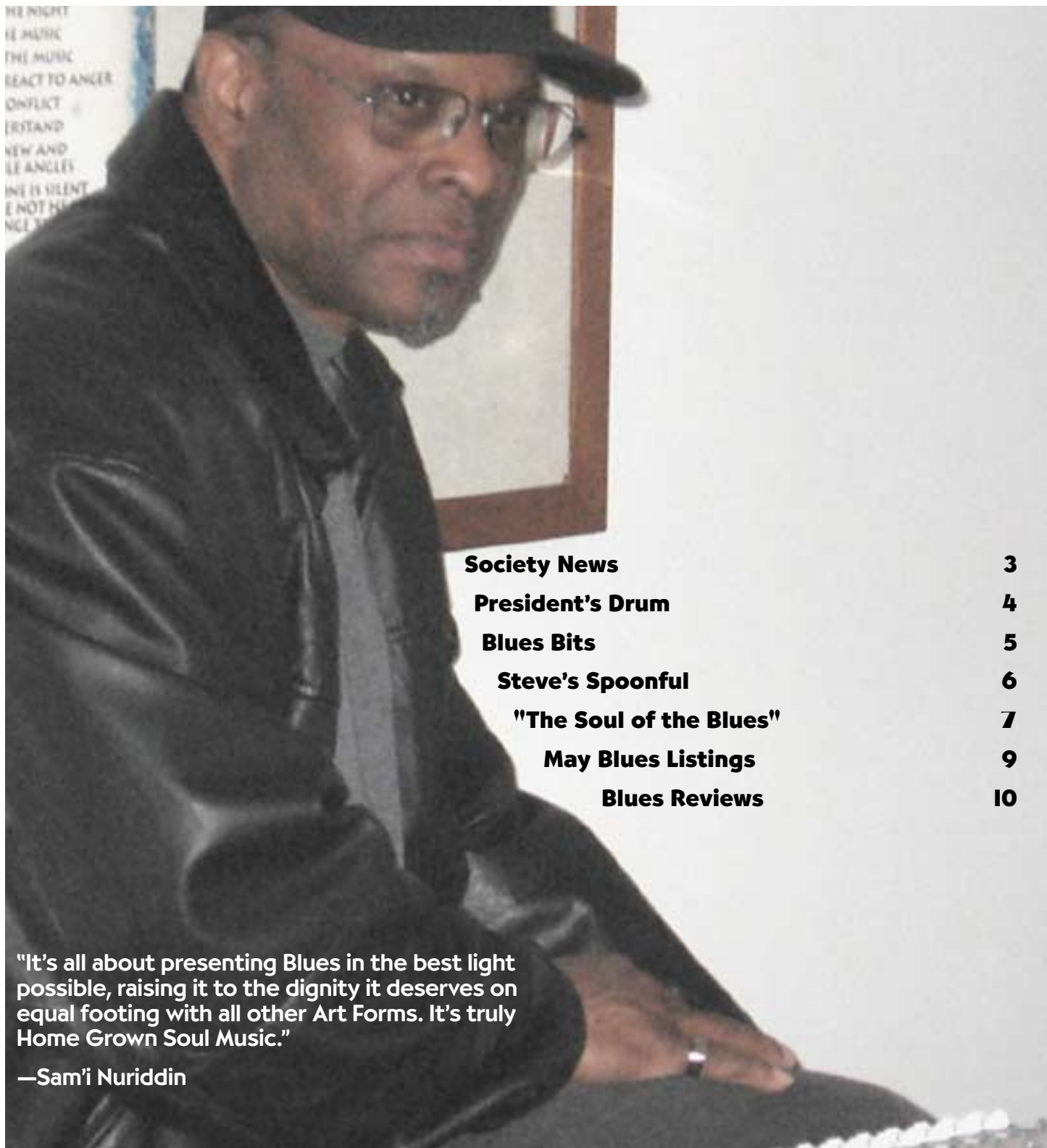




CAPITAL BLUES MESSENGER

May 2007

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"It's all about presenting Blues in the best light possible, raising it to the dignity it deserves on equal footing with all other Art Forms. It's truly Home Grown Soul Music."

—Sam'i Nuriddin

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1/4 page \$40

1/3 page \$55

1/2 page \$70

2/3 page \$100

full page \$125.

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THE DC BLUES SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 77315
WASHINGTON DC 20013-7315
202-962-0112

<http://www.dcblues.org>

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The D.C. Blues Society is a non-profit section 501(c)(3) organization. Annual membership: Student \$15 (send copy of photo id); Individual \$25, Family \$35, Canada \$35 (US), other countries \$50 (US). Contributions (not dues) to the D.C. Blues Society are tax-deductible. To join, send a check & address to the P.O. box above. There is an application on page 11.

The DC Blues Calendar is usually published monthly (except for a combined December-January issue and occasional other double issue). It contains information on society events, blues listings and other items of interest. Recent issues are also downloadable as PDF files from the Society's website, www.dcblues.org.

This issue is © 2007 DC Blues Society.

Note—The deadline for each issue is the 17th of the previous month. Send advertising and newsletter contributions to newsletter@dcblues.org Calendar listings should be sent to Steve Levine, 5910 Bryn Mawr Rd, College Park, MD 20740 or e-mailed to cypressgrove@hotmail.com. Changes in your name and address and/or membership status should be forwarded to membership@dcblues.org or mailed to: P.O. BOX 77315, Washington, DC 20013-7315.

