



# Capital Blues Messenger

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

October 2021

Volume 15, Issue 5

## 31st DC Blues Festival Features Mix of Talents, Styles

The DC Blues Society is keeping the spirit of the blues alive at the 31st DC Blues Festival on Sunday, Oct. 17. Admission is free.

Local and national talents combine for an day of live music outdoors at Wunder Garten, 1101 First St., NE, Washington, DC. The music, dancing and good times go from 1PM to 7PM. Grab a seat or bring your lawn chair.

Headlining the festival is **King Solomon Hicks**, a young powerhouse whose debut album *Harlem* was named Best Album by an Emerging Artist at the 2021 Blues Music Awards. Also scheduled are: local favorites **Robbin Kapsalis & Vintage #18** whose album, *Soul Shaker*, was released earlier this week; guitarist **J.P. Reali**, whose Delta and Piedmont style playing won the 2019 Solo/Duo Competition; and the legendary **Linwood Taylor**, multiple WAMMY winner and one of the most highly respected names in the blues community.

Wunder Garten is located one block from the Red Line's NoMa-Gallaudet station and offers a wide selection of craft beers; food trucks will have varied offerings. Outside food and beverages are not permitted.

See pages 5-9 for details about the festival and bios of the performers.

### Schedule of Blues Festival Performances

**1PM: J.P. Reali**, winner 2019 DCBS Solo/Duo Competition

**2PM: Linwood Taylor**, a local legend and highly sought-after guitarist

**3:45PM: Robbin Kapsalis & Vintage #18**, area favorites introducing their new album, *Soul Shaker*

**5:30PM: King Solomon Hicks**, Provogue Records artist, winner of the 2021 Blues Music Award for *Harlem*, Best Album by an Emerging Artist



photo by Pat Bransford

Winners of the 2021 Blues Showdown share smiles after the Oct. 12 competitions. From left, Carly Harvey whose band, Kiss & Ride, took top honors in the Battle of the Bands; Danny Garrett, harp player; judge Carol Salsbury; and guitarist Sam O'Hare. Garrett and O'Hare won the Solo/Duo Competition. See pages 12-13 for details on the Blues Showdown and bios of the performers.



For many DCBS members, this grin was their introduction to the DC Blues Society. Many members and blues fans from throughout the country remember President Pete Salsbury as a warm and welcoming ambassador for the Society and for blues music. We will miss not only his enthusiastic advocacy of the blues, but also his kindness and friendship. Please see page 3 for some thoughts from the Board of Directors.

# DC BLUES SOCIETY

P.O. Box 6289

Washington, DC

20015-0289



[www.dcb blues.org](http://www.dcb blues.org)

The DC Blues Society (DCBS) was founded in 1987 and is dedicated to keeping the Blues alive through outreach and education. Its mission is to celebrate, preserve, and promote the Blues as an original American art form. DCBS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, all-volunteer organization that depends on grants, membership, contributions, and volunteers to operate. The DC Blues Society is a proud affiliate of the Blues Foundation.

DCBS is governed by its Board of Directors. Only DCBS Officers and designated board members are authorized to speak, represent and make commitments on behalf of the organization.



The CAPITAL BLUES MESSENGER is published monthly (unless otherwise noted) and sent by email to members. Back issues are available at [www.dcb blues.org](http://www.dcb blues.org).

DCBS members are encouraged to submit articles, photos, cartoons, reviews and suggestions to the newsletter. Please submit material via email to [newsletter@dcb blues.org](mailto:newsletter@dcb blues.org). Listings from bands and venues should be sent to [calendar@dcb blues.org](mailto:calendar@dcb blues.org). Deadline for all submissions is the 15th of the month prior to publication. Articles should be submitted in MSWord; logos and graphics should be in vector format (.eps or .ai); and photos should be in color in high resolution .jpg format.

## DCBS Board Members

### OFFICERS

**President:** vacant

**Vice President:** Adam Oppenheim  
[vp@dcb blues.org](mailto:vp@dcb blues.org)

**Secretary:** Pat Bransford  
[secretary@dcb blues.org](mailto:secretary@dcb blues.org)

**Treasurer:** Adam Oppenheim  
[treasurer@dcb blues.org](mailto:treasurer@dcb blues.org)

### AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Dorothy Hines  
John Neumann  
Larry Spiwak

**President Emeritus:**  
Felix McClairen

### HONORARY DIRECTORS

John Cephas (1930–2009)  
Chet Hines (1946–2016))  
Felix McClairen  
Sam'i Nuriddin  
Barry Lee Pearson  
Joseph Wilson (1938–2015)

## Enjoy the Benefits and Fun of DCBS Membership

Members are key to the livelihood of the DCBS. Members' dues play an important part in helping DCBS fulfill its mission to promote the Blues and the Musicians who keep the music alive, exciting and accessible. Members receive many benefits for their nominal DCBS investment:

- ▲ Discounted rates on advance tickets to DCBS events
- ▲ Friendship of fellow Blues enthusiasts at DCBS's many events
- ▲ Monthly editions of THE CAPITAL BLUES MESSENGER sent by email
- ▲ Priority notices of the latest scheduled area Blues concerts, events and news sent by email
- ▲ Eligibility to win free tickets to area Blues concerts and performances (e.g., City Winery, DC; The Soundry; The Hamilton and more)
- ▲ Opportunities to "get close to the action and the music" by volunteering at DCBS events
- ▲ Taking a supporting role in DCBS's Blues in the Community program, an outreach effort to educate and encourage the rich heritage of Blues music

## Join or Renew Today!

Date \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Family email \_\_\_\_\_ Second Email \_\_\_\_\_

If family, list name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

### Annual Dues\*

- ☐ Student: \$15  
(include copy of student ID)
- ☐ Individual: \$35 per year  
\$60 two years
- ☐ Family: \$45
- ☐ Corporate: \$200

