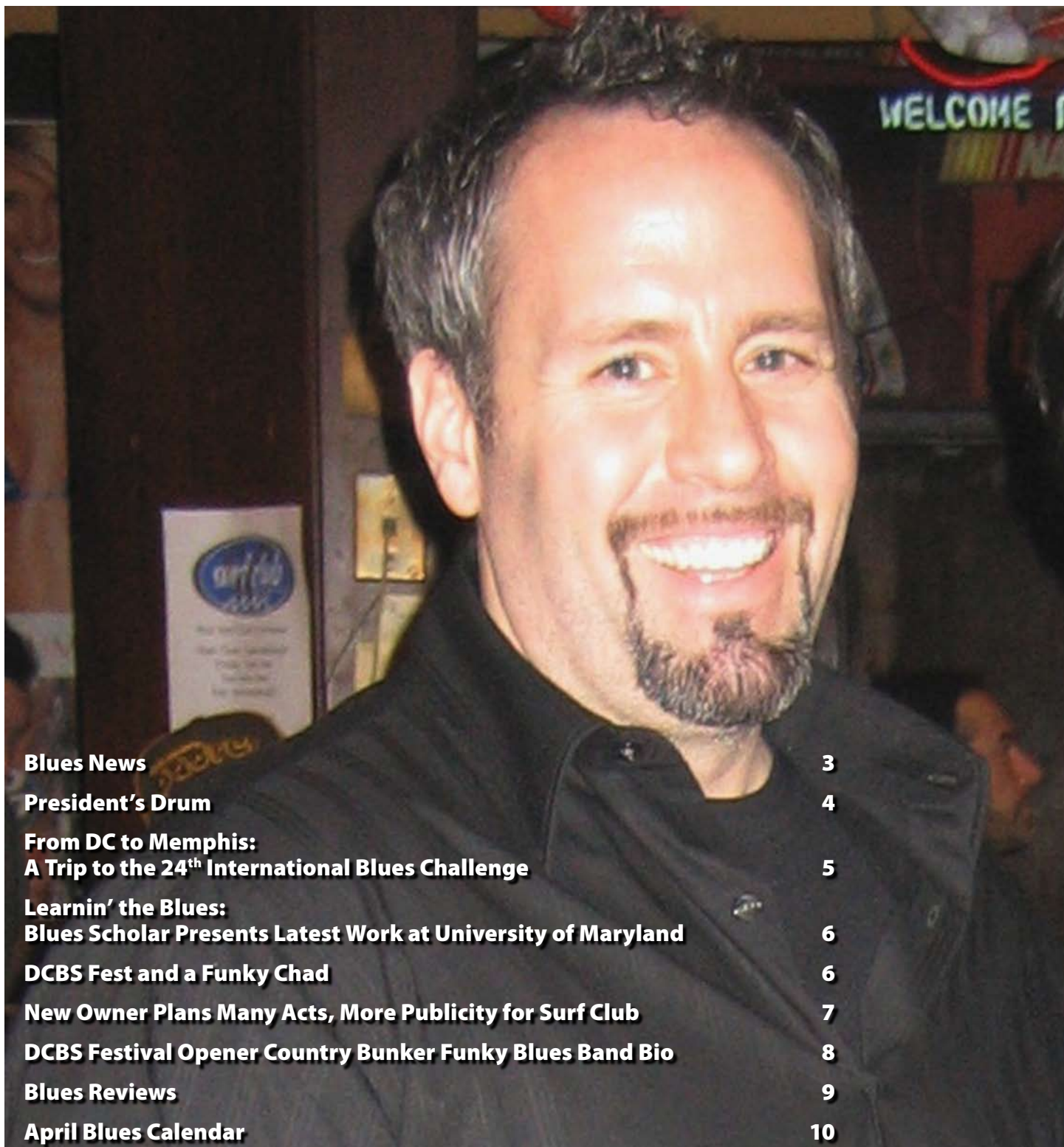




CAPITAL BLUES MESSENGER

Vol. II, Issue 3

April 2008



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Ad rates

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THE DC BLUES SOCIETY

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The D.C. Blues Society is a non-profit section 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to keeping the Blues alive through outreach and education. 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 © 2008 DC Blues Society.

Note—The deadline for each issue is the 15th of the previous month. Send advertising to treasurer@dcblues.org 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 calendar@dcblues.org. 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: *Jim Byrum, new owner of the Surf Club, discusses future plans in an exclusive interview with the Capital Blues Messenger. See interview on P. 7. Photo © Jim Byrum*

Correction

TCB



**FUNKY
BLUES
BAND**

After a quality control recount of votes at our festival audition, we have a new winner, **The Country Bunker Funky Blues Band** (TCB). Congratulations!

The error was made based on a mix-up of band names that resulted in votes being counted for Funky Club that should have gone to TCB. [Scores on page 6.] We apologize to **Funky Club**, the purported winner, for our error.

To avoid this kind of error in the future, we will ensure that band names are consistent on scorecards, instructions, and public announcements. In addition, a third party will audit the scorecards and tabulations to verify the results. We will apply this procedure to all DCBS-judged events. Furthermore, we recognized some inherent flaws in conducting this first festival audition, such as judging. Instead of a popular vote that is affected largely by the size of the crowd at the time an act is on stage, we will choose judges from the crowd. These judges will rate all the acts using scoring criteria similar to that used for the Battle of the Bands and IBC. We hope these changes will help fine tune what we hope will become a fun-filled (error-free) annual event.

