



Inclusive - a newsletter for the
Prairie Crossroads Blues Society

August 2015 Edition

VIEWS

Written by: PCBS President Dennis Wismer

Happy Summer people! I sit here on Buddy Guy's birthday and have been hearing and reading of friends and acquaintances recount their Buddy stories. Listen to the players he has influenced over his very lengthy career and reminisce. He has persevered and remained successful through business acumen and passion. He has successfully turned a modern day big city juke joint into a thriving business. The old club was wild and raucous, the new club stylish and sophisticated, but like Buddy himself 100 per cent Blues. Better sound, same fantastic food and some of the best Blues performed anywhere on a nightly basis. Unbelievable collaborations might develop out of nowhere or a newfound love of a new or old player. Legends has definitely shaped me musically and in many ways beyond. Two of my all-time favorite performers I have discovered at Buddy Guys Legends, Willie Kent and the Gents on a years ago Buddy Blues Fest Brunch at the old club at 754 S. Wabash and Carl Weathersby opening up for Buddy at a January homestead show. Some of my most treasured friends I have ever known have braved the January "Hawk" tailgating Legends in hopes of a great table.

To draw this ramble into the Prairie Crossroads Blues Society vein I relate the long and lengthy career of a true Bluesman like Buddy Guy to our relatively young Society. Full of ideas and talent and energy we meander along trying to find our identity and influence parameters. We book shows, hold contests and meetings, provide information at events and festivals and have programs for children to further our mission. We chunk along like a three legged dog not always winning the race but trying real hard and having a lot of fun doing it.

Then once in a while you turn around and look at the accomplishments and friends gained along the way and say how much it was worth it. Sometimes one song, or one event stands out as an influential or steadying moment. A fun time when down or a busy event when needing direction allows a positive flow to gain traction. Other times you can see the big picture of how many people were entertained or enlightened to the creativity and beauty and power of Blues music.

 **We need your help!** 

The Prairie Crossroads Blues Society has been serving the community for more than four and a half years promoting live Blues music, preserving the heritage of Blues, and educating our young people about the Blues. Perhaps you have stayed on the margins of these efforts and do not realize how satisfying and fun it is to be directly involved. If so, it is time for you to find out!

Several of our board members are stepping down in June and we need some of you to step forward to help run the society. Don't be shy! Prairie Crossroads Blues Society is a great group of people to work with and an interesting way to get to know the various

Blues musicians in this area. The positions that will be open are listed below. Can you commit some of your time to take over one of these jobs for the next year? Those who are leaving positions will be glad to provide some orientation to new volunteers.

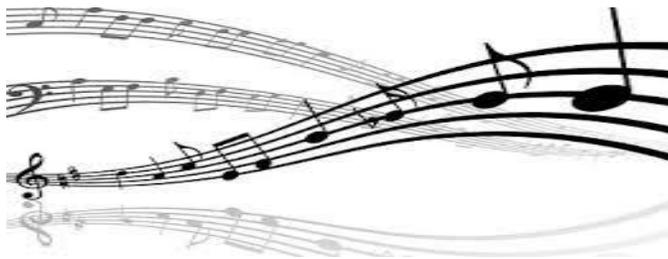
Open positions:

Education Committee Chair: Makes arrangements to provide Blues in the Schools programs to local schools, and Blues workshops for children in libraries, Boys and Girls Club, etc.

Marketing Chair: Publicizes upcoming events for the society through a variety of media outlets, and promotes the mission of PCBS in general

Web maintenance Chair: Keeps the PCBS website up to date by posting the calendar, meeting minutes, special events, articles of interest, and information about member bands. May also use Facebook for interaction with members.

If you are interested in helping to lead Prairie Crossroads Blues Society, please send your name to Greg Altstetter (galtstet@yahoo.com) along with a note about the position you would be willing to take on. Thank you for considering joining us in serving PCBS!!



