

BLUES

THE BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF

NEWS

THE BLUES SOCIETY OF TULSA

Volume 14, Number 1

www.bluessocietyoftulsa.com

November/December 2015

Blues Choice Award Voting Deadline is November 27

The 12th Annual Blues Choice Awards voting is underway where members of the Blues Society of Tulsa select their best and favorite artists in four categories. **Deadline for casting ballots is Friday, November 27th.**

An awards ceremony honoring the winners will be held in the first quarter of next year at a time and venue to be announced. The ceremony will be held in conjunction with the Blues Society's annual birthday party, with the winners invited to perform.

"The Best of 2015" feature four categories: Best Vocals, Best Group, Best Lead (which can be any instrument that leads an act) and Best Rhythm (which is typically drums, percussion or bass guitar).

Vote by filling out and submitting the ballot on page 8 of this issue, postmarked no later than November 27th, or hand delivered to a BST officer or awards committee member, no later than 6 p.m. on November 27th.

Your vote can also be submitted on a piece of paper, or just about anything, including by phone, text message, etc. If you're not a BST member and want to vote, just become a member for only \$20. That way you can support your favorite artists and live music in Northeastern Oklahoma at the same time. Any questions, call Bill at: 918-288-7574.



THE VOX SQUADRON: Aaron Lee, Richard Wood, Jack Myers and Jeremy Scott.

The Vox Squadron: Rising from the Ashes

Story and Photo by Bill Martin

Tahlequah based **The Vox Squadron** is one of those feel good stories about a group of kids who have known each other most if not all their lives. They grew up having similar interests and talents.

But lives and musical aspirations were shattered in February 2014 with the passing of beloved bandmate 37-year-old **Chris Russo**, of the group **Locus**. Now fast forward to last year when **Jack Myers**, best friends with Russo, fulfilled his dream of putting together a blues/rock band.

"The Vox Squadron was formed in September 2014 out of the ashes of the band **Locus**," says Jack. "Chris Russo was the lead guitarist for **Locus**. He was my best friend when he died of leukemia."

This spurred Jack to contact former **Locus** bassist **Richard Wood** as well as drummer **Jeremy Scott** to start jamming as a trio. They eventually added **Aaron Lee** on keys.

They have since released a debut CD *Crashing Down* that received a rave review (*Blues News* August/September 2015). (Continued on page 2)

INSIDE:

Blues Society Christmas Party, Blues Choice Award Ballot, Black Kat Benders, Doyle Eck, Electric Rag Band, Mississippi Fever, Best Self-Produced CD Winner, My Own Holiday, Rory Block, Andy T and Nick Nixon, D.L. Duncan, Sunday Moan, Irenne, Dirtboxwailers, Calvin Youngblood, Alan Jamieson, Joe Shicke and more!

Welcome Our New Members!

David Brabson, Linda Slater, both of Tulsa; Jim Tate, Woodlands, TX; Scott and Kenya Kirschner, Sperry.

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Blues Society of Tulsa, P.O. Box 2836, Tulsa, OK 74101, is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization with the purpose of preserving and promoting the blues in Tulsa and Northeastern Oklahoma. *Blues News* is published bi-monthly and encourages your support through personalized membership card and the Blues News newsletter. BST members are encouraged to submit articles, photos and other materials for publication. Deadline for both editorial items and advertising is the 1st of the month (30 days) prior to publication

LOCAL BIRTHDAYS

November 4 Bobby Parker; 8 Hank Thompson (2007); 15 David Teegarden Sr. and Speedy West Jr. (2011); 17 Isaac Hanson and Larry Moss; 20 Bob Childers (2008); 21 John Hoff; 23 Maxx Campbell; 26 Bob Wallace; 27 Harry Williams; 28 Matt Mason and Debbie Campbell (2004);
December 1 Casey Van Beek; 2 Bill Davis; 5 J.J. Cale (2013); 8 Sam Kinison (1992); 11 David Gates; 23 Rick Huskey, Chet Baker (1988); 24 David Tanner; 25 Jeff Martinson; 27 Steve Pryor; 30 Charles Tuberville. Compiled by Chester Burnett

BST MONTHLY MEETINGS

are held the second Monday of the month at 7p.m. The November 9th meeting is at the Cimarron Bar, 26th Street and South Memorial. There is no December meeting. Non-members are always welcome!