Cover: *Sunday Jam* host Sam'i Nurriden covers the soundboard. *Sam'i knows DC Blues*—this Washington native has been running the Blues Jam at for at least five years (well, more than he can remember!) Sam'i enjoys "giving novice musicians the chance to get their feet wet by performing in front of a live audience. What they learn on that stage can't be compared to any formal lesson and they thoroughly enjoy the opportunity."

Check out Sam'i's Blues Jam the first Sunday of every month at Chick Halls Surf Club in Bladensburg Md."



**The DC Blues Society
Presents**

Mudcat Blues Band

The Day After the Congressional Blues Festival

**Thursday, May 17
8 pm-11:30 pm**

Tickets

\$15.00 at Door

Advance Tickets

Members: \$10.00

Non Members: \$12.00

Order Tickets:

(301) 322-4808



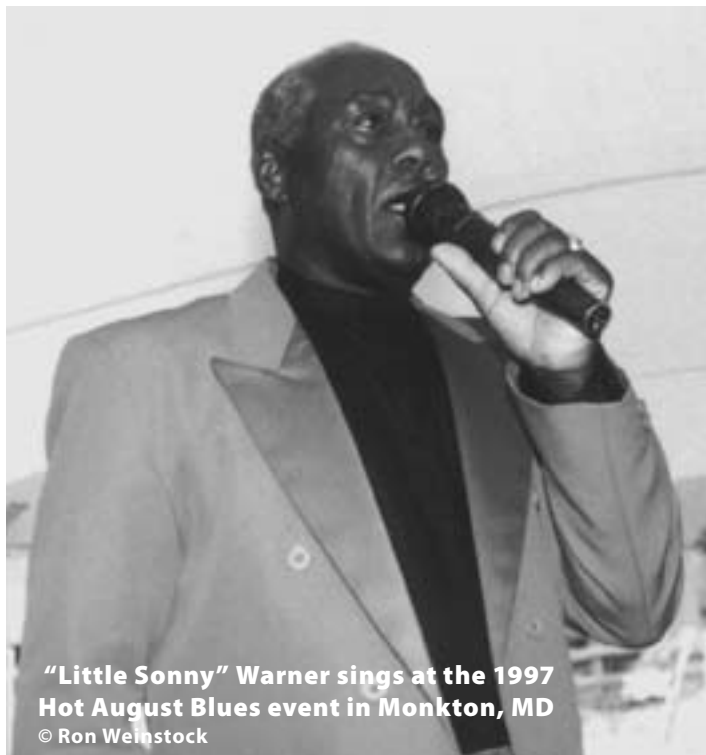
Photo by Marc Golub

Deep swamp, rockin' and rollin', bad to the bone blues
-- many have attempted to compare his style, pin it down to something familiar.
The adjectives used to define this show are too extensive to list.
One thing is certain -- Mudcat is the kind of band that gets an audience moving.

Chick Hall's Surf Club

4711 Kenilworth Ave.
Bladensburg, MD
(301) 927-6310

Visit the DC Blues Society at <http://dcblues.org/>



“Little Sonny” Warner sings at the 1997 Hot August Blues event in Monkton, MD
© Ron Weinstock

DC Blues Legend Sonny Warner Passes

By Ron Weinstock

Haywood “Little Sonny” Warner, one of the greatest blues artists to emerge from the Washington DC music scene, passed away on April 12, 2007 from the effects of prostate cancer. Warner, born October 30, 1930, grew up in Falls Church, Virginia on Shreve Road, behind what was then Peacock Buick. As a teen he was part of a gospel group **The Four Sons**, who sang at the Second Baptist Church in Falls Church. This was the beginning of his lengthy musical career. This group went up to New York and as **The Rockets**, backed legendary Atlantic Records session pianist **Van Walls** on Walls’ single releases, “After Midnight” and “Open the Door.”

Sonny became part of the DC music scene, singing at various area clubs while holding down a day job. In the mid 1950’s he became valet for the legendary **Lloyd Price** in Prices’ touring band. Price had established the Washington DC based KRC label with **Harold Logan** and **Bill Boskent**. Being a valet also included some part-time vocal duties. Initially he shared duties with Price’s cousin, **Larry Williams**, but Specialty Records’ **Art Rupe** got Williams to sign with them and start on his own career. Warner wasn’t unhappy, telling blues scholar **Larry Benicewicz**, “You see, Larry was also a hairdresser, which gave him an advantage, because Lloyd would always want to look good for his public. I could never compete with that.”

Benicewicz noted that Warner tired of Price’s grueling road itinerary and returned to the Washington area where, still popular as a local entertainer, he began hanging out at various

clubs, including the legendary Maryland venue, where he would sit in with the locals. He recalled to Benicewicz, “I met **Jay McNeely** at a place called Evan’s Grill in Forrestville, MD, and his singer wasn’t doin’ nothin. The crowd egged me to go on, so I got Jay to agree. I never saw that vocalist again.” Jay asked Sonny to go on the road with him, and a few months later he left his day job and small local gigs behind to join McNeely in Seattle (where Big Jay was based). He fronted McNeely’s Band, scoring with his **Ray Charles** influenced vocals. In Seattle, they were recorded at the Birdland club which McNeely has issued on Swingin’ label later (and are available today on Collectables.) These recordings mixed a number of wild instrumentals, showcasing McNeely’s honking tenor sax, along with Warner’s soulful singing. The disc includes an early version of “There is Something on Your Mind.”