CD Reviews and News

Written by James "Skyy Dobro" Walker in collaboration with his daughter Amy Walker

Sugarcane Collins – *Going Back To Clarksdale*

Self-Produced

<http://www.sugarcaneollins.com/>

CD: 11 Songs; 51:52 Minutes

Styles: Contemporary Ensemble Blues, Acoustic Blues

Why are the tried and true standard songs of the Blues so consistently popular? In some quarters, covers are seen as the "old bones" of the blues, so why do performers keep on playing and recording them? What is the key to their enduring power? The key is this: They point straight to the past, to the roots and the masters of the music itself, and therein they reveal the future. And, after listening to Australian Sugarcane Collins' brand new album *Going Back to Clarksdale*, it is obvious that this "wonder from down under" gets it. He speaks the old language of the blues. But he isn't merely warming up "dem old bones" here. Collins is inventive enough to enrich everything he touches with new angles and fresh ideas and has fleshed out a tasty set of timeless tunes that, like the best of Fourth-of-July barbecue sauces, are intriguingly tangy and so savory that you'll keep coming back for more.

Going back to Clarksdale, Sugarcane's sixth studio album, was recorded in New Orleans and Clarksdale, Mississippi employing hot, talented musicians from these two great bastions of the blues, with the finishing touches added back in Australia in his home town of Cairns. As the first two locations suggest, the sounds move from the sizzle of big brassy swing and smokey

Jazz/Blues N'awlins style, up to the raw, stripped back acoustic guitar and small band sounds of the Mississippi Delta.

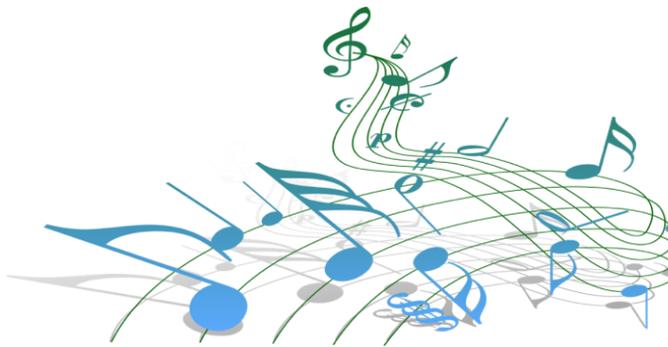
Big Joe Turner's "Flip Flop Fly" starts off the set with exuberant horn driven big band blues. New Orleanians Mac Carter - drums, Cornell Williams - bass, Bill Malchow - B3 organ set up an easy rolling groove on which Aaron Fletcher - saxophone, Glen Hall - trumpet and Terrance Taplin - trombone go to work punching out the accents. Sugarcane's smooth, powerful vocal and sax / organ solos from Fletcher and Malchow round out a fine opening track. "Trouble in Mind", Richard M. Jones classic tale of suicidal blues ("*I'm going to lay my head on some lonesome railroad line*") and ultimate redemption ("*the sun's going to shine on my backdoor someday*") reveals Cairns regulars Ruedi Homberger on melancholy sax with Paul Green on slow-burning electric guitar. Next up, Collins delivers a husky vocal and some solo acoustic fingerpicking on a gentle, dreamy version of Mississippi John Hurt's "Creole Belle". Sugarcane's imaginative arranging skills are highlighted to good effect on the following track - a fresh new reading of the traditional New Orleans funeral blues "St. James Infirmary". The eerie atmospheric intro featuring spacious, reverb drenched organ, piano and clarinet creates perfectly the desolation felt by Big Joe McKennedy, the song's protagonist/narrator, as he observes his dead lover laying on the cooling board "*so pale so cold and so fair*". The full ensemble then kicks in to build to a joyous upbeat middle section as Big Joe invokes the band "*to raise some hell as we go strolling along*". And to conclude this remarkable track, a suitably raucous New Orleans "Second Line" picks up the outro and fades it off into the distance.

