



Inclusive - a newsletter for the Prairie Crossroads Blues Society

January 2013

Double Header at the Highdive By Sandy Hannum

On the evening of December 21 the PCBS hosted a fabulous show at the Highdive.

The Sugar Prophets opened and got everyone going with a few favorites from their album, including the smooth and soulful "Brighter Day" and the wonderfully suggestive "Big Love." They also performed some great covers of well-loved tunes, putting their own Sugar Prophet spin on "Hard to Handle" and "The Thrill is Gone." These musicians have a way of creating terrific dynamics together – even this night when they were one man down, since Joe Asselin was unable to attend. The remaining four – Josh Spence on vocals and harmonica, AJ Williams on guitar, Kevin Wilson on bass, and Chris Logan on drums – made a sound rich enough to keep everyone more than delighted! Dancers were up and at it, and everyone was in the groove. Throughout the show, Josh made several comments about the PCBS and specifically about the Blues in the Schools program. Actually, the Sugar Prophets are going to be intimately involved in the BITS program in Garden Hills School. We thank them for this!!



The Sugar Prophets at the Highdive
Photo courtesy of Jim Hannum

Then at 9:00, Blues Music Award winner Johnny Rawls took the stage. He started out by inviting everyone to get up and dance. Then the band played funky soul blues that was so danceable it was hard to resist! All of Johnny Rawls' songs are originals, but they certainly have the feel of the 1960s and 70s. I was transported back to my youth. However, people of all ages were dancing. The appeal of his music is universal and ageless. A couple of standouts were "Country Boy" and "Can I Get It" which Rawls said was his favorite song.



Johnny Rawls at the Highdive
Photo courtesy of Jim Hannum

It was fun to see Johnny Rawls in person because the band puts on a real show visually as well. In addition to playing their instruments the musicians dance at the same time, in the style of a soul band. The band that came to Champaign was a core group of three – Johnny Rawls on vocals and guitar, James Cosey on guitar, Greg Allen on bass and they were joined by local musician Aaron "A-Train" Wilson on drums. The audience was fully engaged with the performers throughout the show. What a treat!

Looking Forward (and Back)

By Bob Paleczny

Happy New Year to all our members and friends. 2012 saw Prairie Crossroads continue our growth and development as a Blues Society. Thanks to all our members, sponsors and volunteers for their efforts and support. This year saw some changes in the officers of PCBS and we remain dedicated to our mission to preserve, promote and support blues throughout East Central Illinois.

PCBS had lots of accomplishments this past year. Many great performers took part in our Friday series of blues shows. Artists such as Smilin' Bobby, Tee Dee Young, James Armstrong and BMA winner Johnny Rawls performed a short set on WEFT radio and then thrilled audiences with live gigs at local venues. Thanks to the awesome performers and everyone who contributed to our entertainment efforts.

Thanks in part to a grant from the Urbana Public Arts Commission and help from Krannert Center for the Performing Arts; PCBS conducted a **Blues In The Schools (BITS)** program at Wiley School in Urbana. With the help of Cara Maurizi, Ashley Howard, Doug Schroer and our outstanding Education Committee, 330 Wiley School students attended an all-school assembly that featured a blues history lesson and a performance by The Painkillers, one of our member bands. That was followed with a six week after-school program that included harmonica instruction and blues history lessons. Each of the after-school students received a Hohner harmonica donated by Samuel Music.

This past summer PCBS increased our involvement with Champaign Blues Brews & BBQ's Fest. Besides our tent in the main stage area we also conducted a series of BITS workshops inside the Orpheum Children's Museum. Thanks again to all the local artists and volunteers who contributed to our guitar, piano, percussion and vocal workshops. We want to send another thanks to the bluesCentral Dancers who gave several dance lessons and the GH Strummers for their participation.

We've changed our monthly meetings to be more of a social gathering, holding them in a variety of local restaurants and they now include a CD giveaway. This month's meeting is 6:00pm Thursday January 10th at Jupiter's at The Crossing. PCBS held our first organizational meeting there as we were forming. We think it's fitting to return there and begin the New Year with a meeting to plan our future directions. Come out

and join us for some food and fun and get involved by sharing your ideas.

In 2013 PCBS wants to continue the things we do well. We feel our Education, Entertainment, our monthly newsletter **Inclusive** and our Web and Facebook pages are our strongest assets. Let us know what we can do to improve these and any other areas.

Coming in January will be the fundraiser for our IBC winner Jerry Lee & The Juju Kings. Saturday January 19th at Memphis on Main we'll be raising some money to help send our representative band to Memphis. Jerry won our closely contested 2nd Annual IBC challenge in October. Jerry is from Dwight, IL and brings his charismatic energy to all his performances. The Susan Williams Band, a PCBS member band opens for Jerry. Susan and her band play a wide range of styles from blues to country to rock.



