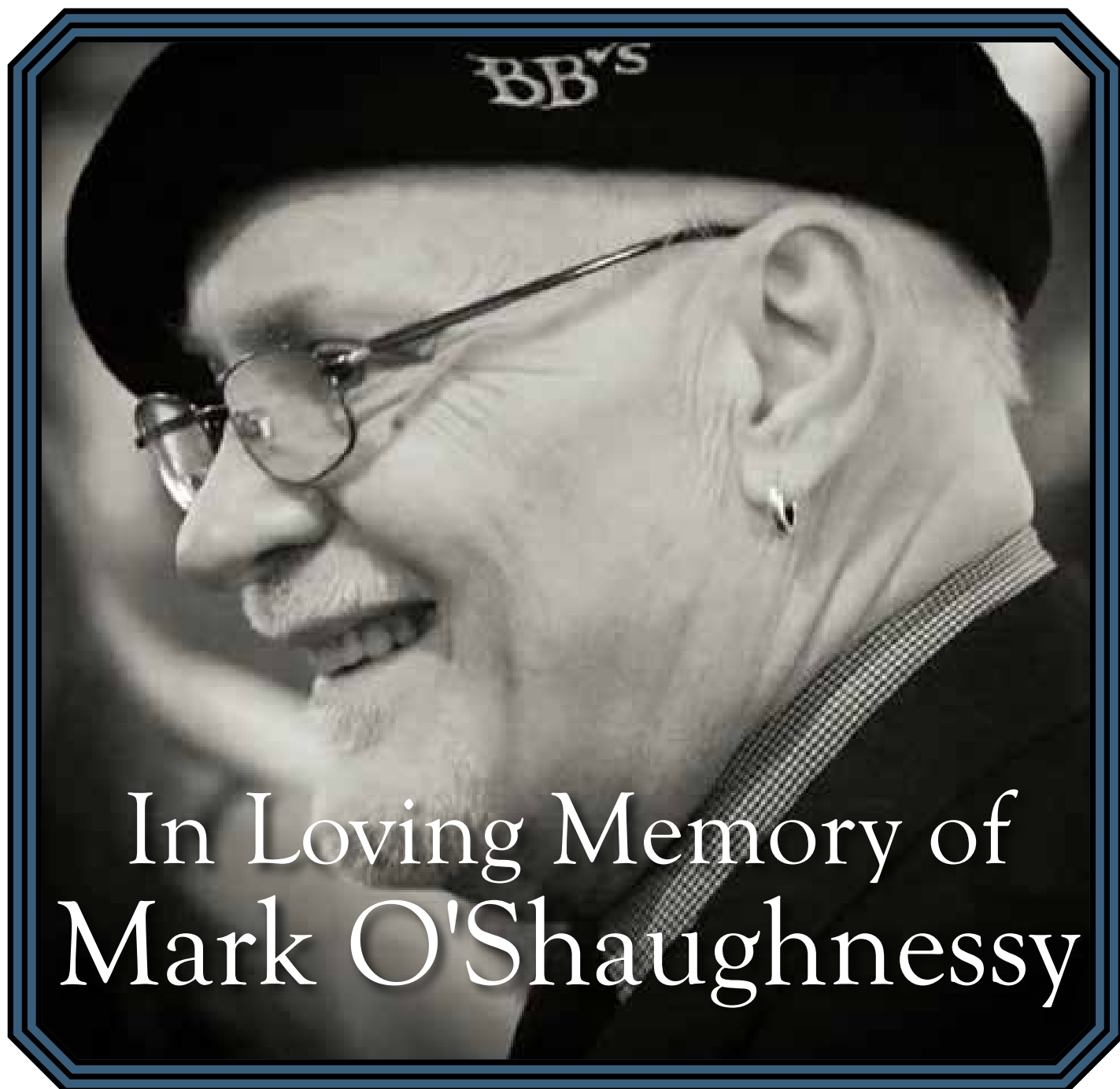
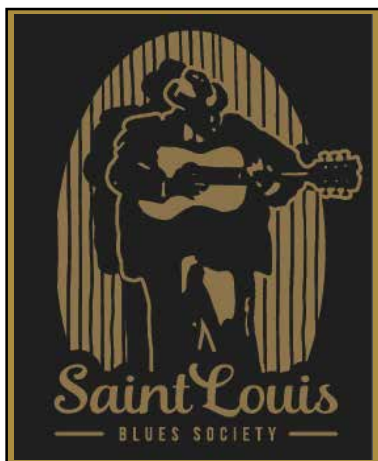


# BLUESLETTER



Plus: Big Muddy Blues Festival - International Blues Competition/The Road to Memphis - Mr. Handy's Blues - Stacy Johnson Tribute - and much more!

# PRESERVING AND PERPETUATING BLUES MUSIC IN AND FROM ST. LOUIS SINCE 1984



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### - CORRECTION -

In the May/June issue of BluesLetter we ran a beautiful showcase of local harmonica players. Unfortunately, we made a serious spelling mistake. Our apologies go out to outstanding harp player, **Mr. Glenn Changar** whose name we just couldn't get right—five times in the article, and even worse, in the caption of his photo on the cover.



First of all, it is our pleasure to announce that **Alonzo Townsend** has joined the St. Louis Blues Society Board of Directors. Many of you probably know him as the son of St. Louis legend Henry Townsend, or from spending time at the Broadway Oyster Bar where he works, or from his very vocal support for the tradition of St. Louis Blues. We are looking forward to all the great work that will be done in the future together.

**BIG THANKS** to everyone who made the **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Atomic Blues Festival** a success this year. We were able to raise a good amount of money for the STLBS Education Fund as well as having a great time listening to St. Louis music—we even included some youngsters from the STLBS Youth Band! The Atomic committee of Cindy & Frank Bauer, Adam Andrews, Mike Battle, and Marty D. Spikener did a great job organizing the event. Special thanks to the Atomic Cowboy, Bob Walther of Strictly Audio and Pabst Blue Ribbon for the sponsorship and promotion!

As you will read about in this issue, the **22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Big Muddy Blues Festival** is right around the corner. We're all very excited about the 50+ St. Louis acts that will be performing Labor Day Weekend on Laclede's Landing—as well as the two tribute shows at the National Blues Museum. Many of you have attended in the past and we hope you will again this year. I'll add that this is the perfect opportunity to expose your friends to St. Louis' finest talent. If everyone who attended last year brings a friend this year... it's going to be a truly great celebration of St. Louis Blues Music.

Also, a quick note that the **International Blues Challenge** applications are open for 2017. If you're a band or solo/duo act interested in participating, or if you released a CD in the past year, check the website for details or ask one of the board members about how to sign up. We've had some really great acts represent St. Louis in Memphis the last few years. Let's keep showing the world what one of the greatest blues scenes in the world has to offer.

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

Please write me at [jsegelmoss@stlouisbluessociety.org](mailto:jsegelmoss@stlouisbluessociety.org) and tell me what you think of our organization's growth.

Jeremy Segel-Moss

Chairman of the St. Louis Blues Society

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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.*

22<sup>ND</sup>  
ANNUAL

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2017

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Kim Massie & The Solid Senders	The Maness Brothers
Big Mike Aguirre & The Blue City All-Stars	Matt Lesch
Renee Smith	Richie Darling
Ground Floor Band	Sweetie & The Toothaches
Soulard Blues Band	The Bottlesnakes
Roland Johnson	Sarah Jane & The Blue Notes
Gene Jackson	Jason Cooper
KDXX Blues Band	Tommy Halloran's Guerrilla Swing
Skeet Rodgers & The Inner City Blues Band	Joe Metzka Band
Sharon Bear & The Golden Licks	Devil's Elbow
NGK Band	Gaslight Squares
Aaron Griffin	Dust Covers
Al Holliday & The East Side Revue	Annie & The Furtrappers
Renaissance Band	Brian Curran
Green McDonough Band	Larry Griffin
Melissa Neels Band	Tom Hall
Kingdom Brothers	Johnny Fox
John McVey Band	Bob Case
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Alice Monroe & The East Side Revue	Brother Jefferson Band
Torey Casey & The South Side Hustle	St. Louis School of Rock