—Felix McClairen

Support Blues Programming on WPFW

WPFW, 89.3 FM, home to the *Bama Hour*, and the **Nap-Turner**-namesake *Don't Forget the Blues*, is recruiting volunteers to answer phones during its Annual Spring Pledge Drive, May 3rd–May 17th. Show your support for local blues programming by becoming a volunteer! WPFW is especially in need of help during *Don't Forget the Blues*, which airs Monday through Friday, 12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m. To sign up now, please call the WPFW volunteer hotline, 202-588-0999 ext. 360, or email **Rachel Pope**, Volunteer Coordinator, at pope_rachel@wlfw.org.

WPFW is located in the heart of DC, at 2390 Champlain St NW, on the second floor of the Washington City Paper Building.

Smokin' Joe Kubek & Bnois King Celebrate New Release in Greenbelt

The red-hot, rockin, Texas blues band **Smokin' Joe Kubek & Bnois King** will celebrate the release of their debut Alligator CD, *BLOOD BROTHERS*, with a live performance in Greenbelt on Saturday, April 12th. Kubek's raucous roadhouse fretwork is expertly complimented by the equally fiery guitar and soulful vocals of Bnois King. With nearly 20 years together and literally thousands of live performances under their collective belt, the two create a one-two punch of raw, tough, Lone Star blues-rock.

The concert will be 8:30 p.m., Saturday, April 12th at the Greenbelt American Legion, 6900 Greenbelt Road Greenbelt, MD

BLOOD BROTHERS, produced by Kubek and Alligator president **Bruce Iglauer**, features 14 high-energy blues songs (13 originals) filled with Kubek's larger-than-life fretwork and King's smoky vocals and economical, tasty guitar playing. Recorded with Kubek and King's road-honed band, the album captures all of their legendary live energy and highlights the seemingly telepathic interplay between the musicians.

Kubek was born in Grove City, PA in 1956 but grew up in Irving, TX. He was leading his own bands and gigging all around Dallas clubs when he was only 14. Bowled over by the blues after first hearing **Eric Clapton** and **Jeff Beck**, Kubek soon discovered the music of **Muddy Waters**, **Howlin, Wolf** and other early masters. By the time he was 19, he was backing many famous players in the Dallas area, including legend **Freddie King**.

Kubek worked with R&B singer **Al "TNT" Braggs** and made a host of friends, including **Albert King**, **Stevie Ray Vaughan** (with whom Kubek became close), **B.B. King** and many other blues icons. In 1989, Kubek met guitarist/vocalist **Bnois King** at a Monday night Dallas jam session. The two became fast friends, and melded their seemingly divergent styles. Kubek a rocking

Blues News continues on P. 8



★THE THIRTEENTH ANNUAL★
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|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Buckwheat Zydeco | Nappy Brown | Eric Byrd Trio + 4: |
| Scofield, Medeski & Deitch | Lil' Ed & The Blues Imperials | Ray Charles Tribute Combo |
| Savoy Brown | Nora Jean Bruso | The Blue Sky Traffic |
| Charlie Musselwhite | Jimmy Thackery | Flat Foot Sam and the |
| Guitar Shorty | Albert Cummings | Educated Fools |
| Bettye LaVette | Gina Sicilia | The Bobby Flurie Band |
| | | Stack O' Blues |

*Listed artist roster is subject to change

Supported in part by:
City of Hagerstown, Maryland State Arts Council
and Washington County Arts Council.

www.blues-fest.org

President's Drum

Springing into Blues Season

As the weather warms, and the sap's arisin', so is the Blues greening. The DCBS kicks off Spring presenting with the American Legion Post #136 a benefit show with "**Smokin' Joe**" **Kubek** featuring **Bnois King** on April 12, 8:30-11:30 p.m. Tickets are only \$18 for DCBS members and \$20.00 to non-members. The funds from this show benefit the Legion's Legacy Scholarship Fund, which provides support for college bound children who have lost a parent in combat. American Legion Post #136 is located at 6900 Greenbelt Rd. Greenbelt, MD 20770. Support this worthy cause and have a ball. Hope to see you there.

DCBS will burst into Spring jamming at a new venue on every 1st Sunday starting April 6. Join musicians and vocalists from all over the DC region at Mirrors Nightclub at 33 New York Ave. N.E. Washington, DC. The jams are absolutely free. Help us bring more Blues to this bourgeois town.

Although still in the planning stages, a 2008 20th Annual DC Blues Festival fundraiser is in the works for late May-early June. [Tease: We're looking at an up and coming big-voiced Blues belter for this one.]

Spring Planting

In preparation for our Summer and Fall events schedule, we're planting seeds now.

Sign-up for the annual Battle of the Bands is getting in gear. Details soon will be posted at www.ddblues.org. We plan on holding the Battle of the Bands earlier this year in late September. The 25th International Blues Challenge (IBC) is on February 4-7, 2009. The dates are conveniently one week after the Caribbean Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise, which finishes on Jan. 31, 2009. DCBS's 2007 Battle of Bands winner, **Charles "Big Daddy" Stallings**, represented DC at the 24th annual IBC.

