



Inclusive - a newsletter for the Prairie Crossroads Blues Society

December 2016 Holiday Edition



Welcome Back to our Newsletter

By PCBS President Dennis Wismer

Welcome back to Prairie Crossroads Blues Society news letter. I hope you find plenty of enjoyment and usefulness from our contributors. I was extremely fortunate to enjoy many events, music and people that this year brought into my life. I hope it was great for you all as well.

A wonderful turn of events has helped make PCBS meetings more enjoyable. Jim Rasner and Po Boy's restaurant have collaborated with Kilborn Alley to have a regular show 7:30 the evenings of our meetings. These home town shows have been a treat to enjoy and a bonus for the members who show up to organize the various functions PCBS is involved in.

The local Blues scene is in great shape as wide arrays of bands perform and venues host Blues in Champaign and surrounding communities regularly. Many weekends there are multiple offerings and start times to allow for a little Blues hopping. The Prairie Crossroads Blues Society calendar is a great way to track and plan for shows in our community and throughout the region. Check the calendar regularly to keep up with our local shows and national acts

passing through the area. It is a wonderful asset.

prairiecrossroadsblues.org/pcbscal.html

Two firmly entrenched local Blues bands have been performing with new vocalists. The Impala's have been performing with Kenna Mae Reiss. I am anxiously awaiting the opportunity to see this new version of this always great band. I have had a few opportunities to see The Painkillers newest vocalist Dawn Clark perform with them and I am thoroughly impressed with her voice and the energy she brings to augment their performances of traditional down home Blues.

On the topic of new twists it appears Leadbelly's is a bar opening in the space previously occupied by The Fluid Events Center and will have a Blues theme. A Thursday evening schedule of performances hosted by Joe Asselin and featuring guest performers including Andy Duncanson and Noah Williams shows potential.

January in the Midwest brings cold weather and Hot Blues. With the passing of BB King the torch of elder Bluesman arguably could be passed to Buddy Guy. Buddy continues to tour, record and do his January home stand at Buddy Guy's Legends 700 S Wabash, Chicago. These performances are a wonderful opportunity to enjoy Buddy, his great band and a stellar lineup of opening acts. With many fine hotels within a few blocks of the club, a great Cajun inspired menu and a mother lode of Blues artifacts arrive early and stay late and make some new friends.

Of course Chicago offers many club and bands to check out as do Indianapolis, St Louis and many surrounding cities so if you have your wandering shoes ready go exploring.



PCBS Donations - Year End Giving

In this season of giving consider making a tax-deductible donation to **Prairie Crossroads Blues Society**. We are a non-profit 501(c)3 organization committed to preserving, promoting and educating about the blues.

We are a proud affiliate of the Blues Foundation in Memphis, TN and were formed to promote blues music and artists in East Central Illinois.

Please visit our website; www.prairiecrossroadsblues.org

We have two Paypal links which you can use to make a donation to PCBS. You can make a donation in the amount of your choosing to our general fund which supports our mission.



You can also make a donation directly to our Education Fund. This fund is set up specifically for the purpose of educating the youth of our area on blues history and basic musicianship. A second PayPal link will direct your donation directly to our educational efforts, including our "**Blues In The Schools**" (BITS) program.

We thank you for any amount you can help us with. Visit our [Membership Page](#) to become a new member or renew your PCBS Membership.



New Year, New Resolve?

Hey if you're looking for somewhere to use your talents or start 2017 off with a new project, we have several options you might consider.

Are you someone who has a passion for education or perhaps history? We could use you to help re-start our education program. We've had great success in the past partnering with area grade school teachers and students at the University of Illinois to present Blues in the Schools. Check out our Education page, prairiecrossroadsblues.org/education.html, or the national Blues in the Schools program, blues.org/blues-in-the-schools/ and let us know what you think.

Maybe you're a writer, editor or photographer and you'd like to help with our newsletter, Inclusive. You can take a peek at some of our back issues online, prairiecrossroadsblues.org/news.html to get a feel for what we do. We're always open to new ideas and you might just be the right person for that job.

