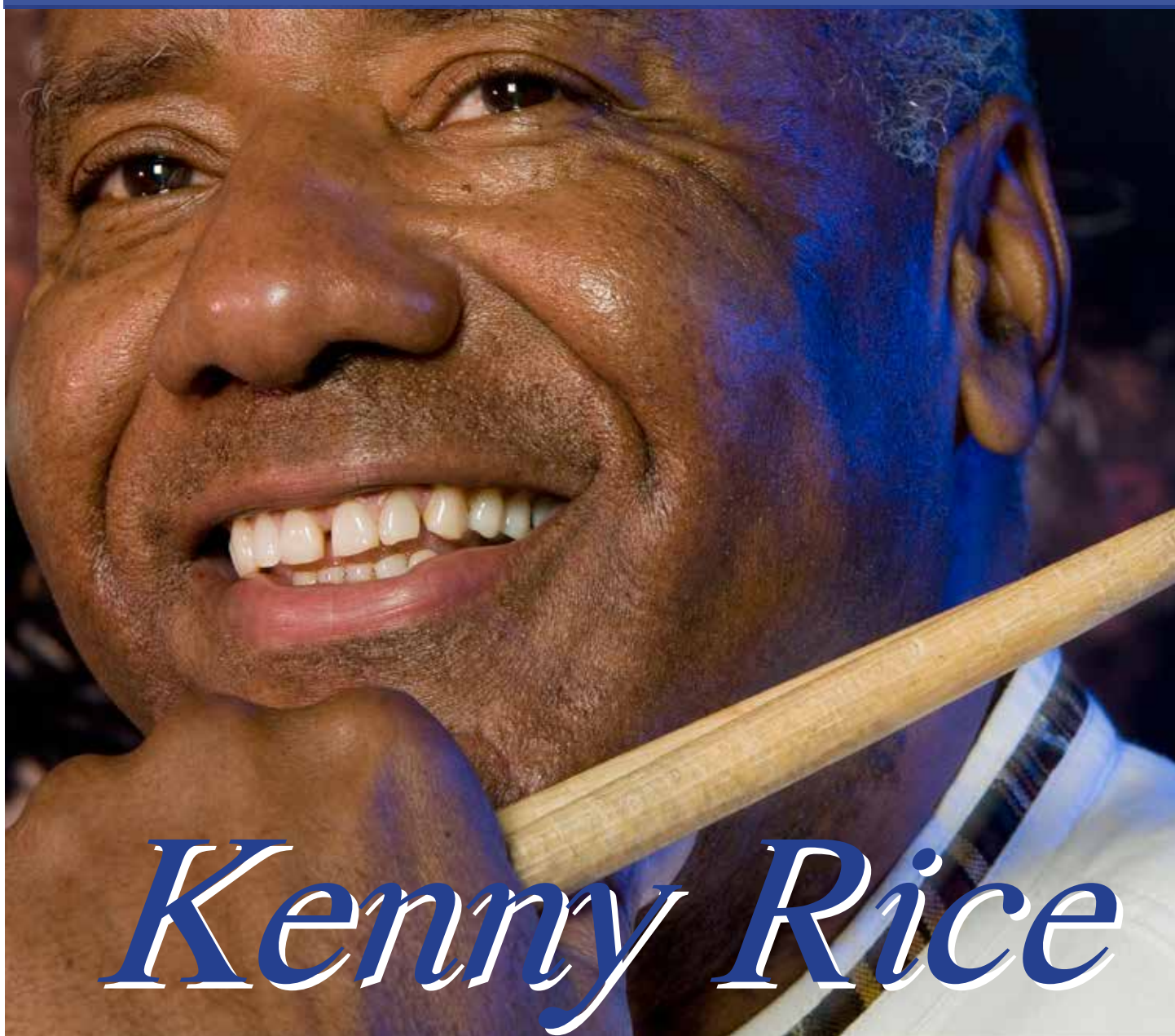


BLUESLETTER

THE BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE SAINT LOUIS BLUES SOCIETY Jul/Aug 2016 Number 80



Kenny Rice

PLUS:

STLBS Sponsored and Coordinated Event Listing
21st Annual Big Muddy Line-up
Road to Memphis International Blues Challenge info
St. Louis Blues Room at the National Blues Museum
Lilley's Corner spotlight on Michael Battle
A Cast of Blues Opening Reception photos



SUPPORTING BLUES MUSIC IN ST LOUIS FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS

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If this issue of the St. Louis Blues Society's BluesLetter is any indication, the St. Louis Blues music scene is bursting at the seams. We honestly barely had room for articles because of the huge amount of events and shows happening in and around St. Louis. What a truly amazing time to be in St. Louis.