The title track, the first of Collins' three originals, harks back to those "old bones", and when he sings "*from New Orleans up to Clarksdale that's a ten hour greyhound ride*", you know damn well this tough and talented Aussie troubadour, on his sixth tour of the USA, has traveled every inch of the way. Clarksdale luminaries Stan Street on harmonica and Lee Williams on drums combine seamlessly with Cairns guitar-slinger Paul Green and Wil Kepa's bass on this light hearted ride from the Big Easy up to the world famous Riverside Hotel, his "*home down in the Delta*", where room 2A was recently named the "Sugarcane Collins Room" in his honor. Stan Street's harmonica alongside Sugarcane's acoustic guitar takes center stage on the Mississippi Sheiks' "Sittin' on top of the World" and to spice the fast finger-picked ragtime on Blind Willie McTell's "Baby it must be Love", Collins brings in Peter Ella on mandolin and Homberger on clarinet.

"Hungry Broke and Blue" a sweet little swinger featuring bull fiddle, shaken matchbox, and Ella's mandolin, and "Blind Willie" his solo tribute to the great Georgia bluesman McTell, are thoughtful Collins originals and good examples of his deft fingerpicking. "Walking Blues" the Son House hit rockets like a Roman candle into the 21st century with its modern day makeover. This penultimate tune has Stan Street on hot harp, Lee Williams on hard driving drums, Wil Kepa on booming bass, Ella's melodic mandolin and Paul Green on electric slide guitar providing some tasty licks. Closing the album on an up vibe, Collins reprises a little known Leroy Carr number "Memphis Town". Recorded in Clarksdale, Cairns and New Orleans, Sugarcane welcomes back Bill Malchow on steady rolling piano and Ruedi Homberger on tenor and soprano saxophones for an all-in romp from Clarksdale

up to Memphis, replete with soaring harmony vocals.

If there was an award category for most uniquely recorded CD, *Going Back to Clarksdale* with its international mixtures and locations would be the blue ribbon winner. The resulting album is clearly and pleasantly distinct in the ears of this reviewer who has heard and critiqued 214 CDs in just the last four years. A person who moves to a different part of the US soon begins to unwittingly emulate the regional dialect there. Similarly, American blues musicians, listening to each other, have a homogenized sound. Here, from Australia, is a new and fresh approach and sound that are noteworthy, outstanding, and first rate on the entertainment meter. As Collins is *Going Back to Clarksdale*, travel along with him, and learn the secrets of the "old bones" yourself!



It may be time to renew your PCBS Membership. You can do this on our website using PayPal

www.prairiecrossroadsblues.org/member.html

PCBS Local IBC Blues Challenge By Bob Paleczny



Save the date! On Saturday October 17th Prairie Crossroads Blues Society will be holding our local IBC Challenge at Memphis on Main, 55 E. Main St. in Champaign. We'll assemble a crowd of enthusiastic blues fans and a panel of esteemed judges as the acts vie for the honor of representing PCBS at the Blues Foundation's International Blues Challenge in Memphis, TN. Our competition is open to Illinois based blues acts, and we'll reward the winning acts with a cash prize package to assist the winners with their travel expenses to Memphis.

The 32nd IBC takes place from Tuesday January 26 thru Saturday January 30th 2016, in Memphis, TN. It is a search by The Blues Foundation and its affiliated Blues Societies to find the best Blues Band and Solo/Duo Act ready to take its act to the international stage. In 2015 over 250 acts competed in the clubs on historic Beale Street. It is a judged "Battle of the Bands" and competitors can win cash, musical instruments, amps, promotional assistance, studio time and festival appearances. As a proud affiliate of The Blues Foundation, Prairie Crossroads Blues Society is thrilled to be involved again.