The 1st Sunday jam coordinator, **Sam'i Nuriddin**, will soon be soliciting motorcyclists and bands for our 3rd Annual Fish, Brew, Blues, & Motorcycle Show. We're looking at mid-July for this blowout event. Musicians can sign up at our monthly jams. Get more information by contacting jams@dcblues.org and visiting www.dcblues.org.

For these events and others [like one or two more fundraisers, after-party, holiday party, etc..] we need volunteers to help with publicity, fish frying, and logistics.

One critical volunteer we need is a person or two to store and transport DCBS equipment to jam and other events. **Chet Hines** (aka **Dr. S.O. Feelgood**) has been doing this for too many years to mention. He needs a well-deserved break.

If you can help with the equipment or in other ways, send me a note of interest to president@dcblues.org. Don't wait on the other guy to volunteer. You ARE the other guy.

Rent Party!

Loyal Blues fans & DCBS supporters **Ed Strickler** and **Tobi Tyberg** are facing a crisis and need our help. You've seen the diabolical formula in action before: mounting medical bills, inability to work, and an accelerated mortgage that equal impending personal disaster. Help stave off this outcome by supporting Ed and Tobi with donations and by buying tickets to their 2nd Annual House Rent Party. To donate to the cause, visit savetobianded.blogspot.com. The Rent Party is on Saturday, April 12, from noon until "the Bluesmen pass out" in Ed's backyard at 2445 E. Ruhl Rd., Freeland, MD, 21053. So far, the lineup includes **Automatic Slim**, **Deak Harp**, **Flatfoot Sam**, **Glenn Moomau & the Blue Flames**, **Mikey Jr.**, **Roger Girke**, and **Chris & Joey** from **Nothin But Trouble**. Send SASE and check or money order payable to Tobi Tyberg at the above address. Tickets are \$20.00 and soon you'll be able to get them online. Check out the blog for updates. View the party flier at www.forkman.net/page2.html. Get your Blues on with Ed and Tobi then come on see "Smokin' Joe" Kubek and Bnois King.

Blues Always,
Felix

TAKE A 
BLUES
BREAK! 

"Smokin Joe" Kubek
featuring
Bnois King

April 12th, 2008 8:30 - 11:30 p.m.
American Legion Post #136
6900 Greenbelt Rd.
Greenbelt, MD 20770

Tickets are \$20.00 ea.
Doors open @ 7:30 p.m.

Benefits
Legacy Scholarship Fund.

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For Details contact:
Tommy Bryant
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or email to
tommy@milesglassco.com

Boiled Shrimp seasoned w
Old Bay, Wings & chees
sticks will be available fo
purchase.



From DC to Memphis:

A Trip to the 24th International Blues Challenge

In late January I had the honor to represent (with **Charles "Big Daddy" Stallings** and the rest of our band) the DC Blues Society at the International Blues Challenge in Memphis, TN. The IBC is the world's largest gathering of blues bands, and it takes place for three days in various Beale Street venues. Going as a performer, or a fan, is always a great time, and the DC Blues Society had quite a crew this year!

Clarence "The Bluesman" Turner planned a bus trip to Memphis. His band (representing the James River Blues Society) was on the trip, plus his wife and three kids. Other fellow travelers included singer **Stacey Brooks** and several DCBS members (I'm really bad with names, so I'm not going to try to list everyone!). Other local bands in the contest included **Blues on Board** (Frederick Blues Society), **Nothin' But Trouble** (Baltimore Blues Society), and duo **Matt Wigler & Mike Aubin** (Blues Society of Central Pennsylvania).

The bus (a nice, chartered bus, with lots of room and satellite tv) left on the evening of January 30. It was a loooong trip (I think it's 16–18 hours nonstop; Of course we made several stops), and I'll spare all of the travel details.

We arrived in Memphis the next morning, Thursday, January 31—a cold, rainy day. We checked into our hotel, got some real rest (the bus was nice, but tough to sleep on), and waited to hear about when and where we would play. It turns out we were at the New Daisy Theater, and scheduled to perform pretty early that night. In fact, we were the first band to play (which kind of made us the official sound check band). Clarence was also scheduled to play there, which meant that there was no way both of our bands would make it to the finals! (the IBC chooses one finalist from each of the ten venues where the semi-finalists compete).

Being a cold, wet weeknight, the usual Beale St. crowd wasn't out, but the blues fans were there enjoying the music. We



played to a small, enthusiastic crowd, and (despite some sound problems) I thought we had a really good set. I was very impressed by all of the bands at the Daisy, especially Turner & Co.

On Friday afternoon I wandered around Beale St. (which was starting to get much more lively now that the weekend was starting and the weather improved) with some of my band mates, then went to Sun Studio. That was my first time there, and I highly recommend their tour (another must-see is the STAX Museum).

On Saturday, we had a later time slot and much bigger crowd. We changed the set around, and did some more originals (including the crowd pleasing "4X4 Woman."). Clarence finished that round, and then it was time to wait for the finalist announcements.