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### JULY - AUGUST EVENTS

FRI 07	7:00PM	Woody Russell Trio Austin, TX
SAT 08	11:30AM	Live Music Brunch with <b>The Breakfast Boys</b>
	7:00PM	<b>Maple Jam Band</b>
SUN 09	11:30AM	Brunch with <b>Miss Jubilee &amp; The Humdingers</b>
MON 10	8:00PM	<b>Preston Collins</b>
TUES 11	7:00PM	<b>Kasondra Rose</b> Tampa Bay, FL
	8:30PM	<b>Daniel Ondaro Duo</b> Berlin, Germany
WED 12	7:00PM	<b>Bronson Wisconsin</b> Los Angeles, CA
THUR 13	7:00PM	<b>Daniel Smith Piano Concert</b>
FRI 14	7:00PM	<b>Tom Becker Trio</b> Bloomington, IL
SAT 15	11:00AM	Saturday Brunch with <b>The Jazz Troubadours</b>
	7:00PM	<b>Joe Bozzi</b>
SUN 16	11:30AM	Brunch with <b>Sweetie &amp; the Toothaches</b>
	6:30PM	<b>Megan Flechaus</b> Austin, TX
MON 17	7:00PM	<b>Singer Songwriter Night</b>
TUES 18	7:00PM	<b>Whitherward</b> Nashville, TN
WED 19	7:00PM	<b>Goldie Lahr</b> Oklahoma City, OK
	8:30PM	<b>Cody Woody</b> Raleigh, NC
THUR 20	7:00PM	<b>The Wildwoods</b> Lincoln, NE
FRI 21	7:00PM	<b>Wack-A-Doo</b>
SAT 22	11:00AM	Saturday Brunch with <b>The Jazz Troubadours</b>
	7:00PM	<b>Boogie Foot</b>
SUN 23	11:30AM	Brunch with <b>Sweetie &amp; the Toothaches</b>
TUES 25	7:00PM	<b>Pat Joyce</b>
WED 26	7:00PM	<b>Paul Niehaus IV</b>
THUR 27	7:00PM	<b>Whiskey Raccoons</b>
FRI 28	7:00PM	<b>Analog Thief</b>
SAT 29	11:30AM	Brunch featuring <b>Liberation Organ Trio</b>
	8:00PM	<b>Stephen Haake Trio</b>
SUN 30	11:30AM	Brunch with <b>Miss Jubilee &amp; The Humdingers</b>
MON 31	7:00PM	<b>Singer Songwriter Night</b>
AUGUST EVENTS		
WED 02	7:00PM	<b>Jim Manley</b>
THUR 03	7:00PM	<b>TOPSY</b>
FRI 04	7:00PM	<b>The Breakfast Boys</b>
SAT 05	11:00AM	Brunch featuring <b>Liberation Organ Trio</b>
	7:00PM	<b>Evan Bartels</b> Lincoln, Nebraska
	8:30AM	<b>Rebecca Ryan, Leslie Sanazaro, Tony Estrada</b>
SUN 06	11:00AM	Brunch with <b>Miss Jubilee &amp; The Humdingers</b>
MON 07	7:00PM	<b>Singer Songwriter Night!</b>
TUES 08	8:15PM	<b>LUXI</b> Milwaukee, Wisconsin
WED 09	7:00PM	<b>Glen Smith &amp; Eric Slaughter</b>
THUR 10	7:00PM	<b>Carrie Welling</b> Nashville, Tennessee
FRI 11	7:00PM	<b>The Fletcher Money Group</b> with <b>Katie Turnbull</b>
SAT 12	11:00AM	Saturday Brunch with <b>Box Of Nerves</b>
	7:00PM	<b>Fresh Burn Band</b> Columbia Illinois
SUN 13	11:00AM	Brunch with <b>Miss Jubilee &amp; The Humdingers</b>
SUN 20	11:00AM	Brunch with <b>Miss Jubilee &amp; The Humdingers</b>
SUN 27	11:00AM	Brunch with <b>Miss Jubilee &amp; The Humdingers</b>

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# Alonzo Townsend Talks 20 Years of the Broadway Oyster Bar with John Johnson



*This July, John and Vicki Johnson are celebrating their 20th year as owners of one of St. Louis' premier destinations of St. Louis Music and the reigning Missouri Restaurant Association 'Restaurant of The Year,' The Broadway Oyster Bar. I thought, what better time than now to sit down with one of the most respected and loved venues St. Louis has to offer. Mr. John Johnson and I talk about the last 20 years of one of the most decorated staples in St. Louis, one of the most overlooked cities in America and the future of St. Louis.*

**Q:** First of all, How does it feel 20 years on from when you began this journey and where the Broadway Oyster Bar is today?

**A:** Some days it feels like it's only been a couple of years. Then you get the days where you feel like it's been 30. I am very proud of the progress and strides we've made these last 20 years on top of what was already rooted in here before. The best part is when people feel as if you're a staple for your city, to be mentioned with places like Crown Candy, The Hill, Pappy's (who we are proud to have a relationship with and use their delicious pulled pork for our Pappy's Pulled Pork Sliders) or BB's, that's what we set out to make sure of, you have to build bridges. The hardest part of any business is staying relevant and being able to evolve...I think we've done an pretty good job at that.

**Q:** For decades, the big question was how the rich music legacy of St. Louis would thrive into the future. You've played a big part and invested deeply along with the late Mark O' Shaughnessy, and the bearers of the city before you. How proud are you of the music scene and landscape you helped grow and we have now in St. Louis?

**A:** Very proud and continue to be surprised every day. We've come a long way here in St. Louis and still have more ground to cover. From Bennie Smith, Henry Townsend, Oliver Sain, and Tommy Bankhead to Marquise Knox to Funky Butt Brass Band; from Clusterpluck to All Roostered Up, from Jake's Leg to Aaron Kamm; the sounds and strides we have are hard to ignore. The different new venues like Ready Room, Gramophone, Old Rock House, etc. that have been seeded and opened as well in the last 20 years here in the city have helped tremendously in so many different ways. It has given so many more of our musicians more platforms to showcase on and to spread out and opens up more opportunities.

That word, opportunity, is so key and important because that's all someone really needs sometimes to break through to the right audience or person. Giving the casual music fan more choices and more avenues is what is needed also for our scene to thrive. But, it also makes venues like ours work harder to constantly create freshness. Building those personal bridges thru music has meant the most and is my proudest thought of it all, having different people no matter color or origin or orientation, thru all walks of life coming together to enjoy and love the very form that we all share. The legacy of St. Louis music. Whether it's Beale, BB's, or here at Broadway Oyster Bar, we all have deep ties to this area and city that lets everyone know the blues and the music of St. Louis is far from done evolving and growing.

**Q:** What does it mean to you when you hear now that both the local and national music at Broadway Oyster Bar has made itself just as important as the highly raved cuisine & how do you truly feel about the future of St. Louis music going forward, and what needs to happen to ensure its continued growth and stability?

**A:** Feels pretty good just because for so long we built our reputation on being all about our food. Being the best destination for

what we do, the music was always just ingrained into the bricks and was the bonus of it all. From the days of Henry Townsend and Leroy Pierson playing here and Bennie Smith playing on Thursday nights, it's just in the blood of what the Oyster Bar is. But as far as now, pretty good is never enough. It can always be better, but we as a city have to embrace what we have and continue the dialogue of why St. Louis is so special.

We downplay ourselves and what we have too much when we should be screaming and raving about it. We must embrace tourism more heavily and show the world our amazing world class festivals, our food, our legacy, and our future. St. Louis is way more than the Cardinals. I love how Jeremy Segel-Moss has been able to show that with last year's amazing Big Muddy Festival and crafting it fully about St. Louis and St. Louis' amazing artists, but it's up to us all to tell those stories and share our diamonds. To remove yourself from the box, spread out and diverge ourselves way more in everything we have as a city. We have to give ourselves more credit than we do and then maybe more from outside our city will start giving us the same credit we deserve. KDHX is so great, beneficial and vital in what they do for our city, our artists, and our music because of its rooted investment in the independence of STL and broadcast our voices broader and that is what we have to do personally as well. *Support* and *embrace* have to be the words of the future to carry us.

