

# BLUES LETTER

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE SAINT LOUIS BLUES SOCIETY

June 2013 Number 60





# The St. Louis Blues Society

## BluesLetter

June 2013  
Number 60

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### The Monthly Magazine of the St. Louis Blues Society

The St. Louis Blues Society is dedicated to preserving and perpetuating blues music in and from St. Louis, while fostering its growth and appreciation. The St. Louis Blues Society provides blues artists the opportunity for public performance and individual improvement in their field, all for the educational and artistic benefit of the general public.

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## On the Cover.

Art Dwyer (top), Eric McSpadden, Rich McDonough, Roland Johnson, Mike Aguirre, and Marsha Evans (from left) perform at the 2013 Bluesweek Festival, Memorial Weekend.

cover photos by Reed Radcliffe



Fundraisers at BB's Jazz Blues and Soups  
for St. Louis Blues Society  
Big Mike Aguirre with special guests  
June 15 - July 13 - August 17

## CORRECTIONS

We heard from Ron Edwards (St. Louis' own human blues music encyclopedia) that Silver Cloud has never had the opportunity to play with Rod Piazza as was stated in the May issue of the Bluesletter.

Also, unfortunately, Silver Cloud was feeling under the weather this past week and could not perform at Bluesweek as scheduled. The Bel Airs took the time slot at 4 p.m. on Sunday and played an incredible set in his honor.

Our thoughts are with Silver Cloud hoping that he recovers soon and gets back to performing again.

And, our apologies to Pat and Dawn Liston whose phone number in the St. Louis Musicians Listing contained a typo. That number is now corrected.

### St. Louis Blues Society



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# JUNE

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# THE 2013 ST. LOUIS BLUES MUSIC AWARDS

Recipients of the 2013 St. Louis Blues Music Awards accepted their honors at a ceremony kicking off Bluesweek with Bernie Hayes emcee on Thursday, May 23.



Boo Boo Davis  
received the 2013  
"Lifetime Achievement"  
award

Marquise Knox  
received the 2013  
"Artist of the Year"  
award



Boo and Marquise pose  
with last year's "Lifetime  
Achievement" recipient,  
Big George Brock

photos by Peter Newcomb

## Were You There?

### Soulard Blues Band joins forces with Meramec Symphony

By Bruce Olson

It's been three months since the Soulard Blues Band joined forces with the Meramec Symphonic Band to play a set at St. Louis Community College/Meramec, but the sound created is probably still rattling around in the Meramec Theater. The show was the brainchild of Gary Gackstatter, who for six years has been the instrumental music director at Meramec. Gackstatter has a long history of putting small bands in symphony settings, having also done the trick with Kansas, Three Dog Night and the Paul Winter Consortium.

Gackstatter got together with Soulard Blues Band founder and bassist Art Dwyer because "I wanted those guys to see what it felt like to have a 65-member horn line." With Soulard, a five-piece blues band that has been playing St. Louis since 1978, Gackstatter wanted to give his band members, many of whom are students at the community college, a chance to play with a popular band. "It is a lot of fun to combine the people who read the little black dots with a band that plays without charts," he added.

Dwyer chose the music from the SBB recording "Live at Joe's Cafe" for the concert, which filled the seats at the Meramec hall March 3. Songs like "Wang Dang Doodle," "Hoochie Coochie Man," "Key to the Highway" and "High Heel Sneakers" were scored by Gackstatter and presented to his 82-member band.

And while Soulard often adds a horn section to its basic lineup, this time the line included 11 trumpets, five tubas, 10 trombones, various saxophones and other horns, creating an enormous sound. Two members of the Meramec band, clarinetist Robert Baumann and tenor sax Mark Schellenberg, stepped up to solo with Soulard.

The Soulard lineup included Dwyer on bass, Tom Maloney on guitar, Brain Casserly on trumpet, Marty Abdullah, vocals, and Kirk Grice on drums.

Asked how it all sounded, Dwyer gave a one word response, "Crazy." 🎵



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By Bruce Olson

Killer Blues, a non-profit group devoted to restoring neglected gravesites of blues heroes around the country, has focused on St. Louis in the past couple of months, placing headstones honoring two blues singers and the controversial killer and inspiration for the blues standard, Stagger Lee.

