



Inclusive - a newsletter for the Prairie Crossroads Blues Society

December 2012

Carolina Chocolate Drops Are Pure Delight By Sandy Hannum

On Wednesday November 14 the Carolina Chocolate Drops came back to Krannert and played to a packed and delighted house. The phenomenal range of their rootsy music includes a fascinating mix of black string-band music from the 20s and 30s, early jazz, Scottish Gaelic, and old blues. Founding members Rhiannon Giddens and Dom Flemons have played and sung together for seven years.



Rhiannon Giddens

Photo by Adam Hajnos from the Chocolate Drops website

Both play several different stringed instruments and sing. Giddens' powerful voice is mesmerizing. She was trained as an opera singer, but I for one am glad that she chose this different path. Hubby Jenkins, a banjo phenomenon from Brooklyn, is also a permanent member of the group now. In this show the fourth member of the group was Leyla McCalla, a classically-trained cellist from New Orleans who plays with them frequently.

The warmth and personality of Rhiannon and Dom made us feel as if we were joining them on the front porch for a sing-along. A few songs into the show Dom announced, "You may have noticed that this is not a classical music concert." Their homey banter included much humor and many interesting bits of history. The range and sheer perfection of these talented musicians is astonishing. A few of my favorite songs were "No Man's Mama," "Boodle De Bum Bum," and the great old blues song "Your Baby Ain't Sweet Like Mine."



Dom Flemons

Photo by Adam Hajnos from the Chocolate Drops website

Flemons and Jenkins played an unbelievably complex routine on the bones and Rhiannon worked a kazoo as I have never seen it played before. Leyla McCalla treated us to a stunning Hatian ballad that she played on the banjo and sang.

I think it is safe to say that nobody wanted the show to end. However, realizing the incredible amount of energy they had already put out, we let them go after one encore. Surely they will return to C-U again!

CU Folk & Roots Festival

By Lorri Coey

Word must have gotten out after Blind Boy Paxton's performance at the CU Folk & Roots Festival last year because the Iron Post was packed for his 2012 return. That was his second full house of the day, having just finished at The Rose Bowl, as well as presenting a finger picking workshop at C4A.

In 2009 The Country Blues, said of Blind Boy, "he may be the most sensational newcomer in the blues in many years." He was featured in the current issue of Living Blues magazine where they said, "He is easily the most talented young acoustic bluesman to come along in many, many years." Blind Boy Paxton plays the fiddle, harmonica, piano, acoustic guitar and banjo.



Blind Boy Paxton

Photo from folkandroots.org

It's easy to see why people are drawn to Blind Boy, without even an introduction or a mic he was at the piano playing his version of acoustic blues. He played some banjo too, then switched back to the piano. You can tell when a musician is really connecting with the audience by how quiet they are. At the Post that night there were few sounds coming from the crowd other than laughter and applause.

This year Blind Boy was joined by Brandon Bailey, an innovative young harmonica player. Brandon uses techniques such as looping and beat boxing and calls his

unique playing style, harp-boxing. Brandon hosted a blues harmonica workshop at the festival that was the highlight of the weekend for more than one harp player.



Brandon Bailey

Photo from folkandroots.org

And that's the beautiful thing about the CU Folk & Roots Festival. There are talented musicians who come to lead as well as take part in workshops, sit in on jams and or just enjoy the music. Donna Herula performed last year and made the trip down from Chicago this year as a fan because she loved it so much.

Donna's husband and musical partner, Tony Nardiello, raved about walking into Brandon Bailey's harmonica workshop and finding Jason Ricci, the person he'd been learning to play harmonica from via YouTube, as a participant. Deak Harp was there, too. That's pretty impressive company.

For that weekend the streets of downtown Urbana are filled with musicians, dancers, singers -- music lovers of all types. You can sit in on a Hootenanny and find incredibly talented people from throughout the area. There's a Try-It tent, a musical mayhem parade, campfires and sing-alongs.