### Volunteer

- ☐ Update Website
- ☐ Work shift at a show  
(DCBS table, door, etc.)
- ☐ Promote shows  
(Distribute fliers, handbills, etc.)
- ☐ Raise funds
- ☐ Write reviews or take  
photos for monthly  
newsletter

*Contributions (not dues)  
are tax deductible. Please  
allow up to 6 weeks for  
processing. DCBS accepts*



Return this form with  
your check or credit card  
information to:  
DC Blues Society  
P.O. Box 6289  
Washington, DC 20015

*Becoming a DCBS member is quick and easy! Use the mail-in application on this page,  
sign up at the DCBS table at any DCBS event or apply online at [www.dcb blues.org](http://www.dcb blues.org)*

# Remembering Pete Salsbury

It is with great sadness that we share that Pete Salsbury, President of the DC Blues Society (DCBS), has passed. Although fully vaccinated, Pete had been hospitalized since early August for complications relating to Covid. His valiant fight against this disease sadly ended on Sept. 20, one day after his 68th birthday. The DCBS Board of Directors, DCBS volunteers, members and so many in the local blues and other music communities will miss this very special person.

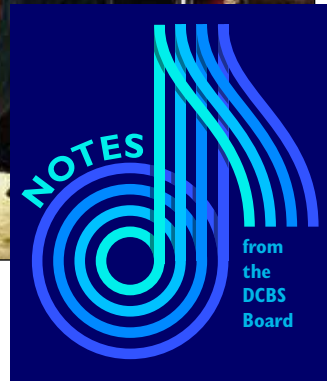
Pete loved music and especially live music, and before things shut down in 2020 due to Covid, he was tireless in his attendance at music events and his support for other musicians and for the venues that also supported live music. Pete, a musician himself, got involved with the DC Blues Society in 2013, contributing ideas for events, writing newsletter articles, and volunteering at events. In 2017, he joined the Board of Directors to assist with fundraising. In January 2018, he became Vice President, and a year later became President.

As President, he provided great leadership and enthusiasm, and he especially enjoyed the monthly jams and happy hours, which he emceed and ensured that blues fans, members and non-members – and old and new – were treated to a welcoming atmosphere.

Pete leaves his wife, Carol, and two sons, Danny and Jimmy



*DCBS President Pete Salsbury in his favorite role as the enthusiastic emcee of a DCBS jam, happy hour, performance or special event.*



Salsbury. While plans for a memorial for DCBS President Pete Salsbury are still pending, Pete's wife, Carol, asked that DCBS facilitate the option of receiving donations in Pete's honor. Pete retired from Federal service in March 2020 and had looked forward to devoting more time in his retirement to his role as President of the DC Blues Society and to his love of live music. DCBS has established a Paypal link to receive donation in Pete's memory: [https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted\\_button\\_id=N4F7XTQPUCE2](https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=N4F7XTQPUCE2)

## Upcoming Shows at 4th Friday Blues Happy Hours

October 22:  
Bad Influence Band

November 26:  
Carly Harvey's  
Kiss and Ride

### FREE ADMISSION

Live music: 6:30 to 9:30 pm  
American Legion Post 41  
905 Sligo Ave.

Silver Spring, MD 20910  
(Entrance on Fenton Street,  
adjacent to public parking  
garage)

Parking is free after 7 pm  
Affordable food and cash bar  
available

## Upcoming Performance? Let Us Know!

THE CAPITAL BLUES MESSENGER is pleased to welcome its latest volunteer and contributor, WPFW DJ Elliott Gross. In addition to hosting his weekly radio show, **Don't Forget the Blues**, Elliott has taken on the task of coordinating the monthly events calendar for the DCBS.

The DCBS has always been committed to sharing the latest news about events of interest with blues fans. **We need the help of area musicians, bands, booking agents, venues and fans to compile a comprehensive list of upcoming events.** Please send us information about your upcoming performances and events. Deadline is the 20th of the month preceding publication, i.e., Oct. 20 for the November issue.

Elliott will be collecting information about upcoming events, and he's looking forward to hearing from you. Please submit info about your upcoming shows and performances to:

**[radio@elliottgross.com](mailto:radio@elliottgross.com)**



DC Blues Society presents

 **OCTOBER FOURTH FRIDAY** 

**BLUES**

**HAPPY**

**HOUR**

featuring award-winning local favorite

# Bad Influence Band



**FRIDAY, OCT. 22 ★ FREE ADMISSION**

**Live Music: 6:30–9:30 pm ★ Dancin' ★ Lotsa' Fun**  
**Affordable Cash Bar + Food**



**American Legion Post 41**

905 Sligo Ave. ★ Silver Spring, MD 20910

Entrance on Fenton St., adjacent to public parking lot  
FREE Parking AFTER 7 PM



**[www.dcblues.org](http://www.dcblues.org) ★ 202-617-2625**





presents

**FREE**  
admission

# the 31st dc **BLUES** festival

**17 October**  
Sunday, 1PM-7PM

held outdoors at



**Wunder Garten  
at NoMa**

1101 First St. NE  
Washington DC 20001  
1 block from Red Line's  
NoMa-Gallaudet station  
commercial parking nearby  
craft beers + food trucks  
no outside food or beverages

live music  
+ dancing



5:30PM • Provogue Records artist  
**King Solomon Hicks**  
winner, 2021 Blues Music Award  
for Best Emerging Artist  
Album, "Harlem"



3:45PM • Area Favorites  
**Robbin Kapsalis  
& Vintage #18**  
introducing new album,  
"Soul Draker"



2PM • Local Legend  
**Linwood Taylor Band**



1PM • **J.P. Reali**  
winner, 2019 DCBS  
Solo/Duo Competition



[www.dcblues.org](http://www.dcblues.org) • 202-617-2625

meet the performers:

the 31st dc

# BLUES festival

## King Solomon Hicks

Editor's Note: King Solomon Hicks headlines the 31st DC Blues Festival, and attendees are in for a treat! Considered an up-and-coming star of the blues world, Hicks has become known for his versatility, skilled guitar playing and showmanship. His first album, *Harlem*, took first place in The Blues Foundation's 2021 Blues Music Awards for Best Album by an Emerging Performer. BLUES BLAST magazine recently profiled Hicks, and this article is used with permission from the author.

by Anita Schlank

"My favorite new find!" That's what many people are saying about King Solomon Hicks after seeing him perform recently at the Big Blues Bender in Las Vegas. But Hicks has actually been playing professionally since he was 13 years of age. Born and raised in Harlem (where he still lives), Hicks first picked up the guitar at age 6 and was known as the kid who always had a guitar on his back and was always being told by the teachers in school to put his guitar away.

