



BLUES NEWS

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THE BLUES SOCIETY OF TULSA

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THE DUSTIN PITTSLEY BAND (Horton Records)



I've been in the choir singing the praises of the **Dustin Pittsley Band** for years. I might be prejudiced, but there are many

reasons for all the awards and regional acclaim for this fabulous band. No one is better on the guitar than Dustin. **Donnie Wood** is smooth as silk on the bass, and has been with Dustin many years. More recently they have added two of the finest musicians anywhere in **David Teegarden Jr.** on drums and **Chris Kyle** on keys. Their tightness, dynamics and even material are not matched by anyone else in the region.

I loved their previous CD *Already There*, but their latest release, the self-titled *Dustin Pittsley Band* might be their conduit to stardom. Tracks of note are *Satellite*, lamenting life adrift and *Rare to be Right*, showing the ebb and flow (dynamics) that make this group stand out.

A blues CD is never complete without a haunting ballad like *For the Ones We Left Behind*, which supplies this in spades. Completing the album is the rousing number *Waves Crashing*. This new record has just cracked the Top 25 on The Euro Americana Billboard (all genres of music). So check out these guys new CD. You can be a convert, and join the congregation on a path to glory! – **Freddie Morrow**

Dustin Pittsley: Finding His Natural Sweet Spot

"I remember talking to Buddy Guy the first time we played there, and he told me, 'Don't let anybody tell you what the blues is. If it's a guy playing the bagpipes, if it's the blues to him, then that's what it is.'" -- Dustin Pittsley

By: G.K. Hizer

Within Tulsa, and throughout most of Oklahoma, **Dustin Pittsley** is widely regarded as one of the best blues-rock guitarists around. After 17 years of playing publically (He first started playing at *The Blue Note* in OKC in '99), Pittsley has stretched beyond the blues and developed into one of the most well-rounded guitarists around. Perhaps it's fitting, then, that his latest album, the self-titled *Dustin Pittsley Band* (fully reviewed in this issue), is the most well-rounded and natural sounding disc of his career.

Although previous releases like *Palm Trees & Trailer Parks* and *Almost There* represented big leaps in growth for him as an artist, there was an aspect of those records that felt just a little forced to my ears. With **DPB**, Pittsley and his band seem to have found a space that lets them capture that same effortless sound and vibe the live performances have always en-capsulated.

(Continued on Page 6)

Part of Dustin Pittsley's winning performance 8/20/16 at the Tulsa Blues Challenge, qualifying his band to compete at the 2017. International Blues Challenge in Memphis Feb. 1 – 4. (Photo by Phil Clarkin)



INSIDE:

Blues Choice Award Winners, Billy's Blues, Jason Elmore & Hoodoo Witch, Ronnie Earl & The Broadcasters, Markey Blue, Charlie Wheeler Band, Hard Swimmin' Fish, The Jordan Patterson Band, Annual Officer Elections, Leon Russell RIP, and more!

Welcome Our New Members!

Larry Riley, Vinita; Richard R. Rogers, Martin Mayberry and Mark Rooney, all of Tulsa; David L. Howell, Chilhowie, VA.

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Membership: Christina Rybacki
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e-mail News: Curt Fillmore

BLUES NEWS STAFF:

Editor: Billy Austin
e-mail: billysblues@peoplepc.com
Design: My Creative Pixel



Owner: Sally Roper
www.MyCreativePixel.com
918.280.9167

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Kerry Kudlacek, Freddie Morrow,
Sharon Thornhill, Curt Fillmore,
Sam Latham, Fripp, Billy Austin



