

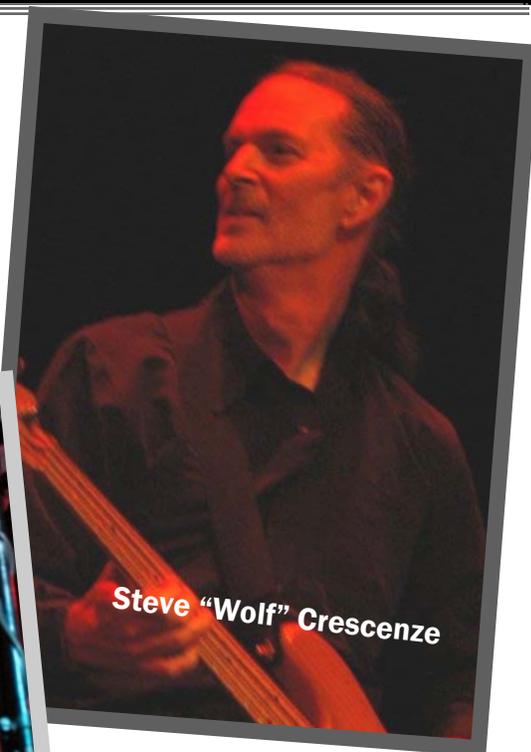
Capital Blues Messenger

Celebrating the Blues in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia

February 2010 Volume 4 Issue 2



**Big Boy
Little Band**



Curtis Blues



**DCBS 2010
IBC Contenders**



Inside: Highlights from the 26th International Blues Challenge — Memphis, TN

Cover Photos by Connie Oleksak Warner and Mona Kotlarsky (Curtis Blues)

THE DC BLUES SOCIETY

**P.O. BOX 77315
WASHINGTON, DC
20013-7315
www.dcblues.org**



The DC Blues Society is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to keeping the Blues alive through outreach and education. It is funded in part by the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities, an agency supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. The DC Blues Society is a proud affiliate of the Blues Foundation.

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Send changes in name, address or membership status to membership@dcblues.org or mail to DCBS Attn: Membership at the address listed above.

The Capital Blues Messenger is your publication and members are encouraged to submit articles and ideas for articles, reviews, cartoons and photography. Please e-mail to editor@dcblues.org.

Blues listings for bands should be sent to calendar@dcblues.org or mail to Steve Levine, 5910 Bryn Mawr Rd. College Park, MD 20740.

Note: The deadline for all submissions is the 15th of the month prior to publication. DCBS reserves the right to edit or refuse any content, including advertising, that it deems inappropriate.

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Blues Calendar- February

4	Bobby "Blue" Bland @ Birchmere; Corey Harris @ Blues Alley (50% discount for 10 p.m. show-see p. 7); Janine Wilson Band @ Iota; Slow Blues and Swing Dance @ Glen Echo
5	Sonny Landreth, Tom Principato @ Birchmere; Buckwheat Zydeco @ Rams Head; Corey Harris @ Blues Alley
6	Corey Harris @ Blues Alley; Folklore Society of Greater Washington Midwinter Festival @ Takoma Park Middle School
7	DCBS Jam @ Departmental Progressive Club; Little Muddy Jones Band @ Old Bowie Town Grille
8	Eddie Jones & Young Bucks @ Westminster Presbyterian Church
9	Dr. John @ Rams Head
10	Tab Benoit @ Rams Head; Dr. John @ Birchmere
11	BB King @ Constitution Hall; Slow Blues and Swing Dance @ Glen Echo
12	Rick Franklin, Phil Wiggins & Mike Baytop @ Washington Ethical Society; Pinetop Perkins & Willie Smith @ State Theatre; Lisa Lim & Over the Limit @ Murphy's Pub; Big Boy Little @ Lexington Market; Nighthawks @ Clyde's, Chevy Chase
13	Big Daddy Stallings @ Chef Mac's; Nighthawks @ Rams Head; Tommy Lepson Band @ Old Bowie Town Grille; The Jewels, Memphis Gold, & Hardway Connection @ PG Community College
14	Tab Benoit @ State Theatre; Billy Price Band @ Rams Head
15	John Mayall @ Rams Head; Danny Blue @ Westminster Presbyterian Church
16	John Mayall @ Birchmere; Nighthawks @ Clarendon Ballroom
17	Eric Lindell @ Rams Head
18	Slow Blues and Swing Dance @ Glen Echo
19	Whop Frazier @ Old Bowie Town Grille; Nighthawks @ Fish Head Cantina
20	Joy Bodycomb @ Potomac Grill; Rick Franklin @ Cassatt's
21	Scott Ainslie Acoustic Guitar Workshop @ Archie's Barbershop
22	Whop Frazier @ Westminster Presbyterian Church
24	Guy Davis & Eric Bibb @ Rams Head
25	Slow Blues and Swing Dance @ Glen Echo
26	Moonshine Society @ Old Bowie Town Grille
27	Baltimore Blues Society presents Big Daddy Stallings, Holmes Brothers @ Rosedale American Legion; Andy Poxon Band @ Old Bowie Town Grille
28	Chris Duarte @ Rams Head

Early March

1	Cathy Ponton King @ Westminster Presbyterian Church
5	Leon Redbone @ Birchmere; Big Daddy Stallings @ 219
6	Big Daddy Stallings @ 219
7	Ronnie Baker Brooks @ Rams Head