He was playing at the Lenox Lounge in New York at age 13 when a woman named Princess Billie Holiday approached him about coming to the legendary Cotton Club to replace a departing guitarist. Initially he

played on only three songs but was soon asked to play five nights a week. Hicks acknowledged that not everyone was happy to see a young kid join the band.

"Initially there was a little bit of animosity about me being a kid, but that went away once they saw that I wasn't goofing off and was trying to be one with the band. The Cotton Club is where I first felt my love for entertaining the crowd and was the first place I learned how to work with a band. I was able to develop my sound and it sparked my interest to continue playing.

And playing five nights a week helped me sharpen my skills and connect with the audience."

From the Cotton Club, Hicks played a two-week tour in Denmark and Japan, opening for Jeff Beck and Ringo Starr, and then was booked on the KISS cruise with Gene Simmons, and the Joe Bonamassa "Keeping the Blues Alive at Sea Cruise," which all seems somewhat unusual for a teen who had just graduated high school at that time.

He was also invited to be a judge at the International Blues Challenge (IBC) in Memphis, although he had never competed at the IBCs.

"We were just very blessed. I do believe in luck and being in the right place at the



photo by Laura Carbone/BLUES BLAST

right time, but I also believe in preparation and practice and focus. For the IBCs, I was already out playing professionally, so that's why I did not compete. It was an honor to be there as a judge, and, of course, I'll take any excuse to be in Memphis."

Hicks first studied jazz, which provided a good foundation for him musically, but he soon found himself drifting over to the blues.

"Jazz is dealing with theory and harmony, but sometimes the theory doesn't give you the feeling I want. Jazz is dealing with harmony clashing, versus letting a note ring long enough for the right vibrato. If I have to dedicate myself for the next 50 years, I'll take that over playing 25 chord changes. Jazz will always be a part of who I am, and it gives you a base music-wise, but the blues makes you feel good."

Hicks added 'King' to his name as a tribute to the three 'kings' (BB, Freddy and Albert), and noted that he hoped to "carry on some of that same classiness they had." He appears to be accomplishing this goal, as he is already known for consistently appearing very well-dressed and well-mannered. Hicks also identified numerous musical influences besides the 'three kings,' including Selwyn Birchwood's storytelling ability, the guitar work of Walter Trout, Marcus King, Kingfish, and 'Monster' Mike Welch, and the

*continued on next page*



# King Solomon Hicks

*continued from preceding page*

innovative ways in which Kevin Burt is able to reimagine popular songs.

When asked if he thought it was rare for a young person to be interested in the blues, Hicks compared it to developing a taste for alcohol.

"It's like a drink. Some people can drink straight whiskey like some people can listen to straight blues. Other people need a chaser for the alcohol, or to break it down with a little Sprite. They can't handle straight booze and they can't handle straight blues. Maybe when they get older, they might appreciate straight blues, but until then we find a way for them to like it.

"I have been playing for teens who never heard blues, but if you present it in the right way, you can get them turned on. There are always ways to change things and reinvent it for someone who hasn't heard the songs—to make it multigenerational."

While playing as a solo musician at a festival in Brooklyn, Hicks met his current manager, Kirk Yano, who also recorded, co-produced and played bass on Hicks' album, *Harlem*. Yano, who is a three-time Grammy winner and has worked with a wide variety of artists, such as Mariah Carey and Public Enemy, seemed like the perfect pairing to Hicks.

"Kirk is the perfect producer because of how he likes all of these different styles of music. He never pigeon-holed me into saying we're just going to play traditional blues, and we've been working together for the past six years. You never know who you meet in life, and when you meet the right person and you are both focused and have the same goal, it's a beautiful thing."

Hicks discussed the two original songs on the album, both named for street addresses. "'Riverside Drive' is looking right at New Jersey on the Hudson River. It is one of my relaxing places. I write best near some type of water. I will always be a city person, but it's also nice to be out in nature. And '421 South Main' is a salute to the blues museum in south Memphis. Going to Memphis was a turning point for me."

He noted that he focused mainly on covering great songs for this first album but planned to include more original material in his next album. This decision was partly due to his insight that the quality of songwriting often improves with life experience.

"For the next album I'll be writing more original material. You have to live a bit more of life, and get your heart broken to write good songs. I had one heartbreak already, and that really messed with me, and I listen to lyrics differently now.

"After that loved one passes away, or someone steals your guitar, those are the dues that you don't really see on stage, but you live through it. You don't get to be a great player like Walter Trout until you have paid your dues. You don't necessarily have to have bad times to play the blues, but it definitely helps. For this album I was focused on taking great songs and putting arrangements that really related to me. I was born in 1995, so I would never understand what Junior Wells went through. So, I won't do a song note-for-note like the original. I have to try to find a way to put myself in every song."

One such song on the album is a bluesy version of Gary Wright's song, "My Love is Alive." This seemed like an unusual choice, not only because it was not originally a blues song, but also because it was popular in 1975, decades before Hicks' birth.

