



Inclusive - a newsletter for the Prairie Crossroads Blues Society

December 2011

Kilborn Alley Blues Band CD Release Party By Rich Cibelli

What do you get when you cross one of the hottest local blues bands around just home from a great tour of Europe and a cold late November Tuesday night at The Iron Post in Urbana? Answer -- The Kilborn Alley Blues Band "Four" CD release party.

The band, which actually returned the morning of the show, showed some signs of jet lag. But that didn't stop them from putting on one of the best performances that this writer has seen. Blues fans, that is dedication from the heart -- a plain and simple fact. There is no way to teach this. You either have it or not. The Kilborn Alley Blues Band has it. Period!



Kilborn Alley Blues Band at CD Release Party

Courtesy Zack Widup

From start to finish the band not only played several numbers of their brand new Blue Bella Records release "Four," like "Couple of Days (Change My Ways)," but as always took time out of this show to showcase some fan favorites.

In classic Kilborn Alley Blues Band style Andrew, Josh, Chris and Ed and, saxophonist Dave Fauble treated the evening's crowd to a rousing rendition of Bobby Blue Bland's "Turn On Your Love Light," and their own "Watch It."

Not to be undone the band was also joined by long time singer and friend Abraham Johnson who helped bring down the house with an extended version of "Tear Chicago Down".

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Andrew Duncanson and Abraham Johnson

Courtesy Zack Widup

Before I continue I'd like to take a minute and give a great big thank you to Paul Wirth and all the staff at the Iron Post for helping put on this event and for their continued support of live music in Champaign-Urbana. Most of all, a great thank you to the many fans who braved a cold Tuesday night to come see one of our own.

I may have mentioned this in an earlier story, but for those of you new to the Prairie Crossroads Blues Society, The Kilborn Alley Blues Band was the first band to join our organization back almost a year and a half ago. Just like this event they took time from their show to thank us for the bond that we have.

What else is there left to say? I suggest you go out and purchase Kilborn Alley's new CD "Four," so that you too will be able to relive over and over the true sounds and sheer talent of The Kilborn Alley Blues Band.

It may be time to renew your membership
in the PCBS! Check the
date on your membership card.
You can renew online using PayPal.

Matt Hill – First Friday

By Lorri Coey

“Bring more Blues events here.” That's item number three on the PCBS mission statement to-do list. And we're making progress.

This Friday, Dec. 2, we're starting a new series, for now we're calling it First Friday Blues. We're teaming up with WEFT 90.1 (Champaign) and our good friends at Memphis on Main to bring in blues artists from outside the area. And first up is 2011 Blues Music Awards (BMA) Best New Artist Debut winner, Matt Hill.



Matt Hill

Hill and his band, The Deep Fried Two, will start the evening playing a set on-air from WEFT's great hall during their Friday night Blues Live show. Tune in around 8 pm to catch the show. You can listen online as well: weft.org. Somewhere around 9:30 the band will be up the street at Memphis on Main for a live performance.

Hill won the BMA award for his “On the Floor” cd. And apparently that name is representative of the energy Matt brings to his live performances.

Karen Nugent, a writer for the Boston Blues Society says “he was, in fact, 'on the floor' for a good part of the time. Spinning and rolling around, while playing and singing. It got so wild my view was completely blocked by the adoring crowd.”

That energy is just one reason Hill is one of the most talked about and electric performers on the circuit today. Hill started playing guitar at the age of 12. Since that time he's played with

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blues greats such as Bob Margolin, Pinetop Perkins, Hubert Sumlin and Nappy Brown. Hill's uninhibited stage presence comes from his admiration for Jerry Lee Lewis, Howlin' Wolf and Nappy Brown.

Hill has recently completed his second release. He describes it as “a little bit of everything from gut-bucket blues to rock and roll, soul, and even gospel and country influences.” The new cd includes Joe Meyer on drums and vocals and Paul Niehaus IV on guitar, bass and vocals.

In January we're going to combine the First Friday event with our send-off party for PCBS's entry into the International Blues Challenge, Hurricane Ruth. Blues fans who saw Hurricane Ruth at that event, loved her energy and connection to the audience. And without the restrictions that go along with an IBC event, you'll find out just how much fun this band is. Be sure to put Jan. 6th on your calendar and help us give Hurricane Ruth a great send-off for the Memphis International Blues Challenge.