**Q:** Lastly, What do you envision for the continued success and evolution for the next 20 years and beyond for the Broadway Oyster Bar and St. Louis in whole?

**A:** I feel like we've already equipped ourselves to be stable and adapt to the next decade and beyond, I just hope we continue to be an destination that people will continue to want to come to and be a part of, especially our guests from out of St. Louis to see what we as an whole have to offer. It's so much more than what people believe St. Louis is. Giving more people opportunities, show people something to live for, creating chances can open so many doors for those who don't know where to look or stopped believing they had a door to open. That alone can curb so many issues that plague our city. The answer is not always more police or mass incarcerations. Sometimes it's as easy as just showing direction and giving someone a chance that they never had or been given before. It is so important to show the future that they do have.

I'm very happy this generation has people and images that are vital to us and our future as a city like Bruce Franks, Alonzo Townsend, Marquise Knox to show and lead and show by example that this next generation has all the power and just need to be shown how to use it to its full potential. The key is to creating environments to enjoy life the right way and luckily, we have a handful of great people whose hands are helping to create to environments. Just helping each other prosper in so many different ways a little bit at a time will make St. Louis continue to be as strong as it is and everything that is beyond. 🎵

# Stacy Johnson

## BLUES SINGER

BY BRUCE OLSON

One cloudy afternoon a couple of years ago, as I researched my cultural and political history, *That St. Louis Thing*, I spent a pleasant afternoon in the company of Stacy Johnson at his house in Soulard. Johnson, who lost his battle against cancer May 11, was a gentle man with a good memory and a wry sense of humor. His was a singer's life; a bluesman who held his audiences in thrall with a tone as smooth as rich cream and as thoughtful as a good book.

Johnson was born into an affluent family in midtown St. Louis in 1945. His mother owned a tavern in a white neighborhood. "We were the third black family on the street, very interesting, I got to mingle with both races," Johnson said.

The entertainment bug bit Stacy when he was twelve—watching doo-wop groups on TV. He and his friend, Vernon Guy, formed a duo and went onto the streets to sing. "Did that lead you into a band?" I asked.

"No, that led me into reform school," Stacy answered. "I was a hot-tempered, hard-headed kid." Once he was released, he reunited with Guy and formed the Superiors. Then came the Arabians and "the money started coming in."

In 1960, Stacy met Benny Sharp, by then the chief rival to Ike Turner and the Kings of Rhythm on the East St. Louis R&B stages. Stacy, just 15, was by now a full-fledged performer. And when Turner went on the road in 1962, Stacy and Guy joined his revue.

"You not only had to learn the act," Stacy said, "you also had to learn how Ike Turner was. He was very, very moody all the time. One day he was just a wonderful person and the next day you couldn't speak to him. But he ran a tight ship and I learned how to dress and I learned the recording business."

Stacy, however, soon became disgruntled with Ike's behavior and returned to St. Louis. He rejoined Benny Sharp and helped make "Do the 45," a local hit in 1965. Stacy took over the lead vocal slot on what was then the senior R&B band in East St. Louis, playing into the late seventies when Sharp left the stage due to illness.

Throughout the eighties, Johnson worked with a host of bands at St. Louis clubs often sharing the spotlight with Guy. In 1987, he sang on a Johnnie Johnson album and made the first of nine tours of Europe with the likes of Robbie Montgomery, Clayton Love and Oliver Sain as part of the St. Louis Kings of Rhythm.



photo by Peter Newcomb

By then the blues had moved away from the East Side and was closing down on the North Side. Soulard was the center of the new scene and Stacy was a major part of that action. "It was a musical scene and a party scene," Stacy said. "Soulard and the surrounding area were very good for working. It was a mixed crowd, predominately white but with an influx of blacks, then the Latinos. Got so it was just a big melting pot."

In 2012, a stroke slowed Stacy way down. But that year, at BB's Jazz, Blues & Soups, he stood strong, resplendent in a fifties-style red jumpsuit, his trademark baldhead covered by a sharp black bluesman hat as he sang. Sitting in his house as he talked with me not long after that night he sang at BB's, Stacy was a very mellow man, smiling as he remembered his life as a blues singer.

"I loved Ray Charles, I liked Joe Cocker, Bobby Womack, Lou Rawls, Brook Benton. My mother had two shelves of record albums. I listened to them at home and I learned them. Music was very present. My mind was open to them. It was automatic."

Stacy Johnson was 72. 🎵

*Bruce Olson is the author of "That St. Louis Thing, An American Story of Roots, Rhythm and Race, Vol. 1 and 2." It is available at the Missouri History Museum, Left Bank Books, Subterranean Books and Vintage Vinyl. On the Internet please use Lulu.com to order. Amazon ordering is discouraged. Or buy direct from the author by dropping an email to [bolson@casco.net](mailto:bolson@casco.net) or at the Joe's Café Gallery during Thursday music shows and at other events around town.*

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Thank you to everyone for making the *Atomic Blues Festival* such a memorable event and a great success for our Education Fund



**Alice Monroe**



**Jeremiah Johnson with  
STLBS Youth Band member**



**Event committee member Adam  
Andrews with Jon Erblach**



**Rip Kastaris**



**STLBS Board Member and event emcee,  
Alonzo Townsend**

## BIG THANKS TO ALL THE ATOMIC BLUES FESTIVAL DONORS

Henry Townsend (Alonzo Townsend), Renee Smith, Marquise Knox, FolknBluesGrass, Jeremiah Johnson Band, Lucky Old Sons, Soulard Blues Band, Bruiser Queen, The Lindbergh Babies, Jeff Chapman, The Quaaludes, Mike Zito, Joe Metzka, Green McDonough Band, Marty Spikener's On Call Band, Brian Curran, The Homewreckers, Paul Bonn & The Bluesmen, Bobby Rush (Tom "Papa" Ray), Alvin Jett & the Phat noiZ, Bottoms Up Blues Gang, John McVey, Roland Johnson, Gene Jackson, 911 (John Fulmer), Letter To Memphis, Tommy Halloran, The Funky Butt Brass Band, Melissa Neels Band, Adam Huckle, Eugene Johnson, Kim Massie, National Blues Museum, Hammerstone's, Blues City Deli, Broadway Oyster Bar, Joanie's To Go, Music Go Round—Kevin Dierker, and our course, our sponsor, Pabst Blue Ribbon



**Gene Jackson**



**Event committee member Cindy Bauer with STLBS Board members Paul  
Niehaus, Greg Hunt and Jeremy Segel-Moss**



**STLBS Board Member and event committee  
member, Marty D. Spikener**



**Paul Bonn and Sharon Foehner**



**Ladies of the Blues, Melissa Neels, Renee Smith and Sharon Foehner**



**Jeremiah Johnson and  
Gene Jackson**



**Chuck Smotherson**



**Rip Kastaris and Jeremiah Johnson**



**STLBS Youth Band member**



**Event committee member Frank Bauer  
with Eric McSpadden**



# THE ROAD TO MEMPHIS

## INTERNATIONAL BLUES CHALLENGE



*The St. Louis Blues Society 2017 regional competition opens for participation on July 1, 2017. Band and Solo/Duo applications will be available for access until August 31, 2017.*

*Two winners (one band and one solo/duo act) will sent to Memphis, TN January 16 to 20, 2018 to participate in the 34th 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 Criteria on their website before completing the application. [blues.org/official-ibc-rules/](http://blues.org/official-ibc-rules/)*

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

### **APPLICATION AVAILABILITY/ SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS JULY 1 THROUGH AUGUST 31, 2017\***

***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, 2017 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, 2017. No applications will be accepted after the official deadline.

### **ST. LOUIS BLUES CHALLENGE FINAL JUDGING SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2017 3 PM**

Kirkwood Station Brewing Company  
105 East Jefferson  
Kirkwood MO 63122

### **ST. LOUIS BLUES CHALLENGE WINNERS' SHOWCASE AND FUNDRAISER SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2017 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 2018. 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 will send one recording to be considered for the 2018 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, 2017.