"Kirk turned me onto 'My Love is Alive'. He'll give me songs that he heard his whole life. We'll be in the studio, and I'll think he's crazy, and then I realize it's genius crazy. It's fun seeing when people realize what song it is—it's like a bolt of electricity. We also did 'I Love you More than You Know' more like a samba, and I put my own direction to 'Every Day I Have the Blues.' I'm trying to find my own imprint. Sometimes the best things come out of people who are willing to take chances and push the envelope. It's great working with someone who has an open ear."

Hicks is already giving back to younger



musicians, as he was one of the few artists who donated the money made from airing a performance on the 'Can't Stop the Blues' Facebook page. He donated that money to the Pinetop Perkins Foundation and the Blues Museum. (For those not familiar with the Pinetop Perkins Foundation, it is a non-profit that offers support for young people in the early stages of their musical careers, and also provides care and safety for elderly musicians in the twilight of their careers.) His generosity is not surprising, as his humility, sincerity and kindness seem quickly apparent in any interaction with him. He noted that he held the following belief.

"You don't need to take money all the time. It's good to give to the cause and help when you can. There were times when people have helped me. It's a cyclical world—a very spiritual thing. I'm more spiritual than religious, but I think the music comes from a higher power than ourselves."

Most recently, Hicks collaborated with Eliza Neals for her song "Sugar Daddy" and is featured in the music video for that song. He is also scheduled to open for Samantha Fish in the near future. You can find out where King Solomon Hicks is playing by checking his website: [www.kingsolomonhicks.com](http://www.kingsolomonhicks.com).

*Interviewer Anita Schlank lives in Virginia, and is on the Board of Directors for the River City Blues Society. She has been a fan of the blues since the 1980s. She and Tab Benoit co-authored the book BLUES THERAPY, with all proceeds from sales going to the HART Fund.*

---

meet the performers:

the 31st dc  
**BLUES**  
festival

*“Vintage #18 is a band  
you have to see live  
to appreciate their level  
of performance.”*

— DJ John Porter,  
WCVE, Richmond, VA

## Robbin Kapsalis & Vintage #18

Robbin Kapsalis & Vintage #18 are using their performance at the 31st DC Blues Festival to introduce blues fans to their new album, *Soul Shaker*. The album, released on Oct. 15, was finished during the pandemic. *Soul Shaker* includes eight originals, one written by Deb Ryder, and three covers.

When Vintage#18 hits the stage, the first thing you notice is Robbin Kapsalis’ signature white glass-beaded fringe dress and white knee-hi boots. She sways on stage creating a hypnotic visual with the soul foundation of her voice: something between a Gladys Knight and Anita Baker. Then you hear the band behind her, and you think, “wow, this is something else.”

Vintage#18 lays a low, steady groove allowing Robbin’s vocals to breathe. Sauntering and sexy with a mix of blues rhythms and soul grooves fuel a blistering performance of the DC-based soul-blues band.

Performing together since 2013, the band sharpened their sound and performance chops in clubs throughout the DMV. In 2016, they represented the Central Virginia Blues Society at the International Blues Challenge in Memphis, and afterward immediately began to work on their debut album *Grit* (2017).

The band’s performances have generated quite the buzz throughout DC and beyond, and they soon found themselves opening shows for The Nighthawks, Billy Price, Lil’ Ed and the Blues Imperials, Albert Cummings, Selwyn Birchwood and Coco Montoya.

[www.vintage18.net](http://www.vintage18.net)



Lawrence French Photography

*“Their onstage  
performance with  
Robbin’s boundless  
energy will leave you  
breathless.”*

— DJ “Dr. Nick” Johnson.  
WPFW,  
Washington, DC



---

meet the performers:

the 31st dc  
**BLUES**  
festival

## Linwood Taylor Band

Local bluesman Linwood Taylor hails from the Nation's Capital Blues Scene and holds one of the most highly respected names in the blues community. He is a multiple winner of WAMMIES, the Washington Area Music Awards, in the category of Best Blues Band.

Linwood's style is in the vein of Muddy Waters, Jimi Hendrix, Albert King, Freddy King, Albert Collins and Jimi Hendrix. His resume includes appearances with Albert King, Joe Louis Walker, Skip Castro, Devon Allman, Tommy Castro and Joe Louis Walker as he toured the US and European blues circuits. In fact, Taylor often played with Collins on the East Coast and treats fans to "Frosty," a Collins tune he played with its creator. This talented Bluesman

also plays a bare-bones acoustic guitar and entertains at several venues in the DMV.

He has released two albums with his multi-talented band, *Make Room for the Paying Customer* and *Live at Colonial Seafood*. Linwood also recorded *Ladies and Gentlemen: Live at the Outta' the Way Café* as a member of the James Mabry Blues Band, and he was part of an ensemble of Baltimore musicians who recorded *Baltimore On Tap*, *Live at the Cat's Eye*.

[www.linwoodtaylor.com](http://www.linwoodtaylor.com)  
<https://www.facebook.com/linwood.taylor>



## J.P. Reali

Winner of the DCBS Solo/Duo Competition in 2019, J.P. Reali is a veteran of the DC music scene who's in a constant state of growth and evolution. His early days as lead guitar for the psychedelic blues band The Next Step led to his role as half of the acoustic blues/roots duo The Reali Brothers in the 90's, and then into to his current solo career.

While J.P.'s repertoire is steeped in the traditions of Piedmont and Delta blues, it also showcases his original blues compositions in a conscious effort to keep these traditional styles alive. He has three



solo releases under his belt, *Cold Steel Blues* in 2007, *Bottle of Blooze* in 2010, *The Road to Mississippi* in 2012, and one with bandmates, *A Highway Cruise* in 2019.

J.P. also won the DCBS Battle of the Bands in the solo category in 2010 and 2011 and competed in The International Blues Challenge in Memphis. He also received Washington Area Music Association nominations for Best Blues Instrumentalist and Best Traditional Blues Recording.