Regular Blues Events

Sunday	Wolf's Blues Jam @ Bangkok Blues; Z Revue Blues Jam @ JV's (1st Sunday)
Tuesday	Old Man Brown @ Madam's Organ (alternating Tuesdays)
Wednesday	Wolf's Blues Jam @ Beach Cove; Blues Jam @ Old Bowie Town Grille
Thursday	DCBS Thursday Jam/Open Mic w/Sol @ LA Bar & Grill; Patrick Alban or Johnny Artis @ Madam's Organ; Open Mic w/Fast Eddie @ Spanky's Shenanigans; Blues Jam @ Eastport Democratic Club; Big Boy Little Band Jam @ Zoo Bar
Friday	Glen Moomau & Blue Flames @ Bertha's; Wolf's Blues Jam @ Fat Boys (1st and 3rd Friday); John Guernsey @ New Deal Cafe
Saturday	Acoustic Blues Jam @ Archie's Barbershop; Big Boy Little @ Zoo Bar (1st Sat.); John Guernsey @ New Deal Cafe; Brian Gross/Steve Levine @ Sala Thai, Bethesda (2nd Sat.)

Attention dancers: See DCBS homepage for link to dance-friendly venues. To subscribe to a weekly e-mail newsletter "So Many Choices" with dance-specific information, often with a blues twist, send an e-mail to DCBS member and Blues fan Robin: hc1829@aol.com

Bolded items are picks by calendar editor, Steve Levine, and include DCBS and BBS events. Send listings to calendar@dcblues.org or mail to Steve Levine, 5910 Bryn Mawr Rd., College Park, MD 20740. **Musicians: Deadline is the 15th of the month prior to publication.** Events listed are based on the best information possible. DCBS cannot be held liable for errors in schedules, places or performances listed. It is recommended that you contact the venues to verify the event will occur. The DCBS homepage has additional music links and information: www.dcblues.org.

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President's Drum This Ain't Your Daddy's Newsletter!

I'm sure you noticed the smaller *CBM* in your mailboxes the last couple of months. That's mostly because of a lack of content. I entreat you once again to send us your musings, CD and event reviews, interviews with local artists, etc. Inquire about how you can help at newsletter@dcblues.org. While I'm on the subject of volunteering, we are always in need of help. Please contact me if you have website maintenance, public relations, or database management skills. We need your help now! Step up at president@dcblues.org.

Some of you will also noticed that the *CBM* is being delivered by email. As I've mentioned many times, printing and mailing the newsletter are our greatest expenses besides funding the Annual DC Blues Festival. Delivering the *CBM* via email will save precious funds that can go toward other programs such as Blues In The Schools & the Festival.

I hope that being able to see photos in better resolution and in color and receiving the *CBM* more quickly will increase your enjoyment of the publication. If you receive the newsletter by snail mail, it's because we don't have an email address in our database or the one we have is no longer active. Please send current email addresses to membership@dcblues.org. If you have not received emails from DCBS, you also need to send current info to membership. Anyone who prefers to receive by snail mail instead of email let us know. I hope this change agrees with you. Please let me know what you think.

A Glance at the New Year

After ringing in the New Year with a smashing dinner-dance party featuring CW Harrington and the Blues Messengers, DCBS jetted into January with a host of events to kick off 2010. In addition to the monthly jam on first Sundays [NOTE: Feb 7 jam is at the Departmental Progressive Club], DCBS co-sponsored fundraisers for Curtis Blues and Big Boy Little Band to help send them to Memphis for the International Blues Challenge, January 20-23. Congratulations to the Big Boy Little Band for placing among the finalists. [See latest news on p. 6] And congratulations to Big Boy Little's guitarist, Matt Kelley, who was the final's top guitarist and was awarded a beautiful blue custom Gibson guitar with the Blues Foundation's logo.

DCBS helped celebrate the birthday of Martin Luther King with the McLean Community Center with a rousing show starring Michael Hill's Blues Mob, who played at last year's DC Blues Festival. The Center's Alden Theater was filled to capacity for the show and presentation by Dr. Ed Jackson, Jr. Executive Architect of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial Project Foundation. The outstanding BBQ dinner was also a crowd pleaser.

On January 21, DCBS sponsored its first Blues In The Schools (BITS) presentation of the year with The Otis Taylor Band at DC's Savoy Elementary. Otis led a fun-filled, informative and interactive musical experience for an engaging crowd of children and teachers, and others at Savoy. [See more below.] I heard that quite a few DCBS members took advantage of the 50% discount to Otis' show at Blues Alley later that night. We're looking forward to a few more BITS events for 2010, including the much talked about (at least by me) BITS Scholarship Fundraiser featuring *(somebody you can't miss)*.

Further Down the Road

Guess you could say we're chilling in February. Last year we had Lil' Dave Thompson for Valentine's Day and a Black History Month show with Whop Frazier. Having to find new homes after the Surf Club Live took the "live" out of its offerings has challenged DCBS to schedule events more modestly. 2010 brings you many of the events you've come to love. We're planning a festival fundraiser or two for spring and summer. Then there's the 6th Annual Fish Fry 'n' Blues & Bike Contest; BITS Scholarship Fundraiser; the Festival and After-Party, The Battle of the Bands, IBC Fundraiser (i.e. College Park Blues Festival); the Holiday Party; and New Year's Eve Party. And we're bound to slip a few more things into the mix...So, visit the website and open our emails.