All three grave plots are located in Greenwood Cemetery, the first non-denominational cemetery for African Americans west of the Mississippi, located in North St. Louis. The cemetery itself has undergone much needed renovations lately after years of neglect.

The project was launched in 1997 when Michigan blues fan Steve Salter journeyed to Chicago cemeteries where blues artists were known to be buried. "I wanted to pay my respects to those that had enriched my life with their music," Salter said, but he was shocked to find that many of the greats he had come to honor had no markers on their graves. He began searching for musician graves, especially for ones that had no markers.

He's now put new headstones on 14 graves, including the three in St. Louis. He raises funds for the project by producing perpetual blues calendar in book or wall form that lists over 1,000 birth and death dates of blues artists. He says there are at least 25 artists still in need of markers. And now, with the new headstones for Lee "Stagger Lee" Shelton, Milton Sparks and Walter Davis, more honors to the deceased may be on the horizon.

The new St. Louis headstones were dedicated at Greenwood by guitarist and singer Brian Curran who did a rendition of the Lloyd Price version of "Stagger Lee," a song that stemmed from a St. Louis killing. There are over 400 known recorded versions of the song.

Shelton lived in St. Louis' Deep Morgan district. He killed a man named Billy Lyons in a bar fight on Christmas Night 1895. Both black, the two men were friends but stood on opposite sides of the political spectrum; Lyons an establishment Republican and Shelton a rebellious Democrat. Shelton was convicted of the crime but later pardoned. However, he committed another crime and sent back to prison. He died in prison in 1912 and was buried in Greenwood Cemetery. Lyons is buried in an unmarked grave in nearby St. Peter's Cemetery.

Sparks and his twin brother Aaron recorded from 1932 to 1935. Milton is most known for the song "Every Day I Have the Blues." A singer and pianist, he was associated with several great St. Louis bluesmen and recorded with Big Joe Williams, Peetie Wheatstraw and Henry Townsend. He played in such St. Louis saloons as the Hole in the Wall and the Dirty Inn, both in Chestnut Valley.

Like Shelton, Sparks killed a man in a bar fight in 1936 and served time for manslaughter. When he got out of prison, Sparks gave up the blues life and worked construction until he died in 1963.

Walter Davis also died in 1963. He came to St. Louis in 1925 when he was 13 and a few years later joined up with Henry Townsend as a singer. He also played with Wheatstraw as well as pianist Roosevelt Sykes. Davis played all over the South and was known as one of the best of the Mississippi Delta singers. He cut 180 sides over the period from 1930 until 1952 when he suffered a stroke and became a preacher until his death. ♪

for more information visit their website: [www.killerblues.net](http://www.killerblues.net)

The St. Louis Blues Society BluesLetter

# BLUESWEEK 2013 IN REVIEW

By Bruce Olson

Ground Zero for blues in St. Louis was centered on the big stage on Tucker Boulevard near Chestnut, where 18 performances brought home the strength, depth and quality of the 2013 St. Louis blues scene for three days over Memorial weekend. Organized by Entertainment St. Louis, the St. Louis Blues Society and the National Blues Museum, the free 4th annual Bluesweek Festival got right down to the heart of the matter, right into the soul and essence of a music scene that never needs to take a backseat to any other in the country.

Over the three days an estimated 65,000 people flocked downtown to a spot that for 120 years has been a part of the core of St. Louis music. Many fans didn't know it, but when they walked toward Tucker—known in the old days as 12th Street—they were walking in the heart of the Chestnut Valley, an entertainment mecca that began in the 1890s.

During that distant decade it was an area packed with saloons, wine bars, hotels, bordellos and restaurants. It was the incubator for ragtime, blues and jazz, musical styles that flourished in the heart of St. Louis up to the urban renewal projects of the 1950s. Chestnut Valley, Mill Creek Valley and Deep Morgan were where original musical styles were nourished and made whole. And, the current manifestation of this history was something to behold over the Memorial Day weekend.

The Blues Society put on its first big festival, *The St. Louis Blues Festival*, in 1986. The 14-hour one-day event at Mississippi Nights on Laclede's Landing introduced the blues, which had been long smoldering, to a new community of fans.