### **BEST SELF-PRODUCED OFFICIAL RULES:**

1. The eligibility period: St. Louis artist CDs must have been released between November 1, 2016 and September 22, 2017.
2. Performing acts must reside and perform in the St. Louis area.
3. 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.
4. A performer who has previously been nominated for a Blues Music Award (formerly the W.C. Handy Blues 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. Please contact The Blues Foundation directly to confirm eligibility.
5. A CD on a record label that has been previously nominated for a Blues Music Award (formerly the W.C. Handy Blues Award) shall not be eligible for this competition.
6. If an Affiliate does not conduct a competition to determine who it will sponsor but instead appoints a CD, that CD may not include a board member or officer of the sponsoring Affiliated organization.
7. The winner will be announced at the St. Louis International Blues Challenge on October 15, 2017.

### **Judges will evaluate the following points.**

**The criteria are in order of importance.**

1. Blues Content
2. Musical Performance
3. Audio Quality and Production Value of the Recording
4. Professionalism and Visual Appearance of Cover Art and Design
5. Credits and Liner Note Information

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, 2017***

**ST. LOUIS BLUES SOCIETY  
PO BOX 78894  
ST. LOUIS, MO 63178**

*The winner will be announced at the St. Louis International Blues Challenge on October 15, 2017.*



# The Early Days of BB's Jazz, Blues & Soups

## *episode one*

by Michael Kuelker

It was looking like a typically flavorful night at BB's Jazz Blues & Soups early in the evening of May 27, 2017 as Love Jones the Band were readying to perform a 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary concert. But a page was turning upstairs on the third floor where club owner Mark O'Shaughnessy lived in an apartment, same place he'd resided since 1976 when he bought the building and began manifesting a vision for music and culture in St. Louis. He lived with diabetes and had been unwell but still the death seemed sudden. Downstairs the music played on.

For a generation of blues people in St. Louis, he was builder and teacher, promoter and preacher, a man who lived and died the St. Louis blues. Mark O'Shaughnessy had many facets. He was a beatnik poet fond of berets, a blues producer, an arden cook, an urban pioneer. He road managed international tours for St. Louis artists like Oliver Sain & the Kings of Rhythm and Henry Townsend and other blues people who weren't getting sustainable livings out of the local music scene. He was an original board member of the St. Louis Blues Society, producer of the St. Louis Blues & Heritage Festival, a producer for Swingmaster Records in the Netherlands, a member of the Soulard Culture Squad. At the time of his death, O'Shaughnessy was on the cusp of liquidating his share in BB's and shifting focus toward creative projects under the name Blue Vision. He had a library of photos, video, manuscripts and ideas with which to work.

The life he gave to BB's Jazz Blues & Soups may be his most lasting legacy. There are three eras of the venue at 700 South Broadway: 1976-77, 1980-81 and 1996-present.

The building he and nightlife builder Bob Burkhardt took over in 1976 (BB's being the latter's initials) was already old. It began in 1848 as a house in an area known as Frenchtown and over time the structure expanded and served many purposes. For

about 30 years prior to the inception of BB's, the place was a flophouse hotel for transients named Phil's Hotel No. 2.

Burkhardt was a few years older and brought experience to the partnership having debuted Muddy Waters on Laclede's Landing (a new entertainment district) and the rock club, Rusty Springs (4592 Manchester at Kingshighway). Burkhardt soon established the Broadway Oyster Bar (736 S. Broadway) among his archipelago of restaurants and venues.

As Phil's Hotel neared the end of its inglorious run, O'Shaughnessy was living in Soulard in a building that he bought on the cheap near the market and library. Soulard was a scruffy area years away from renewal. John May recalls, "In the early 70s you could pioneer and homestead in Soulard. If you could pay the tax on a building, five hundred bucks, you could have the whole freakin' building. He lived upstairs. There was a restaurant-bar downstairs. He didn't run it. It was 'buy the building, renovate it, somebody else will help pay for it' and he did that until he could sell it and this opportunity [BB's] opened up." O'Shaughnessy's friend for 40-plus years, May was his business associate for almost as long. The two were deeply involved in the St. Louis Blues Society and St. Louis blues festivals. Among May's myriad musical works since the 70s, he has been the talent buyer during BB's era 3 during which time the club flourished as a showcase for top-level talent.

O'Shaughnessy and Burkhardt acquired the building in 1976 and inaugurated BB's Jazz Blues & Soups, which showcased more jazz than blues at the time. Among the artists who performed at BB's were Lee Roth, JD Parran, the Mayer Brothers, the Kennedy Brothers, Oliver Sain, Eddie Harris, Betty Carter and Earl 'Fatha' Thimes. National artists were often booked for four dates or more and put in combination with young emerging St. Louis jazz players who were ready to raise their game. Though the club lasted just a year and a half in this first incarnation, a vision for BB's Jazz Blues & Soups was set into motion and stayed true.

In light of BB's international reputation today, it is instructive to recall its early days as a divey place specializing in jazz and serving soup to the alcoholics and outliers who resided on the second floor. Soup and bread are filling—and if you happened to be toothless and short on cash, easy to swallow. The cost for a bottomless bowl was \$1.70.

"The soups were cooked on the third floor by Mark O'Shaughnessy. All the vegetables and produce and bread came from Soulard market, where they would go down and be able to pick 'em up at a discount and make fresh, hearty soups. The clientele was strictly the people that lived in the hotel. It wasn't open for lunch business but if you happened to be at bar and needed something to eat, you could. It was all you could eat until you passed out. And then you start over. At the same time, it was trying to make sure that if you're gonna drink, you need to eat. And after that, music is also good for the soul too. The jazz and the blues and the soups and the hotel went together."

One of those jazz cats was Lee Roth. Prior to performing at BB's in his band the Expression Jazz Quintet, Roth met O'Shaughnessy through the music scene and they remained friends for more than 40 years.

"I was playing down on Euclid at the Orphanage. Jim Byrnes was opening for us—and he's not opening up for anybody anymore—and he was also playing Balaban's next door. Colin Sphincter Band was playing Balaban's too and Ptah [Williams]. We were going back and forth. We were playing there at the Orphanage every Friday and Saturday for a while.

"After the gig, somebody would have a party and Jim Byrnes would come and he would play something. Mark came and he played 'two hangmen hanging from a tree' by Mason Proffit by himself. He was a good player and a good singer, really, still was before he died in my opinion, but he didn't do it very much. Then I found out that he was working on trying to open up a bar."

Through a happy accident in the time-space continuum, Roth had the opportunity

# In Loving Memory of Mark O'Shaughnessy (1952-2017)

to tuck-point BB's at the dawn of era 1. "I worked on the dock and my day gig was about a block away from there at Frisco Transportation. I was a dockworker and the union steward there. So I would come over on lunch and help him on the building," says Roth. In order to get the building up to code, it meant a lot of hard work on the DIY plan. "It would have cost thousands of dollars [to hire out the work] which he didn't have. Mark did most of the work and he had the scaffold set up so I could join him on my lunch hour and I could do some after work. I also helped Bob Burkhardt, too, helped Bob work on the Oyster Bar. We were all working together; we were hippie friends."

The 700 block of South Broadway Avenue was fertile with taverns. Across the street from BB's sat the Last Exit, later Rich Andrews' Restaurant & Bar (now Beale on Broadway).

Down the block were Kelly's Korner Bar and Broadway Oyster Bar.

John May: "Kelly's was the only 3 a.m. bar in the city of St. Louis. That's where all the musicians would go at the end of the night and hang out there. Or go to the east side. And that's when the east side was accessible, you'd go over there and there were a lot of blues clubs. Most of the people would end the gig and go to Kelly's for cheap drinks and pizzas. That's where judges and cops and everybody would go and you could find out a

lot just being a fly on the wall in there, man. They'd all show up and start talking about what's really going on."

The clientele at Kelly's and BB's differed in kind, May says. "Totally different vibe [at BB's]. This was a hippie thing, you know, counterculture. Down there [at Kelly's] it's the gritty city people. These are the people that

The confluence of music and people in this new frontier of urbanity did not go down well with everyone. "Down here in the early days, the cops would give Mark a hard time because he was mixing races and you're not supposed to do that," says May. O'Shaughnessy told author Bruce Olson in *That St. Louis Thing, Vol. 2*, "We got a lot of threatening phone calls from people who didn't like us dancing together listening to the same kind of music" (372).