What about bringing blues artists to town and getting the word out about shows? We could use you on the entertainment committee. We've been lucky enough to host performers such as Johnny Rawls, Tweed Funk, Jarekus Singleton and others.

What will PCBS do in 2017? Who knows but your involvement could make the difference.



Taking Time

Submitted by Lorri Coey

Yeah that's the title of a new Kilborn song and it's also just a good idea in general. Taking time to do the things that matter, to notice what makes life special and to spread the love by talking about it.

So what makes Prairie Crossroads Blues Society worthy of taking time for? I'll start the list. Feel free to add to it.

1) Friends. They're hard to find sometimes. It helps when you can find common ground. Enter the blues society. Not only the friends I've made when we work together to put on shows or send out a newsletter but those I've met who come out to those shows and show their appreciation for what PCBS is trying to do.

2) Music. Yeah that goes without saying, but take a minute and think about how much that adds to your life. I know for me it's huge. Having a rough week, how about sitting at Pipa's for an hour or two and celebrating the wide range of musicians who take the stage at a jam? That'll cure the blahs for sure.

3) Information. I'm constantly using my phone to make notes about artists I've never heard of but someone in PCBS has or upcoming shows. And while I'm on the subject, the blues society has a pretty good calendar you can consult when you're looking to plan a night out. Check it out sometime.

4) Family. Yep, I feel like I have a blues family. People who lift each other up and provide support, laughter, encouragement and all the rest. And it goes beyond this local community. I'm thinking of The Friends of the Blues in Kankakee, the group that I've met and can reconnect with in Clarksdale and many others. I wouldn't know any of them if I hadn't got involved in PCBS.

5) Making a difference. Ask any of the musicians we've had the opportunity to support by helping defray their costs for a show in the area. They'll tell you it makes a difference and I'm proud to be part of that.

Thanks for taking the time to read this and for doing your part to keep blues alive.



IBC Challenge - on the Road to Memphis

Prairie Crossroads Blues Society submitted **Mary Jo Curry's** self-titled debut CD as our entry in the Blues Foundation's **BSPCD = Best Self-Produced CD** competition as part of the 2017 IBC. Mary Jo and her band are based in Springfield, IL and play frequently throughout the area. We're thrilled to enter her CD! It features Mary Jo's awesome vocals, great musicianship and nice packaging. It's also the debut CD for Guitar Angels Records. The Blues Foundation judges these CD's in several rounds, we'll keep you posted as we love the disk and think it will advance to the finals.

- PCBS - Prairie Crossroads Blues Society
- **BSPCD = Mary Jo Curry - "Mary Jo Curry"**

Local blues societies hold fundraisers in December & January to help these bands on the road to the competition in Memphis. Here's the ones we're aware of, check with your local Blues Society to support your local act.

- **William Marsala Band** - Champaign-Urbana IBC Fundraiser - Friday Jan. 20 - Memphis On Main, 55 E. Main St. Champaign
- **Back Pack Jones** - Springfield IBC Fundraiser - Saturday Jan. 28 7:00 pm - Alamo Club, 115 N. 5th St. Springfield

Local Blues Societies have held their IBC Solo/Duo and Band Challenges. Here's the winners!

- ICBC - Illinois Central Blues Club - Springfield
- **Solo/Duo = Bo Ricketts**
- **Band = Back Pack Jones**

- River City Blues Society - Peoria
- **Band = QC Slim Blues Band**

- Decatur Blues Society
- **Band = William Marsala Band**

Each January/February the Blues Foundation holds a competition on historic Beale Street in Memphis, TN., to select the best up and coming Blues Band and Solo/Duo act. The winning acts at the local competitions are rewarded with cash and other prizes to hit the Road to Memphis and represent their affiliate against the best the world has to offer.



IBC Fundraiser

PCBS is thrilled to help with a fundraiser for the William Marsala Band, Friday January 20, at Memphis On Main, 55 E. Main St. Champaign.