22nd Annual DC Blues Festival

We're knee-deep in putting together the lineup for the Annual Festival on September 4 at the Carter Barron Amphitheatre in DC. The lineup should be finalized by the next publication of the *CBM*.

In the meantime, we will be selecting one of the Festival bands by auditions on March 27 at the Wheaton American Legion. Bands interested in signing up should see the information on p. 8 and visit the website [www.dcblues.org] for details on entering the contest. Deadline for entering is February 24. The audition winner will earn a slot at one of DCBS's sponsored festivals this year.

As you know, DCBS has been presenting the free festival for 21 years. We do this with a small grant from the DC Commission for the Arts and Humanities, funds we raise through events and merchandise sales, and donations. Help keep this tradition going with quality and entertaining acts. Visit the website and represent DCBS by ordering some of the DCBS-branded hats, T-shirts and novelties. Also attend DCBS events and help support the annual festival.

In addition, you can send your tax-deductible donations (any amount is welcome) to DCBS, P.O. Box 77315 Washington, DC 20013.

Blues always,



Otis Taylor Band Rocks the Kids in Blues In The School

The Blues came to a DC school and the kids loved it. Otis Taylor, one of today's blues greats, awakened the blues in the fourth and fifth graders at Savoy Elementary School in Anacostia. The teachers, the school principal and the staff got a kick out of it too.

The Otis Taylor Band was in town to play two shows at Blues Alley but stopped first to play for the kids in a Blues In The Schools (BITS) program sponsored by the DCBS. Taylor's performances are free-flowing rather than a traditional set. The band plays a percolating groove, or 'trance blues' as Taylor describes it, while he talks with the kids about the history of the blues. Taylor then asks the students and teachers to join the band in song and sing about "what makes you sad."

Most of the kids were shy at first, then teachers Tondra Odom-Owens and Sara Engelman sparked the crowd with their own instant blues songs. The auditorium really got swinging as interim Principal Dr. Tamitha Campbell grabbed the mic and sang about kids being late on homework, making excuses and unnecessary noise. That spurred a line of kids to form to sing with the band, as DCBS member Norman 'Bozee' Bowlding helped with the mic.

About half a dozen students got to sing, while the others enthusiastically clapped along, waved their hands, laughed as the teachers sang, pushed each other to sing, and danced in front of the stage. Campbell gave the show high praise. "The children were involved. They loved it. There was applause, they reacted, they participated. It was an important exercise for them. It's great (the band) took the time to connect and teach. The children won't forget it."

The 45-minute set included the Delta blues song "I Got the Blues," along with "Grizzly Bear" and "Hambone." The band includes Taylor on guitar, banjo, harmonica and lead vocals, Nick Amodeo on bass and mandolin, Larry Thompson on drums and Chuck Campbell on pedal steel guitar. Chuck Campbell also is a member of the Campbell Brothers Band. He and two brothers are dedicated to playing the "sacred steel" guitar in music built on the tradition developed in the African-American Holiness Pentecostal Church.

Taylor writes most of the bands songs. Its latest release is *Pentatonic Wars and Love Songs*. He's been spreading the news of the blues to young people all over the world, including "...Turkey, France, Canada. We get a good response," Taylor told the Capital Blues Messenger.

Taylor has also played in the schools in the U.S. and around his home town of Boulder, CO.—Burney Simpson



Photo: Burney Simpson,

Local Clubs and Blues Musicians Help Raise Funds for Big Boy Little Band

On Saturday, January 9, in quaint "Old Bowie," DC Blues Society co-hosted the first of two fundraisers to help defray the expenses of The Big Boy Little Band's trip to the International Blues Challenge (IBC) in Memphis. The scene was Old Bowie Town Grille and the band performed many of its fan favorite originals and covers. They were joined by a number of special guests including Clarence "The Bluesman" Turner. No stranger to DC blues lovers, Turner competed several times at IBC and in 2007, he finished in the Top 10 in the competition that had over 100 entrants.

Also appearing was the "Cape Cod Legend" Tall Richard, who is new to the area. Well-known in his native Massachusetts, a recent press article said his playing was "...like a New England squall blowing some Smokestack Lightning." Bobby Joe Owens, who runs the fine live music venue and restaurant, and also leads his own band, Retro Deluxe, also joined in. Rounding out the lineup was guitarist/singer Tom Maxwell from Wolf's Hot Rods & Old Gas who has been described as having a "...Jimmy Vaughn-like approach to the guitar... his slide work is sweetly exquisite, reminiscent of Duane Allman."

Friends, old and new, spent most of the night grooving on the dance floor. Stay tuned for future Big Boy Little Band shows at Old Bowie Town Grille. www.oldbowietowngrille.com



Top (l-r): Mark Wenner, Bret Littlehailes. Bottom (l-r) Matt Kelley, Frederic Yonnet, Steve "Wolf" Crescenze
Photos: Connie Oleksak Warner

Travis Fouch of the Stone Cold Red Band. Anyone who left before the end certainly missed a wonderful addition and fitting end to a great night of harmonica blues.