It has occurred to me that with all of the talk of the festivals, the new clubs, the community music events and the National Blues Museum—we get caught up in the fun of it all. We may forget that at the root of the music community

for well over 100 years are the musicians. Specifically, the fact that blues was created and perpetuated by African American musicians. Whether black or white...in 1920 or 2016...all artists are connected by the musical river. They spend countless hours practicing, studying, writing, promoting, performing with no guarantee of a steady paycheck. They work tirelessly to carry on a musical tradition. They are invaluable! When you boil it down, without musicians, we wouldn't have music venues, music festivals or music museums. So during the summer, while you're out enjoying the food, the parks, the venues or the National Blues Museum....make sure to thank a musician. It is a hard road they have chosen, and they would appreciate your gratitude.

In celebration of the St. Louis Blues community, the 21st Annual Big Muddy Blues Festival will be entirely local this year. Over 40 St. Louis acts will perform Labor Day Weekend on Laclede's Landing with three outdoor stages and three club stages. This is the perfect opportunity to celebrate and immerse yourself in the deep tradition of St. Louis music. We hope to see each and everyone of you there!

ST. LOUIS MUSICIANS: Just a reminder that applications for this year's International Blues Challenge are available on the STLBS website. A new aspect has been added to the St. Louis competition: *Best Self-Produced CD*. Records made between November 2015 and September 2016 are eligible. The winning CD will be sent to Memphis to compete in the *International Blues Challenge Best Self-Produced CD* contest. Please go to the website, check it out, and let us know if you have any questions.

As always, thank you for supporting the blues in St. Louis
Jeremy Segel-Moss, Chairperson of the St. Louis Blues Society



CORRECTION

The photograph of John McVey in the Lilley's Corner section of the Mar/Apr issue of the BluesLetter was incorrectly credited to Tiffany Waits. The photograph was actually taken by Dana Chapman. Our apologies to Dana, John and Lilley.

Want to write for the BluesLetter?

We are looking for people with a writing background who want to help spread the word about St. Louis Blues music and musicians.

Contact Jeremy Segel-Moss to share your thoughts and valuable time for a great cause.

E-mail Jeremy
I'd love to hear from you!

Please write me at jsegelmoss@stlouisbluessociety.org and tell me what you think of our current projects.

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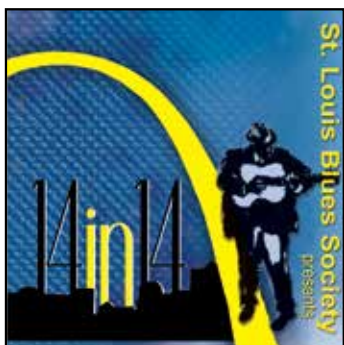
Mary Kaye Tönnies
Co-Editor
mktönnies@stlouisbluessociety.org
Jeremy Segel-Moss
Co-Editor
jsegelmoss@stlouisbluessociety.org
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The St. Louis Blues Society is dedicated to preserving and perpetuating blues music in and from St. Louis, while fostering 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.

The St. Louis Blues Society is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit Missouri corporation. Memberships to the Blues Society are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.



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SPONSORED AND COORDINATED EVENTS

July

7/9	Downtown Kirkwood Concerts Hudson and Friends	Kirkwood Station Plaza	6:30pm
7/9	Soulard Concert Series Jeremiah Johnson Band	Soulard Market Patio	6pm
7/21	Live on Olive Concert Series Skeet Rodgers & Inner City Blues Band	Central Library	7pm
7/23	Carondelet Park Mainstage KD Allen Band	Carondelet Park	6pm
7/23	Kirkwood Park Concerts Gene Bradford Blues	Lions Park Amphitheater	7pm
7/26	Concerts in Fanetti Park Letter to Memphis	Schirmer and Ivory Sts.	7pm
7/30	Lafayette Square Concerts Jim Stevens Group	Lafayette Park Gazebo	6pm
7/31	Carondelet Park Concerts Funky Butt Brass Band	Carondelet Park	6pm

August

8/5	Manchester Concert Series Funky Butt Brass Band	Schroeder Park	7pm
8/6	North By Old North Love Jones, Delta Sol Revival, Jeremiah Johnson Band, Marquise Knox	Crown Candy Kitchen Square, St. Louis Ave. and Warren	11am- 8pm
8/13	Lafayette Square Concerts Gene Dobbs Bradford Blues Experience	Lafayette Park Gazebo	6pm
8/14	Carondelet Park Concerts Miss Jubilee & The Humdingers	Carondelet Park	5:30pm
8/18	Live on Olive Concert Series Jeremiah Johnson Band	Central Library	7pm
8/20	Soulard Concert Series Carrie and the Catapults	Soulard Market Patio	6pm
8/21	Lindenwood Live Soulard Blues Band	Lindenwood Park	6pm
8/21	Brentwood's Music on the Menu The Green McDonough Band	Brentwood Park	5pm
8/24	Maplewood Concert Series Robbie and the Rockin' Fools	Ryan Hummert Park	6pm
8/27	Kirkwood Concerts Kim Massie & the Solid Senders	Lions Park Amphitheater	7pm