While that was going on, a jam was being set up. I walked up to the stage and asked if they needed a harp player. They did, and I was the first one to play at this jam. I was pleasantly surprised to find myself standing next to former IBC winners **Sean Carney** and **Zac Harmon**. Some of Clarence's band also played, and **Mike Wescott** (Blues on Board) joined us on

guitar. Playing with two IBC champs was one of the highlights of the trip.

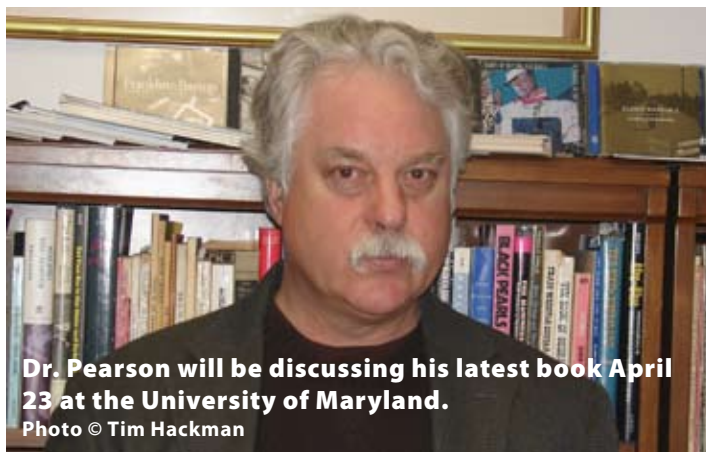
When that jam set ended, the announcement was made—ten bands were chosen (based on IBC judging criteria) to play the finals. The winner at the New Daisy was **Delta Wires** (Sacramento Blues Society,) another band with a harp player and horn section. I felt that any of the bands I saw in our venue could have made it, and I was pleased to share that stage.

I didn't go to the finals, or really do anything blues-related (except have lunch at BB King's while listening to a local band play for tips) that last day. The bus ride home was (like the trip there), a long one, and we couldn't get Fox in to watch the Superbowl! That gave most of us the blues!

It was a fun time, and nice to be among fellow musicians and DCBS members. I want to personally thank Clarence for arranging the bus trip. We'll keep going back if we can, and we'll keep trying to win. If you ever get a chance to go to the IBC, get on that bus!

— Steve Levine

Learnin' the Blues: Blues Scholar Presents Latest Work at University of Maryland



Dr. Pearson will be discussing his latest book April 23 at the University of Maryland.

Photo © Tim Hackman

McCulloch, 2003), *Virginia Piedmont Blues: The Lives and Art of Two Virginia Bluesmen* (1990), and *Sounds So Good to Me: The Bluesman's Story* (1984). He has published over one hundred articles, and was nominated for a Grammy in 1993 for his work on the recording *Roots of Rhythm and Blues: A Tribute to the Robert Johnson Era* (Columbia, 1992). In the 1980's he toured Africa and South America for the U.S. Department of State with Piedmont artists **John Cephas** and **Phil Wiggins** as the **Bowling Green Trio**.

An engaging speaker with a deep knowledge of the blues and lots of interesting stories of his own to tell, Barry Lee Pearson's talk is sure to be of interest to anyone with an interest in the blues, oral history or folklore.

The event is free and will be held in the Special Events Room (6137) of McKeldin Library on the College Park Campus. Books will be available for purchase and signing, and light refreshments will be served. Parking is freely available in many campus lots after 4:00 p.m.; call 301-314-PARK for information. This event is part of the UM Libraries series, "Speaking of Books... Conversations with Campus Authors," which presents the latest research by UM faculty authors. For more information about this and other talks in the series, visit www.lib.umd.edu/MCK/booktalks.html

—Tim Hackman

On April 23, 2008 at 7:00 p.m., the University of Maryland Libraries will present a talk by noted blues and folklore scholar **Barry Lee Pearson**. Dr. Pearson, a professor of English and American Studies at the University, will discuss and sign his latest book, *Jook Right On: Blues Stories and Storytellers* (University of Tennessee Press, 2005). Assembled from hundreds of interviews that the author conducted over thirty years, *Jook Right On* presents what Pearson calls a "blues quilt," an insightful view into the lives of blues performers told in their own words. **Koko Taylor, Archie Edwards, Charles Brown, Little Milton, and John Lee Hooker** are just a few of the dozens of artists, well-known and obscure, whose stories Pearson recorded and transcribed for the book.

Professor Pearson has written several books on the blues, including *Robert Johnson: Lost and Found* (co-authored with **Bill**

DCBS Fest and a Funky Chad

At the DC Blues Festival Auditions (February 23 at Chick Hall's Surf Club), we had a great turnout of musicians and fans.

Attendees were stamped with a "V" for vote and given the Band Voting Form so they could vote for their favorite band.

The list of bands and times was provided in front of the stage and next to the bucket where attendees turned in their votes. Fans wrote the name of their favorite band on the voting form and turned it in at the end of the night.

At the end of the night, DCBS counted the votes and congratulated the winner, **Funky Club**. A follow-up count in the daylight revealed a different winner. Six attendees voted for **Funky Blues Band**, which was originally incorrectly counted towards Funky Club when it should have gone to the **Country Bunker Funky Blues Band** (we learned later that they have an alternate name **TCB, Funky Blues Band**). The true winner of the DC Blues Festival opening slot band competition is Country Bunker Funky Blues Band. Congratulations to Country Bunker Funky Blues Band!