[www.jpreali.com](http://www.jpreali.com)  
[www.facebook.com/jprealmusic](https://www.facebook.com/jprealmusic)

# Warner Williams: Honored Musician, Local Legend, National Treasure, Inspiration and Friend

Editor's note: Warner Williams, an award-winning, popular guitarist and fixture at area jams, festivals and even farmer's markets, passed away on Sept. 19. Warner was an extraordinary musician, known for his constant cowboy hat, colorful character and a larger-than-life personality. His long-time friend, musician Daryl Davis, wrote this tribute a few hours after his passing.

*by Daryl Davis*

One day several decades ago, I was rehearsing my band in the garage of one of my bandmembers. The garage door was open and we were playing a song when a strange-looking vehicle with actual bull horns and other oddities on it pulled into the driveway. A much older man and a young man got out and stood against the vehicle listening.

At the end of the song we invited them to come out of the hot sun and into the garage. The much older man asked us if we knew how to play the Blues. I confirmed we did and he asked if he could play a song with us. He said he played guitar and he introduced the younger man as his nephew who played bass. My guitarist and bassist relinquished their instruments to these two newcomers, while I accompanied them on the piano and my drummer provided the beat.

Could they play the Blues? Let me tell you what. THEY PLAYED THE BLUES!!! We had pretty much finished rehearsing and were just jamming when they pulled up. But we spent the rest of the afternoon playing with these two guys.

To call the guitar player a Blues guitarist was an understatement. Yes he played an authentic cross between the Delta and Piedmont styles of guitar playing. But he also played authentic Country music that would have made Hank Williams, Sr., and Ernest Tubb proud. Not only that, he played

Jazz standards like "Misty" and "Pennies From Heaven." He was the consummate musician with a style all his own.

We became fast friends and have remained friends to this day. Warner Williams passed away today a little while ago at the young age of 91. For almost the last year, Warner had been ill and living in a nursing home. He outlived his wife and some of his children. His best friend who kept him alive all these years was his guitar. He was living

County, MD and the Washington, DC metropolitan area, but he also became a national treasure. He was the recipient of the National Heritage Fellowship Award, given by the National Endowment for the Arts which is the highest honor of the U.S. Government in the area of Folk and Traditional Arts. Warner performed at numerous folk and blues festivals including ones hosted by the prestigious Smithsonian Institution.



*photo by Amanda Voisard, The Washington Post*

*Warner Williams in 2011 at the Armed Services Retirement Home in Washington, DC.*

proof of the adage, "You don't stop playing music because you get old. You get old because you stop playing music."

Warner could be seen participating in several open mics, not only on everyday of the week, but also on the same night. He would go from one to the other all night long if he didn't have a gig. He was often much better and more experienced than the musicians who participated in these events.

Warner Williams went on to not only become a local legend in Montgomery

Warner would always drive or be driven if the venue at which he was to perform was within a day's drive. Otherwise he would ride the train. He had never flown on a plane and had a phobia about flying. A former director of a festival and workshop in Washington State had booked Warner, me, and various other artists for the event. I flew out there from Washington, DC. Warner took the train!!!

A few years later, I became the festival and

*continued on next page*



# In Appreciation of Warner Williams

*continued from preceding page*

workshop director for the same event and there was a demand to bring Warner back. I insisted that Warner not take the several day train ride again out to Washington State and that he fly. His closest friends, bandmates, and even his family told me, "Daryl, that will NEVER happen."

I have had the pleasure of knowing and becoming very close to Warner, taking him with me on gigs to Pennsylvania, Virginia, Ocean City, MD, West Virginia, and Delaware. I have booked him for events for the prestigious Strathmore and AMP and many other places. I had a long talk with him about flying and told him I would be in the seat on the plane right next to him and assured him that he would be just fine. Warner trusted me and agreed to do it. NO ONE believed it would happen and he would back out at the last minute.



The morning of the flight from Washington, DC to Seattle, Washington arrived and I drove to Warner's home to pick him up. His suitcase was packed and he was ready. The TSA at the airport flagged him going through security. He had his pocket knife in his pocket. I had to explain to him that it had to stay behind. We gave it to the person who rode with us to drive my car back from the airport and would return it to Warner when he arrived back home.

Warner sat in the window seat and his eyes

were glued to everything he could see as we ascended into the sky. He continued looking down at the Earth until we rose above the clouds and the ground could no longer be seen. He did fantastic both flying out and flying back. We only had one little incident upon our return.

I didn't know Warner had never ridden an escalator before in his life. Not on the Metro, not in a department store, not anywhere. We had ridden the elevator in the airport terminal when we flew out. When we landed upon our return, we all were tired and the elevator was a little walk away. I insisted we ride the escalator which was right there. I had him stand with me at the bottom of the escalator and watch people get on and ride up. I explained what to do. I told him I would be right behind him and to get on, hold the rail and continue to look forward and not look behind him. (I was fearful he would get dizzy and fall). I took his bag and his guitar. He got on the escalator with his guitar and I got on right behind him carrying his bag and mine.

I continued talking to him, telling him to look forward and I would tell him when to step off. Everything was going fine till we



*photo by Frank Matheis*  
Guitarist Warner Williams with long-time harmonica partner, Jay Summerour at the First Annual John Cephas Piedmont Blues Festival, June 2015.

got about halfway up. He turned around and looked down. He got dizzy and lost his balance and fell. I dropped both bags to catch him. The bags and his guitar tumbled all the way down the escalator steps to the bottom. Once we got off, I had to ride the down escalator to retrieve them. Fortunately, nothing was damaged. He would later ask me several times, "When are we going to fly again?" He's now flying higher than I ever could have taken him on a plane.

