C. Handy and Pace, book club members were enticed to learn more about Ethel Waters, who was the first to record for Black Swan, so next we read her autobiography originally published in 1951.

Ethel Waters reports she was born in Chester, Pennsylvania, on October 31, 1900, to 13 year-old rape-victim, Louise Anderson, and 17 year-old John Waters. She later revised her birthdate to 1896.

Waters was raised by her maternal grandmother, Sally Anderson, who worked long hours as a housemaid. She died when Waters was 13. The first sentence of the autobiography reads: "I never was a child." Walters reports she primarily took care of herself "I just ran wild."

There was only one home she lived in as a child for more than a few weeks - Clifton Street, a red-light district in Philadelphia. She remembers the 15 months fondly and in detail. Waters had three short-term marriages, the first at age 13 and lasting less than a year. She

The two collaborated on song writing and then in 1912 started up America's first Black-owned music publishing company, eventually setting up a primary office in NYC in 1918. The relationship was short-lived. Book club member, Tom Cook, notes that the conflicts between Handy and his business partner were illuminating about the complexity of human existence and that they both had valid points.

After two years of being in business together, the younger partner, Pace, decided it was time to set up America's first Black-owned record company and went off on his own. "Down Home Blues" recorded by Ethel Waters was Black Swan's first big seller. Other successful Black Swan's stars were Alberta Hunter and Fletcher Henderson. Unfortunately, its very success was its demise because when the larger record companies realized money could be made with black performers and a black audience, they stepped in and took over.

Pace went back to the banking industry

and set up a new insurance company called Northeastern Life which specialized in providing insurance for Black customers with a merger in 1929 called Supreme Liberty Life. He went on to quietly enroll at Chicago Law School and had a double career as a partner in a Chicago Law practice.

In May 1937, Pace joined forces with Carl Hansberry, a Black Chicago real estate broker and political activist. Helped by the NAACP, they provided a court case *Hansberry v Lee* which would successfully challenge the legality of segregated housing, the first step in providing equal protection under the law as eventually determined by the 1948 Supreme Court case of *Shelley v Kraemer*.

Although a remarkable man, Pace seemed to disappear from the pages of history. In part, this was attributed to his relatively early death at age 59. More recently, it is recognized that his son and his daughter both married white people and the family transitioned into the white community.

HIS EYE ON THE SPARROW: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY by Ethel Waters with Charles Samuels

had no children.

Waters extraordinary talents and survival skills, honed in childhood poverty and trauma, took her to a life of success touring, performing and acting in clubs, film, theater, radio and television.

Tall and slim and renowned for her "hip shimmy shake," she debuted in 1917 on the black vaudeville circuit as "Sweet Mama Stringbean," gaining attention for her subtle rendition of "St. Louis Blues." In the 20s, she introduced "Stormy Weather", composed for her by Harold Arlen, at the Cotton Club in Harlem, where she was discovered by Irving Berlin in 1933, who put her on Broadway, the first African-American to share the stage with white performers.

Irving Berlin wrote several hits for Waters to perform, including "Supper Time", a song about a lynching. She later became the first African-American star of a national radio show and eventually played in many TV shows, such as the "Good Night, Sweet Blues" episode of "Route 66."

Devoutly religious, Waters became a born-

again Christian at one of Graham's crusades in the late 1950's and then sang with the Billy Graham Crusade. She recorded several albums of sacred music; her favorite hymn was "His Eye Is on the Sparrow."

In middle age, she reinvented herself as a dramatic actress on Broadway and in the movies. She was the second African-American actress to be nominated for an Academy Award as Best Supporting Actress of 1949 for performance in *Pinky*.

Because most people have associated Ethel Waters with her later film and TV stereotypical roles, the significance of her early career contributions have been greatly overlooked. Book club members agreed that reading this autobiography of her early life gave book club members a greatly enhanced understanding and appreciation of Ethel Waters. Once again, book club members enjoyed renditions by Tom Cook and Hank Imhoff of early blues songs and watching related YouTube videos. If you wish to join the BSCP Blues Book Club, please email bluesmunga@gmail.com.

Blues Book Club Baltimore Field Trip

By Kathryn Gregoire | Photos by Book Club Members

The BSCP Blues Book Club held its first meeting in August 2020, using Zoom to meet safely during the pandemic. The group continues now to meet online because of the convenience of no traveling required. Consequently, many of the book club members had yet to meet each other in person, so the group decided to take a field trip scheduled for October 26, 2022.

Through reading books about blues and blues musicians, the book club members have gained a deep appreciation for the associated history so having a field trip that enabled us to learn more about the history of our country appealed to all.

One of our founding book club members, Bradley Alston (Chairman of the Baltimore Blues Society Board of Directors), hails from Towson, MD. Who better to enrich our learning than Bradley, an avid historian and an experienced Baltimore Tour guide!

Bradley organized a full-day for us to experience Fells Point, founded in 1726, historically one of America's premiere shipbuilding ports. Bradley, a docent for the Frederick Douglass-Isaac Myers Maritime Park Museum, gave us a tour of the facility, sharing the history of Baltimore and the lives of Frederick Douglass and Isaac Myers. The Museum is "a Living Classrooms Foundation campus and a national heritage site that celebrates the contributions of African Americans in the development of Baltimore's maritime industry, focusing on the saga of renowned author Frederick Douglass' life as an enslaved child and young man, as well as on the life of Isaac Myers, a free born African American who became a national leader."

We took a fun water taxi ride with Bradley identifying and giving us the history of many of the historic sites and the businesses along the Inner Harbor. We returned for our Fells Point Walking Tour, which included lunch at the (highly recommended) Pitango Bakery & Cafe at 903 S Ann Street, inspired by classic Italian bakeries and sandwich shops. The architecture and the stories about the historic homes and shops were enthralling, making the early days of Baltimore come to life.

Of course, we had to stop to pay homage to the Cat's Eye Pub, 1730 Thames Street, Historic Fell's Point, established 1975, known for its live blues music.



Frederick Douglass-Isaac Myers Maritime Park Museum



Frederick Douglass

Bradley went to many of the places we visited earlier in the week, so museum directors and store owners were expecting us and were very welcoming. One such place was the Loring Cornish Gallery at 1622 Thames Street, Fells Point. Cornish is a visual artist specializing in glass mosaic. He spent the night before preparing a display of mosaics featuring blues musicians, such as Ma Rainey and Billie Holiday, for us, which we especially appreciated having read about them in our Blues Book Club.



Inner Harbor Tour boat



Cat's Eye Pub Fells Point

Following the Outsider (self-taught) Folk Art theme of the Loring Cornish Gallery, Bradley took us next to the American Visionary Art Museum, "a creative urban wonderland." The gift shop is known for its unique, reasonably priced items.



Federal Hill Park

The Art Museum is located at the base of historic Federal Hill, a defensive stronghold during the War of 1812. The Federal Hill Park was the perfect place to end the day, learning more history and getting an extensive view of Inner Harbor and Baltimore.



American Visionary Art Museum Tree Fort



Bradley Alston Tour Guide



Loring Cornish Gallery - Billie Holiday



American Visionary Art Museum Blues Car



P.O Box 7453
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