September

9/3-4	Big Muddy Blues Festival Two days - 40+ local blues acts	Laclede's Landing	3pm- 12am
9/15	Live on Olive Steve Pecaro Band	Central Library	7pm
9/17	Old Webster Jazz and Blues Festival	North Gore and Allen Sts.	12pm- 10pm
9/17	Soulard Concert Series Patti and the Hitmen	Soulard Market Patio	6pm
9/18	St. Louis Blues Society Atomic Blues Festival	Atomic Cowboy	3pm

For more information about these sponsored and coordinated events, visit the events page on our website:
www.stlouisbluessociety.org/events



Show your St. Louis Blues Society Membership Card and receive a discounted ticket

LIVE MUSIC ON SATURDAYS

July 2 Tom Hall Noon - 3pm
 July 9 Ethan Leinwand Noon - 3pm
 July 16 Erika Johnson & Tom Bryne Noon - 3pm
 July 23 Brian Curran Noon - 3pm
 July 30 Ron Edwards, Jon Erblisch & Bob Case 11 am - 1pm

MUSEUM HOURS
 Tuesday - Saturday: 10am - 5pm Sunday & Monday: Noon - 5pm
www.nationalbluesmuseum.org

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Saturday	9	Doug Deming & the Jewel Tones with Dennis Gruenling
Thursday	14	Big Mike and the Blu City All Stars
Saturday	16	Sweetie and the Toothaches
Thursday	21	Chris Ruest with Gene Taylor
Saturday	23	The New Orleans Jazz Vipers Feat. Charlie Halloran & Chloe Feoranzo
Thursday	28	Jeremiah Johnson Band
Saturday	30	Bad Brad and the Fat Cats
Thursday	4	Paul Niehaus IV and friends
Saturday	6	closed
Thursday	11	John McVey Band
Saturday	13	Soulard Blues Band
Thursday	18	Roland Johnson and Soul Endeavour
Saturday	20	Mondo Cortez with special guest
Thursday	25	Felix Reyes and Mat Wilson
Saturday	27	Miss Barbara Clifford and Little Rachel Wilson

The deli has live music just about every Thursday and Saturday. Lookin' for a taste of the blues? Check out our website for upcoming shows and events!

www.bluescitydeli.com



Spend warm summer evenings outdoors enjoying great music played against one the city's most spectacular backdrops—Central Library. Bring your lawn chair, blanket, or relax on Central's front steps. Coolers are welcome! **Concerts begin at 7 p.m.***

JUNE 16 | MARQUISE KNOX (Blues)

JULY 21 | SKEET RODGERS & THE INNER CITY BLUES BAND (Blues)

AUGUST 18 | JEREMIAH JOHNSON BAND (Mississippi River Blues)

SEPTEMBER 15 | STEVE PECARO BAND (Southern Rock & Blues)

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*Events will move indoors to the Auditorium in case of inclement weather.



THE ROAD TO MEMPHIS

INTERNATIONAL BLUES CHALLENGE



The St. Louis Blues Society 2016 regional competition opens for participation on July 1, 2016. Band and Solo/Duo applications will be available for access until August 31, 2016.

Two winners (one band and one solo/duo act) will sent to Memphis, TN January 31 to February 4, 2017 to participate in the 33rd Annual Blues Foundation International Blues Challenge as representatives of the St. Louis Blues Society, a Blues Foundation Affiliate.

Musicians are strongly encouraged to read the International Blues Challenge Rules and Scoring System on the IBC website before completing their application. www.blues.org

*Any questions, please contact:
Jerry Minchey jminchey@stlouisbluessociety.org
or Jeremy Segel-Moss jsegelmoss@stlouisbluessociety.org*

APPLICATION AVAILABILITY/ SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS JULY 1 THROUGH AUGUST 31, 2016*

***DON'T DELAY - APPLICATIONS ARE ONLY
AVAILABLE FOR A LIMITED TIME!***

The St. Louis/IBC Application will be available for a limited time beginning July 1, 2016 on the St. Louis Blues Society website. Musicians who intend to enter the challenge will download the application and submit it in a timely fashion to ensure a place in the final competition.

*The St. Louis Blues Society will accept only the FIRST TEN band applications received that meet requirement qualifications and the FIRST FIVE solo/duo applications received that meet requirement qualifications. When sufficient numbers of qualified applications are received by the St. Louis Blues Society, the application availability period will close for that category. The official submission deadline date for both categories is August 31, 2016. No applications will be accepted after the official deadline.