The line-up for the 1986 show included Oliver Sain, Tommy Bankhead, Henry Townsend, Rondo Blues Deluxe, Clayton Love, and James Crutchfield; all gone. It also included Leroy Pierson, Tom Hall, the Soulard Blues Band, Silver Cloud, Billy Peek, Ron Edwards, George Brock and the Houserockers, Barbara Carr, and David Dee; all still around. In fact, Pierson, the Soulard Blues Band and Big George were there on the 2013 stage with Silver Cloud on the schedule but unable to attend.

Each year since 1986 has seen some form of this festival take shape in various venues and under various names, keeping the ringing spirit of papa and mama blues and their spinoff children alive; filling our town with fine sound, year round. The 2013 festival was one in a long line of such events in St. Louis, but few, if any, were as comprehensive and comfortable as this one.

Kim Massie, a diva reminiscent of the female singers in the early 20th century, opened the festival Friday. Her precise notes penetrated the clear air on what was one of the better spring nights of the season—cool and dry—a far cry from last year's blistering heat.

Moving the stage two blocks east from the cement slab on 14th Street was a genius move by the organizers. It transformed the Bluesweek venue into one of grass and shade and provided the stage with a surround-sound effect as the notes bounced off the big square buildings on the adjoining streets. The amplification of the sound this year became perfect, the best this veteran festival goer has heard anywhere, better than New Orleans or Portland or Chicago.

Massie was so impressed by the sound, she started a loving tribute to the sound man, singing impromptu lyrics as her band picked up the beat, drifting into a sexy, moaning song that reached a point where Massie stopped, "That's enough," she said. "We gotta keep this show PG-Rated."

Indeed she did, for the crowd included many youngsters in its total diversity. It was a black and white crowd, young and old, gentrified and down and out. As one fest-goer put it, "There's nothing ethnically or racially challenged about this crowd." A community, defined by its lifestyle and its love of music was the crowd at Bluesweek; a community that brought all kinds of sitting devices, lawn chairs, wheelchairs and blankets; that wore ball caps, pork-pie hats, floppy sun hats, straw hats, sombreros, Stetsons; a community who's colors went across the rainbow far beyond the black blues uniform.

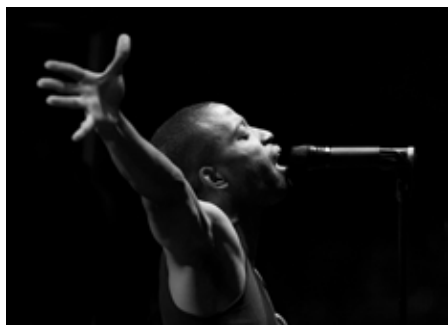
Massie's "At Last," her pitch-perfect killer, was followed up by Southern Hospitality, a Florida group of three players who usually lead their own bands: Victor Wainwright, J.P. Soars, and Damon Fowler. During the summer festival season they meld together as they did this day on the blues stage, bouncing off each other's solos and tripping out on the unity of sound they can develop.



Southern Hospitality photo by Reed Radcliffe

As they finished you could feel the crowd pushing up a little tighter toward the stage, with at least 10,000 people filling Kaufman Park for Trombone Shorty and Orleans Avenue, the funk king of that funky town down at the southern end of the big muddy river, a town that has shared a bloodstream with St. Louis since New Orleans fur trader, Pierre Laclède, founded St. Louis in 1764.

Shorty has advanced over his three years of national impact from someone who rode an original sound onto the charts to a charismatic performer who has taken that sound and deepened it to a degree of sophistication rarely heard in the funk/fusion loop of NOLA notes. He ended his rendition of “St. James Infirmary” with a tribute to W.C. Handy’s “St. Louis Blues,” running past



Trombone Shorty photo by Madison Thorn

the Louis Armstrong trumpet riff into something of his own. Shorty is the real deal, his thick arms raised high above his skinny torso, a trumpet in one hand and a trombone in the other.

He paid a lot of attention in the

set to St. Louis-bred Pete Murano, who parlayed a teenage love of music into a scholarship at Loyola-New Orleans then began gigging around the Big Easy as a rock guitarist. After Hurricane Katrina decimated the city, Murano turned to jazz and helped Shorty form his Orleans Avenue band in 2006. Shorty must have introduced him six times during the set and Murano’s blazing playing showed why they call him “Freaky Pete.”