Prairie Crossroads Blues Society is hard at work planning our local challenge. This year PCBS plans to host a challenge in the Band category as well as a challenge in the Solo/Duo category. Acts with three or more musicians are

considered bands. The winning band will receive \$1000, and the winning Solo/Duo act will receive \$500 to help them on the road to Memphis in January 2016. Registration for acts to enter will open soon, so watch our website and Facebook pages for all the details. We'll have an information page, along with links to the complete rules, scoring criteria and an entry form. The entry deadline will be September 30th which will give us time to finalize the arrangements for the competition on October 17.

We've been privileged to have had exceptional acts to represent us the past few years, and we're confident the judges will pick outstanding acts to represent us this year.

Previous PCBS Local IBC Band Winners

Hurricane Ruth - 2011

Jerry Lee & The Juju Kings - 2012

Back Pack Jones – 2013

Previous PCBS Local IBC Solo/Duo Winners

Monica Morris & Josie Lowder - 2014

PCBS also plans to hold a Best Self-Produced CD (BSPCD) competition to choose the best self-produced CD from among our member bands. The CD chosen by our panel of judges will be entered in the Blues Foundation's BSPCD competition. The CD must be released between November 1, 2014 and October 31, 2015.

Previous PCBS BSPCD Winner

Benny Jenkins Bloodline - "Can't Take The Blues" – 2013

Back Pack Jones – "Betsy's Kitchen" - 2014

These are some of the most exciting events of the year for local blues fans and Prairie Crossroads Blues Society members and volunteers.

You can get info about the IBC on the Blues Foundation website;

<http://www.blues.org/international-blues-challenge/>

If you want to compete in any of our challenges contact us at

priariexrossroadsblues@gmail.com. We will have the complete details available soon, so watch our Facebook page and website <http://www.priariexrossroadsblues.org> for announcements. See you on October 17th!

Did you make it to the 8th annual Blues, Brews and BBQ Festival was held Friday, **June 26** and Saturday, **June 27**? If not, here's some photos of what you missed!!!





Blues, Brews & BBQ

By Lorri Coey

Prairie Crossroads Blues Society was once again in attendance at this year's Blues, Brews & BBQ Festival in downtown Champaign. We loved seeing old friends stop by our tent and really enjoyed meeting new ones. And of course, a huge thank you to all the volunteers that made our involvement possible.

This year's PCBS raffle included a Taj Mahal box set of CDs, a gift certificate from Triptych, posters from The Blues Foundation and a t-shirt from Lagunitas Brewing Company. If you missed the chance to get in the raffle, be sure to look for us next year.

The 2015 Blues, Brews & BBQ festival featured all female-leads, which made for a unique event and one that several of the performers commented on from the stage. In fact, Janiva Magness mentioned that perhaps someday festivals will have more than one female performer on the lineup on a regular basis. It was great to be part of a festival like this and

spend a bit of time recognizing the long history of women in blues going way back to performers such as Sister Rosetta Tharpe and Memphis Minnie and running through modern blues today.

Several PCBS members were interviewed by a grad student making a documentary about women in the blues. Keep an eye out in our newsletter and Facebook page for when that becomes available.

The Friday night schedule opened with two local bands, No Solid State and Upshot, followed by Adrianna Marie, Sena Ehrhardt and Carolyn Wonderland. Rain was in the forecast and the temps were a bit chilly, which made for small crowds, but the music kept flowing and the audience was treated to outstanding performances.

Saturday's weather was ideal and the crowds came out early and stayed late. Laura Rain & The Caesars kicked things off, followed by Joanna Connor, Janiva Magness, Shaun Murphy and Ana Popovic. The story behind the festival was all about how Ms. Popovic and her band had their van stolen the night before. But they showed up ready to play and the crowd responded.

To paraphrase Ana, you can steal my equipment, but you can't steal my music. I'd just add, the blues is about overcoming and celebration. Both evident in this year's festival. I can't wait for next year.