ST. LOUIS BLUES CHALLENGE FINAL JUDGING SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2016 3 PM

Kirkwood Station Brewing Company
105 East Jefferson
Kirkwood MO 63122

ST. LOUIS BLUES CHALLENGE WINNERS' SHOWCASE AND FUNDRAISER SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2016 3PM

BB's Jazz, Blues and Soups
700 South Broadway
St. Louis MO 63102

The two St. Louis winners will agree to perform together at a St. Louis Blues Society fundraiser prior to the IBC in January 2017. Proceeds from the fundraiser will go towards expenses incurred by the Blues Society to send the two fabulous acts to Memphis for the time of their lives!

BEST SELF-PRODUCED CD

Along with sending representatives to the International Blues Challenge in Memphis, TN, the St. Louis Blues Society is allowed to send one recording to be considered for the 2017 IBC Best Self-Produced CD. To enter, make sure CD qualifies (see below) and then send four copies of the cd with STLBS Self-Produced CD Form to the address below by September 20, 2016.

BEST SELF-PRODUCED OFFICIAL RULES:

--The eligibility period: CD must have been released during November 1, 2015 - September 1, 2016.

--Performing act must reside and perform in the St. Louis area.

--A performer who has previously been nominated for a Blues Music Award shall not be eligible for this competition. A CD issued in the name of an otherwise eligible performer which also includes the contributions of a Blues Music Award nominee may be ineligible, depending on the extent of the contribution.

--A CD or a record label that has been previously nominated for a Blues Music Award shall not be eligible for this competition.

--Recordings with established or "known" producers within the industry are eligible as long as the recording is on the artist's independent label and not on an established blues label.

Judges will evaluate the following points. The criteria are in order of importance.

- (1) Blues Content (Is this a blues music recording?)
- (2) Musical Performance (Quality of musicianship)
- (3) Audio Quality of the Presentation (Production Value)
- (4) Cover Art and Design (Professional Packaging)
- (5) Credits and Liner information (Informative and Professional)

Musicians must submit four copies of their CD to the St. Louis Blues Society by mail. The submission package MUST include a STLBS Self-Produced CD Form available on the St. Louis Blues Society website.

***SUBMISSIONS MUST BE DELIVERED BY
SEPTEMBER 20, 2016***

**ST. LOUIS BLUES SOCIETY
PO BOX 78894
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The winner will be announced at the St. Louis International Blues Challenge on October 16, 2016.



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JULY

July 1	7 PM	Johnny Cilantro & the Well Seasoned Sextet (Peoria, IL)
July 2	7:30 PM	Bottoms Up Blues Gang
July 8	7 PM	Eve Seltzer & Terminal Swing
July 9	7 PM	Kasondra Rose (Tampa, FL)
	8:15 PM	West of Staley (Champaign, IL)
July 15	7 PM	Sarah Jane & the Blue Notes
July 16	7 PM	Fresh Burn Band (Columbia, IL)
	1 AM	Look Out Lincoln (Chicago, IL)
July 19	7 PM	Feyza Eren
July 20	7 PM	The Liberation Organ Trio
July 22	7 PM	Boogiefoot (St. Louis, MO)
July 23	7 PM	Danbury Street
July 28	7 PM	Vincent Varvel
July 29	7 PM	The Midwest Jazz-tette

AUGUST

Aug 4	7 PM	Jordan Hull (Nashville, TN)
Aug 5	8:30 PM	Miss Maybell & Slimpickins (Jackson, NH)
Aug 12	7 PM	The Joe Bozzi Orchestra
Aug 13	8:15 PM	Maple Jam Band (St. Louis, MO)
Aug 16	7 PM	The Apollo Affair (Madison, WI)
Aug 19	7 PM	Sarah Jane & The Blue Notes
Aug 20	7 PM	Wack-A-Doo (American Musette)
Aug 26	7 PM	Boogiefoot - New Orleans Funk
Aug 27	7 PM	Franglais
	10:30 PM	Alex Smith (Long Lake, NY)

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Johnson & Company • Ground Floor Band • Funky Butt Brass Band
John McVey • Green McDonough Band • Steve Pecaro • Joe Metzka • Aaron Griffin
Pennsylvania Slim • Soulard Blues Band • On Call Blues Band • Love Jones
St. Louis School of Rock • Jason David Cooper Band • Kingdom Brothers
Skeet Rodgers & The Inner City Blues Band • Paul Bonn & The Bluesmen
Fab Foehners • Tom Hall • Jim McClaren • Bumble Bee Bob Kamoske • Billy Barnett & Tip Belz
Letters to Memphis • Delta Sol Duo • Brian Curran • Tommy Halloran • JD Hughes • Johnny Fox
Coco Rico • The Bottlesnakes • McDonough, Foehner, McSpadden Trio • The Dust Covers
Erika Johnson & Tom Bryne • Larry Griffin & Eric McSpadden • The Bottoms Up Blues Gang
Piano Showcase featuring Dean Minderman, Ethan Leinwand & James Matthews