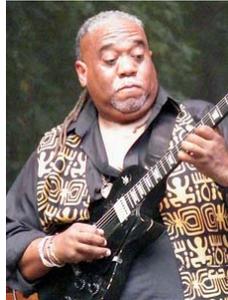
The DC Blues Society's Jazs helped tremendously by selling raffle tickets all day long. Friend of the band, Gay Reed, had the winning ticket and generously donated her winnings to the band. The only downside to the day was that the Zoo Bar reached full-capacity early on and some blues-loving fans were turned away at the door. Those that got in enjoyed at least 5 hours of blues harmonica – a true harmonic(a) convergence. — Connie Oleksak Warner

Pete Ragusa Leaves The Nighthawks

Pete Ragusa, drummer for the Nighthawks for over 35 years, announced in early January that he is leaving the band to pursue other projects. A songwriter and producer, Ragusa's new endeavors will include producing other artists and performing with musicians in the DC area. His press release cited his "gratitude for the opportunities... to sit in Muddy Water's living room as well as to play with him...and share the

stage with such legends as B.B. King, Hubert Sumlin, Pinetop Perkins, and Buddy Guy."

Another accomplished drummer, Mark Stutso, will replace Ragusa as The Nighthawks new drummer. He first came to the DC area in 1987 and performed as a member of the Smut Brothers Band. From 1991 to 2008, he was the drummer for Jimmy Thackery and The Drivers before leaving to pursue, in his words, "my own musical self." His recent efforts have included his solo CD plus work with Norman Nardini, a longtime Pittsburgh rock'n roller. Be on the lookout for his first performances with The Nighthawks. www.thenighthawks.com



Inspiring King Tribute Rocked by Michael Hill Blues Mob

The McLean (VA) Community Center's Alden Theatre was home on Sunday, January 17 to a crowd-pleasing tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr and a showcase for the New York-based Michael Hill's Blues Mob. The music was thrilling, the speeches in honor of Dr. King were inspiring, and the barbecue afterward was great. The program, "Embrace the Dream: Exploring Our American Blues Heritage," was presented in cooperation with the DC Blues Society and the 7th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration.

The audience heard an update on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial to be built on the Washington Mall from Dr. Ed Jackson, Jr., the executive architect on the project. While other speakers discussed King's legacy, the Blues Mob took care of "exploring the blues" with two 35-minute sets. The respectful tone of the program seemed to put a rein on Hill's group, who never quite let loose for the mature McLean crowd. After all, CIA headquarters is right around the corner.

Still, the Blues Mob proved itself a tight, professional four-piece that presented its New York-style blues with a straight-forward crowd-pleasing approach. The music is heavy on traditional blues tinged with rock, R&B, and African sounds. The sets combined head-on blues like "Are You Ready for the Blues?" along with social-commentary songs such as "Can You Love Your Slave?" referring to Sally Hemings' relationship with Thomas Jefferson and "This is My Job," the tale of a man washing car windows to survive.

Bronx-born Michael Hill has been leading versions of his group since 1987. The current line up includes Hill on guitar and lead vocals, David Barnes on harmonica, and a rhythm section propelled by DC's own Michael Griot on bass and Bill McClellan on drums. Griot and McClellan also provide vocals. Hill's sixth album *Black Gold and Goddesses Bold!* on JSP Records features the legendary Hubert Sumlin; Vernon Reid, leader of the band Living Colour and Memphis guitarist

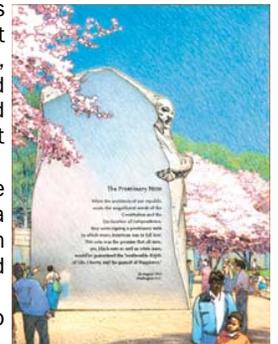


Top to bottom: Michael Hill, David Barnes, Bill McClellan, Michael Griot.
Photos: Mary Knieser

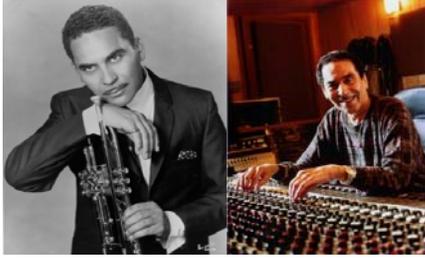
Colin John. www.michaelhillsbluesmob.com

In his presentation and slide show of the King Memorial, Dr. Jackson said that after a 17-year struggle, ground was recently broken near the Jefferson Memorial, and is expected to be completed by the fall of 2011.

For more information and a virtual tour go to www.buildthedream.org - Burney Simpson



In Memory of Those Who Helped Shape Our Music in So Many Ways



Photos: www.bluesmagazine

Willie Mitchell 1928 – 2010

This famed soul music producer died in Memphis on January 5, at the age of 81. He had been in ill health since the fall. The following obituary is from The Recording Academy: "We are deeply saddened by the passing of Willie Mitchell. An accomplished trumpeter who led one of the region's premier bands of the 50's, he made the transition to recording star at Hi Records in the 60's. At Hi he became a vital part of the organization by engineering, producing, scouting talent and eventually running the label. A true renaissance man, Mitchell created his own Memphis sound – a uniquely sophisticated brand of funk. He put together one of the world's greatest rhythm section – 18 Rhythm – featuring Teenie Hodges on guitar, Charles Hodges on organ, Leroy Hodges on bass and drummer Howard Grimes. He made stars of Ann Peebles, Otis Clay, O.V. Wright and Syl Johnson, creating recordings still revered, covered and sampled to this day.