Big Jay’s recording of “There is Something on Your Mind” (with Little Sonny’s vocal) was the big moment in Sonny’s career, with the record going gold. The record, issued on the Swingin’ label of **Hunter Hancock**, **Roger Davenport**, and McNeely, became a major R&B smash in 1959, even reaching #44 on the Pop Top 100. Sonny’s wonderful delivery and his ad-lib scatting are still appealing almost five decades later. It was a classic recording of a terrific song and has been covered by numerous performers, including **Bobby Marchan**, **James Cotton**, **Kenny Neal**, **Professor Longhair** and **B.B. King**. Over the next couple years, several more singles—some simply instrumentals—were waxed by McNeely and band, but none reached the success of the song that took Big Jay, Little Sonny and band touring across the country, playing some of the great venues, and sharing the stage with other R&B giants.

Eventually, Sonny left McNeely and returned to the Washington DC area. He was able to hook up with Bill Boskent, who Sonny would have known when he was with Lloyd Price because Boskent was Price’s road manager. Larry Benicewicz notes that Boskent recorded for Sonny a pop flavored ballad, “Wallflower.” The single was backed by the bouncy “That’s For Me” (both Boskent compositions) for the first Bee Bee (that’s Bill Boskent) release in 1961. Sonny recorded two more Bee Bee sides (duets with **Marie Allen**) in 1962. Benicewicz stated the recordings had an impact in the Mid-Atlantic region, but did not break out as had been hoped. Then Boskent recorded Warner for a new Lloyd Price enterprise, Concertone records, but again the recording did not meet expectations. Later in 1966, Sonny recorded what was possibly his best known post-Big Jay singles, “Bell Bottom Blue Jeans” and “Been So Long,” which were produced by **Ted Bodner**. The former tune remained a staple of his repertoire until the end.

Over the next few decades, Sonny continued to perform, being one of the most highly regarded artists in the region. He evoked Ray Charles as he sang blues and soul songs, always backed by a crack band. He also continued to play top venues in the region. When Lamont’s opened in 1990 he was the venue’s opening act. He played the Warner Theater, The Taste of DC, and was

Society News Continues on P. 8

President's Drum

In an effort to move the DCBS publication from its generic name of the "calendar" to something more in keeping with the DCBS mission, we are changing our newsletter's name. Welcome to the new *Capital Blues Messenger*. The name speaks for itself.

In the March issue I mentioned that the lineup for the festival was still under development. This year's festival is on Saturday, 1 September from 1:00PM to 7:30PM. And here's the tentative festival lineup:

- Special surprise guest
- **Clarence "The Bluesman" Turner & Band**
- **The Mary Shaver Band**
- **The Orioles**
- **The Nighthawks**
- **Bobby Parker & The Blues Night Band**

You may notice the decidedly local flavor of the lineup. This is the Society's 20th anniversary as you've heard me say more than once. It seems natural to feature some of the performers that have graced the DCBS festival stage over the past 19 years. And because this anniversary is all about the DC Blues Society and the DC region, this special occasion should herald the fantastic talent in our own backyard.

I'm sure you know that our annual festival is free to the public. While DCBS has received grants from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities for many years, the grants have typically accounted for only about 30% of festival expenses. DCBS must match the DCAH grant, which is easy enough in terms of the amounts we must spend to put on the show. So, this matching money and the other 30% or so of needed festival funds comes from where? Well, it once came from DCBS savings that accumulated in better days when members better supported DCBS activities and events. Needless to say that well has all but run dry.

Other sources of income to support the festival include event revenue, merchandise sales, and donations. Before raising membership fees last year your collective dues did not cover the cost of producing the newsletter. Now, after the increase, it's a wash. You can help keep the Society doing Blues things by coming out to events, buying DCBS stuff, and giving generously when we solicit donations to support the annual festival.

Here's where I make my ritual plea for volunteers. But let's talk specifics. We desperately need a Webmaster and helper. When content gets old or would-be postings languish on someone's hard drive, we get lots of complaints—rarely a volunteer offering help. We also need someone to track transactions and prepare financial reports. Finally, we need someone to help our NEW volunteer board member and Media Relations Director—**Joe Vallina**—create fliers, send faxes, and develop promotion strategies (ticket giveaways, ticket placement with retailers,



Felix with Norman Bowlding aka "Boze the Clown" (and someone's drawers (see more next issue...))
© Bonnie McKeown

special invitations, etc.) like Joe. Send me an email at president@dcblues.org

(Too) Many of you missed the rousing panel discussion on the current state of the Blues music industry titled "Who Stole the Soul From the Blues." The crowd was excited and engaged the panel with insightful and heartfelt comments and questions. The panel included professor and WPFW host **Dr. Jared A. Ball**, musician **Mike Baytop**, **DJ Tom-Tom (Tom Bracey)**, Chicago singer/drummer **Larry Taylor**, and "Barrelhouse" **Bonni**

McKeown, a West Virginia blues singer-songwriter. We had to turn out the lights on the acoustic blues show featuring **Mike Baytop**, on guitar and bones, **Jay Summerour** on harmonica and **Barrelhouse Bonni** on piano and **Larry Taylor** as special guest vocalist. The audience responded enthusiastically to Larry's performance by forming a long line to get an autographed copy of his CD *In This House* (AV Records 2004) and have him autograph memorabilia.