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21ST ANNUAL BIG MUDDY BLUES FESTIVAL

Labor Day Weekend—Laclede's Landing

bigmuddybluesfestival.com

SEPTEMBER 3 & 4

Most St. Louis Blues music fans are familiar with names like Albert King, Johnnie Johnson or Silvercloud. That's how the industry works. The front players are the names that stick with us as the icons of the genre. The side players are often forgotten, never heard about, or destined for the small text on the inside panel of a record sleeve. Kenny Rice is one of those players who has been dedicated to the groove for over 50 years and is just now coming out front with his new CD, *House Party*.

Below are some of the stories in Rice's own words about how he got started, whom he played with, how it happened and what it has all meant to him—beginning with his High School's band leader, Vernon Nashville, who approached him in eighth grade.

Kenny Rice

by Jeremy Segel-Moss



[Nashville] asked what instrument I'd like to play and I said drums. So, turns out they didn't have any drums. It wasn't a very rich community. Very small community—Kinloch, Missouri. He brought a trombone to the house, so I started cryin'. My father says "man, we can't afford to buy you no drums." But I kept on cryin', so he went and found me an old black rimmed snare drum and I joined the band.

Rudy Coleman [also known as Silvercloud] approached me to play with him, but I was too young to get in clubs. So he had to ask my parents. They said yes, but they made him assure them he'd take care of me and protect me.

One of the biggest compliments I've gotten during my career is that my timing is impeccable. I attribute my timing to Rudy's bass player, Simms. I can't remember his first name. I was so afraid of Simms. I was so afraid to play wrong—I played right. And by doing that, little known to me, I was strengthening my ability to be a good timekeeper which is the basic function of a drummer.

Billy Gayles saw me playing with Rudy Coleman and he had just left Ike and Tina Turner's band. He had a hit record out called *Tore Up*. Billy was out playing and approached me to join his band. It was Billy who taught me how to shuffle. I stayed in his band for a while. We were playing a little honky-tonk club in North St. Louis, the Moonlight Club, and Albert King was sitting there one night when I was playing with Billy. He called me over and said "I want you to play in my band boy." Albert paid more money than anybody at the time. I said, "you have to talk to my father," because Albert was talking about going on the road and touring and I was 16 going on 17. So, Albert came over to my house and got permission from my father. My father liked Albert. I loved Albert, and his whole band treated me like they were surrogate parents. When I joined Albert's band, Johnnie Johnson was at the piano. After Rudy, I was playing with two legendary blues artists. Albert King and Johnnie Johnson and recorded with them. I thought I had really done something in my career that I can be really proud of.

Much later, Albert was doing a gig at the Fox with BB King and Bobby Bland. That's when he was getting pretty sick. So me and Gus Thornton went over to see him. I was in his dressing room and I got to tell him I loved him and of course, he didn't say I love you back, but the reason I know he liked me a whole lot is because he said, "I gotta go on. You going to be here, stay in the dressing room?" I said yeah, so he said "hold this" and gave me a wad of money and his pistol. Now, this is Albert King and anyone who knows Albert King knows the two things he cherished was his money and his pistol. That's how I knew he really liked me.

I left Albert's band and joined Leo's Five in 1961. Albert did a New Year's Eve show at the Blue Note Club and the owner of the club was always bringing in big jazz names. He said, "Come here boy, you look like a flower amongst a bunch of weeds and I want you to be my drummer. I'll pay \$90 a week and all the food you can eat." Ninety dollars a week was like a thousand in 1961.

My first love is jazz, period. Albert liked that. His band was basically jazz musicians playing the blues. This song, "Have a Natural Ball," if you listen to the first part of it—that's a Horace Silver [lick] from "Cooking at the Continental." Before Albert would come up we'd play straight Be Bop.

He liked it. He'd brag, "my band is very versatile." When I told Albert I was going to join

Leo's Five, he was very disappointed. But I wanted to do more than play blues. I got to play behind all these great jazz artists. One that sticks out is Oliver Nelson, who was a great jazz saxophonist and arranger and writer. He wrote scores for TV shows like *Six Million Dollar Man*. A great St. Louis musician. I stayed with Leo's Five until the mid-1960's and then Albert approached me again.



