**BSCP 2023 ANNUAL REPORT DRAFT**

BSCP had a year-long celebration of their 25th Anniversary. In honor of several members and musicians for their many years of service to the Blues Society and blues community at large, BSCP gave its Sonne Award to Hannah Sherman, Nate Myers, Pete Netznik, Beverly McCormick and George Bressler. BSCP recognized the achievements of Board Member Emeriti Dorothy “Dot” Grubb, Clark “Buster” Grubb, and Virginia “Mom I” Ivanoff, who are life-long members. BSCP presented Certificates of Appreciation to Al Mammola, Mary Mammola, and Kathy Lorah Zeiders for their extensive contributions.

BSCP placed emphasis during 2023 on developing and expanding connections in the community with schools, business, grant providers, and individuals. The BSCP mission to preserve, promote, support and enjoy the blues is carried out by the work of board committees.

**Archives Committee by Mike Easton** The archives committee played a major role in setting up the show for the 25th Anniversary Mom I picnic, with a focus on recognizing the musicians and bands that helped start the jam. Other events included a special concert honoring some of the deceased musicians with former bandmates performing and finally finished out the season with a special extended Thursday night jam inviting musicians that used to come to the jam to participate in the celebration. Money collected went to the Mitch Ivanoff Education Fund.

**By-Laws Committee Report by Kathy Gregoire.** BSCP reviewed the by-laws and had no proposed amendments to the Articles. The By-Laws are posted on the BSCP website under More - About BSCP.

**Education Committee by Sallie Bengston.** The Education Committee championed the following offerings and initiatives during 2023:

**Master Classes and Workshops –** BSCP offered free master classes before the July 9th MS RR Show (Hill Country Blues with RL Boyce and The Cornlickers) and the October 1st Fall Show (Boogie Woogie and Blues with Dave Keyes Band and Benny Turner). BSCP musicians conducted a Kids Harmonica Workshop at the Little Buffalo Festival on October 7. BSCP provided financial support for The Cornlickers to offer a week-long workshop in France.

**Book Club** – The BSCP Blues Book Club held meetings on the third Monday of each month beginning at 11AM, via Zoom. Books discussed were *I Feel So Good: The Life & Times of Big Bill Broonzy*, by Bob Riesman; *Can’t Be Satisfied: The Life and Times of Muddy Waters* by Robert Gordon; *Survivor: The Benny Turner Story* by Benny Turner with Bill Dahl; *Biography of a Phantom: A Robert Johnson Blues Odyssey* by Robert “Mack” McCormick and *Brother Robert: Growing Up with Robert Johnson* by Annye C. Anderson. Club members had the opportunity to have lunch and a Q&A with Benny Turner in celebration of his 84th birthday.

**Blues Library** – The BSCP Blues Library opened in April 2023 with 22 available titles. A list of books and operating guidelines are available on the website at <https://www.bscpblues.com/bscp-library>.

**Education information on website** – All education-related content has been consolidated into a section which includes Blues Talk Videos, Book Club, Library, Learn to Play resources and Masterclass workshop videos.

**Community Outreach and Education, Blues in the Schools** – New and innovative ways to expand blues awareness and education, and how to finance those initiatives are under ongoing evaluation and exploration, including IU 13 SEE Seminars, PA Council on the Arts grants, NEA Grants, and Blues in the Schools Programs.

**Events Committee by Mike Knott.** The BSCP held 5 shows and 1 picnic in 2023.

**Winter Show** – Charlie Owen & Pocket Change featured Terry Hanck with opening

sets by Nate Myers & the Aces and soloist Neil Tapp was held on Sunday, February 19 at

Champions Sports Bar in Highspire, Pa.

**Spring Show** – Peter Veteska & Blues Train with opening sets by Fast Eddie & the

Slowpokes and Blues Bizness was held on Sunday, April 23 at Champions Sports Bar in

Highspire, Pa.

**Mom I Picnic** – Our 25th Anniversary celebration and annual fund raiser with Blue

Elephant, Blues On The Loose, Krypton City Blues Revue Tribute Band, the

Humblers, Slaughterhouse Blues, Dane Paul Russell was held Sunday, May 28 at the

Mechanicsburg Club’s picnic grounds, which was complete with a food buffet and beer truck.

**Mississippi Railroad Show** – R.L. Boyce with the Cornlickers, a “free to

members” event, was held Sunday, July 9 at Champions Sports Bar in Highspire,

Pa. RL Boyce and the Cornlickers conducted a workshop before the show.

**Fall Show** – Dave Keyes Band and special guest Benny Turner, with opening set by

Switch Fu was held Sunday, October 1 at Champions Sports Bar in Highspire, Pa. Dave Keyes and Benny Turner conducted a workshop before the show.

**Christmas Party** – John Nemeth & the Blue Dreamers was held Sunday, December

10 at the Hummelstown Fire Hall in Hummelstown, Pa. The “free to members”

event included a food buffet.

**Door Prizes**. BSCP provided or arranged for numerous donations of door prizes at our events, such as arts and crafts items, store gift cards, restaurant gift cards, museum passes and even a custom-made Cigar Box Guitar donated by Bowlin Box Instruments in Nashville, TN.