I want to encourage more of you members to attend our upcoming shows. Right now many non-members help subsidize the benefits only members get. Put your support where your mouth is. Next up is the **Memphis Gold show** at the Surf Club on 12 May. On the following Thursday, 17 May, you can check out the incomparable **Mudcat** from Atlanta. These promise to be blow-out shows!

Blues Always, Felix McClairn
President

Volunteer Opportunities

We have a number of DCBS activities that our members can participate in. Contact volunteer@dcblues.org if you're interested!

Here are some opportunities:

- Distribute DCBS flyers (you can distribute our flyers anytime by printing and copying our flyers posted online.
- Get your name in print by writing articles (such as CD and/or show reviews) and/or taking photos of events to include in the *Capital Blues Messenger*.
- Speak with organizations/corporations/restaurants/venues/CD stores etc. and ask for gift certificates/discounts for members/merchandise to use as DCBS raffle prizes.
- Ask the same as above if they'd like to be a corporate sponsor of DCBS events and get free advertising.
- Recruit new Members/Volunteers/Board Members.
- Assist with updating the DCBS web site www.dcblues.org.
- Assist the DCBS Membership Coordinator with Access database updates/maintenance.
- Contact DCBS members whose addresses and/or e-mail addresses are not working.
- Invite all your friends to DCBS events!

Blues Bits

Brought to you by dcb blues.org and WPFW. These sketches of DC area Blues notables can be heard on WPFW-FM Blues shows.

JELLY ROLL MORTON

Born Ferdinand Joseph Lamothe in New Orleans in 1890, this artist's legendary piano playing rocked the bars and brothels in New Orleans to Chicago to New York. However, in just a few years this bridge between Blues and jazz had gone from world famous to down-and-out in Washington D.C. in 1937.

But it was his D.C. stay that cemented his reputation as one of the creators of what became known as jazz. Ferdinand initially had a regular gig at the Jungle Inn on U St. A few months later he was part-owner of the club, and renamed it the Blue Moon.

The July 1937 edition of *Down Beat* said that it was some sight seeing Ferdinand playing the blues, his thumping heel beating out the slow rhythm, his eyes closed and his head thrown back, and the sad notes sprinkling from the keyboard into the low-ceiling room.

Ferdinand, also famously known as Jelly Roll Morton, died in Los Angeles on July 10, 1941, after blaming his declining health on a voodoo curse.



Friday, June 8

AUTOMATIC SLIM DUO 8PM-11PM
(Inside New Deal cafe)

Saturday June 9 (outside in Roosevelt Center)

MIKE WESTCOTT & BLUES ON BOARD 6:45PM

CLARENCE "THE BLUESMAN" TURNER 5:15PM

ACME BLUES COMPANY 4:00PM

THE PAULVERIZERS 3:00PM

THE ROADHOUSE CREW 2:00PM

CURTIS BLUES 1:00PM

Saturday night: Archie Edward's Barbershop- New Deal Cafe

4TH ANNUAL GREENBELT BLUES FESTIVAL

113 CENTERWAY, in historic GREENBELT, MD (ROOSEVELT CENTER)

WWW.NEWDEALCAFE.COM for info.

Steve's Spoonful

by Steve Hoffman

So here I am, writing the first in a series of monthly columns for the DC Blues Society newsletter. And there you are, reading it. So what are we both up to? Well, I'll be serving up a buffet of blues-related morsels each month, and you can fill up your plate with 'em or nibble at 'em a la carte. As to drinks, BYOB.

A Spoonful of 1971

I'm getting old enough to be nostalgic about whatever the heck I've done in my life (and who I've done it with), and so I've named my column after my first foray into blues. The year was 1971. I was a scrawny, long-haired hippie attending Antioch College, a degree-granting insane asylum run by the inmates, of which I was one. Antioch had a radio station (WYSO, as in Yellow Springs, Ohio). Back then, college radio was a wide-open, free-form frontier and any creative weirdo with the inclination to hang around the studio could get an on-air slot. Which I did. Inspired by the song "Spoonful Blues" (and using the **John Hammond** version as my theme song), I called my show "Steve's Spoonful." I spun Blues, R&B, Rock'n'Roll, and whatever—a spoonful of this, a spoonful of that. That same spirit will infuse this column.

Blues from Boise

Frankly, I don't keep up with new blues albums the way I used to, but every now and then a disc grabs my attention. One such is **John Nemeth's** *Magic Touch* on Blind Pig. His sound is very retro, owing a lot to early 60's soul. His voice is soulful and his harmonica playing impeccable. His music has depth, so dig it. A Boise, Idaho native, Nemeth hit the scene two years ago filling in for the ailing **Sam Myers** with **Anson Funderburgh and the Rockets** and now is making a name for himself. He'll play the DC area next month – June 19 at the Clarendon Ballroom and June 21 at Twin's Lounge.