It's a great festival and why Prairie Crossroads Blues Society is proud to be a sponsor. Don't miss it next year.

Links: CU Folk & Roots: <http://folkandroots.org>
Country Blues: <http://www.thecountryblues.com/>
Living Blues: <http://www.livingblues.com/>

Blues in the Schools Is On a Roll By Sandy Hannum

The CU community is starting to know about the education efforts of the Prairie Crossroads Blues Society.

We ran a very successful Blues in the Schools program at Wiley School, funded by an Urbana Arts Council grant. Music teacher Cara Maurizi was instrumental in getting this afterschool enrichment program off the ground. The program was kicked off with a concert by the Painkillers, and taught by Doug Schroer (blues harmonica) and Ashley Howard (blues history). This brought us some terrific TV coverage from ciLiving featuring Rich Cibelli, David Adcock, and several of the kids from the BITS program. If you haven't already done so, you should take a look at the TV clip on the PCBS website (http://illinoishomepage.net/fulltext?nxd_id=358942). Some of the comments by the kids are really great. In mid November David Adcock and Sandy Hannum made a final presentation to the Arts Council about the project. The council must have been happy with us, because we have been invited to apply for another grant.

Meanwhile, over in neighboring Champaign, we are helping to launch another Blues in the Schools program at Garden Hills School with music teacher Abby Heras. She has successfully secured her own funding, which is great! Historian Ashley Howard has moved on to teach at Loyola in New Orleans, but another grad student from African American history, Courtney Cain, is interested in teaching the Blues history for BITS. This project will start in January, so we will be meeting soon to work out the details.

Another piece of good news for the Education Committee was the winning of a grant from the Orange Krush Foundation, thanks to Bob Paleczny and Lorri Coey. This grant money will be used to fund a few small workshops for kids teaching blues harmonica in local libraries. We also have some donations that have come in to our education fund, so life is good!!

It is time to get busy thinking about the next Urbana grant as well. Our consultant and outreach supporter at Krannert Center, Sam Smith, is recommending Thomas Paine School as the next Urbana school to approach.

This is all very exciting, and there is lots of fun work to be done in the very near future. Needless to say, the education committee welcomes and encourages new members.

Looking Forward By Bob Paleczny

Prairie Crossroads is continuing to grow and provide our community with quality entertainment and educational opportunities. We're excited that we've been adding new members, bands and sponsors. We'd also like your ideas and input to make our Society better. So come to one of meetings or send us an email, we're always looking for new ways to reach out to the blues community. We're looking forward to even more fun and exciting times for Prairie Crossroads Blues Society.

Holiday Meeting

Instead of holding a regular monthly meeting in December we're having our year-end holiday gathering. We'll get together on Saturday December 8th at The Iron Post in Urbana from 6:00 to 9:00pm. The Painkillers, one of original member bands, are playing. We promise there will be very little business discussed, just good times and great music, so come on out and meet your fellow members.

Johnny Rawls

On Friday December 21st, we're bringing Johnny Rawls to the area. Johnny has been nominated for nine Blues Music Awards and in 2010 he won the BMA for The Best Soul Blues Album for his CD "Ace of Spades". Johnny will be playing at The Highdive; the opening act is The Sugar Prophets; <http://thehighdive.com/calendar/johnny-rawls/>. This promises to be a great night of blues, Johnny hasn't played in the area for years, so make your plans now to come out Dec. 21st. Johnny will also play a short set at WEFT 90.1FM before his Highdive appearance. We appreciate WEFT's support of the blues in our community.

IBC Fundraiser

On Saturday January 19th, we're having a fundraiser for our IBC winner, Jerry Lee & The Juju Kings. They've completed their registration with the Blues Foundation and are working hard to get a great set list for the International Blues Challenge later that month in Memphis. They'll be one of more than 100 bands competing. You can check out all the competitors at https://www.blues.org/#ref=ibc_current. Make your plans to head down to Memphis to root for Jerry Lee & The Juju Kings and come by Memphis on Main on the 19th for a whole evening's worth of blues.