After Friday’s perfect spring night, Saturday dawned as a transitional weather day between spring and summer, thunderstorms and rain clouds hung above the city as they tend to do. No tornadoes were in the mix, though, and May without tornadoes is a good thing in St. Louis. Jazz guitarists Eric Slaughter, Tom Byrne and Dave Black opened the afternoon with some jazz, cool to hard, with some techno and a Miles Davis riff here and there.

The organizers got nervous, however, during the St. Louis Blues and Soul Revue set when the thunder started to rattle and some rain came down. But the band, made up of members of the Soulard Blues Band and guests like Erma Whiteside, Dawn Weber, George Brock Jr. and Matt Murdick soldiered on, doing a set that reminded us of the soul revues of St. Louis past, especially those of the East Side in the days of Ike Turner and Bennie Sharp.

Whiteside had just launched “The Blues Is All Right” when the organizers got word lightning was in the area. The brain trust conferred and after the first flash the show was stopped. No reason getting anybody electrocuted, people in the crowd were already electrified enough.

About 15 minutes of the Soulard set was lost and there was a 10-minute delay in the start of Lil’ Ed and the Blues Imperials. After a rousing performance by the charismatic Ed Williams, he of the square African topper, the show was back on schedule with Jeremiah Johnson and the Sliders at 4:30 p.m.

Johnson always throws in some southern spices in his blues

stew and he drew the crowd back into the park down front, as more horns—Jim Rosse and Stu Williams—resounded through the whole Soldiers’ Memorial area. Jeremiah finished with a heartfelt tribute to his grandmother—“it seems fitting for Memorial Day”—and did his remarkable “Southern Drawl.”

And as fine a young player as there is in the city was next up, the magic Marquise Knox, who dove into the crowd, by now dried out and getting larger by the minute, the storms over and the day settling down. Marquise marched around the park, picking up followers, howling his harp on another rendition of “The Blues is All Right.” He gained about 40 people in a cake-walking snake line before climbing back up on stage to the biggest cheer of the day. No wonder the 22-year-old was named Artist of the Year for 2013 by the St. Louis Blues Society.

Rod Piazza and the Mighty Flyers, regular St. Louis visitors from San Diego, created even more energy when Piazza’s soulful harp fired off in front of his terrifically tight band that includes his wife, Honey, on keyboard.

Then it was Mavis Staples time as the veteran trouser leaned on her cane and belted out a mighty gospel-tinged set, highlighted by “The Weight,” where she implored the crowd to “take a load off Annie and, and, and—put the load, put the load, right on me.”

While all this excitement was taking place on the main stage, over at the Workshop Tent, more mellow things were happening. Holding the workshops on the festival grounds and running concurrently with the main stage shows was a new concept for Bluesweek this year. The workshops were held over two days, Saturday and Sunday, and featured discussions and performances by local and national players.

There were guitar tips from the likes of Sharon Foehner, Brian Curran and Billy Barnett, three of St. Louis’ best guitarists. Likewise was the harmonica workshop where Sandy Weltman, a unique jazz player, Eric McSpadden, a blues master, and Adam Andrews, who also leans into the blues, made the harp more understandable to more appreciative students.

Frutelnd Jackson, who has made a career teaching the blues to kids in Chicago, brought music history to life in the tent and later played a set of deep blues with McSpadden in the afternoon.

On Sunday, the Workshop Tent hummed with more

activity, including members of the Blues Society explaining the process and progress of the organization; a discussion about the International Blues Challenge; and tips on marketing and self-promotions from industry how-to guru Bob Baker.

The workshops included a series of performances including one by Joe Pastor who led a group of younger percussionists,



Frutelnd Jackson photo by Jeremy Segel-Moss

Continued on page 8



followed by recent high school grad Aaron Griffin and his group, Mojo Rising, featuring the fast slide of Aaron's father, Larry Griffin. The tent wound down with a finale from members of Rum Drum Ramblers, putting the workshop concept to bed with another intimate performance. It was comfortable in the tent, with lots of shade and folding chairs, giving the fest-goers a chance to take a break from the sun (or flee from the rain) and learn something at the same time.