Radio Oases on the Net

I'm an old-school radio guy—I love AM and FM and have a radio in every room in my house. But let's face it, if you're seeking diverse offerings of roots music like blues, conventional radio doesn't cut it nowadays. In our market, WPFW is the only station regularly playing blues. But the cool thing is that, with most radio stations simulcasting on the internet, your computer and modem can guide you to refreshing oases of cool music anywhere in the radio desert. Three of my favorites are New Orleans' WWOZ (www.woz.org). Memphis' WEVL (www.wevl.org), and St. Louis' KDHX (www.kdhx.org). There's no charge to tune into these stations. Check out their schedules for blues and other roots music that will quench musical thirsts you didn't even know you had. Your ears will thank me.

And of course, DC's own WPFW also streams its eclectic blend of Jazz and Justice (and blues) on the internet, at www.wpfw.org.

Big Chief, Meet Lily Allen

Blues where you'd least expect it: Underneath the half-sung, half-spoken lyrics of **Lily Allen's** "Knock 'em Out" are the polyrhythm and melody of the New Orleans Mardi Gras classic "Big Chief." Allen is a very cheeky, talented 20-year Brit (her debut *Alright, Still* is my favorite pop album of the 21st century so far). "Knock 'em Out" starts with a sample from the original **Earl King/Professor Longhair** recording, and then her band takes over, doing a very credible job of replicating "Big Chief's" second-line riffs as Allen chants and rants about lame guys who try to pick her up in bars.

Speaking of New Orleans, I'm making my first post-Katrina trip to the Crescent City for the first weekend of this year's New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. I'll report on it in next month's column.

Steve Hoffman hosts "Don't Forget the Blues," Wednesdays noon to 1 pm on WPFW (89.3 FM). Contact him at steve@goodnote.com.



DC Blues Society Presents Memphis Gold

Memphis Gold has played with such popular Memphis performers as J. J. Blues, Fieldstones, Little Milton, Albert King, B. B. King, as well as Carla and Rufus Thomas.

Tickets

\$15.00 at Door

Advance Tickets

Members: \$10.00

Non Members: \$12.00

Order Tickets:

(301) 322-4808

Saturday, May 12
8 pm-12 am

Chick Hall's Surf Club
4711 Kenilworth Ave.
Bladensburg, MD
(301) 927-6310



Visit the DC Blues Society at <http://dcblues.org/>

"The Soul of the Blues"

Some critical comments during the April 14th panel discussion and acoustic show entitled "Who Stole the Soul From the Blues?" The event, held at the Westminister Presbyterian Church, was sponsored by the DC Blues Society as part of our 20th Anniversary celebration.



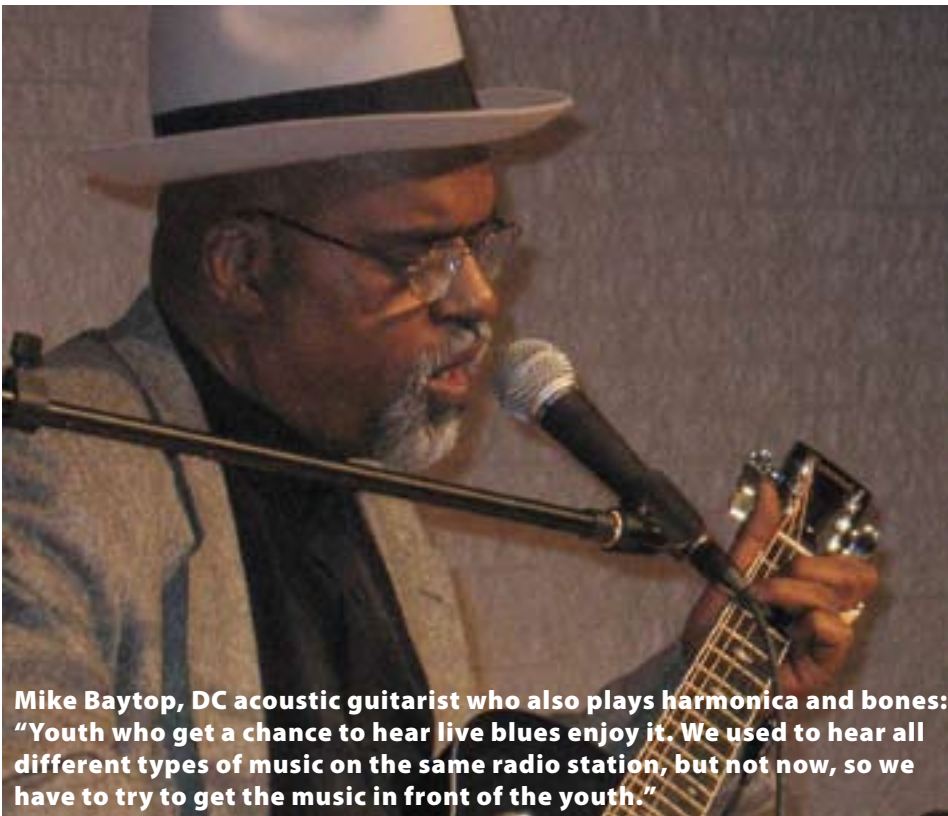
Barrelhouse Bonni McKeown, blues piano player, educator, singer-songwriter:
"The Handy Awards are won by younger non-African American artists, but the black artists seemingly have to be old or dead to win. Not only the commercial music industry, but the nonprofit Blues Foundation fails to support upcoming black blues artists."