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Christmas Party is December 5th!

Annual Blues Society Christmas Party with the Dustin Pittsley Band

VFW Post 577 Centennial Lounge

9 p.m. \$5 Cover Covered Dish

A Special Tribute to Buffalo Bill Barrett



The Vox Squadron (Continued from page 1)

"I'd never written a song before," Jack states. "*Crashing Down* was the first song I ever wrote," who also penned the other 9 songs on the album.

Although Jack grew up playing guitar with his buddies, his career kind of got in the way. Today he has a general surgery practice in Tahlequah focusing on more complicated procedures that are minimally invasive. That's right – Dr. Jack Myers.

As the band's lead guitarist and vocalist, Jack says, "I'm having the time of my life with these guys."

Richard recalls that after the death of Russo, members of Locus continued playing as the trio **Critical Mass** (with **Aaron Pride**, drums and **Steve Kirkpatrick**, guitar, vocals).

Jeremy adds that when Jack came along wanting to form a band, "I knew he had a big sound. I like big guitars and as a drummer it makes me play even bigger."

Crashing Down starts out the CD with a heavy metal sound as the band was looking for a WWII air raid sound effect.

"We borrowed an actual air raid siren from that era...put a dimmer switch on it...and miked it across the room at Jeremy's brother's house and the computer generated planes and the crashing effects," Jack relates.

Jeremy jokingly adds, the four airplanes flying over signify the four band members "...coming in to destroy a village of people that are just trying to live their lives, but we're a bunch of jerks!" This band is serious, but funny and fun. A little humor never hurts!

Jack already has incorporated a handful of new songs into their live set and is planning the next CD release with all new originals, by next spring.

CORRECTION: **The Boogie** has not disbanded as stated in the *Blues News*, September/October 2015, page 1. Bassist **Dusty Robison** says, "I have legally trademarked, incorporated and am in the process of publishing *The Boogie* as we speak. I have incorporated myself as a music publisher and plan on releasing new material from **The Boogie** very soon!"



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CD REVIEWS



Electric Rag Band:

MY SIDE

(ERB Records)

This record has a most interesting cover design with a sinking ocean liner in the distance, with what appears to be a heavily armed terrorist sitting on a beach lounge near a board fence

topped with razor wire. He looks remorseful. This is **Pat Cook's** first release in over two years as a follow up to *The Esoteric Ramblings of the Electric Rag Band*. Two differences in *My Side*, according to Pat, is "I'm not quite as angry this time," plus there's a little more acoustic material. However he describes it, *My Side* is his sixth and perhaps best record yet. He once again displays his picking prowess, whether he's playing guitar, tenor banjo or bass. His son **Daniel Cook** is the icing on the cake with his drums and washboard playing. Daniel also adds guitar, and both contribute with vocals. There are 13 original tunes about life, love and honesty ("I'm drinking for my health."). They all are very good.

-- Fripp



Doyle Eck:

LET IT SLIDE

We last heard from Tulsan **Doyle Eck** about a year ago when he came out with a four-song demo CD (*Blues News*, November/December 2014). Doyle is back with a full CD of that release *Long Enough*, that is expanded to a dozen original tunes and renamed

Let It Slide. Again, Doyle does it all on this release, including lyrics, music and I assume, all instrumentals (liner notes don't say). An accomplished guitar picker, he excels at clever, meaningful lyrics such as *Thanksgiving Blues*. "Well the turkey is in the oven, my life is in the can, you're listening to a liberated man." Doyle Eck bleeds the famous Tulsa Sound, not to mention **Cale** and **Traffic**. This is his fifth CD release. Keep 'em comin' Doyle. Good stuff. -- **Billy Austin**

Black Kat Benders:

SHAKE THE BLUES

It's been over two years since the **Black Kat Benders** self-titled CD was released, and this new effort is a step forward from their previously well accepted album. While BKB continues their trademark Texas Blues on much of this CD, the quartet is tighter than ever.