In 1969 while on tour with his Willie Mitchell Band, he met a young singer in Midland, Texas and brought him back to Memphis. Together, he and Al Green made history, creating an unparalleled body of work featuring

arguably the greatest voice in soul backed by Mitchell's unique mix of gritty southern R&B and elegant arrangements. In 2007 he was recognized by the Memphis Chapter of the Recording Academy (RA) at the RA Honors. In 2008 he received an even larger honor from the RA at the 50th annual GRAMMY Awards – The Trustees Award. His impact on Memphis and music is immeasurable. There will probably never be another one like him."

Teddy Pendergrass 1950 - 2010

Philadelphia native and soul singer Teddy Pendergrass died from colon cancer Wednesday, January 13, 2010. He was 59. With a voice specially made for love songs, Pendergrass' greatest hits included timeless ballads such as *Close The Door, Come Go with Me, Turn Off the Lights*, and *Love T.K.O.* Before his success as a solo artist, Pendergrass was a drummer-turned-lead singer for the soul outfit Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes.

Theodore DeReese Pendergrass Jr. was born on March 26, 1950 in Kingstree, SC. His family relocated to Philadelphia when he was a child and it was here a young Pendergrass sang in local churches and became the member of a pop band. In his teens, Pendergrass, a high-school dropout and self-taught drummer, joined a local band, The Cadillac. When the group merged with Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes, he was promoted to lead singer. The group went on to have many hits – the most memorable being *If You Don't Know Me by Now* and *Wake Up Everybody*.

Ultimately the tension between Harold Melvin and Pendergrass caused the singer to quit the group and start a solo career.

Not surprisingly, with his soulful, sensual baritone, his success continued. However, on March 18, 1982, eight days before his 32nd birthday, Pendergrass was in an automobile accident that left him paralyzed from the waist down. The tragedy led him to establish The Teddy Pendergrass Alliance to help those with spinal cord injuries. He continued to record in the '80s and '90s and appeared in the 1985 Live Aid concert along side R&B singers Ashford and Simpson and in 1987 he toured in the play "Your Arms Too Short to Box With God." In 2001, he resumed his own concert performances. He had numerous platinum recordings and five Grammy nominations. — *Melissa McEwen*

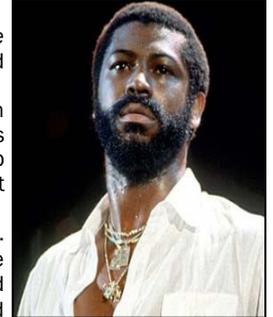


Photo: www.TeddiPendergrass.net
Michael Ochs Archive/Getty

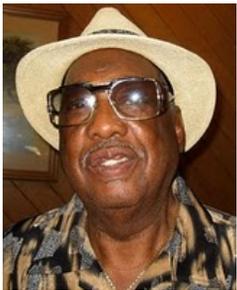


Photo: www.crosssharpchronicles.wordpress.com

Earl Gaines 1935 - 2009

The following obituary appeared on the Juke Joint Soul website (www.jukejointsoul.blogspot.com). It was posted by Ben The Harpman and sources cited include Bob Corritore and *The Tennessean*: *Earl Gaines, one of the primary voices of Nashville's 50s R&B scene passed New Years Eve (December 31, 2009). He was 74. Born in Decatur, Alabama on Aug 19, 1935, Gaines spent much of his early life on the farm and singing in church until one Christmas weekend (1951) he went to visit his mother in Nashville. He never left and made Nashville his singing and recording home.*

In 1955, Gaines sang lead on the Top 10 R&B smash "It's Love Baby (24 Hours a Day)" for Louis Brooks and His Hi-Toppers. The hit sent Nashville into the R&B spotlight and gave the fledgling Excello Records the hit it needed to secure its status in R&B/Blues history. Gaines and his voice became a central figure in Nashville's late '50s R&B circuit that gave roost to a young Jimi Hendrix and was the home of some of Slim Harpo's recordings.

After spending most of the '60s through the earlier part of this decade in recording obscurity, Gaines star rose once more when the Country Music Hall of Fame put out its historic look at the Nashville R&B scene with the exhibit and recordings called "Night Train to Nashville." Until then, Gaines had recorded for over two dozen labels in the soul and southern fried soul department for years while driving a truck to earn a living. Gaines' voice however never faded. The renewed interest in his music brought about some recent critically recognized recordings and European tours until his health began to fade. Known for his class and his pure

vocal talents by his peers and soul connoisseurs alike, Gaines presence will be sorely missed."

James Gurley 1939 - 2009

James Gurley, the innovative lead guitarist for the Big Brother and the Holding Company, died of a heart attack on December 20, 2009, two days before his 70th birthday. Big Brother and the Holding Company was a psychedelic rock band that propelled Janis Joplin to fame and Gurley's brilliant guitar playing can be heard on some of the band's best known Janis Joplin era songs such as "Summertime," "Piece of My Heart," and "Ball and Chain."

Gurley was a self-taught musician (as a teenager he listened to old Lightnin' Hopkins blues records and taught himself to play) and one of the few rock guitarists at the time who preferred finger picks over flat picks. He was recognized as a huge influence on his guitar playing contemporaries because he was so innovative and broke boundaries of conventional music. The Big Brother and the Holding Company's website describes him as "a pioneer, a real original, a very funny man, and truly alive with an energy that not many people have." He left the BBHC in 1997, pursued some solo projects, and released his "Pipe Dreams" album in 2000.