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LOCAL BIRTHDAYS

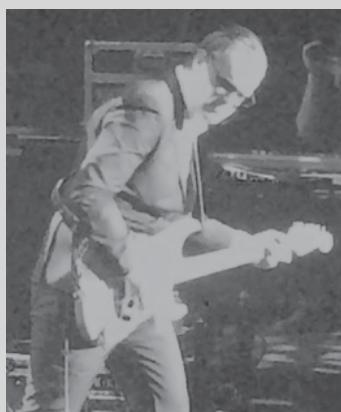
January 1 – Stan Reed (2016), 7 – Charlie Redd, 8- Tom Skinner (2015), 9 – Jon Parris, Kevin Phariss, Big Al Downing (2005), 12 – Jay McShann, 15 – Bill Raffensperger (2010) 17 – David Skinner, Dub Cross (2013) 20 – Scott Santee, Earl Grant (1970), 21 -- Tiny Davis (2010), 22 – Dick Sims (2011), 23 – Jim Ziegler, 25 – Speedy West (2003), 29 – Shane Stewart and Marco Ogden (2009). February 2 – Tommy Triplehorn, 7 – Jimmy Byfield, Gus Hardin (1996), 8 – Ray D. Rowe, 9 - Gary Eldridge, 11 – David Thayer, 13 – David Berntson, Ice Pick Walt Gibson (2012), 15 – Paul Rowlett, 16 – Tommy Crook, 17 – Bill Snow, 18 - Jennifer Marriott, 18 – Pete Squires, 20 – Buddy Jones (2011), 22 – Ron McRorey, 23 – Larry York, 27 – Debbie Campbell (2004), Ron Martin (2009), 28 - Don White.

BST MONTHLY MEETINGS

are held the second Monday of the month at 7 p.m. The January 9th and the February 13th meetings will both be held at the Cimarron Bar, 26th Street and South Memorial. Nonmembers are always welcome! It's a fun and informative gathering for music lovers! Plus, free pizza!

BILLY'S BLUES

It's pretty amazing how one event can change your life significantly. I was reminded of this recently when my good friend **Jim Moody**, vice president of the Oklahoma Blues Society and I were talking before a **Doyle Bramhall II** show recently in OKC. Jim's life similarly was affected by that same event I previously referred to.



Joe Bonamassa 12/16 at Tulsa's Brady Theatre playing Leon Russell's Hummingbird on Eldon Shkamblin's famous Stratocaster. (Photo by Jim Moody)

That show made **Jim Moody** an avid Bonamassa fan. It even led to him booking Joe in OKC on several occasions, not to mention a host of other acts, including the previously mentioned **Doyle Bramhall Show**.

When Don and I walked into the theater some 15 years ago, there were four people in the lobby standing behind a small fold up table. They were the Blues Society of Tulsa, which had recently been loosely formed. They were having people fill out contact information for when they came up with a plan for the Blues Society.

To make a long story short, soon Don and I went to Carl's Coney Island in East Tulsa for a BST meeting. The owners were **John and Sharon Eskew**, two of the BST founders.

As a result of that original contact, I became involved later that year. In November 2002 I became editor of the *Blues News*. In March 2003 I was elected president and have been serving in both positions ever since. Don was elected treasurer and we served together in the BST until his passing in October 2012.

Anyway, **Jim Moody** and I shared this story with Bonamassa when the guitar great was in town to play The Brady Theatre last December. The day before his concert, we spent some time with Joe at Cain's Ballroom as he recently purchased the famous Fender Stratocaster once owned by the great **Eldon Shamblin**, guitarist for **Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys**.

It's pretty ironic how one seemingly normal event can lead to so many things you never dreamed would happen.

Today, perhaps Joe is the biggest blues rock draw in the world, something I hope to share some thoughts with you about in a future column. Meanwhile, Happy 15th Birthday to the Blues Society and wishing it 15 more years of promoting the blues and its artists in Northeastern Oklahoma. We'll be recognizing this milestone throughout 2017 – **Bill Martin**



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2016 Blues Choice Award Winners:

Dustin Pittsley Band, Dustin Pittsley; Pete Marriott, Chris Kyle, Byron Crenshaw and Matt Martin



Best Group, Dustin Pittsley Band:
Donnie Wood, David Teegarden Jr.,
Chris Kyle and Dustin Pittsley (Photo
by Phil Clarkin)

Dustin Pittsley Band won its 11th BCA for *Best Group*. Namesake of the four-piece band, blues rocker **Dustin Pittsley** also captured his eighth award for *Best Lead* and is now a three-time winner for *Best Vocals*. DPB continues to tour throughout the Midwest and has recently released its sixth record, self-titled *Dustin Pittsley Band*. Dustin had an acoustic tour in Europe in 2014 and looking to do another European tour with his band.