**Finance Committee/Treasurer’s Report by Gary “Rocky” Rothrock.** The Blues Society of Central PA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with four major sources of income - membership dues, the jam jar, the annual picnic and merchandise sales

Our highest expenditure category is Contract Services, with over $13,000 going to pay artists for their performances at our events and for Master Class Workshops. We are proud to provide our support to these great artists.

Events Sponsorships was another major expense.. This year we provided substantial support to the Iron Bridge Music Festival, the East Petersburg Blues Festival, and the Little Buffalo Festival. We are co-sponsoring a performance and workshop by Piedmont Bluz with Susquehanna Folk Music Society at Ft. Hunter on January 28, 2024.

We contributed to the Blues Foundation and to Music Makers Foundation, which provides support to hard-working musicians in their professional development and with things like medical bills.

BSCP is sponsoring Alex Lee Warner in the Youth Guitar Showcase on January 19, 2024, at the International Blues Challenge event in Memphis

**Jam Committee Report by Gary “Rocky” Rothrock.** Our jam is going well and jam jar proceeds have been good. We continue to see new jammers showing up, many of them younger people. Very few repair expenses this year and no major equipment purchases. We were pleased that the artists for most of our shows use our backline gear including the Hammond organ. This shows our jam gear is fully up to professional standards.

BSCP held its Thursday Night Blues Jam every week in 2023. We thank our jam crew members who set up and tear down weekly and Don Intrieri and staff of My Wife’s Sound Company who continue to operate the sound system.

We want to thank our jam host volunteers, who put in many hours all year to keep our jam running smoothly. They are John Stover, Marianna Schaffer, Jamie Hess, Bob Wineland, Tom Lowry, Lewis Bechtold, John Drudul, and George Bressler.

On November 3, we held our 25th Anniversary Jam and celebrated with old and new friends. We had at least 12 players who have been coming to the jam since the Lochiel Hotel Days! All jam jar proceeds from the event went to the Mitch Ivanoff Education Fund.

**Membership Committee Report by Kathryn Gregoire.** The final total for 2023 Memberships is 345, which exceeds our pre-Covid total of 317 in 2019 and is a comeback from the low of 225 during Covid in 2021.

**Merchandise Committee Report by John Rignani.** As we close-out our 25th Anniversary year, I would like to note the following highlights for 2023. As of December, 2023, Sales have reached our highest level ever achieved - $3,088.00. This figure includes live event sales and $346.00 of on-line sales through our website. Our previous high total was $2,231.00 in 2019. We have less than $1,400 in 25th Anniversary apparel remaining in stock. We will continue to offer these items both on-line and at live events in early 2024.

**Newsletter Committee Report by Kathryn Gregoire**

The Newsletter Committee produced four issues of the Blues News in 2023 which are posted on our website. We email the link to all members, plus we mail hard copies to those members without an email address and distribute them at our jams, events and local festivals.

**Public Relations by Drew Withum**

The Public Relations Committee continues the work of developing posters and flyers for all events with Jay McElroy volunteering his services as the designer. Committee members send emails to members; set up information tables at local festivals; provide information to local newspapers, magazines and radios; and post information on the BSCP website, Facebook, and Instagram.

Thank you to Bob Creed, our Blues Society Facebook Group page originator. He and Mike Easton do a great job administrating the page which has 3,863 members as of December 12, 2023.

The Committee created a Google Spreadsheet of local businesses to help spread the word of the Blues Society’s events. These range from antique shops to music stores; all that have been visited to date have been willing to put up posters for upcoming events.

The Committee is posting an official internship in December 2023 on Harrisburg University’s Career Services Handshake site. The plan is to have an intern over the Spring 2024 semester to help with social media strategy, content creation, website design, and any other branding strategy ideas they may bring to the Blues Society.

**Technology Committee by (Position Open).** The Committee maintains and upgrades the website, our Zoom site and our Jam Message Board, as well as working closely with the technology resources needed for public relations. A Committee member also writes articles about technology for the Blues News. Dan Mowery continues to serve as the Webmaster.

**MEMBERS-AT-LARGE by John “JD” Drudul, Valerie McCaffrey, Hannah Sherman, and Sherman Smith.**

Members-at-large provide unique perspectives and service to the members. John “JD” Drudul serves as our IT specialist. He researches, purchases, maintains and upgrades technology equipment that serves the members, such as the message board at Champions. He keeps the slides updated with new BSCP events and information. He has written IT articles for the newsletters, including QR codes, ChatGPT and AI. He writes articles for Blues News on blues jams he attended in the U.S. and Canada. He performed at the Kids Harmonica Workshop. He serves as a Jam host and he helps with set-up and clean-up at most jams and events.

Valerie McCaffrey reaches out to individuals and to the business community to obtain door prizes for events. She helps in the kitchen at the picnics and Christmas Party. She assists in distributing event posters and taking tickets at the door.

Hannah Sherman writes articles for Blues News and often helps proof read it, assists in promoting events and taking tickets at shows, and heads the kitchen crew at BSCP events, providing overall management of planning, shopping, preparing and serving food.

Sherman Smith provides a helping hand at events, especially the picnics, helping set up and clean up.