On Sunday, summer arrived at the Bluesweek. The sun was out and the humidity was up, pants and skirts got shorter, spring jackets disappeared, and shade became the place to set up shop. Still, the setting was comfortable for the festers and the music continued its march of quality, compassion and excitement.

Leroy Pierson got the day started with a variety of tunes out of his historic songbook. Both mellow and rousing, the man can hold any stage all by himself. The stories he tells between songs are priceless and his country/Delta style of playing demonstrates his talent and love of the blues.

Next, there were quite a few more players on stage when Big Mike Aguirre brought forth his Blue City All-Stars downing a healthy slug of East St. Louis on the stage, playing a few originals like, "My Dog." He then surprised the crowd with a William DeVaughn highlight, "Be Thankful For What You Got," that put the crowd in the "backseat of Cadillac, on a summer's day, with a sunroof top, diggin' the scene with a gangsta lean."

Aguirre finished off with Earl King's "Up On the Hill," and Johnny Taylor's "Running Out of Lies," then handed the baton to Rough Grooves, the St. Louis quartet that continued the deep blues with some fast work from guitar giant Rich McDonough and "Southend" Eric McSpadden on harp.





Big Mike Aguirre photo by Madison Thorn

Sharon Foehner, whose vocals have given the band a charge lately, gave modern life to the old chestnut "Dance With Me, Henry" (written in 1955) and Eric got everybody worked up with his wild harp on "Hip Shake." McDonough was masterful on the Jimi Hendrix classic, "Little Wing," a song that crosses all lines, blues, rock and jazz, in one five-minute period. "Every time I hear that, I cry," said a guy sitting out front, crying.

The piano man Silver Cloud was due in the next slot but could not make it and was replaced by the Bel Airs, the Columbia, Mo. blues trio who I believe are three of the skinniest guys in show business. They followed the announcement of the winners of the BBQ Challenge, another new event at Bluesweek. The three Bel Airs added together probably didn't weigh much more than one of the big BBQ winners, but in the blues world we say, "To eat his own."

Continued on page 9

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The big winner, by the way, was Roadkill BBQ, with Four Smokin' Butts taking second place. Other winners were Two Nuts and a Grill (chicken); A Pig's Worst Nightmare (ribs); Smokin' K (brisket); and Q in the Lou (pork butts). Fifteen St. Louis BBQ outfits took part, with the winner taking home \$1,000 and an automatic entry in a big upcoming Kansas City contest.

The Bel Airs, fronted by brothers Dick and Dave Pruitt, popped up a surprise with a very solid, country-blues version of the Chuck Berry classic "Nadine" and did some fancy guitar work on Slim Harpo's "Got Love if You Want It."

Following the Bel Airs was Marsha Evans and the Coalition, another mainstay St. Louis band whose set was highlighted by two Fontella Bass songs in tribute to the great St. Louis blues singer who died last year. "Rescue Me," Bass's big hit, was, of course on the bill. But, a nice surprise came when St. Louis soul man, Roland Johnson, came out to join Marsha and sing Bobby McClure's part on "Don't Mess Up a Good Thing."

Next, in town from way up the Mississippi in Minneapolis, was the Scottie Miller Band, that did some very rootsy originals behind the Leon Russell/Dr. John style keyboard of said Scottie, who also goes by "Bones." He's played a few times at BB's and is clearly being won over by St. Louis, even if he does find it a little warm. "There's a lot of great bars in this town," he exclaimed, "What's up with that?"

The warm afternoon turned to night and a light breeze and a drop or two of rain cooled off the crowd in time for Mud Morganfield. The son of Muddy Waters was joined by an all-star St. Louis cast: the Bel Airs, McDonough, McSpadden and piano master Bob Lohr backing up on a string of Muddy covers that gave the son a chance to sound like the father. He did.

And, then, the last man standing (or sitting) proved to be Big George Brock, fresh from his Blues Society Lifetime Achievement award year where he made something of a comeback, playing more, putting out a fresh and acclaimed CD, and as the capper, getting his very own "BGB" throne, complete with a purple pillow and golden arms.