Voting Results

| | |
|----|---|
| 3 | First Thing Smokin' |
| 20 | Sherwood Blues Band |
| 27 | The Freestate House Rockers |
| 16 | CP Blues Band |
| 34 | Country Bunker Blues Band (originally was 28) |
| 19 | Heart of Blue |
| 23 | Funky Club (originally was 29) |
| 15 | Unruly Blues Band |
| 15 | Frontal Bluesotomy |

New Owner Plans Many Acts, More Publicity for Surf Club



Jim Byrum poses with Mike Wescott (left), Clarence "Bluesman" Turner (near right) and Sam'i Nuridden (far right.)
Photo © Jim Byrum

Capital Blues Messenger recently sat down with **Jim Byrum**, the new owner of Chick Hall's Surf Club, to ask him about his background, the reasons he bought the club, his plans for the great musical institution—and what the Blues Society and other music-lovers can do to help him make Surf Club Live a lasting success.

Capital Blues Messenger: What made you decide to buy the Surf Club now and keep live music alive there, when the music part especially seemed (very regrettably) like it would soon disappear?

Jim Byrum: I was in the market for a club for many years, but never found the right opportunity. When the Surf Club was brought to my attention, I was immediately interested. Growing up in PG County, I was very familiar with how legendary this place is. The Surf Club has been the home of some of the most legendary local and national artists for over 50 years. It would be a shame to see that end.

CBM: Where are you from and what's your background, especially in terms of business and music? How will your background and experience help to make the resurrected Surf Club a success?

JB: I was born and raised right here in PG County. I grew up locally in Landover Hills and also Bowie. PG County is a great county full of rich diversity and culture. The new Surf Club Live looks forward to continuing the wonderful tradition that the great Hall family started here so long

ago. I feel honored and privileged to have inherited such a wealth of musical history that they established at the Surf Club over the last 53 years.

My name may be on the mortgage, but this place will always belong to the people. It is the people who have patronized and performed at the Surf Club for so many years that has established this venue as one of the greatest rooms to play in the area. I hope we can all work to ensure that the new "Surf Club Live" will live forever!

CBM: You anticipated the next question. Do you plan for your purchase (and continuing to offer live music) to be a long-term commitment? People will want to know that after being teased for months about the club's closure and sale.

JB: I want the new "Surf Club Live" to be the premiere music venue in this area. I want to continue to book acts that have played this room regularly, as well as branch out and bring in new artists that aren't as familiar with the room. As long as the people come out and support our efforts, we should be able bring in great acts to perform.

CBM: What will you do, perhaps differently from the previous owners (who rendered a great service to the community for many years), to ensure that you get enough business to be able to remain open and offering live music regularly? It looks like you've already redesigned the Website.

JB: As far as doing things differently, the club has to be able to change with the times. As you mentioned, the Website is one avenue I am using to promote the club. I have big plans and great ideas for the Website, www.surfclublive.com. As of now, I am using MySpace as the medium

to build a great community with our patrons and local artists [www.myspace.com/surfclublive.] Anyone who hasn't done so already should sign up on our Website or send an email to events@SurfClubLive.com and get on our mailing list. We are booking great acts every day, so that is the best way to keep up to date with what we are doing at the new Surf Club Live! [See below for more on these exciting acts.]

I also want to expand and bring new people to Surf Club Live. There are a lot of people in the area who have never had the opportunity to enjoy a show here. I will bring in some new and exciting musicians that I hope will attract these people. Once they experience a show here, I am convinced that they will learn what all of us already know: what a great club this is for live music. We are hoping these people will continue to come back for more shows.

My name may be on the mortgage, but this place will always belong to the people.

—Surf Club Live owner
Jim Byrum

CBM: Who do you plan or hope to have perform at Surf Club Live?

JB: We have some of the great acts that have played here many times already booked to perform. Artists like The Dueling Divas of the Blues, **Mary Shaver** and **Marianna Previti**, with **Dave Sherman & the Smokin' Polecats** on March 8, **JP McDermott** on March 14, **Tommy Lepson** on March 21, The **Nighthawks** April 5 and the **Junkyard Saints** on May 31. But we are also bringing in artists such as **Tom Principato** (March 29) and the **Grandsons** (March 28). We are currently working on getting **Deanna Bogart** to perform here. We also have great Zydeco bands like **Leroy Thomas** (May 17) and **Curley Taylor** (May 23) scheduled. **Guitar Shorty** will be here on May 30! I'm also looking at putting together some other blues acts to perform together.

Jim Byrum continues on P. 8

Jim Byrum continued from P. 7

CBM: We heard you have some renovations planned for the club. Can you say anything about these? And how about the menu?

JB: Renovations will be done to the bathrooms, the bar area, the tables and chairs and seating areas will be upgraded... but the feel of the club won't change. I also plan to upgrade the menu... both in the short term with more options and the long term with a menu overhaul.

CBM: What's been the reaction of the community to your purchase?