Blues In The Schools

We'll be announcing some new programs in our BITS
(Continued on next page)

(Blues In The Schools) and educational endeavors soon. One of PCBS's primary goals is to educate the local community about the blues and we specifically want to focus on the youth of our community. I'd like to remind members we have a special Educational Fund set up and you can donate on our website's Education page, <http://www.prairiecrossroadsblues.org/education.html>, or find us at one of our events where we'll usually have a separate container for folks to contribute to this worthwhile cause.

Kilborn Alley

You can catch some blues on TV too. WILL has a whole night of blues featuring three separate concerts scheduled for local viewers. Tune in Thursday December 6th as they broadcast a Jubilee episode, which features local favorites Kilborn Alley Blues Band's performance at the 2010 W.C Handy Blues and BBQ Fest from Henderson, KY. This is a unique chance to see Andrew, Josh, Chris, Ed and Deak Harp play some of the outstanding Chicago Blues they're known for. Next up is Muddy Waters with The Rolling Stones Live. This concert was recorded back in 1981 at Chicago's famous Checkerboard Lounge. The Stones were in Chicago to play a couple of nights and showed up to sit in with Muddy and his band. In addition, these legends are joined by Buddy Guy, Junior Wells and Lefty Dizz. This is a concert not to be missed. WILL wraps up the blues evening with the classic Albert King and Stevie Ray Vaughan in Session recorded in 1983. Tune in!

PCBS is planning additional events throughout the winter months and into spring. We want to be a reflection of our members, so be sure to let us know what you like. We can always use some help with our educational programs, our wonderful newsletter *Inclusive* and with planning our events. If you have ideas or a little free time we're happy to have you contribute. By the way our new T-Shirts make great Christmas gifts.

DID YOU KNOW that every time you attend a Prairie Crossroads Blues Society meeting you have a chance to win the **blues CD giveaway** of the day!

I'm Thinking Blues (Music) this Holiday Season

By Rich Cibelli

For years now I've known I can have a "Blue Christmas," with Elvis and a "White Christmas," with Bing Crosby. But after decades of the same old thing I think it's time for change.

So with the holiday season in full swing and another successful year for PCBS under our belts, I'm thinking it's time to share with you some of my all time favorite blues holiday music selections. Here's hoping you get the chance to enjoy them as much as I do while you're celebrating the December holidays.

In my opinion nothing gets the holidays swinging better than The Alligator Records Christmas Collection (ALCD-XMAS 9201). Released back in 1992, this CD features some of the blues world's most memorable artists including Koko Taylor, Katie Webster, William Clarke, Charles Brown, Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, Son Seals, and many more. Take it from me - this is a must for your blues music library!

A few years ago a good friend added to my Alligator collection of Christmas music with a copy of Genuine Houserockin' Christmas (XMAS CD 9202). The late and great Michael Burks is featured on this 16 track recording along with many other outstanding performers including Marcia Ball, Shemekia Copeland, Coco Montoya, Lonnie Brooks, plus a whole bunch more. Maybe there's a special person in your house that will surprise you with a copy this year.

Speaking of special people, nobody knows how to bring the blues to center stage like B.B. King. In 2001 The King of the Blues, released his first ever collection of holiday tunes especially for Christmas on MCA Records called "A Christmas Collection of Hope."

Long story short, King sings his heart out on each one of the 13 titles that are included. I especially like the 10th song "Blue Decorations." If you follow and collect blues music you already know B.B. King has recorded a lot of great music in his amazing career. Do yourself a favor and check this one out.

For you guitar players "Merry Axemas - A Guitar Christmas," is right up your alley. Released in 1997, (EK 67775) features a collection of guitar slingers including Kenny Wayne Shepherd, Eric Johnson, Jeff Beck and Joe Perry just for starters.

(Continued on next page)

Not all together a traditional blues inspired release "Merry Axemas," combines the talents of some of the greatest guitar players around and some who you might not be familiar with.