The big man played his Bluesweek set from his well-deserved new chair, obviously enjoying the comfy pillow, right at home at Ground Zero on Tucker as were the thousands of festers who also found comfort, quality and a lot fun down in the Chestnut Valley. It was just like old times. 🎵



Big George Brock photo by Reed Radcliffe

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# FROM THE BLUESWEEK CROWD

with

## Reed Radcliffe

## Madison Thorn

## JEREMY SEGEL-MOSS

## Mary Kaye Tönnies

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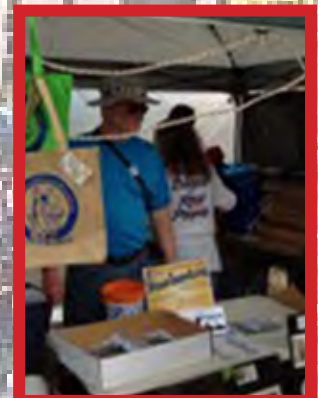
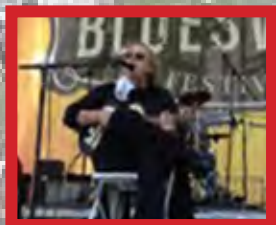
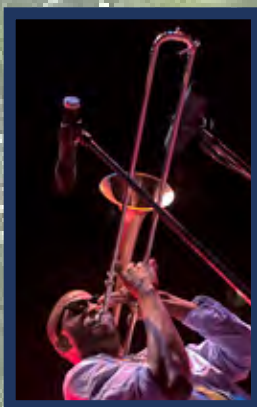
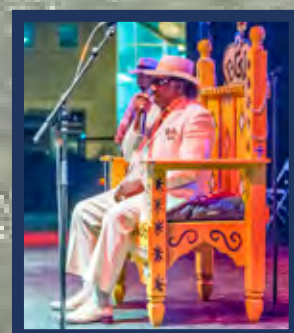
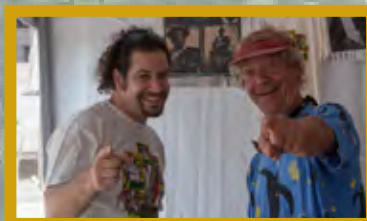




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# The Geyer Street Sheiks: The Reunion Tour

by Lynn Barlar

It all began back in January, when Tom Hall, as the Facebook page states, “took a Tom Fall” and broke his collarbone. A benefit was scheduled at the Shanti on Saturday, January 19 to help Hall with his expenses. That night, I learned from Hall that he had poured himself a cup of coffee and then slid down the stairs resulting in the shattered collarbone. Unable to play his National guitar, his livelihood, resulted in a lot more shattering problems; medical expenses, rent and food.

The Shanti benefit was a fun night. A fire pit glowed on the patio and a lot of musicians showed-up for Tom and rotated in and out of the band. And, as St. Louis was about to find out, it was the first of a series of exciting evenings all put together using the misfortune of Tom Hall as an excuse.

The second event in the series happened just a couple of weeks later. The Geyer Street Sheiks were about to come out of retirement; getting back together for “A Benefit for One of Their Own.” Most exciting, Alice Spencer would be returning to St. Louis from her home in Austin, Texas for the occasion. In mid-February the Schlafly Tap Room was host to a huge crowd of fans all ready to see one of the best acoustic blues and folk bands to ever come out of St. Louis. How exciting! It’s hard for me to remember when their last performance was—I don’t think I ever missed a one.

The Geyer Street Sheiks have been together in one form or another since the mid 1970s. Spencer joined the group as a vocalist in the 1990s. Two original members, Dave Gebben and Steve Mote, passed away in the early 2000s and the band just didn’t seem to make it back from that. Spencer was instrumental in making the February reunion show at the Tap Room happen. She made sure all



the proceeds would go to Tom. Schlafly Beer stepped up to purchase Alice’s airline ticket.

The Tap Room was packed full of “Sheik Freaks” on February 17. The band included former members; Mike Prokopf on bass guitar, Charlie Pfeffer on mandolin and guitar, Bill Murphy on Keyboards, Marc Rennard on fiddle, Tom Hall on his National guitar and Alice Spencer on vocals.