JB: I have heard nothing but positive feedback on what we are doing from so many people. There are a lot of fun times ahead for us here at Surf Club Live. I hope everyone will come out and support the club and the artists.

CBM: What can the D.C. Blues Society and its members do to help ensure the success of the new Surf Club?

JB: Please spread the word and tell everyone that we are open. Come out and support the club and the artists that perform here. We almost lost this great venue; now we have a chance to save it. If people don't come out and support the venue and support the bar, it will be very difficult.

I look forward to continuing working with and being the home of the DC Blues Society. Together we can save this great venue and make Surf Club Live a great success.

—Interview conducted by Alan Cohen

DCBS Festival Opener Country Bunker Funky Blues Band Bio



The **Country Bunker Funky Blues Band** is a newly formed show band featuring an all-star cast of veteran musicians including **Charles Solomon** (Bass), **Art McKinney** (Drums), **Rob Rebo** (Guitar), **Carl Cimino** (Keyboards), **Neal Herron** (Harp), and up and coming Blues Vocalist **Bobby Joe Owens**. The TCB Funky Blues Band plays a high-energy combination of traditional and contemporary blues in the spirit of the Blues Masters.

Blues News continued from P. 3

and fierce picker and slider, King a jazz-inflected chorder (who could also solo with flaming electricity) into one of the most potent guitar combinations the Southwest had ever produced.

King was born in Delhi, LA in 1943. He was inspired to play guitar by his high school music teacher. Before long, Bnois was playing blues cover songs with a local band. On his own, he traveled through Texas, Oklahoma and Colorado, finding local bands to gig with and also performing with carnival tent show combos. King made his way to Dallas in 1979, gigging with jazz bands until he hooked up with Kubek 10 years later.

Calling themselves **The Smokin' Joe Kubek Band Featuring Bnois King**, they signed with Bullseye Blues and released their debut CD, *Stepping Out Texas Style*, in 1991. The band immediately grew out of Texas and began touring nationally. After a successful series of Bullseye releases, they joined Blind Pig Records in 2003.

31st Annual Mississippi Delta Blues & Heritage Festival Poster Contest

(Greenville, MS) Mississippi Action for Community Education (MACE) is accepting entries for the poster design for the 31st Annual Mississippi Delta Blues and Heritage Festival to be held on September 20, 2008. The theme for this year's festival is: "Rollin'... Goin' Home to da Blues." The contest is open to all artists of all ages in any country. Anyone under the age of 18 must have parent to submit their design.

The winning design will be selected by a panel of judges. The winning artist will receive a cash award of \$500 and be honored at a media reception to be held in July. The poster artwork will be used in all promotional materials for the Festival. MACE will own all rights to the poster art.

In making its decision, the selection panel will consider the following: how the Festival's 31st theme is depicted; how the Blues are represented; and overall artistic excellence.

Entries must include an artist bio and the proposed poster design. All entries must be received by April 30, 2008. Mail or drop off your entry to: Mississippi Delta Blues Festival Poster Contest, 119 South Theobald Street, Greenville, MS 38701.

For additional information, please contact William Brown at 662-335-3523 or macetop@bellsouth.net. The winner will be notified by June 30, 2008. Please visit, www.deltablues.org for official contest rules and to download the application form.

Visit the DCBS Booth

DCBS will be at the Western Maryland Blues Festival on Saturday, May 31. If you'd like to help staff the booth at this event, please contact fest_volunteer@dcblues.org.

We'd love to have your company and assistance—please BRING A CHAIR with you!

Blues Reviews

Eleanor Ellis, *Comin' a Time*, Patuxent Records

Born near New Orleans, **Eleanor Ellis** heard the blues blasting out of the radio, but it was when working at the Tulane University Jazz Archive that she began to take seriously playing music. She played a variety of music there including bluegrass, old-time and country. A few years later she settled in the Washington DC area where she continues to reside today. Her focus was directed on the blues as she became acquainted with some of the area's musical elders who became her role model and friends. She first chauffeured **Flora Molton**, the DC area street singer, and later started playing with her. Then in 1987 she toured Europe with Flora and local Piedmont legend **Archie Edwards**. Later she got into video production and produced the marvelous video *Blues Houseparty*, filmed at **John Jackson's** home and featuring Jackson, his wife **Cora**, Archie Edwards, **John Cephas**, **Phil Wiggins**, **Flora Molton**, **Larry Wise**, and **John Dee Holeman**. During this time she was amongst those who founded the DC Blues Society, and after Archie Edwards passed away, helped found the Archie Edwards Blues Heritage Society.

Throughout this time she participated in performances given by members of the Archie Edwards Barbershop folk. Recently a CD of her with **William Lee Ellis** and **Andy Cohen** was issued that is available on www.cdbaby.com. She recorded a CD that she only sold at performances and finally has a new CD by herself, *Comin' a Time*, that hopefully will let folk outside of DC know about this musical treasure. The 18 songs are pretty varied in their source and contain few songs that should be overly familiar. Thankfully there are no **Robert Johnson** covers, although there are several renditions of **Memphis Minnie** songs—along with a couple each from **Skip James** and **John Estes** as well as songs associated with **Tommy Johnson**, **Henry Thomas**, **Bull City Red** and **Lottie Kimbrough**. She is joined by a number of musical friends, including guitarists **Neil Harpe** and **Mike Baytop**, pianist **Judy Luis-Watson** and harmonica players **Jay Summerour**, **Phil Wiggins** and **Pearl Bailes**.