Blues in the Schools

By Sandy Hannum

The Education Committee has been working on plans for a Blues in the Schools after-school enrichment program at Wiley School. David Adcock and Sandy Hannum have been meeting with Cara Maurizi, Music Teacher at the school, and Sam Smith, Engagement Director of Krannert Center, who is involved in a great deal of outreach to schools in the community.

We are interested in providing a six-week enrichment program at no charge for about 15 students in grades 3 and 4 during the spring 2012 semester, after their ISAT testing is done. The program will run on Wednesdays from 3:15 to 4:30 pm, from March 28 to May 2.

In late February, before the ISAT testing, there will be an all-school assembly (approximately one hour) in which one or more blues bands will play for the students and get them excited about the upcoming program. I believe that some of our member bands may be interested in playing in this.

The program itself will include basic instruction in playing blues harmonica; 1-4-5 progression in Blues music; history of Blues in the U.S.; history of African-American migration from the southern U.S. to urban areas and to the northern U.S.; instruction about well-known Blues performers; how to write a Blues song; performance of 1-2 Blues songs for students and/or parents. The participants will each receive a harmonica (Hohner Old Standby) to keep.

Personnel and infrastructure for the program are being worked out. The Principal, Barb Sartain, is in favor of pursuing the project. The program should be well-received by the school as a whole, since it fulfills several learning goals for Fine Arts and

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Social Studies for Grades 3-4. Cara Maurizi is working out the logistics of space and paperwork for the school. Doug Schroer has expressed an interest in teaching harmonica. We have lined up a grad student from the UI African-American Studies Department who has a particular interest in the history of Blues and is enthusiastic about this project.

We have estimated the cost of the project at \$350. Sandy will apply for grant funding. Sam Smith believes that Krannert may be willing to contribute some funds to the project as well.

Through These Eyes
By Rich Cibelli

By the time you read this story in our brand new December issue of *Inclusive*, the Thanksgiving holiday will have come and gone. Along with it many heaping servings of turkey, green bean casserole, mashed potatoes, gravy and rolls. Did I forget anything? Oh yes, cranberry sauce. How could I forget?

However, since I mentioned the words thanks and giving in the same sentence I'd like to take a minute to thank both Donna Herula and Blind Boy Paxton for not only putting on great shows at this year's C-U Folk & Roots Festival, but for taking time before hand to conduct music workshops.



Blind Boy Paxton at the C-U Folk & Roots Festival
Courtesy of Rich Cibelli

While I didn't get the chance to participate in the workshop with Blind Boy Paxton at the Iron Post, I did take part in one that Donna Herula conducted earlier in the day at Corson's Music. I had the chance to see Herula play at this year's Chicago Blues Festival, but now I was getting the chance to be a student and learn something new and exciting.

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Donna Herula Blues Guitar Workshop
Courtesy of Rich Cibelli

Throughout her scheduled one hour workshop Herula went out of her way to go up to each of those in attendance to make sure they understood each part of the song that she was trying to teach. In this case it was "Big Road Blues," by Tommy Johnson, using drop D tuning.

I'd heard this song before, but now I was actually playing it along with others in a group setting. I felt a real sense of accomplishment by the end of the session. Moreover, I made it a point to introduce myself to Donna after her workshop and to thank her. Little did I know that she actually attended the University of Illinois some years ago.

With one guitar workshop under my belt my curiosity led me to another happening over at the Iron Post where The Sugar Prophets guitar and harmonica player, Joe Asselin, was set to lead an afternoon blues jam.

Arriving a little behind schedule I quickly grabbed my guitar out of my case and joined in with others in a rousing rendition of "Sweet Home Chicago." I was amazed at the number of individuals who had come to have some fun that afternoon.

In addition to someone at the piano, there was someone playing harmonica, another person joined in on fiddle as well as stick drummer and the rest of us on guitar. We were cooking to say the least!

And there I was again right in the thick of things for the second time in the same day. I was in heaven getting to play with a bunch of folks, many of whom I'd never even met before. I asked myself several times - Why hadn't I taken the time to seek out more activities like this one before? This was cool!