Dr. Jared Ball, Morgan State communications professor and host of the Freemix hip hop commentary on current events on WPFW:
"The 'powers that be' use artificial classifications of music to divide people by genres and generations. Hip hop started out as protest music and social commentary but has been exploited and degraded."



Larry Taylor, Chicago singer and drummer:
"Today's not-yet-known traditional blues artists need support from the African-American community and all fans who like this type of music. Blues musicians are not getting their due in royalties or gigs."



Mike Baytop, DC acoustic guitarist who also plays harmonica and bones:
"Youth who get a chance to hear live blues enjoy it. We used to hear all different types of music on the same radio station, but not now, so we have to try to get the music in front of the youth."



Tom Bracy, DJ and promoter of live blues, soul, R&B and oldies shows:
"Music is a generational thing, and getting people out to shows gets more difficult as they get older. However, if a venue can stay in business long enough to be dependable, it can attract a dependable older crowd."



"Little Sonny" joins the crowd at the 2000 Gator Blues Festival.
© Ron Weinstock

Society News Continued from P. 3

twice featured at the DC Blues Festival (1992 and 1998). With his singing and his stage presence, he would capture the audience. He was a whirling dervish on the stage. And as former DC Blues Society President **Bob Gray** would say, no one could sing "There is Something on Your Mind" like Sonny Warner could.

One highlight of those years was Sonny's reunion with Big Jay McNeely at the August 1997, Hot August Blues event in Monkton, Maryland. It may have been the only time since they split in the early sixties that the two shared the stage together. **Brad Selko**, (who, with his late wife **Marcia**, produced the event) mentioned that people still tell him Sonny's performance that day was among the most memorable shows they had ever seen. This writer also remembers Sonny as one of the acts at the 2000 Gator Blues Festival at Lamont's, where he left the stage to wade into the enthusiastic crowd.

Later on, Sonny continued performing, but slowed down his pace. He was discovered by local community activist **Dave Eckert**. Eckert, who played an important role in efforts to recover the civil rights legacy of the Falls Church area, had earlier helped the region appreciate the role of Piedmont Blues pioneer **John Jackson**. Eckert helped arrange performances for Sonny at the City's First Friday celebration, the annual Tinner Hill Festival (a celebration of the first rural NAACP chapter in Virginia) and at the City of Falls Church's "Concerts in the Park" series (held Falls Church's Cherry Hill Park.)

In more recent years, Sonny endured health ailments. He received treatment for prostate cancer, and slowed down his performances. Some of his last performances were as part of a revue, "The DC Allstars," which included **Pookie Hudson & the Spaniels, The Jewels, The Velons, The Orioles, Skip Mahoney & the Casuals, and The Winstons**. Still, his health problems limited his ability to perform. When Big Jay called Sonny to join him in Italy to help him celebrate his 80th Birthday, Sonny was unable to join his fellow legend.

I happened upon Sonny and his wife **Catherine** on several occasions the past couple years, and it would always bring a smile just to chat with him. Even when, last summer at a Safeway parking lot, when he told me his was undergoing chemotherapy for the prostate cancer, he still had the infectious smile and optimism about the future. Sonny was as nice a person as he was one of the finest blues singers and entertainers ever to come out of Washington. He was so good that if there is ever a DC Blues Hall of Fame, he will be one of the charter members.

Sonny was survived by his wife, Catherine, seven children and two stepchildren; sister **Jessie Mae Simmons** and brother, **Joseph Hunter**; 13 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren, eight sisters-in-law, six brothers-in-law, numerous nieces and nephews, other relatives and many friends. To his family we extend our condolences.