The message O'Shaughnessy took home is that he was on his own and if the area was going to be under-policed, he'd have to be an alpha dog who showed teeth. So he stocked up. O'Shaughnessy owned an AK47 (located in the kitchen during Eras 1 & 2 in case of emergency), multiple handguns (every six feet under the bar early in era 3), copious amounts of ammunition and machetes. The man wanted machetes on hand



**The early rough crowd that would gather late night at BB's Jazz, Blues and Soups included Tom Waits and Mark O'Shaughnessy.**

**photo courtesy of John May**

worked at the police station, fire department, city hall, knew who was in court that day."

O'Shaughnessy did the booking at BB's with the help of jazz hipster Ollie Matheus. "Ollie was a guy who came out of the jazz world from Gaslight Square. He was one of the original beat guys. He and Jorge Martinez [club owner in Gaslight Square] were the two guys that Mark was very close to and they were very hip and very beat. That's where the jazz component came from." May said.

if St. Louis turned post-apocalyptic and all the ammo ran out.

One day in the Darwinian urban jungle of era 1, O'Shaughnessy found himself confronted.

John May: "They bought the building from the gangsters. Because Mark owed the gangsters money, man, they came in to claim all their shit. Mark was in the kitchen with his AK47. 'You're gonna get your money but it ain't today.'"

**...to be continued**

# Mark O'Shaughnessy

## ~The Poet~

Mark O'Shaughnessy's death on May 27 robbed the music community of a cornerstone figure. Best known for BB's Jazz Blues & Soups, the venue he co-founded in 1976, and for musical advocacy across four decades, Mark was also a poet. He wrote all of his adult life, reams of poems, and if we are to remember him properly, we must take stock of the thought-world that gave fire to his verse.

A member of the Soulard Culture Squad, Mark wanted his venue to be a place for poetry along with music. If Mark was working BB's door, along with his fistful of cover charge cash he had poems in front of him that he fiddled with because like all writers he was ever and always in search of what the French call *le mot juste*, the right or exact word. He occasionally shared his poems on facebook under the running title "MarkO's Insane Poetry Corner" but the overwhelming majority of his poems have never seen the light of day.

Mark was fond of chiseling his wordical blues into rhyming couplets and quatrains. "Notice in "Self Importance," a poem that he posted online March 31, 2017, the close linkage of sound and sense in this four rhyme sequence:

*It's a planet full of hate and fear  
All resources we must profiteer  
Yet in ignorance we persevere  
Whilst the sick and weakest disappear*

These lines summarize much of Mark's perception of the world, and his poem yearns for a new millennium and with its offbeat rhyme "Self Importance" concludes:

*I pray for the time of global reckoning  
And for angels that we can finally see  
To return our world to sanity  
Fore we destroy ourselves eternally  
In the remaining time, do what I can  
For each soul I meet to understand  
That we're all a child of holy grace  
In each and every mortal's face*

Music was a gateway to transcendence and it pervades his poetry. "When it Comes to Music" elegiacally pays homage to his inspirations, many of whom lived and created great art here in St. Louis.

*When it comes to music  
I wear my heart on my sleeve  
My heart knows what's pleasing  
And it leads me with ease  
It led to the musicians  
Whom I studied and praised  
And in time got to know them  
And had my consciousness raised  
  
Music, sweet music  
Whatever style or type  
That has the soul of its performer  
In some spirit music flight  
That raises every listener  
To peace and brotherhood"*

Spiritual unity is one of the abiding themes of his poetry. Mark saw spirit locked in mortal combat with itself, something which both energized his poetry and depressed him personally. His withering critiques of power came from a well of anger but his ears were always tuned to the flutter of fingers over the lute strings of mystical beauty.

He spoke as plainly of angels as he did of the depredations of Babylon system. Politically, Mark was unambiguous. He hated the war machine,



photo by Carol Santhuff

despised corrupt politicians and their enablers, but it wasn't just about the people. Life was a circulation and collision of forces – evil, which he loathed and respected; good, which he championed; and sometimes just some inexplicably freaky disantanguous shit that nobody's ever heard of before. Mark saw it all.

Circa 2000, after I had been writing blues pieces for the *Post-Dispatch* and the St. Louis Blues Society for a while, Mark would occasionally invite me up to his apartment on the third floor of BB's. The atmosphere was wholly different than on the first floor. Here, buffered from the din, I felt like I'd entered a certificate program for Beatnik Studies with one-on-one tutelage. We smoked marijuana and talked about the arts. He liked it that I had a taste for poetry in addition to the blues and so the fruits of one of our conversations led to an exchange of artifacts. He hipped me to a book of surrealist poetry and because it came up in our chat, I passed along Pontecorvo's *Battle of Algiers*.

Another time up in his pad I witnessed an impassioned poetry reading for an audience of two—bluesman Leroy Pierson and me. Mark was trying out new material that he was happy with and he gesticulated and projected as if he were speaking truth to power center stage at the United Nations. It was thrilling. I imagined him publishing a volume of poetry and a DVD of him reading these works not only from the stage at BB's but, because he was a beat, he'd be videoed reading beside the Eads bridge, in a southside alley, at a northside intersection, before a campfire with the homeless near the river, at a boardroom, on the shoulders of the Stan Musial statue. Any-and-everywhere because he was to the bone marrow a St. Louis artist.

Some of Mark's verse that evening was politically fiery but I remember the poems also showed his visionary-mystical side. We see this pondering of eternal verities in "Making Sense," a poem Mark posted online just a month before he died, and it reads in part:

*We mortal creations of such short time  
Someday escape this mortal paradigm  
And in love and mercy to all things good  
Return to spiritual brotherhood*

– Michael Kuelker

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August 11	BB's Jazz, Blues, & Soups 700 S. Broadway - St. Louis, MO	10:00p
August 17	BB's Jazz, Blues, & Soups 700 S. Broadway - St. Louis, MO	7:00p
September 2	Bradford Bank 150 Celebration Downtown - Greenville, IL	5:30p
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# Big Muddy Keeps a Rollin' Along

by  
Bob Baugh

**G**et ready for Labor Day where history and music come together on the cobblestones of Laclede's Landing. The 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Big Muddy Blues festival will be docking by the Eads Bridge with an all local crew. The success of last year's festival and the 50 + local bands playing this year are a testament to work begun more than 30 years ago.

## Thinking Blues and Community Building

As documented in Bruce Olson's wonderful history *That St. Louis Thing VII*, Big Muddy traces its roots to the 1980s and a time of change in the St. Louis music scene. By the beginning of that decade, Gaslight Square had been extinguished and the club scenes in North St. Louis and East St. Louis were in decline. However, new opportunities were opening up south of the racial divide of Delmar Ave.

New clubs like Broadway Oyster Bar, Mike and Minn's, BB's Jazz, Blues & Soups, Mississippi Nights, and The Venice Café became mainstays for Tommy Bankhead, Silvercloud, Bennie Smith and many more. Capturing that energy and opportunity led to the 1984 formation of the St. Louis Blues Society. It grew out of conversations with John May, Ron Edwards, Frank Babcock and Sam Valenti. John says their goals were simple, "to organize blues fans, musicians and clubs with events to keep the music in motion." They would also be helped by the seeds of an old community radio station, KDNA, that sprouted again in 1987 as KDHX with blues musicians like Ron Edwards, Art Dwyer and others at the mic keeping the blues alive.

Their first big event came in 1986 with first Blues Fest, a 14-hour 17 band show, held at Mississippi Nights that featured a who's who of the St. Louis Blues scene. Its success led to series of Benson Hedges Blues fests but the Blues Society wanted a larger event. So in 1992 the Society with John May, Mark O'Shaughnessy and Barrett Braun in the lead, organized the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual

St. Louis Blues Heritage festival on the steps of the closed Kiel Auditorium. "We made magic," May says, "with people who were magic and we did it together."

As May can tell you in detail, "putting on festivals takes money, organization, experience, crisis management and having friends help." Most people don't know that the 1993 festival was almost cancelled. Dave Beardsley remembers it well, "I was still a working fireman. That year all the Red Cross emergency services you need to have available for a festival event were tied up with the flood and unavailable. That meant no insurance. No insurance, no festival. They called the Fire Department and I helped organize a big group of volunteer doctors, nurses and paramedics to help and the show went on."