Photo: www.boston.com



WPFW Seeks Pledge Drive Volunteers

WPFW—89.3 FM on the radio dial, began broadcasting in 1977 and provides a voice for alternative programming in the Washington Metropolitan area. Volunteerism is at the very heart of the station since WPFW is free of corporate sponsorship. It relies on listener support and its many dedicated volunteers who come from different backgrounds and cultures.

WPFW's winter pledge drive will be held February 1 - 8 and again February 19 - 28, and the station is seeking pledge drive volunteers. Not

only is this a great way to ensure the survival of your favorite station for blues, jazz and justice, it is also a chance to see first-hand how the station operates. Shifts are generally four hours long and are available throughout the day. Sign up for as many, or as few, as you like!

WPFW welcomes families, schools, businesses, clubs or others who want to volunteer as a group. All groups are asked to complete one four-hour shift and groups of four or more will be recognized on the air. It's a great way to get exposure for your group's mission and its upcoming events!

If you have questions or want to volunteer, contact Rachel Pope, Volunteer Coordinator at volunteers@wpfw.org or call 202-588-0999 ext 360.

You can pledge on-line at www.wpfw.org or call 202-588-9739. Also check this website for incentive prizes/drawings that WPFW is offering to those who donate during this pledge drive.



2010 International Blues Challenge

Downtown Memphis was smokin' January 20 – 23 for the 2010 International Blues Challenge (IBC). Smoky juke joints, smoked barbeque, smokin' guitars. And the judges decided the smokin'est guitar of all belonged to our very own Matt Kelley – awarding the Albert King award for top guitarist to the guitar player for

the band entry to the challenge, the Big Boy Little Band. The band itself, led by Big Boy (Bret Littlehales) on vocals and harp, with Matt Kelley on guitar, Robby Leebrick on drums and Steve "Wolf" Crescenze on bass, made a fantastic showing earning them a coveted place in the finals, along with 10 other bands.

One hundred-ten band entries from member blues organizations around the world competed for the final positions. Listening to the top 11 bands, it was clear how diverse and rich the blues are, from the crowd-pleasing down home blues of #1 spot winner Grady Champion from Mississippi Delta Blues Society, Indianola, MS – to the powerful strutting vocals of Karen Lovely, whose band from Cascade Blues Association, Portland, OR took the #2 spot – to the bold controlled chaos with Chicago overtones of Cheryl Renee and Them Bones (Cincy Blues Society's) in the #3 spot.



One of the judges who selected the Big Boy Little Band to move to the finals round is Laura Chavez, master guitarist for Candye Kane. When asked what she liked about the band, Laura called the band "tight" and "varied," unlike your typical 12-bar blues bar band. She also thought they were the best dressed band (check out those shoes!). The pleased crowd at the Blues City Café agreed.

Curtis Blues showed the Blues world that DC still has the stuff in the Solo/Duo category.

He brought his one-man band to Mr. Handy's Blues Hall, where he managed to fit a history of the blues into a 25-minute set of powerful compositions. Considering himself first and foremost a harpist, Curtis accompanies his vocals and harp with kick-drum and guitar (and sometimes with a homemade kitchen gadget didley bow thingie).

Ultimately, the winner in the Solo/Duo competition was Harvest Jazz & Blues Festival's Matt Anderson, an accomplished musician. He is described in the IBC flyer this way: "Matt Andersen has a larger-than-life showmanship that has been earning him a fervent and steadfast fan base. His sprawling blues, roots and rock musical hybrid with his soulful voice has sparked a phenomenal buzz on Canada's East Coast." The consummate educator and student, Curtis' take on the IBC experience was that he picked up enough new ideas to last him an entire year.

A bright future for the Blues can be clearly predicted by the depth of talent in the youth showcase. Thirty-two youth acts were bending notes up and down Beale Street. There were also blues artists from 12 countries, from India to Croatia to Canada and Argentina.

After the competitions, there were Jams that lasted far into the early hours. As Bob Margolin, who leads a weekend jam at one of the clubs said "...where else can you invite anyone who wants to, get up on the stage in a free-for-all jam, and it sounds GOOD?" Other heavies who jammed were Zac Harmon, Candye Kane, Laura Chavez, John Richardson and Barbara Blue.

Rounding out the overwhelming musical experience were trips to the many shrines to the music of Memphis, including the Stax and Sun studios, the Rock N Soul museum, the Gibson Factory, and of course, Graceland. The Civil Rights Museum located at the Lorraine Motel, the site where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated, presents a strong and comprehensive history of the struggle for civil rights.

A shout-out goes to the DCBS faithfuls who made it to Memphis this year, to enjoy the festivities and cheer on the home team. The IBC lived up to its self-proclaimed position as "the nation's biggest and most respected showcase for Blues musicians ready to take their act to the national stage." The quality and breadth of the music was superb and the party was non-stop. — *Mona Kotlarsky*

Photos this page (excluding Curtis Blues): Connie Oleksak Warner (who also knows her shoes)

And, here's some of what Big Boy Little Band has to say about its IBC experience:



After two nights of competition, Big Boy Little Band ultimately reached the top eleven in a blazing finale held Saturday night, January 23, in the historic Orpheum Theater on famous Beale Street. Big Boy's young guitarist, 26 year-old Matt Kelley (left), won the coveted Albert King Guitar award as top guitarist after a sizzling solo on the band's version of BB King's "How Blue Can You Get".