Vocalist **Kara Covey Conrad** displays more versatility than ever. Recorded at *Natura Digital Studio*, the album's title cut starts out smokin' with Bruce Jones' blistering Stratocaster. A favorite is *The Road* driven by bassist **Blair Raguse** and drummer **Bob Bledsoe**, and Bruce's soaring strat. BKB ventures into new territory with *Ghost* and closes the CD with *Ghost Reprise* with Kara's soft, but cool, sultry vocals regarding childhood fears. BKB has now been around awhile, but remains fresh, while moving forward. -- **Billy Austin**



Mississippi Fever:

300 MILES TO MEMPHIS

St. Louis-based **Mississippi Fever** entered the 2011 Tulsa Blues Challenge, but showed up as a hard rock band. If they had played blues/rock, like is found in *300 Miles to*

Memphis, they probably would have scored a lot higher in the challenge. *I Feel Like Superman* kicks off this album led by the trio of **Brent Barker**, guitar/vocals; **Ted May**, bass; and **Tom May**, drums. Ten of the 12 songs are originals and throughout this CD are excellent vocals and musicianship. Mississippi River occasionally plays Tulsa's Cimarron Bar. This album certainly makes me want to catch their next show here. - **Fripp**

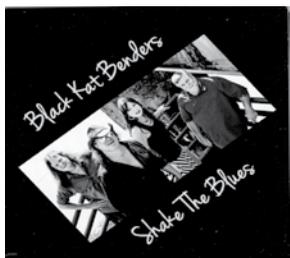


The Duo Sonics: Best Self-Produced CD Winner

The Duo Sonics, comprised of Tulsa veteran artists **David Berntson** and **Bobby "Greenshoes" Parker** is the Blues Society's entry in the Best Self-Produced CD competition sponsored by The Blues Foundation. Their entry, *N URTOWN*, a recording of originals and blues classics was released last January.

The record was recorded and mixed by hometown boys

Mike Peace and **Walt Richmond**. It features a host of excellent Tulsa musicians ranging from **Casey Van Beek**, bass; **Ronnie McRorey**, **Robbie Armstrong** and **Damon Daniel**, drums; and **Robbie Mack**, backup vocals and cowbell. The release is dedicated to the late "**Ice Pick Walt**" **Gibson**, who played upright bass on two cuts. The winner of the BSPCDC will be announced at the IBC finals in January.



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CD REVIEWS



Colin Linden: **RICH IN LOVE**

(Stoney Plain Records)

Canadian **Colin Linden**; Living in Nashville since the late 90's; will remind you of a bluesy, **Elvis Costello**,

with some **Lyle Lovett** thrown in, but without the flash and fun of a Lyle Lovett performance. This is Colin's 13th album, and he's also the main musician, music producer, music director and songwriter of ABC's *Nashville* series. Colin has created a very interesting, and listenable album of new electric and acoustic blues comprised of great songs, and often, very plain, straightforward music. Stand out tracks include *Delia Come for Me* and *No More Cheap Wine*.

- **Curt Fillmore (CurtsList.Com)**



My Own Holiday: **REASON TO BLEED**

(Eclecto Groove Records)

This is a pretty good blues album filled with some great rockin' blues guitar riffs and rhythms. The vocals, however, take a little getting used to. Fortunately, the songs are strong enough to make up for

the unorthodox vocals...but this is an album, that despite its rockin' nature, would not find its way onto my playlist - due to the unusual vocals. - **Curt Fillmore (CurtsList.Com)**

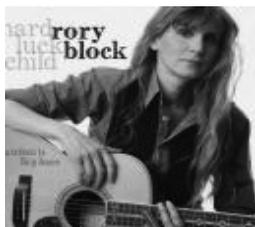


Andy T/Nick Nixon Band: **NUMBERS MAN**

(Blind Pig)