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To tell you the truth I'd like to get together and play some blues again just like we did at the Iron Post that day. Wouldn't that be cool? In fact one of my goals is to establishing an acoustic blues jam that would happen early in the evening on a weekday or sometime on Saturday afternoons if possible so more players might be able to join in. I imagine it as something similar to other jams that are taking place in our community, but on a much smaller scale for now. If anyone is interested in trying to get an acoustic blues jam going on a regular basis they should let me know and I'll work with you on a plan to get one started. You can always contact me at prairiecrossroadsblues@gmail.com. I hope you are enthused about this idea as I am. In future issues of *Inclusive*, I'll make it a point to update everybody on any progress or schedule of the blues jam idea and what help might be needed to keep it running.

Nevertheless, since this issue comes out the first week of December I'm reminded that the New Year is fast approaching. Before you know it 2012 will be here. We will all have to get used to writing that on our checks, won't we?

A new year also means it's time for me to ask all members of PCBS to take a minute and ask yourself a few important questions. For example, is there anything you'd like to see our organization do differently or are you happy with its progress so far?

You may have other concerns and as members of PCBS you have the right to voice them anytime you wish. Furthermore I am always willing to meet with any of you at any time to discuss your concerns - whatever they may be.

I'd also like to take a minute to once again urge you to get involved with our blues society. Please try to find time to come to our events and if possible join one of our committees. I also know that what I am asking is for you to step up and get involved more. You may not think you have the talent and/or the time. I think you do and I am willing to help you with any questions you might have. I guess it's up to you to hear my call to action. I hope you accept my challenge.

So until we see each other again, I wish all of you a very happy holiday season and best wishes for the coming year.

Nora Jean Wallace Puts On Amazing Show By Bob Paleczny



Nora Jean with Little Bobby and the Storm

Courtesy Bob Paleczny

Wow, what a show! I had the pleasure of seeing the dynamic singer Nora Jean Wallace, backed by a rock solid band, Little Bobby and the Storm. The show was on Friday November 18 and took place at a great little club, the Shady Nook in Saybrook IL. Nora Jean showed the audience her full range, singing softly and belting out raucous tunes. She sang songs about going back to her birthplace in Mississippi, about the weekend club her grandmother ran "Miss Mae's Juke Joint", and about her life in Chicago. She sang songs from her heart. She sang a Mahalia Jackson gospel song a capella. There were times when she captivated the entire club and the audience fell completely silent hanging on her every word.

Little Bobby and The Storm is a great band out of Minneapolis, MN and has been accompanying Nora on her recent tour through the Midwest. They are a tight five piece band that plays their own originals and great blues covers and provides the perfect accompaniment for Nora Jean's powerful vocals.

Nora Jean released a new CD "Good Blues" in the fall of 2011 and sang songs from that as well as several previous CD's she'd released under her married name at the time, Nora Jean Bruso. She covered songs such as "Wang Dang Doodle" made famous by Koko Taylor and finished the show with the Luther Allison classic "Cherry Red Wine" during which she put the microphone down and showed the power in voice, walking through the crowd singing directly to the audience. If you have a chance to see Nora Jean, I'd highly recommend you do so.

Matt Hill – First Friday December 2nd

Plays live on WEFT 90.1 FM at 8
Plays live at Memphis on Main at 9:30

Hurricane Ruth – First Friday January 6th

Plays live at WEFT 90.1FM at 8
Plays live at Memphis on Main at 9:30

Corporate Sponsorships

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 Urbana Blues, Brews, and BBQs festival to town every summer, along with other Blues music events throughout the year.

Skins-N-Tins Drum Shop provided a drum set for use in the Prairie Crossroads Blues Society IBC challenge.

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
Slumberland Furniture
SuperValu

Band Memberships

Alex Jenkins & the Bombers are playing at Ike's in Danville on December 3 and Julie's Shooting Star in Westville on the 10th.

The Kilborn Alley Blues Band will be playing in the local area for the next couple of months, so enjoy them while they're close to home! Also, be sure to get their new CD.

King's Highway can be tracked on Facebook, Myspace, and Reverbnation. Check out their CD, "A Harder Blues."

The Sugar Prophets are performing at Memphis on Main on December 9. Check out their Blues Jams at Cowboy Monkey on December 1 and January 5!

The Sweet Wood Band is our newest member band. Sweet Wood Band is playing with The Sugar Prophets Dec. 9 at Memphis on Main and De. 17 at Midway Pub & Grub.

The Painkillers are working on a CD which will come out sometime this fall. You can see them at the Iron Post on December 17.

Timmy D & Blind Justice will be performing at Gino's Place in Danville on December 3 and at the Pink House in Ogden on the 17th.