But heck it's the holiday season, so do yourself a favor and get a hold of a copy anyway. I'm sure you'll like it.

Another band that was heavily influenced by the blues was The Beatles. If you're handy with a computer you might be able to find a copy of "A Very Merry Beatles Christmas," if it's still available. Comprised of recordings from 1963 through 1969, this collection of 15 holiday tunes is another I'll suggest for you to enjoy year after year.

So there it is, just a few of my favorite musical suggestions for you to enjoy this holiday season. I'm sure I've left out a number of other great recordings available these days, so why don't you get into the spirit and send me a list of your favorites. You can always contact me at pcbsmarketing@gmail.com.

In closing and since this is the last issue of *Inclusive* for 2012, I'll take some time to thank you for your continued service to PCBS and to wish you much success and happiness in the coming year.

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



James Armstrong outside Memphis on Main

Photo by Bob Paleczny

It's a crime if you missed the killer James Armstrong show at Memphis on Main, Friday November 30th. Don't miss Johnny Rawls at the Highdive coming up Friday December 21st. The Sugar Prophets will open the show for Johnny.

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 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.

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
Samuel Music
Slumberland Furniture
SuperValu

Band Memberships

Alex Jenkins & The Bombers will be playing at the High St. Bar & Grill in Wingate, IN on December 15, and at Blue Monday @ The Alamo in Springfield on January 28.

Black Magic Johnson will be playing this month at Swingers Grille in Normal on the 22nd, and at the Walnut St. Winery in Rochester on the 28th.

The Diva and The Dude are playing at the North Forty in Gifford on December 1st.

Full Throttle Band is one of our newer member bands. Check them out on Facebook.

Hurricane Ruth will be playing at the Alamo in Springfield on December 10th, and at Crow's Mill Pub in Springfield on January 19th.

The James Jones Trio is a new band and a new member of PCBS. They were the runner-up in our IBC Challenge! We are happy to have them with us.

Jr. & The Blues Rockers is one of our newer member bands. They plan to have a website soon.

The Kilborn Alley Blues Band will be on WILL TV on December 6 when the band's 2010 W.C. Handy Festival Performance is featured. Don't miss seeing this!

Matthew Curry & The Fury is playing this month at the Shady Nook Pub in Saybrook on the 15th, and at the Castle Theatre in Bloomington on the 31st.

The Painkillers will be playing this month at the Iron Post in Urbana on the 8th, and the Prairie Crossroads Blues Society December meeting/get-together will be held there at the same time.

The Sugar Prophets is one of our long-standing member bands. Check out their website and buy their CD "The Sugar Prophets" on Just One Teaspoon Records.

Susan Williams Band will be playing this month at The Pink House in Ogden on the 1st, at Huber's in Champaign on the 8th, and at Jim & Jo's Bar and Grill in Danville on the 28th.

Timmy D & Blind Justice will be playing this month at Gino's in Danville on the 1st, at Cowboy Monkey in

Champaign on the 21st, and at The Iron Post in Urbana on the 31st.

Tombstone Bullet is playing this month at Boondocks in Springfield on the 2nd, and at Casey's Pub in Springfield on the 30th.

Prairie Crossroads Board of Directors

Interim President	Bob Paleczny
Vice President	Greg Altstetter
Interim Treasurer	Sherry Cibelli
Interim Secretary	Lorri Coey
At-large Members	Rich Cibelli Sandy Hannum Tony Odendahl

PCBS Business

The next Prairie Crossroads Blues Society meeting/get-together is scheduled for 6:00 pm on Saturday, December 8 at The Iron Post, 120 S. Race St., Urbana. Join us for some food and drinks and enjoy the music of The Painkillers.

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 26. Please submit articles, ideas, or comments to smhannum@gmail.com.

Inclusive Staff

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Mojo Tech:	Sherry Cibelli

Mt. Bluesmore



Hey, Sonny. Another year is almost over. It's been a real good year for the Blues.