J.B. Hutto's circ. 1980. Kenny Rice on drums, Johnnie Johnson on keys, Bob Case on bass with Lightning Hopkins on guitar. photo courtesy of Kenny Rice

Johnnie Johnson took me to another level too. When Johnnie became popular again in the 1980's, I started playing with him. Played with him at the Rock'n'Roll Hall of Fame during his induction. Johnnie had been featuring me at his shows, singing no less. We were at a show in Texas with Bo Diddley and Little Richard one time. We opened the show and Johnnie had me sing "Let the Good Times Roll," and I got a standing ovation.

I was with Johnnie until he passed away. And after that I decided 'no more sideman with anybody.' And that brings us to my new CD, *House Party*. I got about six to seven originals and the rest are covers. It sounds like a good old-fashioned house party, that's why I called it that. It's special because it is my first endeavor headlining a CD. I wrote a

lot of the material and produced the whole album. I recorded it over 30 years. Some of it was recorded at places like Oliver Sain's studio, but I finished it up this year.

St. Louis is a great city to cultivate your craft. We have great institutions here. I love my hometown but you really can't make a living....for long term success you have to go. It's always been that way. History tells you that you have to leave to get the world-wide acclaim. But there is most definitely a St. Louis sound. Fontella Bass, St. Louis Sound. Ike and Tina Turner, St. Louis Sound. Oliver Sain, St. Louis Sound. Johnnie Johnson, St. Louis Sound. Albert King, St. Louis Sound. I once put a band together in St. Louis for great jazz musician Nat Adderley (brother of Cannonball Adderley) when he was coming to St. Louis. He did a seminar before he played and said about St. Louis and its musicians: "I knew it had an unknown quantity of musicians and now I know there is an unknown quality."

Kenny Rice's new CD House Party is on Jam Jar Records. The album has received numerous great reviews since its release. Recently, it made the KDHX midyear 2016 Top Ten Album list.♪

SAINT LOUIS BLUES

story and photos by **Jeremy Segel-Moss**

The National Blues Museum (NBM) is up and running with a grand opening celebration which will be remembered in St. Louis for a long time. Attendance at the NBM has been good, live music is happening every weekend, and monthly education programs offer continued in-depth insight into the story of the Blues.

One of the highlights of the NBM is the last stop on the tour—the St. Louis Room. The actualization of the St. Louis Room came from the hard work of many people including; Ron Edwards, Leroy Pierson, Bernie Hayes, John May, Rod Sherrell, Peter Newcomb, Mike Zitt, and the sponsors; Broadway Oyster Bar, BB's Jazz, Blues & Soups, Beale on Broadway, Blues City Deli, Hammerstone's, 1860's Saloon, Corner Keg Pub and Restaurant Charities Inc. The St. Louis Room would not have been possible without the support of our sponsors. If you happen to see them around town, or visit their venues, make sure to say thank you!

Here are some of the aspects of the St. Louis Room in the National Blues Museum.

St. Louis History Wall tells the story of St. Louis blues by featuring many of the legends who helped define the genre: Henry Townsend, Roosevelt Sykes, Lonnie Johnson, Walter Davis, Johnnie Johnson, Oliver Sain, Silvercloud and more. There is also information about the Aurora Recording Sessions, the Bobbin and Delmark record labels, and the founding of the St. Louis Blues Society.



Peter Newcomb's Photo Show features 42 living blues artists from St. Louis. Some of the artists featured include Big George Brock, Barbara Carr, Boo Boo Davis,

David Dee, Robbie Montgomery, Billy Peek, Leroy Pierson, Silvercloud, Gus Thorton, Larry Davis, Erma Whiteside and Arthur Williams. Newcomb's mission statement about the project is touching:

"The goal of this project was to apply my editorial photography background with my passion for the blues and help shine a light on the musicians who devoted their lives to the music. Since starting the project, I have continually tried to be involved in the St. Louis music community and document the exceptionally gifted artists that make up the local blues scene in St. Louis. It is my hope to continue this journey and promote these amazing people to St. Louis and the world."

Radio Wall offers a synopsis of the importance of Black radio and blues; early African-American St. Louis DJs; and how KDHX FM and its producers (some of whom have been on the air for almost 30 years) broadcast blues to the community daily. Special thanks to Bernie Hayes. For more information about Black radio, check out Hayes' book, *The Death of Black Radio*.



Venues are the backbone of live performances and St. Louis has some of the best, featuring every kind of music, especially blues. For NBM visitors—local or tourists—the venue wall offers some of the premier venues to enjoy blues: Broadway Oyster Bar, BB's Jazz, Blues & Soups, Beale On Broadway, Hammerstone's, 1860's Saloon, Blues City Deli and Evangeline's.