I will miss my friend terribly. Montgomery County has lost a musical hero and the country has lost a treasure. He was one of the last of the people still living who was of that era and who could play those styles with authenticity. Please keep his memory alive and his family, and his fellow musicians and lifetime harmonica partner Jay Summerour in your prayers. There is no doubt in my mind, just as he looked down at the Earth from the plane, he's now looking down once again at us who remain here, as his guitar sings "Big Bug In My Beer" from the Heavenly stage with his choir of Angels.

Thank you, Warner Williams, for your music, your inspiration, and your friendship.

Rest In Peace, my friend.

Check out some of Warner's music here.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5IOP-rq06o>

# 2021 Blues Showdown

## And the Winners Are...

Congratulations to Carly Harvey's Kiss & Ride, winner of the 2021 DCBS Battle of the Bands, and to Danny Garrett and Sam O'Hare, winners of the 2021 DCBS Solo/Duo Competition! Both winners will be traveling

to Memphis to represent the DC BS in the International Blues Challenge, Jan. 18-22, 2022.

Many thanks and congratulations to the other competitors for their strong performances: Glen Flowers and The Strangers, runners-up in the Battle of the Bands, and Two Blue, runner-up in the Solo/Duo Competition. Bios of all participants are on page 13.

Watch all performances from the 2021 DCBS Battle of the Bands on the new [DCBS YouTube Channel](#):

And please subscribe to our YouTube Channel for more content in the future.

As an affiliated Blues Society of The Blues Foundation, each year the DC Blues Society has the opportunity to send a band and solo/duo musician(s) to represent the organization at the International Blues Challenge held annually along historic Beale Street in Memphis, TN. To select IBC participants, DCBS must stage a live challenge between multiple musicians, resulting in a winner in each category, whether as a band and/or solo/duo artist(s).

Because of Covid-related complications and precautions, the 2021 Battle of the Bands was held without an audience, just judges and volunteers. DCBS extends a big thanks to this year's judges: Lady Myrhh, Willie Leebel, Carol Salsbury and Mike Tash. The volunteers who ensured the event happened included DCBS Board officers Adam Oppenheim, Pat Bransford and Dorothy Hines; and members Gayle Cinquegrani, who served as timekeeper; Clarence "The Blues Man" Turner, who handled the sound/set-up; and Carol Salsbury, who recorded the performances.



photos by Gayle Cinquegrani  
Above: Danny Garrett and Sam O'Hare took top honors in the 2021 DCBS Solo/Duo Competition. At left: Carly Harvey's Kiss & Ride won the 2021 DCBS Battle of the Bands. Both will represent DCBS in the 2022 IBC in Memphis. The contest was held on Oct. 12 and scaled back because of Covid precautions.



photos by Pat Bransford  
Above: Glen Flowers and The Strangers were runners-up in the Battle of the Bands. Below: Two Blue was runner-up in the Solo/Duo Competition. Performances by all competitors are featured on DCBS' new YouTube channel.





---

# 2021 Blues Showdown

## Meet the Performers in the Solo/Duo Competition:

### Danny Garrett and Sam O'Hare

Danny Garrett and Sam O'Hare started playing blues when they were in high school together in Harford County, Maryland. Later, Sam honed his guitar chops at Berklee College of Music, and Danny perfected his harmonica technique with a number of private instructors around the US. Presently, they gig together in bars all around Maryland and are recording a roots-music duo album to be released in 2022. <https://dannyygarrettharmonica.com/>



---

## Two Blue

New blues songs rendered simply with guitar, harp and sax---we gratefully stand on the shoulders of Blues giants and enjoy the view.

Two Blue is Andy Valakos—lead vocals, harp and sax, and Alan Harbitter—guitars and backup vocals. Alan is our songwriter. We have been playing together since 2011 when we met in a larger blues band. We stripped it down to just the two of us. But we often gig with upright bass, flute and drums. We have been gigging in a large variety of venues all over the DC metro. Andy is a native Bethesda boy. Alan grew up in NYC and moved to DC in 1978. Our influences are many, including Muddy, BB, Charles Brown, and Paul Butterfield. <https://www.facebook.com/TwoBlueBand>



## Meet the Performers in the Battle of the Bands:

### Glen Flowers and The Strangers

Glen Flowers and The Strangers play and sing original songs + a few interpreted covers: "New Classic Rock," Blues, Jazz and stuff like that. The band's debut album, *Master Plan*, delivers

new guitar-driven songs with strong blues influences. The group is a labor of love, rooted in deep and meaningful relationships with family and friends. Band members include: Glen Flowers on guitar, vocals and percussion; Doug Dillon on bass and vocals; Rohn Davis on drums and vocals; and Hannah Flowers on vocals and percussion. <https://glenflowersmusic.com>



---

## Carly Harvey Band



Based out of Washington, DC, Carly Harvey combines Blues, Jazz, Soul and Americana roots styles to create a unique sound with her Blues Project, Kiss & Ride. She is an expressive and

dynamic band leader with powerful, sultry vocals. Carly has been featured on NPR and in the DCist, WASHINGTON CITY PAPER and in BIG CITY BLUES magazine as one of the youngest artists to watch. Most recently, Carly won a 2021 Wammie for Best Blues Artist. Band members include Holly Montgomery on bass; Bobby Thompson on guitar; Andy Hamburger on drums; and David Gorozdos on keys. [carlyharvey.com](http://carlyharvey.com)

# Ramirez Makes Triumphant Return to DC Area

by Karen Mendez

If you have ever heard José Ramirez play the blues, if you've ever been to The Hamilton at 600-14th St., NW, DC 20005, or if you've ever won anything, you can imagine how excited I was to learn that I had won two tickets to see José play at The Hamilton! If you have never heard José Ramirez, make a point to hear him soon. He is an accomplished musician with an engaging stage presence who surrounds himself with equally skilled artists.

For this performance, José reunited with musicians Charles "Reds" Adkins, Rod Gross and Bronson Hoover. The repertoire was varied and included blues classics. José was born in Costa Rica, which has a rich musical tradition but is by no means the blues capital of the world, as he confessed to the audience. He grew up listening to blues recordings his father collected for him and eventually moved to the US. The rest, as they say, is history.