"I was shocked," Kelley said afterwards. "I have never in my life seen so many good bands in one place. That I won the same Albert King Award that guys like Sean Carney won seems unreal."

"To be in the top eleven of blues bands from all over the world is something I never expected," said Bret Littlehales aka Big Boy Little. "With young, gifted musicians like Matt out there, it just shows that the blues is still alive and kicking." And, with the philosophy, "It's not rock, it's not jazz, it's blues and playing blues is what we do," the Big Boy's been doing just that in the DC area since 1967, opening for such blues greats as B.B. King, Koko Taylor and Junior Wells.

You can see the band at The Zoo Bar and other venues in our area. For updates and more IBC photos go to www.wolfsmusicweekly.com and click



And Curtis Blues reflects on his IBC experience in a letter to the DCBS Board:



Photo taken at Mr. Handy's Blues Hall, a juke joint on Beale St.

I wanted to thank you for allowing me to represent the DC Blues Society in Memphis. I had a great time and learned a lot from meeting so many dedicated solo blues artists from around the world. The competitor who won the solo competition is currently playing over 200 gigs a year. I was in great company, and it pushed me to my best performances ever.

Before I left I visited Sun Studios and then drove down to Clarksdale, Mississippi and Helena, Arkansas to soak up some Delta vibes. "Where were you baby when the Clarksdale mill burned down?"

You were way down Sunflower with your face all full of frown.

I believe I heard that Old Helena whistle blow,

I'm gonna have to see my baby when she gets on board."

Charley Patton, "Moon's Goin' Down" 1929 (Patton was the first great Delta blues man)

I had a thrill driving past the sign to Lula, Mississippi, knowing that this was where Eddie James "Son" House met Charley Patton in the early 30's. And how about Big Boy Little making it to the finals! They were awesome. So thanks for giving me such an enriching opportunity. I am bringing all of what I learned back here for my local shows and blues education work in the schools. All the best, Curtis Blues (www.curtisblues.com)



Membership means discounts! Show 'em your card

The following companies offer discounts to DCBS members. You must present your current membership card to receive them. Restrictions may apply and discounts may be withdrawn at any time.

<p>Half-price Admission Blues Alley All Blues Shows Sun. - Thurs. 1073 Wisconsin Ave., NW Washington, DC 20007 202-337-4141 www.bluesalley.com</p>	<p>20% Discount Neil Senning Enterprises Quality Painting and Handyman Services: Plastering/Drywall Deck Cleaning/ Power Washing/Staining/Carpentry/Interior & Exterior Work and much more. 301-717-1773</p>	<p>10% discount GOT YOGA? Individual Sessions including gentle yoga, breathing techniques, warm up, poses, meditation and laughter therapy Group Yoga Sessions (minimum of 8) avail- able for above and Laughter Yoga Call to schedule: 301-802-1879</p>
<p>10% Discount Capitol Hill Books Across from Eastern Market 657 C Street, SE Washington, DC 20003 202-544-1621 www.capitolhillbooks-dc.com</p>	<p>15% Discount BOK Custom Framing 5649 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22207 703-534-1866 Hours: M-F 10 -6, Sat. 10-5</p>	<p>10% Discount J & J Automotive 9160 Euclid Court Manassas, VA 20110 703-368-3600 www.jiautoservices.com</p>
<p>15% Discount LA Bar & Grill 2530 Columbia Pike Arlington, VA 22204 703-682-1560 www.lowerarlingtonbarandgrill.com</p>	<p>JV's Restaurant Drink Special Buy one & get 2nd drink free 6666 Arlington Boulevard, Falls Church, VA 22042 703-241-9504 www.jvsrestaurant.com</p>	<p>20% Discount Three Brothers Italian Restaurant 4521 Kenilworth Ave. Bladensburg, MD 20710 301-864-1570 Until 9 pm. Not valid holidays or w/other discounts/restrictions may apply</p>

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Before your next search, go to www.dcb Blues.org and click on the *GoodSearch* link and designate DC Blues Society as your favorite cause. DCBS earns a penny each time you search the web using www.GoodSearch.com. It's easy – just click, search and support. Shopping for that one-of-a-kind gift? Try www.GoodShop.com with over 600 on-line stores. A percentage of each purchase will be donated to DCBS and its mission to preserve and promote the Blues. Grab your mouse, click the link and shop guilt free.

More International Blues Challenge News

DCBS applauds Big Boy Little Band and Curtis Blues for their fine performances at the IBC in Memphis. In addition to the winners named on p 6, the following additional winners and finalists are noted:

In the Best Self-Produced CD contest, the judges determined that two CDs were the best: *Fire It Up!* by the Laurie Morvan Band (Santa Clarita Valley Blues Society) and *Crime Scene Queen* by The Informants (Colorado Blues Society).

Second place honors in the solo/duo competition went to Alphonso Sanders and Bill "Howl-n-Madd" Perry (Crossroads Blues Society, Rose-dale, Mississippi). The other solo/duo finalists were: Becky Boyd & Tim Matson (Cleveland Blues Society); Jimi Lee with PB Shane (Austin Blues Society); Sherman Lee Dillon (Central Mississippi Blues Society); Tom Walbank & Arthur Migliazza (Southern Arizona Blues Heritage Founda-tion); Ken "The Rocket" Korb (Long Island Blues Society); and Steve Cohen (Grafton Blues Association).