The 13th Annual Blues Choice Award winners for 2016 features multi-time winners **Dustin Pittsley Band** on the heels of its recently released, highly acclaimed album, plus some Northeastern Oklahoma artists capturing their first BCA.

Reaffirming its status as a fan favorite the

DPB also won the Tulsa Blues Challenge last summer and will be representing Northeastern Oklahoma at the International Blues Challenge in Memphis January 31 – February 4.

Other band members are **Donnie Wood**, bass (**Medicine Show**), **David Teegarden Jr.**, drums (**Randy Crouch and Flying Horse**) and **Chris Kyle**, keyboards.



Pete Marriott rocks Stone River Music Festival.

Best Lead: There was a tie in voting for *Best Leads*. Veteran blues rocker and guitarist **Pete Marriott** will accept his first BCA. Pete has a storied career having played with **Joe Cocker**, touring with **Ritchie Havens** and recorded with **Sandra Wright** on an album that included **Warren Haynes (Gov't Mule, Allman Brothers)** and **Danny Louis (Gov't Mule, Greg Allman and Friends)**, as well as the **Jennifer Marriott Band**. Pete released a highly acclaimed album in 2014, *Outrunnin' the Rain*. (Continued on page 5)

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Blues Choice Awards...*(Continued from page 4)*

Best Rhythm: Four gifted artists will be receiving awards for *Best Rhythm*.

Matt Martin toured all 48 states and western Canada as a band member with **Reba McIntyre** for two years, including January



Drummer Matt Martin

was no stopping him. Chris keeps quite busy as keyboardist for the **Dustin Pittsley Band**, but also has his own band **Ego Culture**, an improv funk fusion instrumental act. He also is a member of **Joshua Yarbrough and Memphis Bound**. Kris is in high demand as a session player and has appeared, or will be appearing on four albums within a year.

Bassist **Kat Irons** is a mainstay in the Tulsa music scene. She's currently playing in four bands and can be found filling in with others. She founded the trio **Biophiliac** along with guitarist **Aaron**



Bassist Kat Irons

20-year-old **Byron Crenshaw** is the youngest artist, but one of the most talented, to receive a BCA. The bassist for **Darrel Christopher and the Ingredients**. Darrel describes his bassist as "a rising star." The young man was voted *Mr. Hornet* at Tulsa's

1983 when Reba had her first number one hit, *Can't Even Get the Blues*. He's drummed for a number of excellent bands ranging from **Glenn R. Townsend to Medicine Show and Brad Absher**. A native of Seminole, OK, before making Tulsa home, Matt has been performing since 1973. He currently is playing bass for the **James Groves Blues Machine** and drums for **Christine Jude**.

Native Tulsan **Chris Kyle** got a tiny piano to "clunk around on" when he was two or three years old and there



Bassist Byron Crenshaw

Booker T. Washington High School and is now attending the University of North Texas in Denton, on scholarship, majoring in Jazz Studies.

Other artists receiving votes, in no particular order:

BEST VOCALS: Joshua Yarbrough, Jennifer Marriott, Wanda Watson, David Berntson, David Russell, Lori Williams, Bill Davis, Heather Buckley, Shaun Roach, Jack Meyers, Paul Benjamin, Joe Schekie, Steve White and Polly Ess.

BEST GROUP: James Groves Blues Machine, Darrel Christopher and the Ingredients, Heather Buckley Band, Dylan Whitney Band, Last Call Band, Duo Sonics, Hero Band, Jennifer Marriott Band and Joshua Yarbrough and Memphis Bound.

BEST LEAD: Bobby Brewer, David Berntson, David Russell, Johnny Bean, Dylan Whitney, Tom Hanford, Paul Benjamin, Mark Furnas, Johnny Paul, James Groves and Gary Eldridge.

BEST RHYTHM: David Knight, Donnie Wood, Dave White, Bobby "Greenshoes" Parker, Robert Baker, Dale Mason, Steve Shrum, David Teegarden Jr., Dave Armstrong, Harry Williams, David Russell, and David Berntson.