His band, including Adkins, Gross, and Hoover, represented the DC Blues Society at The Blues Foundation's 2020 International Blues Challenge in Memphis after winning the 2019 DCBS Battle of the



photos by Mike Landsman

*Jose Ramirez reunited with DC-area band members to re-create his award-winning band that represented the DCBS and took second place at the 2020 International Blues Challenge. The Aug. 15 performance marked his first in the area since Covid forced cancellation of an earlier show.*



Bands. They finished second in the IBC, generating buzz and earning respect among the blues community. Earlier this year, José was nominated for the Blues Music Award for Best Album by an Emerging Artist for his debut album, *Here I Come*. He moved to Florida during the pandemic but as venues reopen, José made a point of returning to perform in the DC area.

José recently signed with Chicago's Delmark Records, the oldest continuously operating jazz and blues record label in

the US. He recently finished recording his second album before leaving on a European tour, headlining blues festivals in The Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Switzerland and Belgium.

If you haven't visited The Hamilton, I recommend adding that to your "To-Do" list. It has three floors that accommodate diners, business meetings and live performances.

The acoustics for José Ramirez's performance were ideal: crisp with no distortion. There didn't seem to be a bad seat in the house. A dedicated dance floor had not been set up for this performance, however, several people improvised in available space near one of the bars. Food (locally sourced) and beverage prices are reasonable and the staff is friendly. Masks and other safety precautions have been fluidly integrated into The Hamilton's business procedures.

If you haven't won tickets (or anything) recently, enter the DCBS ticket giveaways. I had heard that only a few people take the time to enter, so I entered... and won! The entry form took perhaps two minutes to complete and gave me an evening I will never forget. Thank you, DCBS!





# LATE OCTOBER 2021 LIVE BLUES

- 14 Still Standing with Linwood Taylor @ Babe's Boys' Tavern ▲ The Gayle Harrod Band @ JV's ▲ Mike Kelley and Friends at 219 Restaurant, Alexandria
- 15 Bad Influence Band @ Hershey's Restaurant ▲ **Lancaster Roots & Blues Festival with Charlie Musselwhite, Lil' Ed and The Blues Imperials**, many more, Lancaster, PA ▲ Lunch With Bob @ Hank Dietle's ▲ The Racket @ Cat's Eye Pub, Baltimore ▲ Patty Reese @ Rockville Town Square ▲ Kelly Bell Band @ Harford Community College, Belair
- 16 **Lancaster Roots & Blues Festival with Billy Price Charm City Rhythm Band, Jontavious Willis** many more, Lancaster, PA ▲ Karl Stoll @ Muse Winery, Woodstock, VA ▲ Bad Influence Band @ 219 Restaurant, Alexandria ▲ Fast Eddie & The Slowpokes @ The Loft at The Hamilton ▲ Dave Chappell Band @ Cheverly American Legion ▲ The Thrillbillys @ Hershey's ▲ The Rockits Band @ JV's ▲ Sandra Dean @ The Music Café, Damascus
- 17 **DC Blues Festival with King Solomon Hicks, Linwood Taylor Band, Robbin Kapsalis & Vintage #18 and J.P. Real** @ Wunder Garten, NE DC, see pages 5-9 ▲ **Lancaster Roots & Blues Festival with Vanessa Collier, Shemekia Copeland, Larkin Poe**, many more, Lancaster, PA ▲ Karl Stoll @ Naked Mountain Winery, Markham, VA ▲ Charlie Owen & Pocket Change @ Cat's Eye Pub, Baltimore ▲ Danielle Nicole @ Pearl Street Warehouse ▲ Wolf's Blues Show & Sit-in Jam with Matt Kelley @ JV's Restaurant ▲ 40 Dollar Fine @ Old Bowie Town Grille
- 18 Mama Moon & the Rumpshakers @ Westminster Presbyterian Church ▲ Davey Knowles @ Rams Head, Annapolis ▲ Wolf's Blues Show & Sit-in Jam with Linwood Taylor @ Lahinch Tavern
- 19 Mavis Staples and Amy Helm @ Lincoln Theatre, ▲ Tab Benoit with The Whiskey Bayou Review @ Rams Head, Annapolis ▲ Patty Reese @ The Manor at Silo Falls, Brookeville ▲ Holly Montgomery @ 219 Restaurant, Alexandria ▲ Dan Hovey Happy Hour at Hank Dietle's
- 20 Robert Finley @ City Winery, DC ▲ Tab Benoit with The Whiskey Bayou Review @ Rams Head, Annapolis ▲ Dave Chappell @ 49 West St Coffeehouse, Annapolis ▲ Bill Pappas Project @ 219 Restaurant, Alexandria
- 21 Still Standing with Linwood Taylor and Michael Tash @ Lahinch Tavern ▲ Cadillac Jump Blues Band @ Cat's Eye Pub, Baltimore ▲ Tab Benoit Whiskey Bayou Revue @ The Birchmere ▲ The Soul Crackers @ The State Theatre, outdoors ▲ Mike Kelley and Friends at 219 Restaurant, Alexandria
- 22 **DCBS Happy Hour featuring Bad Influence Band** @ Silver Spring American Legion, see page 4 ▲ Karl Stoll and The Danger Zone @ Crimson Whiskey Bar, DC ▲ Robbin Kapsalis & Vintage #18 @ The Loft at The Hamilton ▲ Dave Chappell @ 49 West St Coffeehouse, Annapolis ▲ Patty Reese @ Chefscape, Leesburg, VA ▲ Fast Eddie & The Slowpokes @ El Golfo, Silver Spring
- 23 The Paulverizers @ Old Bowie Town Grill ▲ The Nighthawks @ Hank Dietle's ▲ Skyla Burrell Blues Band @ Cat's Eye Pub, Baltimore ▲ Karl Stoll and The Danger Zone @ The Loft at The Hamilton ▲ Dave Chappell @ Lone Oak Brewery, Olney ▲ Patty Reese @ Cox Farms Festival, Centreville, VA ▲ Kelly Bell Band @ MD State Fair, Catonsville
- 24 The Thrillbillys @ The State Theatre outdoors ▲ Patty Reese @ Bleu Frog Vinyards, Leesburg, VA ▲ Katie Henry Band @ Hank Dietle's
- 25 Danny Blew and the Blues Crew @ Westminster Presbyterian Church ▲ Wolf's Blues Show and Sit-in Jam with Big Boy Little & Matt Kelley @ Lahinch Tavern ▲ Dan Hovey Happy Hour @ Hank Dietle's
- 26 Patty Reese @ The Manor at Silo Falls, Brookeville ▲ Holly Montgomery @ 219 Restaurant, Alexandria
- 27 Dave Chappell @ 49 West St Coffeehouse, Annapolis ▲ Bill Pappas Project @ 219 Restaurant, Alexandria ▲ Liz Springer Trio @ Hank Dietle's
- 28 Mike Kelley and Friends at 219 Restaurant, Alexandria
- 29 TNT: Linwood Taylor & Michael Tash @ Hershey's, Gaithersburg ▲ Bruce Ewan and Steve Kraemer @ Lahinch Tavern ▲ Patty Reese @ Velocity, Fairfax ▲ Sol Roots @ DoubleTree Hotel, Crystal City, VA ▲ Holly Montgomery @ 219 Restaurant, Alexandria s Bobby Thompson Trio @ Hank Dietle's
- 30 Bad Influence Band @ Red's Table, Reston ▲ Still Standing with Linwood Taylor @ Lahinch Tavern ▲ Rhythm Bandits @ Hershey's ▲ Sol Roots @ 219 Restaurant, Alexandria ▲ Kelly Bell Band @ Guilianova, Inc., Westminster
- 31 Dave Chappell @ Bertha's Mussels, Baltimore ▲ Fast Eddie & The Slowpokes @ Cat's Eye Pub, Baltimore