There are the crisis moments and then there are the times when everything comes together. John May smiles when he talks about the first Heritage Festival, "I booked Lowell Fulson from California to headline. The schedule was tight so there was no practice or dress rehearsal and he was really worried about the backup band. I kept telling him 'don't worry we got it covered.' When he went on stage, Oliver Sain, Gus Thornton, Kenny Rice, Tom Maloney and Johnnie Johnson were waiting. When they hit their first notes Lowell just stared. Slowly a huge gap toothed grin spread across his face. It never left. He couldn't believe how great they were and after the show he said 'I want to do this again.'"

## Blues Heritage to Big Muddy

While the first Blues Heritage festival was a rousing success attracting thousands the city's response was a blanket refusal for any future access to Kiel or Forest Park. However, Laclede's Landing with its historical authenticity and atmosphere would fill the bill. Moving there opened the door to more stages, more talent and more days. The festival quickly grew to two and then three days. The STLBS had succeeded

in solidifying the music community as the festival incorporated jazz, gospel, R&B, rock and blues as a community.

Therapid growth also brought problems. Working out of offices in Laclede's Landing, John May and Mark O'Shaughnessy were trying to run a major festival with volunteer labor. Even with debts rising to \$150,000 in 1996 the Laclede's Landing group refused to charge any entrance fees to help offset the costs. As a result, the Blues Heritage festival rights were sold to eliminate the debt and Big Muddy was started.

The new promoters ignored everyone's advice and moved it to Fenton. The event went bust with the promoters leaving town soon thereafter. At the same time Laclede's Landing businesses realized they had lost their golden goose. That led to the formation of the current Laclede Neighborhood Association which took responsibility for organizing the Big Muddy. They built a new relationship with the STLBS which benefitted both. It gave the association ties to the music community and the society a purpose but not the fiscal and organizational responsibility.

John May is proud of what the thirty-one years of festivals have achieved. "The festivals helped do what the founders intended. They encouraged local musicians to grow with the community of music lovers—more professional, dress the part, act professional, play original music and recording. That created a real product for the export of St. Louis music."

## Great Recession to Local Direction

The Big Muddy enjoyed a good run until the Great Recession hit in 2007. Laura Tobey the Executive Director of the Laclede Neighborhood Association and Big Muddy co-producer spelled it out, "Sponsorship dollars had dried up in the years that followed. The crowds were smaller and the demographics were 50+ in age. The Landing Merchants were considering dropping the event. They had to find another way."

Ann Chance from the St. Louis Office of Special Events encouraged the Association to consider other options. The city recognized the benefits of the revenue generating event but even more Chance says, “these events strengthen the city. People in neighborhoods coming together in their communities and parks eat together, listen to music together and become friends. Police say it really helps. The more active the neighborhood the lower the crime rate.”

They asked the STLBS for suggestions. Their president, Jeremy Segel-Moss came in with a locally oriented plan. He told them, “doing it with an all local talent base that built upon the local community and each bands fan base was the way to go. We have national touring acts and headliners like Jeremiah Johnson, Marquise Knox and Pokey Lafarge but this is their home. They are also local homegrown bands.”

Segel-Moss outlined the problem with the traditional festival structure, “Most festivals around the country operate with a model that is 2/3 national/ big name acts and 1/3 local. It’s expensive.” He also noted that the “Bug Muddy was still operating as a free event covered by sponsor fees and the association. There had to be an agreeable price point to raise revenue.”

The Association with encouragement from many others slashed the budget and rolled the dice. With Laura and Jeremy serving as co-producers they took the model and ran with it booking 45 Acts on six stages. They needed to work with lots of partners beginning with the bands who could help promote the festival. The Blues Society, KDHX, STLBlues.net, The Missouri Arts Council and private sponsors and vendors all stepped up to help.

The newly opened National Blues Museum promoted the festival and sponsored pre-events honoring St. Louis legends Johnnie Johnson and Henry Townsend. The Lumiere Place used their Jumbotron to post festival notices and provided a fireworks show at the end of the festival. Ann Chance and the city worked them through the permitting process and obtaining services from stages and barricades to water, trash and security.

## Success, Community and a Buzz

When Labor Day weekend arrived, the weather cooperated and the crowds returned in numbers the Landing hadn’t seen in years. The estimated 30,000 people who came over the two days was more than double the number of previous years. The \$10 admission fee didn’t keep people away from a peaceful crime free family event. The age demographics skewed younger with a range of 25-75 and it played to the theme of a family event on a holiday weekend with free admission for kids under 15. The gamble had paid off big time with the festival turning a small profit.

Alonzo Townsend, the emcee for the 2016 festival, loved every minute of it. The son of Henry Townsend and newest STLBS board member saw the fest as a chance to “build a community by breaking down the barriers.” So in collusion with Jeremiah

what great local talent we have. There is a buzz for this year.” For the Blues Society it was acknowledgement that going local worked because in Segel-Moss’ words, “the city turned out and stayed.”

## Bigger and Better in 2017

Big Muddy 2017 co-producers Laura Tobey and Jeremy Segel-Moss are working full tilt to deliver an even bigger and better product this year. The planning got underway the week after the close of the 2016 festival. While Tobey, Segel-Moss and the sponsors were ecstatic about the success of the event they had learned a few lessons and it shows.

The 2017 Big Muddy offers a stellar line up of more than 50 local bands and solo performers appearing on six stages. The co-producers have made a few tweaks that allowed them to expand the offerings and provide a better listening experience for the fans.

There will be pre events on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The National Blues Museum will again host tribute shows on their Legends Room stage starting at 12:30 pm events on Saturday for Albert King and Sunday for Tommy Bankhead. Dion Brown, the Executive Director of the NBM says “this is a great partnership that recognizes these musicians while giving the thousands of fans coming to the festival

a chance to hear something up close and intimate at the NBM.” There will also be a Friday night Lucas Stage show on the Landing that features Boo Boo Davis and Kim Massie and the Solid senders starting at 7 pm.

The shift to 3 indoor stages (Big Daddy’s, Morgan St. Brewery and Joey B’s) will help in case of bad weather while avoiding having one stage play over another. Joey B’s will offer a smaller more intimate setting for solo and acoustic performers. The second floor at Morgan Street Brewery has a nice wooden floor which is perfect for dancing and dance oriented bands like Sweetie and the Toothaches, Annie & the Furtrappers, Tommy Halloran’s Gorilla

continued



Johnson who was playing the last set, “we called the people to stand elbow to elbow, shoulder to shoulder, all together as a family. We mixed the entire audience from the front of the stage to the cobblestone street with pumping fists. It showed what we can do together, have together. It captured a moment in time that defined the future of Big Muddy and this city going forward.”

Looking back, Tobey says her best memory of 2016 “was seeing the first day crowd and knowing it worked and seeing the full hillside off people chillin and enjoying the whole vibe.” Ann Chance was just as happy. “Last year was the best blues fest in the country, all local. No complaints about the lack of national names. People loved it. They came out in very big numbers and saw

Swing and more. The Main Stage will shut down at 11pm but the festival continues at Morgan Street Brewery with performances from 11 pm -1:30 am by Joe Metzka and Jason Cooper.

The broad line-up features our homegrown national acts and a number of newcomers to the Big Muddy stage. It highlights the unique nature of this blues festival. There are very few cities of any size with a pool of quality talent big enough to cover a festival of this scope and size. As Segel-Moss notes, "variety is what makes St. Louis special ... we are trying for an all-encompassing expression of the blues. There will be a little something for everyone." That should sound familiar. It's just the kind of community John May, Mark O'Shaughnessy, Ron Edwards and so many others set out to build thirty years ago.