St. Louis Blues Society section offers information the about St. Louis Blues Society who have been supporting St. Louis' blues history and musicians for over three decades. One engaging aspect of the section is the iPad listening stations that feature the two St. Louis Blues Society compilation CDs—29 local bands performing original material. 🎵

The National Blues Museum is open seven days a week: Sunday and Monday, noon until 5 p.m. and Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. until 5 p.m.

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Proceeds support St. Louis Blues Society's Education Fund

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national blues museum photos by peter newcomb

OPENING RECEPTION FOR

A Cast of Blues

July 1, 2016

a new traveling exhibit at
the National Blues Museum



Artist Sharon McConnell-Dickerson with Big George Brock

A Cast of Blues was created by artist Sharon McConnell-Dickerson. The exhibit is composed of the life-cast masks of 40 blues musicians, including St. Louis artists Big George Brock and Henry Townsend. Touching the masks is encouraged! Life-casting is a sculpting process where a cast is created by placing molding materials on a live model.

A Cast of Blues will remain on view inside the Scott and Diane McCuaig and Family Gallery through December 9, 2016.

Lilley's Corner

with Lilley Halloran



Welcome to Lilley's Corner. Lilley Halloran, 6th grader and daughter of local musician Tommy Halloran, has been writing for several years already. She is interested in journalism and publishes the *Wyoming Street News* that you can find around South Grand.

Her column this issue is about local musician Michael Battle, the newest member of the St. Louis Blues Society's board of directors, and the new STLBS Education Coordinator. Battle performs with such acts as Marquise Knox, and is a founder of the Center for Artistic Expression. For more information, or to get involved with the STLBS Education programs contact Mike Battle at michael-battle@sbcglobal.net or 314.807.8865.

LH: How does a drummer play the blues? What is the role of the drummer in blues?

MB: I believe the love and passion for what you do determines how you perform. It comes from within. The role for any musician (or artist) is to communicate with the audience and other musicians through the instruments we play and songs we sing. We all share this one common thread—enjoying what we do—whether you're there to listen and dance or perform on stage. I was always taught the specific role of a drummer, for any style of music, is keeping time and providing a solid rhythm that locks everyone into a great groove. It's all about the groove! Musicians call it, "lock in the pocket!"

LH: How did you get into playing? Who were your teachers?

MB: I was self-taught. Like most musicians, you grew up loving music and wanting to play like the artists you cherished the most. For me it was old-school drummers like Billy Cobham, Omar Hakim, Steve Percaro, Steve Gadd, James Brown's drummers John Starks and Clyde Stubblefield. But there are so many more groups; Motown Funk Bros., Earth Wind & Fire, Frankie Beverly & Maze, Styx, and Queen. Local influences I learned from in my early years were some fantastic singers and musicians like Leland Crenshaw, David Green, Brian Simms, Marty Abdoullah, Paul Jackson, Jimmy Hinds, Wade Long, Jack Morton, and I used to go down and listen to the late Gene Lynn all the time.

LH: Do you think of the blues as happy or sad music?

MB: Blues is the heart and soul of music. Whether it's sad or happy, it can lift you up or help you through a difficult time. It's definitely therapy. It originally came out of hardship and struggle, but all music relates to hardship & struggle to some degree. Most of the time it's because of broken hearts, losing someone dear to you, or getting through a period of difficulty. However, blues can be fun and exciting. It's how the artist feels at the time.

LH: Tell us about the education non-profit you founded?

MB: I'm involved in music education through the non-profit we started, *Center For Artistic Expression*, because I know how difficult it can be learning music on your own. Having a support system around to encourage you during the early stages are critical. That's when you learn about discipline, behavior control, work ethic, principles, integrity, etc. Music is not just about learning how to play an instrument or sing a song. It's about building relationships with the audience and people you're going to be working with for long periods of time. Especially people in the business. It's about understanding music and how it works.

LH: What can playing music teach a person?

MB: There are so many aspects of music. It plays such a pivotal role in our lives and has changed us throughout generations. Music is the essence of who we are,

it makes us happy, sad, angry at times, but it's all about how we love, who we love, and why we love. If anything, music teaches us about ourselves and better ways to communicate and express our raw emotions. It allows us to release so much and develop different skills on all levels.

LH: You are a new board member of the St. Louis Blues Society. Why did you want to get involved?

MB: The St. Louis Blues Society has been inspirational and supportive of local musicians and artists for years. They have given so much in keeping the history of blues alive and well. They have donated a countless amount of resources and time to make sure St. Louis Blues is represented and respected in St. Louis as with any other important St. Louis historical achievement. I wanted to join to offer whatever services I can to continue this legacy and help build upon it.

LH: As the new education director, what are your goals and plans to help educate people about St. Louis Blues?