The other band finalists were: Mojo Theory (Pomeroy Blues & Jazz Society); R&K Brew Co (West Virginia Blues Society); **Big Boy Little Band (DC Blues Society)**; Sonny Moorman Group (Columbus Blues Alliance); Jesse Greene Band (Ottawa Blues Society); **Jackie Scott & the House-wreckers (Baltimore Blues Society)**; Labron Lazenby and LA 3 (Smoky Mountain Blues Society); and The Avey Brothers (Iowa Blues Societies).

Corey Harris Performs at Blues Alley – February 4-6

Shows at 8 pm and 10 pm - Discount for DCBS members who purchase advance tickets online for Feb. 4, 10 pm show. Purchase tick-ets at www.bluesalley.com and enter DCBS at checkout to receive a 50% discount for this show.



No stranger to DCBS, Corey Harris has performed at Society events, including a fundraiser and John Cephas celebration. He is a blues trou-badour and musical explorer who has travelled the world in this pursuit.

Attend These State Theatre Shows & Look for our DCBS Table:



Pinetop Perkins and Willie Smith , w/ The Gypsy Sons – Friday, February 12, Door: 7 pm, Show: 9 pm



Tab Benoit, w/ Big Sam's Funky Nation – Sunday, February 14, Door: 6 pm, Show: 8 pm

State Theatre: 220 N. Washington St., Falls Church, VA 22046 ; 703-237-0300, www.thestatetheatre.com

Special Note to DCBS Members—PLEASE NOTE

Beginning with the February 2010 issue of the *Capital Blues Messenger (CBM)*, all DCBS members with current e-mail addresses on file with DCBS will receive an e-mail providing them with internet access to the *CBM* through the DCBS website (www.dcb Blues.org). Those requesting printed copies must notify membership@dcb Blues.org. Those without email will receive *CBM* via US mail.

**Attention bands
Send your March & April gigs to
calendar@dcb Blues.org by Feb. 15**

DCBS First Sunday Monthly Jams



Did you know that there are foot tappin', finger poppin' and soul stirrin' Blues Jams happening every first Sunday of the month? The Jam has been going strong for over 20 years. The Jam is, and has always been, FREE!

DCBS sponsors these Jams for professional and amateur musicians (like the happy jammers on the left) to get on stage and play to their hearts content. Vocalists and Instrumentalists of all types and levels are invited to drop by, show their skills and have fun. And, you never know who'll drop in for a set or two. Everybody is welcome to participate, dance or just sit back and enjoy the music.

Sam'i Nuriddin (top), the Jam Coordinator, orchestrates the groups by scheduling musicians' appearances on stage and keeping things moving. A musician himself, Sam'i (guitar) and the core group that includes Dr. S.O. Feelgood (sound system and drums/vocals), Dave Harris (harp) and Dave Jackson (bass/vocals) typically play a song or two and then call on others to play sets.

Put the Jams on your calendar and come out support the musicians and DCBS. Drinks are available, and the music and ambiance are great.

Sam'i needs help moving equipment (like the DCBS drum kit) before and after the Jam. If you can lend a hand, please contact Sam'i at jams@dcblues.org.

When: Next Jam — Sunday February 7 — 4 to 8 p.m.

Where: Departmental Progressive Club, 411 Gibbon Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, (703) 549-9518. This is a new Jam location. The March 7 Jam will be at the Silver Spring American Legion. Other sites may be used and will be announced in the CBM and online at www.dcblues.org.

2010 Jams Dates: February 7, March 7, April 4, May 2, June 6, July 4, August 1, September 5, October 3, November 7 and December 5. Be sure to check the website as dates/locations are subject to change.

2010 Festival Auditions

8PM – 12:30AM Saturday March 27, 2010
Wheaton American Legion
11225 Fern St. Wheaton, MD 20902

Bands Sign Up Now!

DCBS will select, from entrants' CD samples, the bands to compete in the live auditions. Judges will select one band from among the competitors for a paid performance at one of the DCBS sponsored or co-sponsored Festivals this year.

Band Eligibility:

Bands who have not performed at any DCBS sponsored or co-sponsored Festival in the last two years are eligible to enter. At least one band member must be a current DCBS member. (To join, go to www.dcblues.org)

To Enter The Competition:

E-mail the following information to DCBS by **February 24** to: contest@dcblues.org. (Mail CD to address below.)

- Official Band Name
- Contact information: name, e-mail & telephone
- Number and names of all Band Members (indicate DCBS member)
- Short Band bio (100 words or less plus a 2-sentence teaser description)
- Digital color or B/W photo with a 300 dpi resolution
- A link to your website(s) & include links to 3 sample tunes if available
- How, when, and where you will publicize your participation in this event
- CD of 3 sample tunes - **Mail CD** to: DCBS Auditions, P.O. Box 77315 Washington, DC 20013

Visit www.dcblues.org or call 301-322-4808 for tickets

Advance: \$10 members — \$12 non-members — \$15 at door



DC BLUES SOCIETY

Celebrating the Blues in DC, MD & VA

www.dcblues.org

P.O. Box 77315

Washington, DC 20013-7315

Your membership renewal date is shown on address label. Renew today and stay in the Blues!

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