The disc opens with a **John Hurt** song that was filtered through Hurt's disciple Archie Edwards: "Take Me Back Baby." Eleanor adds her own touch to the pensive lyrics, along with her gently rolling guitar. "Sleepy" John Estes's "Diving Duck" was recorded at Archie Edwards' Barbershop with Mike Baytop on harp and the late **Richard Thomas** on bones, with a driving accompaniment behind Eleanor's emphatic vocal. Ellis makes no effort to emulate Skip James' ethereal style on "Cypress Grove" or "Special Rider." She delivers these songs in a sober fashion. Judy Luis-Watson adds a touch of barrelhouse flavor for "61 Highway," a song that suggests the toughness of Memphis Minnie. Minnie's influence is also evident on Ellis' strong interpretations of "In My Girlish Days," "Me and My Chauffeur," and "What's The Matter With the Mill," where Neil Harpe joins her for a delightful vocal duet. Harpe also does a duet with her on "The Panic Is On," with its still timely and critical observations

of things going on. "Gonna Shine One Day," one of Flora Molton's truth songs, is updated from its Vietnam war era origins to a timeless message of things getting better some day—with Phil Wiggins adding his sympathetic harmonica accompaniment. Another favorite track on *Comin' a Time* is her rendition of **Jim Jackson's** "Kansas City Blues," one of the true blues hits of the late twenties and early thirties. Eleanor is a marvelous singer and guitarist who delivers in an easy, natural manner that belies the sometimes studied approach of more celebrated acoustic blues performers. This release was many years in the making and is well worth the wait. This record can be obtained from Patuxent Records at www.pxrec.com.

Franklin & Baytop, *Searching for Frank*, Patuxent Records

Rick Franklin and **Mike Baytop** are two of the most accomplished acoustic blues artists in the Washington DC area. Franklin has been a staple of the area's acoustic scene for over two decades, including a lengthy partnership with **Neil Harpe**. Baytop was mentored by the late **Archie Edwards** and became President of the Archie Edwards Blues Heritage Barbershop that still operates, holding weekly jam sessions along with workshops and concerts. He has recorded with DC native **Mike Roach** on harmonica, and recently with projects associated with the Foundation. He has also grown as a guitarist and also plays bones, guitar and mandolin. Franklin & Baytop have partnered for a new disc, *Searching For Frank*, which takes its name from legendary Memphis Bluesman **Frank Stokes**, whose twenties and thirties recordings for Victor and other labels, in the company of Dan Sane and others, were amongst the finest recordings of the pre-World War II era—with the intricate interplay between the two, and Stokes strongly delivered vocals. The album contains fourteen performances, several directly taken from recordings of Stokes and his associates, but transformed to no simple covers. Their intent was to evoke—but not to simply replicate—those classic original duo recordings. Furthermore, several tracks have Baytop on harp and/or bones, so while all tracks are duos, not all are guitar duos. They make the music their own. "Nobody's Business" transforms the Memphis references of Stokes' "Tain't Nobody's Business If I Do" to Washington DC; likewise "You Shall Be Free" updates Stokes' "You Shall"—a tune that likely came out of the minstrel tradition. Other material includes **Blind Blake's** "Champagne Charlie," **Pink Anderson's** "I Got Mine," (an adaptation of Furry Lewis' Judge Harsh Blues") and the **Mississippi Sheiks'** "Stop and Listen Blues." The two play wonderfully and it's delightful to hear Memphis in the twenties evoked. While neither are great singers, they both deliver their vocals in unforced, husky, good-natured styles. They do not sound like they are too studied or reverent with respect to the material. Also, they avoid over-recorded early blues recordings—so thankfully, once again, we are spared second rate **Robert Johnson** covers. This release is available from the Patuxent Records website at www.pxrec.com or email Rick Franklin at rick.franklin@onebox.com for information on how to purchase.

—Ron Weinstock

April Blues Calendar

- 2** Idle Americans@Bangkok Blues
Sonny Landreth@Rams Head
- 3** Idle Americans Blues Jam@The
Country Store
Sonny Landreth@Wolf Trap
- 4** Sonny Landreth@Wolf Trap
- 5** Blues Therapy@An Pointin Stil
Johnny & The Stingrays@Austin Grill,
Silver Spring
ACME Blues Company@Bare Bones
Sherwood Blues Band@Olney Tavern
- 6** **DCBS Jam@Mirrors**
Wave & Wolf's Blues Jam@Bangkok
Blues
- 7** BT Richardson@Westminster Church
- 9** Wave & Wolf's Blues Jam@Beach Cove
- 11** Idle Americans@Bangkok Blues
- 12** Smokin' Joe Kubek@Greenbelt
American Legion
Idle Americans@The Country Store
- 13** Wave & Wolf's Blues Jam@Bangkok
Blues
- 14** Bobby Parker@Westminster Church
- 15** Blues Therapy@An Pointin Stil
Idle Americans Blues Jam@The
Country Store
Sherwood Blues Band@Zodiac
- 18** ACME Blues Company@Calabash
Anders Osborne@Rams Head
- 19** Baltimore Blues Society presents **John
Mooney, Rosie Ledet**@Rosedale
American Legion
Marcia Ball@State Theatre
Blues Therapy@An Pointin Stil
ACME Blues Company@Frisco's Grille
- 20** Marcia Ball@Rams Head
Paulverizers Blues Jam@Old Bowie
Town Grille
- 21** First Thing Smokin'@Westminster
Church
- 23** **Mark Hummel's Blues Harmonica
Blowout**@Rams Head
Wave & Wolf's Blues Jam@Beach Cove
- 24** Dagmar and The Seductones@JV's
- 25** Houserockers@Bangkok Blues
Deacons@Cowboy Cafe
Wolf's Night Out@Bangkok Blues