Jerry Lee & The Juju Kings

Photo from Jerry Lee & The Juju King's Facebook Page

The International Blues Challenge itself is hosted by The Blues Foundation each year in Memphis, TN. Each of the Foundation's affiliate Societies can hold a competition to select an act to represent them. Truly an international event, the IBC gathers over 100 bands and as many as 75 solo/duo performers, with acts coming from 20 countries. Some of the blues stars who've competed in past IBC's include; Tommy Castro, Susan Tedeschi, Eden Brent, Albert Castiglia, Watermelon Slim, Super Chikan, Trampled Under Foot and the late Michael Burks and Sean Costello. Concurrently with the performance competition the Foundation also holds a "Best Self-Produced CD" competition to award excellence in the studio. PCBS is proud to have selected Hurricane Ruth's CD "The Power Of The Blues ... Feels Like A Hurricane" as our representative in this category. If you have a chance to go to Memphis to experience the IBCs we highly recommend it. There's an incredible amount of talent that comes together, and blues industry officials and fans have a chance to hear the next generation of blues stars. https://www.blues.org/#ref=ibc_index
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We are helping to launch a BITS program at Garden Hills School in Champaign starting in January. The plans call for a series of instructions on various instruments and blues history lessons. We're also planning a series of workshops at area libraries with help from an Orange Krush Grant. We have a separate Education Fund you can donate to <http://www.prairiecrossroadsblues.org/education.html>. All the money raised goes specifically towards helping to teach blues to area youth. If you're an educator or performer consider lending us a hand. Whether you can spend an hour on a Saturday afternoon teaching kids the basics of an instrument, blues music or a brief history of the blues, or have the desire to participate with a series of classes, we can use your help.

We continue to promote our member bands, and once again thank each of them for their dedication to the blues and to our Society. We also strive to bring new performers to our area. There's an incredible amount of talent in the Chicago area, and our neighboring states who traditionally haven't had the chance to play in front of C-U audiences. We want to expose our members to as much of this talent as possible and bring in national touring acts as well.

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, one of our corporate sponsors, has an outstanding show coming up. Saturday February 9th they will present Sweet Honey in the Rock in the Tryon Festival Theater. Their voices blend jazz, hip hop, blues, spirituals and gospel music to show their commitment to justice, peace, resistance, love and hope. We're always happy to see superb talent like this come to our area.

As always we urge everyone to support live local music. We also want to hear your thoughts and ideas on how to make our Society even better and more responsive to what you want. Send us an email any time at: prairiecrossroadsblues@gmail.com. Thank You for your support and Happy New Year!

Blues Music Has No Boundaries By Rich Cibelli

They say that music is universal -- better yet, that it has no boundaries. Music it seems comes in all forms and styles. Nevertheless the kind that I've taken a liking to is blues. It's something about the music that draws me to it. Simply said, it's one of the reasons that I got involved in creating the Prairie Crossroads Blues Society.

As we move into 2013 I am very proud of the many accomplishments our society has achieved. In particular, I'd like to point out that our membership continues to grow and our Blues in the Schools program is really starting to take off. We've also gained another corporate sponsor. These things would not occur without dedicated folks like you who give so much of your time to our organization.

I also want to take time to thank all those in our community who regularly attend our events and especially our Friday night blues shows. We hope you've enjoyed the opportunity to witness great blues artists perform as much as we do.

But there's another side to this story that I want you to know about. You see besides gaining attention in this community, PCBS is also gaining notice in another community that's half way around the world. Let me explain.

My older sister Michelle lives in Tel Aviv, Israel where she works as a nanny. Some time ago she found out about CG & The Hammer, a local Tel Aviv blues band. Turns out my sister introduced herself to the band one day and explained that she was a member of a blues society based in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois.



Dov Hammer of CG & The Hammer

Photo courtesy of Dov Hammer

Several weeks later I received a package containing several of the band's CDs. Moreover, like many four piece blues bands, CG & The Hammer plays many of the great blues standards along with a nice mix of their own titles. I found this out while listening to the bands 2008 "Live in Tel Aviv," release.
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You should also know that we keep Michelle updated with what's going on with PCBS each month with a copy of *Inclusive*. She's also a proud owner of several of our blues society t-shirts that she enjoys showing off. Better yet, she plans to give one to each of the children she takes care of. What a great promotional idea.

Furthermore, as you can see from the photo above, Dov Hammer, the harmonica player in CG & The Hammer is also proud to promote Prairie Crossroads Blues Society merchandise. The band would love to play for us the next time they visit the United States. Who knows -- maybe we can establish an ongoing relationship with the Israeli Blues Society in Tel Aviv someday?

As I mentioned earlier, it seems that music has no boundaries. Case in point is the many blues societies and festivals held around the world. There's also The Fed Ex International Showcase that takes place each year at the start of The International Blues Challenge. If you can find the time to attend, this is one event you don't want to miss.