Here's a pretty good, old school sounding blues record with walking bass riffs, a horn section, straight guitar, and a Hammond B3 that will remind the listener of a **Chubby Checker** album. It does

get a little tighter on the title track and *Be Somebody Some Day*. Another good album to slip in at a party, just to make peeps wonder who it is. - **Curt Fillmore (CurtsList.Com)**



Rory Block: **HARD LUCK CHILD: A TRIBUTE TO SKIP JAMES**

(Stoney Plain Records)

My first real interest in **Skip James** came in 2007 with the excellent release of *Son of Skip James* by **Dion**. *Hard Luck Child* by

Rory Block is a much more stripped down, basic, but absolutely wonderful tribute to the blues pioneer who influenced everyone from **Robert Johnson** to **Eric Clapton**.

As a teenager Rory actually got to spend time with James and you can feel it throughout this release. The album begins with *Nehemiah James*, which in effect is a biography. It's Rory's own original, which is followed by nine of James' best songs. This record is certainly a reminder of how the roots of gospel is so intertwined with blues. A really great addition with this release are

the liner notes where Rory writes in detail about the songs of **Skip James** she plays.

"This is the fifth recording in my Mentor Series – musical tributes that celebrate the rediscovered blues masters I met in person as a teenager," Rory writes. The others are the music of **Mississippi John Hurt**, **Rev. Gary Davis**, **Mississippi Fred McDowell** and **Son House**.

If you love roots blues music, it doesn't get any better than Rory with her Signature model Martin Guitars, Shubb Capos and a 14mm deep well socket for a slide – and oh yes, the depth of her vocals. – **Bill Martin**



D.L. Duncan

(15South Records)

One of the enjoyable traits of **D.L. (Dave) Duncan's** (who has received two gold records) self-titled record is avoidance of the staid, traditional "mama done left me" syndrome. Here are eight originals, plus two, that are pretty much upbeat, positive

and sincere. D.L.'s gravelly voice is a perfect fit, whether it's with a favorite like, *Dickenson Road*, featuring a soaring **Santana** like guitar, or the excellent songwriting and guitar licks in *I Know a Good Thing*. If you prefer a more traditional **B.B. King** type tune, *St. Valentine's Day Blues* fills the bill. Add to the mix, a little **Delbert McClinton** harmonica and **Sonny Landreth** slide guitar and this CD is a winner. – **Bill Martin**



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2015 Blues Challenges Pictorial in Review:

Here's a final look at the 7/25/15 Solo/Duo Show @ VFW Post 577's Centennial Lounge, plus the 9/05/15 Band Competition @ Cain's Ballroom. (Photos by Billy Austin)



SUNDAY MOAN: Tyler Pigg, Keith Hix, Derick Hassell, Dave Smith and DaWain Hassell.



THE DIRTBOXWAILERS: Sammy Matthews, Johnny Sea, Jimmy Ray Taylor and Kevin Daley.



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**12th ANNUAL
BLUES CHOICE AWARDS - VOTE!**

Voting is now underway in the Blues Society's Blues Choice Awards, which is open to BST members. The Blues Choice Awards are special because the winners are chosen by BST members, who have an exceptional appreciation and love for blues artists in Northeastern Oklahoma and their music, which brings so much joy to our lives.

The rules allow one vote per member in each of the 4 categories. **Deadline for voting is November 27th.** E-mail or send by U.S. mail your ballot to the address(es) found in the membership application box on this page. The winners will be announced in the next issue.

Best Group _____

(Band)

Best Vocalist _____

Best Lead _____

(any lead instrument, guitar, harmonica, keyboards, etc.)

Best Rhythm _____

(drums, bass, rhythm guitar, etc.)

Voting Member's Name _____

Member Address _____

Blues Society of Tulsa

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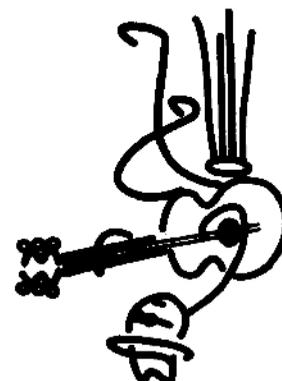
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