The William Marsala Band won the Decatur Blues Society's IBC Challenge and is heading to Memphis, TN to compete in the Blues Foundation's IBC, Jan 31 thru February 4, 2017. Come out and help support these guys as they head down to the challenge. There'll be raffles and other fun things to help raise some cash.

Decatur native Noah Williams fronts the band on vocals and guitar. Champaign resident Joe Asselin adds a second guitar and singer and plays some harmonica on a few tunes. Joe is a veteran of the Kilborn Alley Blues Band and made the finals of the IBC a few years ago with The Sugar Prophets. Nick Elam on bass and vocals and Jake MacNamara on drums comprise the rhythm section.

Come out on January 20th to help these guys get to IBC's.



WEFT's Top Blues CDs of 2016

Submitted by Bob Paleczny

Are you looking for some quality blues music to give as a gift this Holiday Season? Well here's a list of new blues CD's that received the most spins at WEFT 90.1 FM Community Radio station during 2016. WEFT has 14.5 hours of blues programming each week. There's about 8 DJ's, or as WEFT calls them air-shifters, who typically do the shows, so there's a variety of blues styles represented in this list.

WEFT broadcasts throughout Champaign and the surrounding counties and streams worldwide through their website; weft.org

Golden State Lone Star Blues Revue - **Golden State Lone Star Blues Revue**

Johnny Rawls - **Tiger In A Cage**

Guy King - **Truth**

Fiona Boyes - **Professin' The Blues**

Mel Brown & The Homewreckers - **Under Yonder: Mel Brown Live at Pop The Gator 1991**

Various artists - **Classic Chicago Blues - Live & Unreleased**

Corey Dennison Band - **Corey Dennison Band**

Jimmy Thackery & The Drivers - **Spare Keys**

Omar Coleman - **Live! At Rosa's Lounge**

Joanna Connor - **Six String Stories**

Curtis Salgado - **The Beautiful Lowdown**

Ronnie Earl & The Broadcasters - **Maxwell Street**

Magic Sam Blues Band - **Black Magic (2016 Reissue)**

Markey Blue - **The Blues are Knockin'**

John Primer & The Real Deal Bluesband - **That Will Never Do**

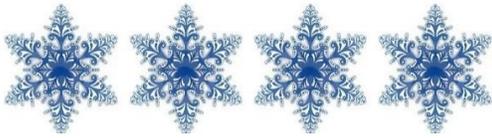
The Golden State Lone Star Blues Revue and Johnny Rawls both appeared in the twin cities within the last year at shows supported in part by PCBS. Guy King and Fiona Boyes both appeared at the Blues Blast Music Awards this fall. Corey Dennison, and bandmate Gerry Hundt appeared last summer with Kilborn Alley at a Krannert at the Research Center show.

Chicago based harmonica player and vocalist Omar Coleman also made the list last year with his "Born And Raised" release. Guitar wizard Joanna Connor, who plays almost every weekend at the Kingston Mines club in

Chicago, was part of last summer's Blues Brews & BBQ Fest when it featured women performers. She also played this summer at Decatur's Blues in Central Park.

It's great to see Delmark Records continue their recent trend of re-releasing classic album's. This year they put out the 2016 reissue of Magic Sam's classic "Black Magic". As with last year's reissue of Junior Well's Southside Blues Jam they sweeten the package with several alternate takes and unreleased tracks.

Any of these CD's would be great additions to a blues lover's collection.



PCBS Blues Memories of 2016

Lorri Coey - The Blues Jams, all of them, are one of my favorite parts of 2016. In particular, the June jam with Dave Dunavent. Not only is he a good musician and a nice guy, but how about stepping up to lead a jam where you don't know any of the players and just rocking it. Loved it!

Greg Altstetter - First time in Memphis to experience International Blues Challenge. I felt an integral part of the competition was the Blues societies supporting their individual challenges' bands as they played their very best to try to move into the Challenge Finals. This annual challenge is vital to PCBS mission to promote our area talent to a wider audience.