Tom Hall, not yet recovered from his injury, had rigged up a device that enabled him to play guitar. From the stage, Alice said she thought it was made of car parts. Whatever it was, the contraption allowed Tom to play. They covered many favorites from their 2003 CD *Great Dream*, including Hall’s signature song “Payday,” the Bessie Smith classic, “Oh, Daddy,” and the sing-along favorite, Tennessee Ernie Ford’s “Sixteen Tons.” Later they threw in “Nobody Knows You When You’re Down and Out” and more Bessie Smith. Spencer’s voice performing its best on the old female blues.

During break I noticed a girl wearing a leather jacket with “Geyer Street Sheiks” on the back—I have never seen one of these before—I asked her about it. She said that her dad had given it to her and he was a member of the Geyer





Street Sheiks. I discovered was speaking to Washboard Dave Gebben's daughter, Gabby. It was so nice to meet her.

A few weeks later I ran into Charlie Pfeffer. He told me great news. Alice Spencer would be returning to St. Louis for another visit, and the Sheiks were scheduling a few gigs the first weekend in May. They believed they had a very successful reunion—had so much fun—and wanted to keep the momentum going.

So on Thursday, May 2 at Joe's Café, Tom Hall and Alice Spencer performed a duo show just like the old days when they played on the patio at Molly's as T & A.

Joe's Café is a great place to see a show. The stage was moved a couple years ago. It is now on the left side of the room as a person enters and it allows the audience to be up close and personal on three sides of the stage. It was a chilly rainy night, but we still were able to walk through the garden and enjoy its funky beauty, the waterfall, the art-work gazebo, Bill Christman's workshop, and the enclosed porch. The stage can be viewed and heard nicely from the porch too.

We learned that the BYOB tradition was no longer allowed, but that stopped no one from enjoying the show in this intimate setting. Alice mentioned that on the way to Joe's, Tom presented her with a gift. She was so surprised as there has never been gift giving before; she had never given Tom a gift. Spencer announced it was DVD set of instructional ukulele by Bob Brozman.

Spencer spoke humorously about how she practices these songs in the car with her two young daughters. On one trip, the kids played "Mama Don't Give the Lard Away" in its entirety on the kazoo. Then they asked, "what is lard?" Another song the kids were inquiring about the song "Alley Boogie." Alice explained that, well of course, it was a dance done in the alley.



T&A performed "Alley Boogie" as well as "Who's Been Here?" and "Oh Daddy." They announced that "lard" would be played at the Tap Room on Saturday.

Saturday, May 4, brought another large crowd of Sheiks fans to the Tap Room for a second time in three months. In another packed room, Alice thanked Tom for "falling down the stairs and making all of this possible." During the show Alice played Steve Mote's mandolin on



"Cake Walk" and "Mama Don't Give the Lard Away." They also covered "Out on the Rollin' Sea," a song not played much anymore. The Bottom's Up BluesGang's Adam Andrews stood in on the washboard for a couple of songs.

On Sunday night, still reeling from such a great couple of shows, I attended the sold-out show

at the Focal Point Traditional Arts Center. The Geyer Street Sheiks provided yet another night of great music. I certainly didn't want to miss any opportunity to see this great band! The highlight of the show was the hunt for Spencer's kazoo. The night was almost over when she realized that she had it tucked into the "V" of her blouse the whole time. She was so embarrassed as cameras had been flashing away all evening with the kazoo peeping out of the top of her blouse! She did go on to play "The Mississippi Waltz" on the kept kazoo. We also heard "Dimming of the Day" and "Payday" as well as many other favorites. All of their St. Louis reunion shows ended with their great version of the hymn of the Georgia Islands, "Goodnight."

After the fact, I learned that I had actually missed a show. On Saturday T & A had performed at The Royale for the Kentucky Derby festivities. I'm sure that was a great time too!

I would like to thank Tom Hall for providing the opportunities for the Sheiks to reunite and grant so many wishes to their faithful St. Louis fans. The reunion tour provided loads of people in another chance to remember and enjoy their music.