(A Blues Choice Awards presentation will be held as part of the Blues Society's 15th Anniversary Party with all the winners invited to perform. It will be held March 25th at Blackbird on Pearl.)

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CD REVIEWS



Jason Elmore & Hoodoo Witch: CHAMPAGNE VELVET (Underworld Records)

Ever now and then you get surprised by listening to some new music. **Jason Elmore & Hoodoo**

Witch with their new CD *Champagne Velvet* was a very pleasant surprise indeed. They are a high energy classic trio that blends jam blues, rock, R&B and a little ole time country into a uniquely familiar sound that is the essence of the blues, while offering a fresh take on the genre.

Tracks of note are *House Rockin' Boogie*. Which kicks right out with a hot jump blues number. *Cross-eyed Women* features fabulous walkin' bass from **Brandon Katona**. Check out *Land of Plenty*, a Nashville shuffle about a tongue-in-cheek tale of a man "starving to death in the land of plenty" Jason Elmore vocals come from a deep well, and break out the resonator for the back porch lament on hard times on *Green to Gone*. This is great music, well played throughout, with lyrics all penned by Elmore. Kudos go to *Underworld Records*, whether you like roots music, or Texas style blues rock. You'll love these Dallas boys. God I love my job reviewing. – **Fred Morrow**

Dustin Pittsley... (Continued from page 1)

When discussing the new disc with Dustin and bandmate/keyboardist **Chris Kyle**, he agreed this album was probably his most complete and natural sounding. When asked what he thought attributed to that progress, he simply answered, "The band I have right now really makes it easier to do that."

"With the last few records, it's always been **Donnie (Wood)**, bassist and me, but we've had different members and the others left everything up to me," he shared. "I've always written the songs, but the others never really contributed to the process. With this record, I wrote the songs and let the band work everything out and figure out their parts. We've been playing together for over two years now and I trust them."

"Two of us are good at identifying the problems, and two of us are good at finding the solutions," Kyle added with a laugh. "We've been playing together long enough and have built that chemistry where we know what works – and what fits for this band."

Heading into the New Year, Pittsley and his band will be heading to Memphis at the end of January to represent Tulsa in the International Blues Challenge. This won't be Pittsley's first time at the competition, but that doesn't lessen his anticipation of the event, although it does shape how he approaches it.

"A lot of people come to this thing looking to prove themselves or make a name for themselves in winning the competition – and I get that; but I really don't approach it that way," Pittsley explained. "For me, we've got a lot of friends out there, so it will be good to see them, and this is another way to keep my name out there and get more exposure for the band."

"Don't get me wrong," he was quick to add, "It's an honor to be going and we'd love to win, but we know straight off we're not rootsy enough to win it all. We'll play a mean blues set, though, and hope that keeps us in people's minds."

"The cool thing about the Blues Challenge is that there are so many people there that are truly at the top of their game," Kyle added.

"The competition aspect of it is a little bit of a turn-off, but it's great to see people that are masters of their genre and make new friends."

"The blues is always a part of what we do, that will never change," Pittsley explained. "We can go to Knuckleheads in Kansas City and play a heavy blues set, but I've never really been pegged into one little corner. I like to be able to play a set that's more blues one night, then honky-tonk the next, then rock or R&B. I love them all, so why not?"

"One night when we played *Buddy Guy's* in Chicago we apologized after the first set and said 'I'm sorry, we'll play more blues the next set,' Kyle added. "They said 'No - We love it when you play that twangy shit!'"

*"I remember talking to **Buddy Guy** the first time we played there,"* Pittsley shared, *"and he told me 'Don't let anybody tell you what the blues is. If it's a guy playing the bagpipes, if it's the blues to him, then that's what it is.'"*

"Blues is such a broad term to me... If you put 'traditional' in front of it, yeah it makes it more restrictive, but it's so much more than that," Pittsley explained."

"The blues is always in my roots and part of what I do, but I'm just doing what comes naturally," he shared. "I've made a very modest living playing music and that's all I've ever really wanted to do. Looking back, I've been lucky as hell."