Prairie Crossroads Board of Directors

President	Rich Cibelli
Vice President	Steve Stoerger
Treasurer	Teri Stoerger
Secretary	Greg Altstetter
At-large Members	Sandy Hannum Tony Odendahl

PCBS Business

For the next Prairie Crossroads Blues Society Meeting we will get together for dinner at 6 pm on December 21 at the Esquire Lounge.

Inclusive, a newsletter of the PCBS, is always looking for new contributors and submissions of finished or unfinished content. Deadline for the next newsletter is December 28. Please submit articles, ideas, or comments to smhannum@gmail.com.

Inclusive Staff

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EVENTS

Dec 1 – Dave Herrero – Kankakee Valley Boat Club – Kankakee, IL – 7 pm

Kilborn Alley Blues Band – The Decatur Club – Decatur, IL – 8 pm

Andrew “Jr Boy” Jones – The Slippery Noodle – Indianapolis, IN – 9 pm

The Sugar Prophets – Blues Jam – Cowboy Monkey – Champaign – 9:30 pm

Dec 2 – The Diva & the Dude – Emerald City Lounge – Champaign – 5 pm

Papa Chubby – The Castle Theatre – Bloomington, IL – 7:30 pm

Matt Hill – WEFT & Memphis on Main – Champaign – 8 pm

The Impalas – Huber’s – Champaign – 8 pm

Hurricane Ruth – Atomic Tunes – Girard, IL – 9 pm

Dec 3 – Alex Jenkins & the Bombers – Ike’s Bar – Danville, IL – 8 pm

Kilborn Alley Blues Band – Huber’s – Champaign – 8 pm

Timmy D & Blind Justice – Gino’s Place – Danville, IL – 8 pm

The Blues Deacons – Barb’s Place – Decatur, IL – 9 pm

Dec 4 – Paul Thorn – Canopy Club – Urbana – 8 pm

Dec 5 – Kilborn Alley Blues Band – Blue Monday at the Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm

Dec 7 – Kilborn Alley Blues Band – D.R. Digger’s – Champaign – 9 pm

Dec 9 – The Impalas – Emerald City Lounge – Champaign – 9 pm

The Sugar Prophets and Sweet Wood Band – Memphis on Main – Champaign – 9 pm

Danny & the Devils – Indian Lakes – Bloomington, IL – 9:30 pm

Dec 10 – Alex Jenkins & the Bombers – Julie’s Shooting Star – Westville, IL – 9 pm

Danny & the Devils – The Uptown Tavern – Westmont, IL – 9 pm

Dec 12 – Nick Moss & the Flip Tops – Blue Monday at the Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm

Dec 14 – Surreal Deal – D.R. Digger’s – Champaign – 9 pm

Dec 16 – Tab Benoit – The Castle Theatre – Bloomington, IL – 8 pm

Dec 17 – The Blues Deacons – Bourbon Barrel – Decatur, IL – 4 pm

The Painkillers – The Iron Post – Urbana – 6 pm

The Sugar Prophets and Sweet Wood Band – Midway Pub & Grub – Effingham, IL – 8:30 pm

Timmy D & Blind Justice – The Pink House – Ogden, IL – 8:30 pm

Dec 22 – Keith Harden – The Clark Bar – Champaign – 6 pm

Dec 23 – Keith Harden & Friends – The Iron Post – Urbana – 8:30 pm

Jan 4 – Kilborn Alley Blues Band – D.R. Digger’s – Champaign – 9 pm

Jan 5 – The Sugar Prophets – Blues Jam – Cowboy Monkey – Champaign – 9:30 pm

Jan 6 – Hurricane Ruth – WEFT 90.1 FM & Memphis on Main – Champaign – 8 pm

Jan 8 – The Sugar Prophets – Champaign Public Library – Champaign – 2 pm

Jan 21 – Hurricane Ruth – Crows Mill Pub – Springfield, IL – 9 pm

Jan 25 – The Sugar Prophets – Goodfellas Pub & Pizza – Pekin, IL – 7 pm

Jan 28 – The Sugar Prophets – River Beach Pub – Chillicothe, IL – 8 pm

Feb 1 – Kilborn Alley Blues Band – D.R. Digger’s – Champaign – 9 pm

Mt. Bluesmore



Hey Wolf, that Kilborn Alley Blues Band CD Release Party at The Iron Post was quite a Party!

Yeah Muddy, the Matt Hill show on December 2 will be great too!