Tom Hall recently disclosed the Sheiks are planning another reunion tour for September 2013. Be On the Look Out. 🎵

The Geyer Street Sheiks at the Focal Point May 5, 2013  
photos by Madison Thorn

# ST. LOUIS musicians directory

**Aaron Griffin & Mojo Rising**

Larry Griffin  
[ljgriff43@yahoo.com](mailto:ljgriff43@yahoo.com)  
314.662.1857

**Bible Belt Sinners**

Molly Simms  
[www.biblebeltsinners.com](http://www.biblebeltsinners.com)  
618.980.2428

**Brown Bottle Fever**

Billy Skelton  
[www.brownbottlefever.com](http://www.brownbottlefever.com)  
314.226.2575

**Bootgrabbers Delight**

Jeremy Segel-Moss  
314.482.0314

**The Bottoms Up Blues Gang**

Jeremy Segel-Moss  
[www.bottomsupblues.com](http://www.bottomsupblues.com)  
314.482.0314

**Bumble Bee Bob Kamoske**

[rkamoske@gmail.com](mailto:rkamoske@gmail.com)  
314.322.2400

**Dave Black**

[www.daveblackstl.com](http://www.daveblackstl.com)  
314.647.1415

**The Fab Foehners**

Sharon Foehner  
[sharondougfoehner@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sharondougfoehner@sbcglobal.net)  
314.577.1934

**Funky Butt Brass Band**

Tim Halpin  
[www.funkybuttbrassband.com](http://www.funkybuttbrassband.com)  
314.623.4504

**The Harris Brothers Blues Project**

Sean Harris  
[www.facebook.com/HarrisBrosBluesProject](http://www.facebook.com/HarrisBrosBluesProject)  
618.977.7333

**Hudson & The Hoodoo Cats**

Hudson Harkins  
[www.hudsonband.com](http://www.hudsonband.com)  
314.603.5641

**Jim McClaren**

[www.jimmccclaren.com](http://www.jimmccclaren.com)  
314.664.3449

**The Jeremiah Johnson Band**

Jeremiah Johnson  
[www.thejeremiahjohnsonband.com](http://www.thejeremiahjohnsonband.com)  
314.556.5211

**Johnny Fox**

[www.reverbnation.com/johnnyfox](http://www.reverbnation.com/johnnyfox)  
314.215.9568

**Miss Jubilee & The Humdingers**

[www.miss-jubilee.com](http://www.miss-jubilee.com)  
314.645.7220

**Larry Griffin & Eric McSpadden Duo**

Larry Griffin  
[ljgriff43@yahoo.com](mailto:ljgriff43@yahoo.com)  
314.662.1857

**Pat Liston**

Dawn Liston  
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**Raven Wolf C. Felton Jennings II**

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[www.rsrs.co](http://www.rsrs.co)  
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**Rough Grooves**

Rich McDonough  
[www.reverbnation.com/roughgrooves](http://www.reverbnation.com/roughgrooves)  
314.625.1787

**The Thin Dimes**

Nick Pence  
[www.facebook.com/thethindimes](http://www.facebook.com/thethindimes)  
314.657.6114

**Tom "Boss" Hall/Geyer Street Sheiks**

[www.tomhallmusic.com](http://www.tomhallmusic.com)  
314.853.0060

**Tommy Halloran and Guerrilla Swing**

[www.tommyhalloran.com](http://www.tommyhalloran.com)  
314.243.3147

**Uncle Albert**

Tim Albert  
[www.unclealbertband.com](http://www.unclealbertband.com)  
618.286.4102

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SA JUNE 15TH    Mark Hummel [Oakland CA]

TR JUNE 20TH    Miss Julilee and the Humdingers

SA JUNE 22ND    The Paul Bonn Band

TR JUNE 27TH    Dawn Weber

SA JUNE 29TH    Gina Sicilia St. Louis CD Release [Philadelphia PA]

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Eugene Johnson is a self-taught musician who has been playing music for as long as he could remember. He says, "Music is a natural part of my life," so he choose the bass guitar because it seemed to be a natural for him. He has recorded with several artists such as Albert King and Oliver Sain and has performed with Barbara Carr, Chuck Berry and Kim Massie. Currently, he spends his time between two bands, St. Louis' Ground Floor Band and his own Eugene & Company.

On June 30, come out and join Eugene Johnson & Company to experience his soulful bass and vocal blues and R&B.



photo by Tiffany Waits

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