## EARLY NOVEMBER 2021 LIVE BLUES

- 1 Patty Reese @ Cox Farms Festival, Centreville, VA
- 2 **Sonny Landreth with Jamie McLean Band** @ The Hamilton ▲ Patty Reese @ The Manor at Silo Falls ▲ Dan Hovey Happy Hour @ Hank Dietle's
- 3 Patty Reese @ Fleetwood Farm Winery
- 4 Patty Reese and Dave Chappell @ Western Market, DC ▲ Moonshine Society @ Hank Dietle's ▲ The Thrillbills @ JV's
- 5 Bad Influence Band @ Hank Dietle's Tavern
- 6 Bad Influence Band @ The Loft at The Hamilton ▲ Patty Reese Band and Dave Chappell @ Cox Farms Festival, Centreville, VA
- 7 Patty Reese @ Vanish Brewery, Leesburg, VA
- 9 Guitar Night with Dave Chappell @ Blues Alley ▲ Patty Reese @ The Manor at Silo Falls
- 11 Linwood Taylor and Big Boy Little with Still Standing @ Lahinch Tavern
- 12 Roomful of Blues @ The Hamilton Live ▲ Veronica Lewis @ Hank Dietle's Tavern ▲ The Nighthawks @ The Music Café, Damascus
- 13 David Bromberg and His Big Band with Veronica Lewis @ The Birchmere ▲ Carolyn Wonderland @ City Winery Loft ▲ Bad Influence Band @ 219 Restaurant, Alexandria
- 14 The Nighthawks featuring Daryl Davis, Fidos for Freedom Benefit @ College Park American Legion
- 16 Guitar Night with Dave Chappell @ Blues Alley ▲ Patty Reese @ The Manor at Silo Falls
- 17 **Christone "Kingfish" Ingram** @ Soundstage, Baltimore ▲ The Reverend Peyton's Big Damn Band with Eddie 9V @ The Hamilton Live
- 18 **Christone "Kingfish" Ingram** @ 6th & I, NW DC ▲ Bad Influence Band @ Lahinch Tavern ▲ Still Standing with Linwood Taylor @ Babe's Boys' Tavern, Waldorf
- 20 Tommy Castro @ Rams Head, Annapolis
- 22 Mark Wenner's Blues Warriors @ Westminster Church

## REGULAR EVENTS—BLUES ALL WEEK

*The Regular Blues Calendar below is provided each month to convey information on recurring blues jams/performances/dances.  
The Regular Blues Calendar is in addition to the monthly calendar prepared by DCBS.*

### Sundays

**CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE: DCBS First Sunday Blues Jam** @ American Legion Post 41 ▲ Wolf's First and Third Sunday Blues and Sit-in Jam @ JV's, Falls Church ▲ Sol Roots Band @ JoJo Bar, Washington, DC ▲ Stacy Brooks and B.T. Richardson @ Madam's Organ, Washington, DC

### Mondays

Wolf's Blues Show and Sit-in Jam @ Lahinch Tavern and Grill, Potomac

### Wednesdays

(except Second Wednesday) Dean Rosenthal's 4 Piece Racket @ 49 West Coffeehouse, Annapolis ▲ Bill Pappas Project @ 219 Restaurant, Alexandria

### Thursdays

Mike Kelley, Matt Kelley Andy Hamburger and Sam Goodall @ 219 Restaurant, Alexandria

### Fridays

every fourth Friday: **DCBS 4th Friday Blues Happy Hour** @ American Legion Post 41

### Saturdays

Acoustic Jam Archie Edwards Blues Heritage Foundation @ 4502 Hamilton St., Hyattsville

*Guidelines to accommodate Covid-19 precautions may affect participation in Jams.  
Please check in advance with the venue and/or host to learn of any changes.*