MB: Our focus is to make sure the St. Louis Blues Society is represented as the premier organization to learn about the St. Louis blues and the rich heritage it promotes. Our goals are to provide educational programs that inspire

young artists and musicians to get involved and become engaged in promoting St. Louis blues heritage and pay tribute to the many legendary blues artists and musicians who have dedicated so many years to performing blues music to St. Louis.

LH: Why is it important to be involved with organizations focused on blues?

MB: Music is a passion and love for me. I know how important the role of blues has played in our lives and in our history. Blues is part of every form of music, in every style, and in almost all lyrics. By being a part of an organization that strives to preserve and share the history of great music and artists, is not only where I need to be involved, but where we owe our gratitude and appreciation.

LH: What is next for you?

MB: That is a very good question. I hope to continue to perform (nationally & internationally) and enjoy what I've been doing all my life. I want to help people find their passion and explore what great things are waiting to be released from within. Music is incredible, not just blues, all music, all genres, all countries, all styles. Music is one of the most treasured gifts God has given us to enjoy and express. ♪

The St. Louis Blues Society Education Initiative will offer several programs to:

- ♪ Inspire new blues talent and young artists to emerge.
- ♪ Highlight legendary blues icons and promote existing blues artists in St. Louis.
- ♪ Preserve the historical archives of St. Louis blues.
- ♪ Get people, especially young persons, who love music involved in the STLBS.
- ♪ Provide opportunity to learn hands-on about how music works!

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- July 15 Flow Tribe New Orleans Funk 10PM
- July 17 Bonerama Brass, Funk and Rock [New Orleans] 8PM
- July 21 Aaron Kamm and the One Drops w/Special Guests Hip Abduction 10PM
- July 22 Cha Wa Mardi Gras Indians [New Orleans] 10PM
- July 23 Jakes Leg 10PM
- July 29 Southern Exposure play the music of New Orleans 10PM
- July 30 Funky Butt Brass Band 10PM
- August 4 Lynn Drury [New Orleans] 9PM
- August 5 Marquise Knox 10PM
- August 6 Big Mike and the Blue City All Stars 10PM
- August 11 Big Sam's Funky Nation [New Orleans] 9PM
- August 12 John Gros' Band [New Orleans] 10PM
- August 19 Funky Butt Brass Band 10PM
- August 20 Bottoms Up Blues Gang Anniversary Show and Blow Out 10PM
- August 27 Aquaducks Funk [Nashville] 10PM
- Sept 2 Brass A Holics [New Orleans] 10PM

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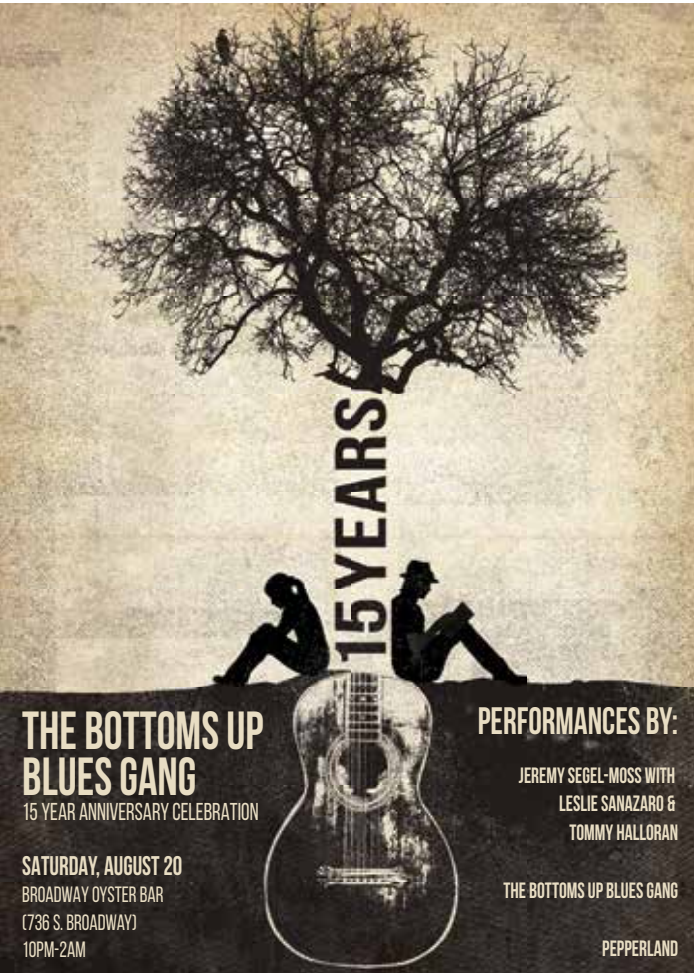
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