Pittsley's fans know that it's more than luck – he's one of the most talented and genuine artists in Oklahoma. And although he may not win the blues challenge this year, we're proud to have him representing us in Memphis and know he'll do more than "stay in people's minds" when he and his band tear up the stage with their new music

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CD REVIEWS



Ronnie Earl & The Broadcasters:

MAXWELL STREET

(Stony Plain Records)

Just listened to **Ronnie Earl & The Broadcasters** CD, *Maxwell Street*, for the fourth time. I will be broadcasting this CD, when I cruise to Talihina this weekend on a foliage sightseeing tour. What a great driving album. Ronnie Earl's latest release is soulful, laid back, but very dynamic, with plenty of rises and falls in tempo. Ronnie displays great guitar work on this project. Don't know much about the other players, but the piano, Hammond B3, and vocals are superb. Once again proving lots of good things come out of Canada, this CD will be one of those I plug in when I hit the road! – **Freddie Morrow**



The Jordan Patterson Band:

THE BACK ON TRACK

RECORDING PROJECT

(Flaming Cheese Records)

Here's another harp tinged, guitar driven, hard rockin', debut blues production with vocals, song structure, and sweet, raucous guitar work that will definitely remind the listener of **Lenny Kravitz**. All original and all excellent songs written and performed by Jordan and his band. Standout tracks include lead off *Favourite Boy*, *You're My Girl*, *Living without Your Love*, and *Heartbreaker*. Jordan has created an awesome listening experience within this first album. Give it a listen and just see if you don't have to go back and listen to it again - I dare ya! - **Curt Fillmore** ([CurtsList.Com](#))



Markey Blue:

THE BLUES ARE KNOCKIN'

(SoulOSound Records)

Nashville Duo **Markey** and **Ric Latina** have created another rockin' blues delight with this second collection of original songs, including two tribute songs that are a couple of the best tracks on the album; *Lay Down Lucille* written for **B.B. King** and *Be My Train* written for **Little Milton**. Excellent, smoky vocals and upbeat, rockin' performances, interlaced with outstanding guitar & session work. Three tracks from this album have even been selected for Movie/TV placement. Very, very tasty! - **Curt Fillmore** ([CurtsList.Com](#))



Charlie Wheeler Band:

BLUES KARMA AND THE

KITCHEN SINK

(Graphite Sound)

Here's a great, guitar driven, hard rockin' blues album from a Pittsburgh band that is sure to satisfy those blues lovers out there that prefer a little punch in their music. This album reminds me a little of **The Arc Angels** with some **Bachman Turner Overdrive** and **JJ Grey & Mofro** thrown in. Great songs with blazing guitar work. I'll definitely be purchasing this one for my own guitar playing fun! Excellent album - top to bottom! - **Curt Fillmore** ([CurtsList.Com](#))



Hard Swimmin' Fish:

TRUE BELIEVER

Self-labeled as 'Twisted Vintage Roots' music; the rockin', blues harp tinged, upright bass thumpin', 20-year Virginia band **Hard Swimmin' Fish** will conjure up **The Black Keys**, as they throw down an excellent fifth album of original performances and fine and funky music that's guaranteed to get your body swaying and your toes tapping. There's a couple of well-done covers within this collection as well including **Howlin' Wolf's** *Howlin' for My Darlin'* and *Mess Around*. An all-around, excellent blues package! - **Curt Fillmore** ([CurtsList.Com](#))

Annual BST Officer Elections are Scheduled for February 13th

The election of Blues Society officers for the posts of president, vice president, secretary and treasurer will be held February 13th at the monthly meeting, set for 7 p.m., at the Cimarron Bar, 26th and South Memorial.

The one-year term of the elected officers will begin with the March meeting. All Blues Society members are eligible to vote and are encouraged to and do so at the meeting.



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Blues Society of Tulsa

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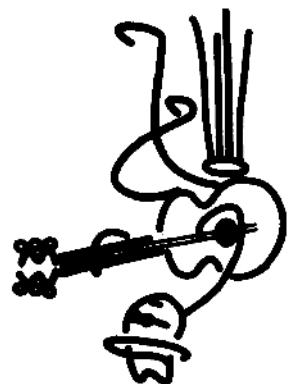
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