The show must go on! Ana Popovic performing at the 2015 Champaign Blues, Brews and BBQ Festival after her van and equipment were stolen the night before! (Photo by Susan Walker, Friend of the Blues, 6/27/2015)



Next meeting of PCBS:

Thursday, August 13, 2015 6:30 pm

Po'Boys,

202 E University Ave, Urbana, IL 61801

Prairie Crossroads Blues Society



Champaign-Urbana IL

Executive Board

President - Dennis Wismer

Vice President - Greg Altstetter

Treasurer – Jim Hannum/Zach Widup

Secretary - Lorri Coey

At-Large Board Members

Sandy Hannum - Phil Hult - Tony Odendahl

Committee Chairs

Membership - Phil Hult

Merchandise - Greg Altstetter

Marketing - by Committee

Education - Sandy Hannum

Newsletter Editor - Elaine Schneider

Entertainment - Bob Paleczny

Web Team - Lorri Coey, Bob Paleczny

Corporate Sponsors

We greatly appreciate our Corporate Sponsors for supporting the PCBS with their funds and their missions.

Memphis on Main regularly brings impressive Blues talent to Champaign.

Fluid Events brings the Champaign Blues, Brews, and BBQs festival to town in the summer, along with other Blues music events throughout the year.

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts

supports our Blues in the Schools program with both funding and expertise.

The Pawn Shop in Rantoul has long been a supporter of live blues shows in central Illinois.

Rossville Sound Werx in Rossville, IL manufactures speaker cabinets and hand wired point to point tube amplifiers. They support PCBS with equipment.

Skins-N-Tins Drum Shop has provided a drum set for use in The Prairie Crossroads Blues Society IBC challenges and other events.

Donors

We are grateful to the following individuals and businesses that have provided donations to support the work of the Prairie Crossroads Blues Society.

Cody Sokolski and Marci Dodds

One Main Development

LLC Eastland Suites

Hohner USA

Louie's Dixie Kitchen & BBQ

Orange Krush Foundation

Samuel Music

Slumberland Furniture

Supervalu

Band Memberships

Back Pack Jones Their CD "Betsy's Kitchen" won our Best Self-Produced CD competition.

Benny Jenkins Bloodline Their CD "Can't Take the Blues" won our PCBS Best Self-Produced CD competition in 2013.

Black Magic Johnson has their new CD, "Walk With You Baby" available from their web site

The Diva and The Dude play regularly throughout the area. Check out their Facebook page for up-to-date information on gigs.

Groove Avenue is one of our newest member bands. They are Joni Dreyer/ Vocals, Bob Watson/ Guitar, Dan Henry/ Bass, Brad Hendricks/ Harmonica, Daniel Casey/ Drums.

Hurricane Ruth released their second CD "Born on the River" in September.

Jackie Scott won a Blues Blast Magazine award in 2010. Check out her website for more on our newest member band jackiescottandthehousewreckers.com

The James Jones Trio recently released their new CD "Tuned In".

Jerry Lee & The Juju Kings were the winners of the PCBS 2012 IBC Band Challenge. Their new CD "Southside of Nowhere" was released in September and is available on their web site.

Jimmy Nick & Don't Tell Mama play frequently throughout the Midwest. They have a CD called "Who Ya Kiddin'."

Kilborn Alley will be releasing their new CD soon!

Mary Jo Curry and Tombstone Bullet
Tombstone Bullet made a mark during the 2012 International Blues Challenge, being recognized as the fan favorites at their venue and moving forward to the 2012 Beale Street Blues King fan favorite competition.