Society News Continues on P. 10

May Blues Listings

- 1** Daryl Davis @ Clarendon Ballroom
- 2** Saffire @ Wolf Trap
Automatic Slim @ Cat's Eye
- 4** Tom Principato Band @ Bangkok Blues
- 5** ACME Blues Company, Tommy Lepson Band @ Chick Hall's Surf Club
"How to Play Blues Piano" Workshop taught by Judy Luis-Watson @ Archie Edwards Barbershop
Dagmar and Seductones @ Mom's in the Kitchen
Sherwood Blues Band @ Olney Tavern
- 6** **DCBS Jam** @ Chick Hall's Surf Club
Melanie Mason @ Ruby's Cafe
Ruby Hayes Band @ Glen Echo
8 Idle Americans @ Bangkok Blues
- 10** ACME Blues Company @ JVs
Skyla Burrell Band @ Cat's Eye
- 11** ACME Blues Company @ Bangkok Blues
Sherwood Blues Band @ Chick Hall's Surf Club
- 12** **DCBS presents Memphis Gold** @ Chick Hall's Surf Club
Brian Gross Trio @ Sala Thai, Bethesda
Barbara Martin @ Old Town Arts and Crafts Festival
Cathy Ponton King @ Madams Organ
- 13** **Maria Muldaur** @ Jammin Java
Barbara Martin & Mac Walter @ Bethesda Fine Arts Festival
- 14** Charles "Big Daddy" Stallings @ Westminster Church
- 16** **Congressional Blues Festival** @ Mellon Auditorium
- 18** **Guitar Shorty** @ Chick Hall's Surf Club
Cehpas & Wiggins @ Montpelier Arts Center
- ACME Acoustic @ Frisco Grille
Blue Smoke @ Pisces Lounge
BG & Mojo Hands @ Chevy Chase Ballroom
Shambells @ Cats Eye
Jamie Lynch @ Dulles Hilton
- 19** Ruby Hayes @ Chick Hall's Surf Club
Nighthawks @ "Rockin' Spring Fling," Deale Elks Lodge
Daryl Davis Band @ Wine in the Woods
Melanie Mason Band, Barbara Martin & Mac Walter @ Northern Virginia Fine Arts Festival
Leroy Thomas & Zydeco Road Runners @ Catonsville Barn Theater
Sherwood Blues Band @ Frisco Grill
- 20** Charles "Big Daddy" Stallings @ Wine in the Woods
Asylum Street Spankers @ Rams Head
Melanie Mason Band @ Taste of Wheaton
- 24** **Candy Kane** @ Chick Hall's Surf Club
Skyla Burrell Band @ JV's
- 25** ACME Blues Co. @ Murphy's Pub
Brian Gross Trio @ Sala Thai, Bethesda
Nighthawks @ Sully's
- 26** **Bobby Rush, Chick Willis, Bobby Parker, Big G, Jim Bennett & Lady Mary** @ Lamont's
- 27** Sherwood Blues Band @ Zodiac
- Bobby Smith @ Firehouse Cue
Jim Bennett & Lady Mary w. Unique Creation Band @ Lamont's
Detroit Slim @ Full Moon
Automatic Slim Jam @ Wahoo's
Matt Bishop @ Zoo Bar
Pro Blues Jam @ Sully's
- Mon**
Blues jam @ Surf Club
Blues Jam @ Bangkok Blues
- Tue**
Ben Andrews @ Madam's Organ
Doug Parks open mic @ Downtown Saloon
- Wed**
Robert Lighthouse @ Chief Ike's Mambo Room
Big Dog Band @ Cat's Eye
Blues Jam with Rude Dog @ Club 347
Blue Lou's Jam @ Surf Club
- Thu**
Open Mic Blues Jam hosted by Idle Americans (starting April 5, continuing every other Thursday) @ The Country Store
Ronnie Ray Jam @ Cactus Flats
Big Boy Little Band Jam @ Zoo Bar
Jam @ New Vegas Lounge
Unforgiven @ The Saloun
Ronnie Ray Jam @ Cactus Flats
- Fri**
Blue Flames @ Bertha's
Open Mic @ Pharoah's
- Sat**
Jam @ Archie's Barbershop
Red Jones @ Full Moon
Walter Robinson Band @ Pharoah's

WEEKLY BLUES EVENTS Sun

- Steve Kraemer (other Sunday bands listed those days) @ Cat's Eye
Paulverizers Jam @ Surf Club (except 1st Sunday)
Big Four Combo Brunch @ Gordon Beirsch

20/20 Vision of the Blues

By Emma Ward

Radio DJ Steve Hoffman of WPFW (89.3 FM) in conjunction with the DC Blues Society's 20th anniversary celebration, presented "20 Things You Don't Know About the Blues," on Sunday, March 25, 2007 at The Electric Maid located at 268 Carroll Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20012 (Takoma neighborhood).

Mr. Hoffman's presentation was electrifying! It made many of us aware that there were numerous things that we know/don't know about the blues. He clearly made us aware that the blues singer Robert Johnson never sold his soul to the devil. What many of us know about our blues singers is their "nickname." Do you know the real name/birth certificate/census name of Bo Diddley, Dinah Washington, Speckle Red & Piano Red, Smiley Lewis, Guitar Slim, Tampa Red, Jr. Wells, Slim Harpo and Etta James (to name a few)? If you were/had been there, you would have/had an opportunity to "show off" your knowledge and win a prize.

Do you know where the term "blue" comes from? Does a blues man have the blues? We know about "Blue Monday," "True Blue," "Blue Ribbons," "Blue Blood," and the beauty of the "bluebird," and the "blue sky." How can the word "blue" be so powerful in such a negative/positive way? What a difference the word "blue" makes when the letter "s" is added to it!

Twenty years (20), twenty (20) questions, and 20/20 vision. Maybe this little bit of information will stimulate you to ask 20 questions that you want answered about the blues and have our historians get closer to the 20/20 perfect/hind sight vision of the blues.

How to Play Blues Piano

Learn how to play blues music by ear in this introductory workshop for beginning level piano players. We will de-mystify the process and get you playing for the fun of it. Judy Luis-Watson, who is the piano player with BluesWorks, has taught popular blues piano workshops at numerous music camps throughout the USA and given private lessons at her studio. She will focus on teaching two traditional songs, a slow blues and a boogie woogie, using basic blues chords, turnarounds, and riffs. Bring a keyboard, stand, and headphones.

\$30/person. Pre-registration by May 1, 2007 is required. To pre-register, email: jluisw@aol.com. Information: www.acousticblues.com or www.bluesworksband.biz.