What I'm trying to say here is that being a part of our blues society has given me the opportunity to learn something about team work, friendship and loyalty. Moreover, it's comforting to know that I've helped contribute to something that's very positive. I hope you'll join with me and help make 2013 another banner year for our organization, the one we call Prairie Crossroads Blues Society.

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!

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

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

Band Memberships

Alex Jenkins & The Bombers will be playing at Blue Monday @ The Alamo in Springfield on January 28.

Black Magic Johnson will be playing at the Long Bridge Golf Course in Springfield on January 11, and at Fat Jack's in Bloomington on February 8.

The Diva and The Dude are taking a 6-week break, and will be back in the middle of February.

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

Hurricane Ruth will be playing this month at Crow's Mill Pub in Springfield on the 19th, and at Shady Nook Pub in Saybrook on the 25th.

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 is just back from an east coast tour. You can see them locally this month at D.R. Digger's on the 2nd, Huber's on the 4th, and The Alamo in Springfield on the 12th.

Matthew Curry & The Fury just played a big show at the Castle Theatre in Bloomington on New Year's Eve. Check their website for coming events.

The Painkillers will be playing this month at the Iron Post in Urbana on the 12th.

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 Memphis on Main, kicking off the IBC send-off party for Jerry Lee & The Juju Kings.

Timmy D & Blind Justice will be playing this month at The Old Orchard Inn in Effingham on the 11th.

Tombstone Bullet will be playing at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Springfield on February 10.

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 will be held at 6:00 pm on Thursday January 10 at Jupiter's at the Crossing, 2511 Village Green Pl. Champaign. Join us for a short meeting, then stick around and enjoy some food and drinks together.

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 January 27. Please submit articles, ideas, or comments to smhannum@gmail.com.

Inclusive Staff

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Mt. Bluesmore



Hey Wolf! Have you recovered from New Year's Eve?

Yeah, Muddy. I'm steady as a rock. Heh heh.

I'm lookin' forward to the big IBC sendoff party for Jerry Lee and the Juju Kings!

Mmm hmm. EVERYBODY's gonna be there enjoyin' the great blues and backin' our band for the challenge in Memphis!

EVENTS

Jan 1 – Billy Galt & Jeff Kerr – El Toro Bravo – Champaign – 6:30 pm

Jan 2 – Kilborn Alley Blues Band – D.R. Digger's – Juke Joint Show – Champaign – 9 pm

Jan 4 – Kilborn Alley Blues Band – Huber's – Champaign – 8 pm

The Surreal Deal – Memphis on Main – Champaign – 9 pm

Jan 5 – Billy Galt & Jeff Kerr – Huber's – Champaign – 8 pm

Jan 7 – Magic Matthew – Blue Monday @ The Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm

Jan 8 – Billy Galt & Jeff Kerr – El Toro Bravo – Champaign – 6:30 pm

Jan 9 – James Armstrong – Goodfellas – Pekin, IL – 7 pm

Jan 11 – Black Magic Johnson – Long Bridge Golf Course – Springfield, IL – 6 pm

Marc Cohn – Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts – Bloomington, IL – 7:30 pm

Timmy D. & Blind Justice – The Old Orchard Inn – Effingham, IL – 9 pm

Jan 12 – The Painkillers – The Iron Post – Urbana – 6 pm

Kilborn Alley Blues Band – Blue Monday @ The Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm

Jan 15 – Billy Galt & Jeff Kerr – El Toro Bravo – Champaign – 6:30 pm

Jan 19 – Susan Williams Band – Memphis on Main – Champaign – 8 pm

Hurricane Ruth – Crow's Mill Pub – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm

Jerry Lee & The Juju Kings – Memphis on Main – Champaign – 9:30 pm

Jan 21 – Groove Daddies – Blue Monday @ The Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm

Jan 22 – Billy Galt & Jeff Kerr – El Toro Bravo – Champaign – 6:30 pm

Jan 25 – Hurricane Ruth – Shady Nook Pub – Saybrook, IL – 9 pm

Jan 28 – Alex Jenkins & The Bombers – Blue Monday @ The Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm

Jan 29 – Billy Galt & Jeff Kerr – El Toro Bravo – Champaign – 6:30 pm

Feb 4 – Robert Sampson & Blues Gumbo – 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

Feb 10 – Tombstone Bullet – Knights of Columbus Hall – Springfield, IL – 2 pm

Feb 11 – Victor Wainwright – Blue Monday @ The Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm

Feb 18 – Hurricane Ruth – Blue Monday @ The Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm

Mar 4 – Brandon Santini – Blue Monday @ The Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm

Mar 6 – Kilborn Alley Blues Band – D.R. Digger's – Juke Joint Show – Champaign – 9 pm

Mar 8 – Timmy D & Blind Justice – The Old Orchard Inn – Effingham, IL – 9 pm

Mar 11 – Edie Snow Birthday Tribute w/ Bill Evans – Blue Monday @ The Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm

Mar 25 – J.P. Soars – Blue Monday @ The Alamo – Springfield, IL – 8:30 pm