Matthew Curry and the Fury
<http://www.matthewcurry.com/>

Susan Williams
<http://www.reverbNation.com/susanwilliams>

Upcoming Events

Saturday, August 1

8:00pm

Billy Galt - Lock Stock & Barrel - Decatur, IL

9:00pm

Kilborn Alley - Memphis on Main - Champaign

10:00pm

Kicked To The Curb - Third Base Sports Bar - Springfield, IL

Sunday, August 2

3:00pm

Alex Jenkins & The Bombers - Pop's Place - Decatur, IL

Monday, August 3

8:00pm

Josh Hoyer & The Shadowboxers - Blue Monday @ The Alamo - The Alamo - Springfield, IL

Tuesday, August 4

6:30pm

Billy Galt & Jeff Kerr - El Toro Bravo - Champaign

Wednesday, August 5

6:30pm

The Surreal Deal - Meadowbrook Park - Urbana

9:00pm

Kilborn Alley - Pipa's Pub (formerly D.R. Diggers) - Champaign - Juke Joint Show

Thursday, August 6

6:00pm

James Armstrong Presents: Black Magic Johnson - The Alamo - Springfield, IL

7:00pm

Billy Galt - New Amsterdam - Peoria, IL

Friday, August 7

6:00pm

Alex Jenkins & The Bombers - Ambucs Music Series, Temple Plaza - Danville, IL

8:00pm

Billy Galt & Jeff Kerr - Huber's - Champaign

9:00pm

The Mudwinders - Local on 45 - Mattoon, IL

Saturday, August 8

5:00pm

Billy Galt - Southside Country Club - Decatur, IL

6:30pm

Hurricane Ruth - Decatur Celebration -
Decatur, IL

7:30pm

The Painkillers - Alto Vineyards - Champaign

9:00pm

Kilborn Alley - Stevie Ray's Blues Bar -
Louisville, KY

9:00pm

The Mudwinders - Local on 45 - Mattoon, IL

Sunday, August 9

3:00pm

Mary Jo Curry & Tombstone Bullet - It's All
About The Party - Girard, IL

Monday, August 10

8:00pm

Hard Road Blues Band - Blue Monday @ The
Alamo -The Alamo - Springfield, IL

Tuesday, August 11

6:30pm

Billy Galt & Jeff Kerr - El Toro Bravo -
Champaign

Wednesday, August 12

7:00pm

Billy Galt - Lock Stock & Barrel - Decatur, IL

Thursday, August 13

6:30pm

PCBS Monthly Meeting - Po' Boys - Urbana

7:00pm

Billy Galt - New Amsterdam - Peoria, IL

Saturday, August 15

12:00pm

Hurricane Ruth - Corner Keg Pub - Highland, IL

2:00pm

Jerry Lee & The Juju Kings - Boondocks Tiki Bar
- Seneca, IL

7:00pm

Billy Galt - Decatur Country Club - Decatur, IL

9:00pm

The Mudwinders - Sweeper's - Arcola, IL

Sunday, August 16

3:00pm

Alex Jenkins & The Bombers - Pop's Place -
Decatur, IL

8:30pm

Surreal Deal - The Rose Bowl - Urbana

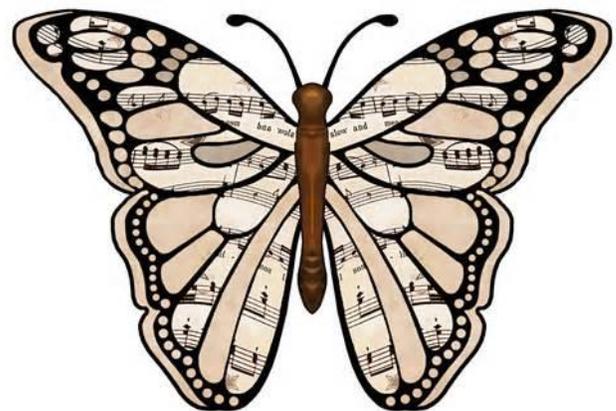
Monday, August 17

8:00pm

Polly O'Keary & The Rhythm Method - Blue
Monday @ The Alamo -The Alamo -
Springfield, IL

For more events visit

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



I am, and always will be, a blues
guitarist.....Eric Clapton