Farewell Acoustic Blues Jam

The monthly Acoustic Blues Jam at Ellington's on Eighth are sadly coming to an end. After nine years, our host is closing. Ellington's on Eighth closes on Mother's Day, May 13th. The Farewell Acoustic Jam will be on Thursday, May 10.

If your establishment is able to host our monthly Acoustic Blues Jams, then please contact president@dcblues.org

Koko Taylor *The Old School*



As the title suggests, the recording is directed to hard-hitting, old-school Chicago blues and includes interpretations along with some originals. Chicago's Blues Queen handles them in her own hold-nothing back style. One track is by **The Blues Machine**, and the other eleven tracks have a studio band led by **Criss Johnson** and drummer

Willie 'The Touch' Sutton (featuring guest appearances from **Bob Margolin**, **Billy Branch** and **Kaz Kazanoff**). Most of the new tunes are from Koko herself. "Gonna Buy Me a Mule" is a striking song as she tells her man she's gonna take the place of him. The jaunty warning, "You Better Watch Your Step," with Billy Branch playing some **Jimmy Reed** inspired harp. Bob Margolin adds slide guitar to **Memphis Minnie's** "Black Rat," and **Lefty Dizz's** "Bad Avenue." The arrangements of both tunes are a bit cluttered, though, and the performances come off as too hectic. If Criss Johnson's arrangements allowed more spaces in the backing, *Old School* would have sounded more like Koko's first Alligator album, *I Got What It Takes*. I have no fault with Koko's performances as she sings really well here—sounding so at home with the material. It's also nicely programmed with very nice covers of a couple songs associated with **Muddy Waters**, "Don't Go No Further," and "Young Fashioned Ways." I just wish the attempt at being 'old school' by the band had a bit lighter, more swinging groove than they play with here.

Philip Walker *Going Back Home*

Going Back Home finds the Gulf Coast native and longtime West Coast bluesman in solid form. The strength of the Delta Groove disc is Walker's characteristically strong vocals (with just a hint of sandpaper in his voice and a rocking/swinging guitar. Producer **Randy Chortkoff** has selected a solid backing band, including guitarist **Rusty Zinn**, **Jeff Turmes** on bass (and sax for a few tracks), **Richard Innes** on drums. Chortkoff also provided Walker with a great pack of songs from mighty pens. **Eddie Snow's** "Mean, Mean Woman" features an accompaniment derived from **Junior Parker's** "Mystery Train." An original Chortkoff song, "Honey Stew," evokes **Lightnin' Hopkins**. The band might have limbered up on some of the grooves of Lightnin' Hopkins' Jewel Recordings. The backing is a bit too upfront and the music loses some of its regional flavor. One wishes the rhythm section was not right on the beat where more of the laconic Excello groove would have been better. These are still very good recordings, with Walker first rate throughout. His take on "Blackjack", "Leave My Money Alone", "Bad Blood" and Walking With Frankie" are particularly outstanding, and if not a perfect date, there is still plenty to enjoy.

—Ron Weinstock

DC Blues Society Membership Application Form

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

The following companies offer discounts to DCBS members. In order to take advantage of these discounts, you must present your current membership card.

1/2 Price Discount at Blues Alley

DCBS members receive half off the normal admission for Blues shows that do not take advance ticket sales.

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The DC Blues Society is a non-profit section 501(c)(3) all volunteer organization! It is devoted to promoting and perpetuating blues music, one of America's most important cultural gifts to the world. In furtherance of this, the Society engages in a variety of activities including (but not limited to):

- Free Annual DC Blues Festival
- Open Monthly Blues Jam Shows with noted national and local acts
- Best Unsigned Blues Band Competition
- Blues in the School Program
- Monthly newsletter, the D.C. Blues Calendar



Members receive the Society's newsletter, The D.C. Blues Calendar, with information on upcoming Society events and other blues in the Washington area and other material of interest; discounts on society events & merchandise, some clubs, and other benefits. Membership proceeds play an important part in making our activities happen.

Contributions (not membership dues or merchandise) to the D.C. Blues Society are tax-deductible

Date _____ Renewal? _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Dues per year (Circle appropriate one:)

Student: \$15.00

Individual: \$25.00

Family: \$35.00

Corporate: \$50.00

Canada: \$35.00 (US)

Other Countries: \$50.00 (US)

Family members (List names:)

Interested in volunteering? _____

Chick Hall's Surf Club/DC Blues Society Presents:

(Check One)

Memphis Gold—Saturday, May 12, 8-12 p.m.

Mudcat—Thursday, May 12, 8-11:30 p.m.

\$15 at door; \$10 Advance (Members) \$12 Advance (Non-Members). For advance tickets, order by May 9.

Tickets _____ Total Amount \$ _____

Donations for the DC Blues Festival/Society

See website for levels of donations and premiums

Level of donation: _____

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Mail to:

DC Blues Society, PO Box 77315, Washington DC 20013-7315



Mike Baytop and Jay Summerour trade harmonica licks at the panel discussion "Who Stole the Soul From the Blues" and show April 14 at the Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Details P. 7.



DC Blues Society

PO Box 77315

Washington DC 20013-7315

**Don't miss Memphis Gold on May 12, and Mudcat on May 17 at Chick Hall's Surf Club.
Advance member tickets \$10. Call 301-322-4808**