Yeah, Muddy. Have you noticed how many great musicians come to play in central Illinois?

Uh huh,yeah! And have you noticed how many great musicians come FROM Central Illinois?

Yeah, man. You got that right!!

EVENTS

Dec 1 – Ronnie Baker Brooks - The Castle Theatre – Bloomington, IL – 7 pm
The Diva & The Dude – The North Forty – Gifford, IL – 8 pm
Timmy D. & Blind Justice – Gino's – Danville, IL – 8 pm
Susan Williams Band – The Pink House – Ogden, IL – 8:30 pm
Kilborn Alley Blues Band – Rock-n-Blues Haus – Manitowoc, WI – 9 pm
Dec 2 – Tombstone Bullet – Boondocks – Springfield – 3 pm
First Sundays at Emerald City – blues dancing with bluesCENTRAL – Emerald City Lounge – Champaign – 6 pm
Dec 3 – Andrew Jr. Boy Jones – Blue Monday @ The Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8 pm
Dec 5 – Kilborn Alley Blues Band – D.R. Digger's – Juke Joint Show – Champaign – 9 pm
Dec 8 – The Painkillers – The Iron Post – Urbana – 6 pm
Susan Williams Band – Huber's – Champaign – 8 pm
Dec 10 – Hurricane Ruth – Blue Monday at the Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8 pm
Dec 14 – 2nd Friday blues dance w/bluesCENTRAL - Channing-Murray Foundation – Urbana – 8 pm

Big Creek Guitar Band – Huber's – Champaign – 8 pm
Dec 15 – Matthew Curry & The Fury – Shady Nook Pub – Saybrook, IL – 8 pm
Alex Jenkins & The Bombers – High St. Bar & Grill – Wingate, IN – 9 pm
Dec 17 – R.J. Mischo – Blue Monday @ The Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8 pm
Dec 20 – Keith Harden & Andy Baylor – The Clark Bar – Champaign – 6:30 pm
Dec 21 – Keith Harden – Silvercreek – Urbana – 5:30 pm
Timmy D. & Blind Justice – Cowboy Monkey – Champaign – 9 pm
The Sugar Prophets – The Highdive – Champaign – 8 pm
Johnny Rawls – The Highdive – Champaign – 9 pm
Dec 22 – Black Magic Johnson – Swingers Grille – Normal, IL – 8 pm
Keith Harden – Huber's – Champaign – 8 pm
Dec 23 - Keith Harden & Friends – Keithmas – The Iron Post – Urbana – 9 pm
Dec 28 – Black Magic Johnson – Walnut St. Winery – Rochester, IL – 7 pm
Susan Williams Band – Jim & Jo's Bar and Grill – Danville, IL – 8 pm
Dec 30 – Tombstone Bullet – Casey's Pub – Springfield, IL – 7 pm
Dec 31 – Matthew Curry & The Fury – Castle Theatre – Bloomington, IL – 8 pm
Timmy D. & Blind Justice – The Iron Post – Urbana – 9:30 pm

Jan 2 – Kilborn Alley Blues Band – D.R. Digger's – Juke Joint Show – Champaign – 9 pm
Jan 11 – Black Magic Johnson – Long Bridge Golf Course – Springfield, IL – 6 pm
Timmy D. & Blind Justice – The Old Orchard Inn – Effingham, IL – 9 pm
Jan 12 – The Painkillers – The Iron Post – Urbana – 6 pm
Jan 19 – Hurricane Ruth – Crow's Mill Pub – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm
Jerry Lee & The Juju Kings – Memphis on Main – Champaign – 9 pm
Jan 28 – Alex Jenkins & The Bombers – Blue Monday @ The Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm

Feb 6 – Kilborn Alley Blues Band – D.R. Digger's – Juke Joint Show – Champaign – 9 pm
Feb 8 – Black Magic Johnson – Fat Jack's – Bloomington, IL – 7 pm
Feb 9 – The Painkillers – The Iron Post – Urbana – 6 pm