Bob Paleczny – Golden State Lone Star Blues Revue at The Accord. Wow, what a show! I've been a longtime fan of Anson Funderburgh, but the guitarist that really impressed me that night was Little Charlie Baty. Two awesome guitarists and the incredible harp playing of Mark Hummel and a rock solid rhythm section, they put on an awesome show.

Dennis Wismer – Favorite blues moment local, Golden State Lone Star Blues Revue, On the road, Harmonicon with Sugar Blue, Billy Branch and Jason Ricci with Rico McFarland on guitar.

2016 Shows with PCBS Support

Blues Expressions – IBC Fundraiser
Jackie Scott
Johnny Rawls
Blues, Brews & BBQ's
David Dunavent (Jam and Blues, Brews & BBQ)
Golden State Lone Star Blues Revue
Chicago Kingsnakes
Jim Anderson – From the Delta to the Prairie
(at Champaign Public Library)
Blues Blast Music Awards



PHOTOS THROUGHOUT 2016 OF BLUES EVENTS

Submitted by Zack Widup and Bob Paleczny





Next meeting of PCBS:

6:00 pm January 12, 2017
Po' Boys - 202 E. University Ave. Urbana
Stick and stay afterwards for a Kilborn Alley Blues
Band juke joint show at Po' Boys

PCBS Executive Board

President - Dennis Wismer
Vice President - Greg Altstetter
Treasurer – 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 - by committee
Newsletter Editor – by committee
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
- Fluid Events
- Krannert Center for the Performing Arts
- The Pawn Shop in Rantoul
- Rossville Sound Werx
- Skins-N-Tins Drum Shop

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
- Krush Foundation
- Samuel Music
- Slumberland Furniture
- Supervalu

Band Memberships

Thanks to our Three Founding Member Bands

Kilborn Alley They'll be playing Abraham Johnson's Annual Birthday Party, December 29 at the Iron Post in Urbana. Their new CD should be out soon!

The Painkillers Blues Band Check them out with their new featured singer, Dawn Clark.

The Sugar Prophets Helped us in many ways, played benefits as we were forming, were IBC judges for us and supported us in numerous endeavors.

These Band have also played active roles in PCBS

Alex Jenkins & The Bombers

Back Pack Jones

Benny Jenkins Bloodline

Black Magic Johnson

Full Throttle

Groove Avenue

Hurricane Ruth

Jackie Scott

The James Jones Trio

Jerry Lee & The Juju Kings

Jimmy Nick & Don't Tell Mama

Johnny Rawls

Low Wines

Mary Jo Curry Blues

Matthew Curry

The Squires

Susan Williams Band



Keith Harden is back in town with a series of shows, several at The Clark Bar, and of course Keithmas Friday Dec. 23 at The Iron Post.

Another musical highlight of the holiday season is when Kilborn Alley's featured singer, Abraham Johnson, celebrates his birthday on December 29. They'll be celebrating this year with a show at The Iron Post. Check the [PCBS online calendar](#) for all the shows in the area this holiday season.

Upcoming Events

Area Blues Shows

Joe Asselin Weekly shows on Thursday night at Leadbelly's Links, Drinks and Arcade (the old Fluid Event Center) 601 N. Country Fair Dr. Primarily blues with guests. Begins January 5 with Andrew Duncanson as guest.

PCBS Monthly Blues Jam – 4th Wednesday of every month 7 to 10 pm Pipa's Pub 604 S. Country Fair Dr.

Sunday Blues at Pop's Place – 3:00 every Sunday
4335 W. Main St. Decatur

Blue Monday at The Alamo - 8:00 every Monday
115 N. 5th St. Springfield

James Armstrong Presents – 6:00 pm every other Thursday
At The Alamo – Springfield

Friends of the Blues – typically presents mid-week shows from spring through fall, at a variety of venues around Kankakee, IL

For more upcoming events, visit our online calendar Prairie Crossroads Blues Society at:
prairiecrossroadsblues.org/pcbscal.html

The Blues are the true facts of life expressed in words and song, inspiration, feeling, and understanding.
- **Willie Dixon**



.....*And to all A Good Night!*