- 26** Holmes Brothers@Rams Head
Blues Therapy@Manor Tavern
Deacons@Cowboy Cafe
- 27** Baltimore Blues Society presents
Mikey Jr. @ Fish Head Cantina
Paulverizers Blues Jam@Old Bowie
Town Grille
Wave & Wolf's Blues Jam@Bangkok
Blues
- 28** Daryl Davis Band@Westminster Church

Regular Events

Sundays

- Big Four Combo (Swingin' Blues
Brunch)@Gordon Biersch, 11 am
Steve Kraemer@Cat's Eye , 4 pm
Brooks Tegler Big Band@Starland Cafe,
5pm
Detroit Slim@Full Moon, 6 pm
Matt Bishop@Zoo Bar
Jim Bennett & Lady Mary w/ Unique
Creation Band@Lamont's
Mary Ann Redmond@Flanagan's Harp
& Fiddle
Cheryl Jones, Wayne Wilentz, Jim
West@U-Topia
Hardway Connection@Thai Seafood
House, Waldorf MD
Mark Mandel's Sunday All Star Blues
Jam 8-11pm@Bangkok Blues

Mondays

- Fast Eddie's Open Mic from 8pm-
midnight@Spanky's Shenanigans
Phil Cunneff Jazz Trio@Cats Eye
Blues jam w/ Sammy & Tony Fazio
9 pm -1 am@ Sapphire Indian
Restaurant, Laurel, MD

Tuesdays

- Blu Lou & The Roadhouse Crew@Chick
Hall's Surf Club
Bill Heid Organ Trio@U-Topia
O'Donel Levy@Holiday Inn Capitol

Wednesdays

- Dean Rosenthal@Rams Head Tavern)
Lyle Link Quartet@Twins Lounge
Steve Smith Band@Round Table
GOVT CHEEZ@The Vegas Lounge
Robert Lighthouse acoustic@Chief
Ike's Mambo Room

- Rude Dog & Special Guest Blues Jam@
Club 347
Open Mic hosted by Nancy Katz &
Stray Dogs@Firehouse Grill
Blues Jam hosted by Chip Clemmer @
Old Bowie Town Grille

Thursdays

- Hillbilly Jazz@Chick Hall's Surf Club
Johnny Castle's Thrillbillys@Sunset Grille
The Unforgiven@The Saloon
Open Mic Blues Jam hosted by Idle
Americans@The Country Store (every
other Thursday)

Fridays

- Friday Night Jazz@Westminster
Presbyterian Church, 6 pm
Blue Flames@Bertha's
Butch Grant & Crossfire Band@My
Bakery & Cafe
Dean Rosenthal@Acme Bar & Grill

Saturdays

- Blue Flames@Bertha's (2nd & 4th
Saturdays)

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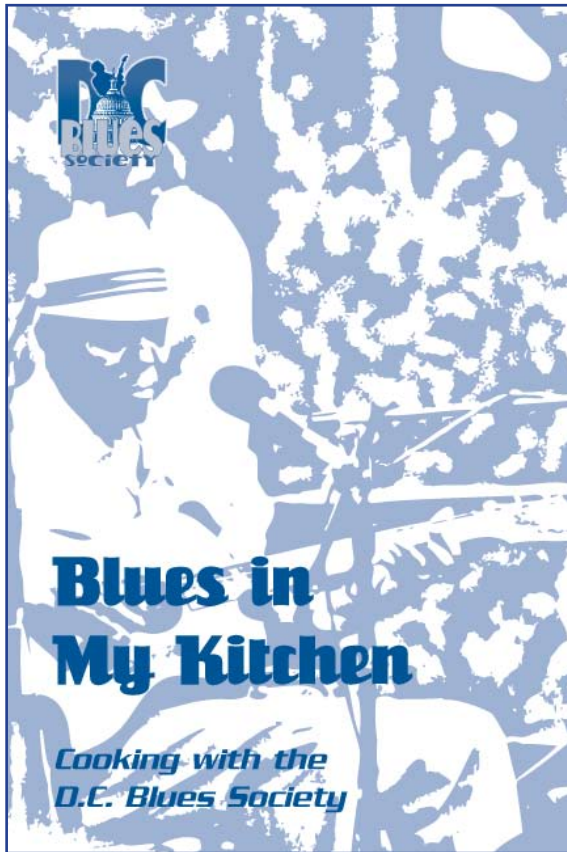
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