## And Now a Word from the Players

**Torey Casey** has been to the last 16 Big Muddy's but this year he and his five-piece R&B band, **The South Side Hustle**, will be struttin' their stuff on stage for the first time. Casey has been performing all over Jefferson County for over 20 years. Torey says, "Every Big Muddy has been a blast, [but] this year we get to play. We are excited and ready. We'll be bringing our new five song EP *Can't Knock the Hustle* and our awesome vocalist Teec'a Easby." Torey promises to deliver "plenty of soul, James Brown and lots of energy." Saturday 4:45-6pm Morgan Stage

**Brian Curran** is no stranger to the Big Muddy stage with a history that goes back to playing with harmonica master Jon Erblich at Blues Heritage festivals. He really appreciates what Jeremy Segel-Moss and the STLBS has done for blues and the community, "this year feels good if not better than last year." He says his band, **The Dust Covers**, are planning a "more blues oriented

selection with new material from the early 20's but nothing after 1935." The Dust Covers Sunday 5:15-6:30pm at Morgan St. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and Brian solo Saturday at Joey B's 4:30-5pm.

**Eugene Johnson** has great memories from last year's festival. While performing with his R&B oriented **Eugene and Company Band** they went into the audience and began dancing with the crowd. A picture taken at the time ended up in a calendar. He says, "I'm excited for the opportunity to play again this year and do my original music." He plans to do "That's Albert King" his new song now on iTunes and others from a CD he is working on tentatively titled *Play One More*. Sunday 8:15-9:30pm at Big Daddy's.

**Al Holliday** loves "the completely organic St. Louis music scene," he says, "we have a real thing here, a good thing." He's really excited to bring his **East Side Rhythm Band** for the first time. "Lots of my favorite acts will be on stage at Big Muddy. It's so cool to appear on stage with them." The full 12-piece band is coming and "a bunch of new music that may even include a reggae version of 'Summertime.'" Al also sends a shout out the fans and to the STLBS for their support of local music. Sunday 8:30-9:45pm Lucas Stage

**Alice Monroe and the East Side Revue Band** will be making their first appearance at Big Muddy. The tight 3-piece outfit with its Rock'n'Roll, R&B and blues focus features Alice on drums and vocals. Bassist Nate Logan and John Higerson, who played with David Dee for a decade, also take their turns on the vocals. Alice says she is "really excited to be on stage" and promises that "we're really gonna' rock it with part of our show done in tribute to the Allman brothers." Sunday 3-4:15pm Morgan Stage

**The Ground Floor Band** has been a mainstay of the St. Louis music scene

for more than 20 years playing regularly at Beale on Broadway. Every member contributes to their mix of blues, R&B and soul with individual vocals and sweet four part harmonies. Band leader Charles Hunt says, "we are excited to be at Big Muddy again ... we want to do a 'just' job and do what we gotta do." For the festival, they plan to play some originals like "Poor Man" and "The Older I get the Better I Get" as well as some Albert King and B.B. King. Sunday Morgan Stage 4:45-6pm

**Sweetie and the Toothaches** will be playing Big Muddy for the first time and hope to fill the Morgan St. dance floor with dancers for their jump blues. Sweetie, **Emily Richards**, says "It's such an honor and a privilege to be asked to play...we have worked really hard the past two years and now we get to showcase our music." The Toothaches pianist and arranger, Chase Garret, echoes Emily's excitement, "we are already practicing to get our stuff up to snuff and we may showcase some new original material we are working on for a CD." Saturday 3:30-4:45pm Morgan St. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

This year **Marsha Evans & the Coalition** will take the main stage with their blues, R&B and jazz. Marsha has played nearly every Big Muddy and Jimmy Hinds, her spouse, bassist and band leader, goes back to the first Mississippi Nights Blues Fest. Marcia is reminded annually why she loves this family oriented fest. "One family who brought their kids to my first appearance (she was their teacher) comes back every year. Now those kids bring their children." Jimmy remembers how shocked out of town musicians would be to find their local backup band was filled with all stars. They both appreciate the renewed local spotlight of Big Muddy. Marsha says to tell he fans, "we can't wait to perform for all of you." Sunday Main Stage 8-9:15pm 🎵



## 22nd ANNUAL BIG MUDDY BLUES FESTIVAL TRIBUTE SHOWS AT THE NATIONAL BLUES MUSEUM

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 12:30-2:30PM

### ALBERT KING

PERFORMANCES BY KENNY RICE, VINCE MARTIN,  
CURT LANDES, GUS THORNTON AND OLIVER JOHNSON

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 12:30-2:30PM

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Thursday 7/13 Soulard Blues Band  
Thursday 7/20 Jeremiah Johnson Band  
Thursday 7/27 Big George Brock and the New House Rockers  
Saturday 7/29 Miss Jubilee

Thursday 8/3 Paul Bonn and the Bluesmen  
Thursday 8/10 Robbie and the Rockin' Fools feat. Little Rachael  
Thursday 8/17 John McVey Band  
Saturday 8/19 TJ Mueller's Banjo Show  
Thursday 8/24 Doug Deming and the Jeweltones

## Mr. Handy's Blues: A St. Louis Story by Bob Baugh

*Mr. Handy's Blues* came calling June 25 at a special event at the MX Theater on Washington Ave. This private showing of the new documentary by the Emmy Award-winning filmmaker, Joanne Fish, was in honor of the central role St. Louis played in W.C. Handy's life. It was also a thank you to the many St. Louisans who assisted and appeared in the film.

Ward 18 Alderman Terry Kennedy was also there from the City of St. Louis to thank Joanne. He presented her a council resolution in honor of the film and W.C. Handy and a signed proclamation from Mayor Lyda Krewson naming June 25, 2017 as "W.C. Handy Day."

The film itself is a remarkable compilation old footage, historical artifacts, musicians, music, historians and the voice of Handy telling his own story. He speaks of his crossroads moment and his despair in 1894 in St. Louis where he found himself starving and sleeping on the cobblestones under the Eads Bridge. A lament he heard on those same streets, "Ma man's got a heart like a rock cast in de sea" would later become a key line in the most recorded song ever written, "The St. Louis Blues."

The film offers a broader perspective of Handy's life. He was a songwriter cheated by a publisher. So to own and control his music, he started a business becoming first African-American owner of a music publishing company. Handy Brother's Publishing remains in business today. It shows his role as a leading figure in the Harlem Renaissance where he co-wrote songs with the famous poet Langston Hughes. He was a musicologist, publishing a number of books about music including an illustrated *Blues: An Anthology* which is considered one of the greatest blues books ever written. He was a remarkable man.

Local blues fans will immediately recognize Bernie Hayes and Dave Beardsley who appear in the film as well as a 16-year-old Matt "Rattlesnake" Lesch playing a Handy song. Other St. Louis musicians appearing in the film include Miss Jubilee, Kim Massie, Kasimu Taylor, Sarah Jane and the Blue Notes, Dr. David Evans, The Voodoo Blues Band and Race Simmons and the St. Louis School of Rock Band.

Dr. Rosalind Norman a long time St. Louis educator and black theater advocate was a local co-producer. She beamed after the showing saying, "I'm so proud of Joanne and her hard work. The research is evident. It is a thorough telling of a story of music, a man and the business side of his life." They are in the next phase with the film "making the film festival circuit and talking with national networks." 🎵

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In attendance at the June 25 special showing of the film, *Mr. Handy's Blues*. From left to right: Joanne Fish; Kris and Tom Fahey, Catherine Manley Gaylord Foundation; Dr. Rosalind Norman co-producer; Dave Beardsley, co-founder National Blues Museum. photo by Bob Baugh



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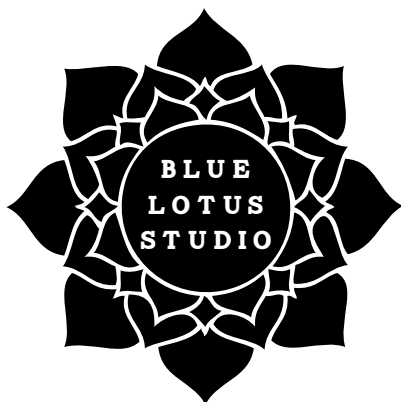
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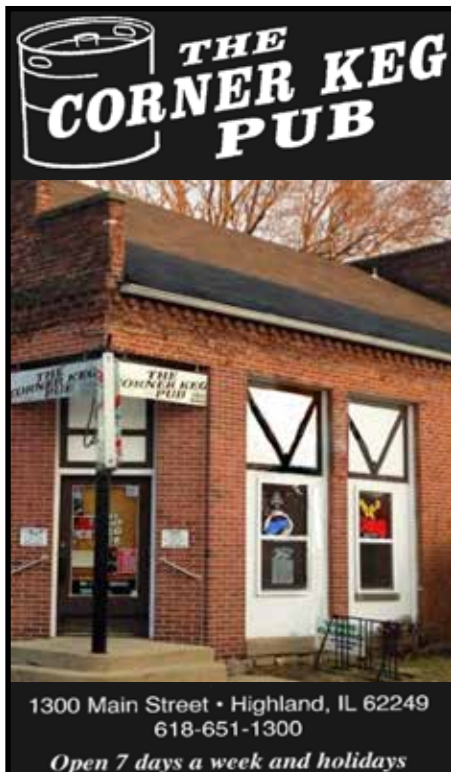
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# ST. LOUIS musicians directory

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[aggriffdog11@gmail.com](mailto:aggriffdog11@gmail.com)  
314.378.0022

## Big Mike Aguirre and the Blu City All Stars

[www.bigmikestl.com](http://www.bigmikestl.com)  
618.610.7467

## Bob Case

[www.bobcasemusician.com](http://www.bobcasemusician.com)  
[bobcasemusician@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bobcasemusician@sbcglobal.net)  
314.807.5770

## Bottlesnakes

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

## The Bottoms Up Blues Gang

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

## Brian Curran

[www.briantcurran.com](http://www.briantcurran.com)  
314.753.1395

## Brother Jefferson Band

Jeff Chapman  
[www.jeffchapmanmusic.com](http://www.jeffchapmanmusic.com)  
618.292.7196

## Dave Black

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

## Deja Blu STL Blues Band

Amy Sampo  
[www.dejablustl.rocks](http://www.dejablustl.rocks)  
[dejablustl.rocks@yahoo.com](mailto:dejablustl.rocks@yahoo.com)  
314.853.5788

## Delta Soul Revival

Tyler Stokes  
[www.deltasolrevival.com](http://www.deltasolrevival.com)  
[deltasolrevival@gmail.com](mailto:deltasolrevival@gmail.com)  
314.330.5028

## Ethan Leinwand

[www.ethanleinwand.com](http://www.ethanleinwand.com)  
202.558.8513

## Eugene Johnson & Company

[www.eugenejohnson.org](http://www.eugenejohnson.org)  
314.537.2396

## Gateway Blues Band

Jeff Sieth  
[www.gatewaybluesband.com](http://www.gatewaybluesband.com)  
618.830.3347

## The Green McDonough Band

Laura Green 314.808.0158  
Rich McDonough 314.625.1787  
[www.thegreenmcdonoughband.com](http://www.thegreenmcdonoughband.com)

## The House of Bishops Zydeco Show and Blues Revue

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## Hudson & the Hoodoo Cats

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

## JD Hughes & The Fuze

[www.jdhughes.net](http://www.jdhughes.net)  
314.954.7288

## Jim McClaren

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

## Johnny Dean Blues

John Wilson  
[jdeanblues@yahoo.com](mailto:jdeanblues@yahoo.com)  
314.534.8060

## Kingdom Brothers Band

Bob Walther  
[www.kingdombrothersband.com](http://www.kingdombrothersband.com)  
314.910.8490

## Larry Griffin

& Eric McSpadden Duo  
Larry Griffin  
[lgriff43@yahoo.com](mailto:lgriff43@yahoo.com)  
314.662.1857

## Marty D. Spikener's On Call Band

[spikemoves@hotmail.com](mailto:spikemoves@hotmail.com)  
314.435.7053

## Matt "The Rattlesnake" Lesch

Chris Totty  
[www.reverbnation.com/mattherattlesnakelesch](http://www.reverbnation.com/mattherattlesnakelesch)  
314.596.8116

## Melissa Neels Band

[melissaneels.net](http://melissaneels.net)  
314.306.8407

## North of the Quarter

Toby Mechem  
[www.northofthequarter.com](http://www.northofthequarter.com)  
314.691.7056

## Pat Liston

Dawn Liston  
[www.patliston.com](http://www.patliston.com)  
618.741.1166

## Paul Bonn & The Bluesmen

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## Paul Niehaus IV

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## Sins of the Pioneers

Mark "Sunny Boy" Mason  
[www.facebook.com/TheSinsofthePioneers](http://www.facebook.com/TheSinsofthePioneers)  
314.481.3380

## Soulard Blues Band

Art Dwyer  
[www.soulardbluesband.com](http://www.soulardbluesband.com)  
314.832.4924

## The Spys

Michael Shornick  
[www.facebook.com/TheSpysBand](http://www.facebook.com/TheSpysBand)  
314.662.7555

## Tom Hall

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314.853.0060

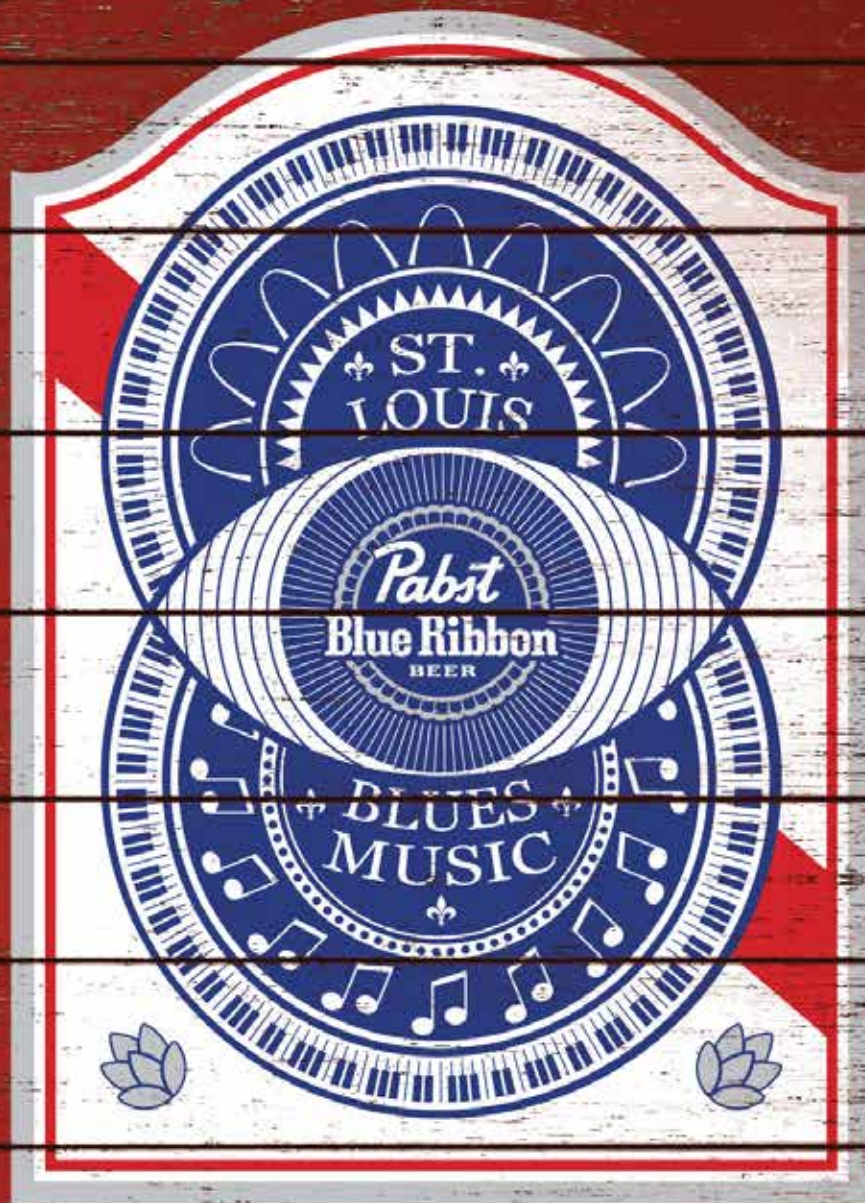
## Tommy Halloran and Guerrilla Swing

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314.243.3147

## Uncle Albert

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