

BLUES IN THE SCHOOLS - INTERNATIONAL BLUES COMPETITION - REGIONAL BLUES NEWS
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OSM BLUESLETTER

MARCH 2021

YOUR ULTIMATE SOURCE FOR THE BLUES



A VISIT WITH SISTER LUCILLE

STORY BY JOHNNIE KING



EST. 1991

THE MARCH BSO BLUESLETTER

FROM THE BSO PRESIDENT



Dear valued members of the Blues Society of the Ozarks. Hello everyone! Our February Membership Drive was very successful and we graciously welcome both our long-standing members who renewed and our new members! Thank you for being a part of the Blues Society of the Ozarks. However, we

won't be resting on our laurels. Myself and the rest of the BSO Board are looking to build up our membership even more so we will continue this membership drive momentum throughout the year. Jump on board 'cause this train is rollin'!

Also, to all of our musician members. We are looking to start doing fund raising and helping our community in even more ways. If you are looking to host your own event, message us and let's talk. We are all in this together.

Why sit in that room one more day being bored? Come on out to our Jams we have at Shuffle (Second Sunday of every month) or Carrie's (Fourth Sunday of every month). Message George Hunt, one of the best in the business, with any and all questions.

In closing, feel free to message us on how you would like to get involved with the Blues Society in any number of ways. We would love to hear your input.

Have a wonderful day and I will see you all out and about as we go Blues'n in 2021.

Sincerely,
O'Neill Blues

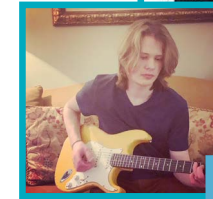
BSO MISSION STATEMENT

Since 1991 our goals have been to encourage appreciation of the Blues, an original American music; to provide a forum in the Ozarks for performance of the Blues at live events and on radio and television; to educate and entertain the people of the Ozarks; to provide an organization through which people can share their common love of the Blues; and to join with similar organizations to accomplish the forgoing goals.

BLUES SOCIETY OF THE OZARKS
P.O. BOX 8133
SPRINGFIELD, MO 65801
<https://ozarksblues.com/>



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ON THE COVER: Sister Lucille - Image provided by Sister Lucille





A VISIT WITH SISTER LUCILLE

STORY BY JOHNNIE KING

The following is an exclusive interview with the award winning Sister Lucille Band, from Springfield, Missouri. Johnnie King had the opportunity to visit with Kimberly Dill and the band members: Jammin' Jamie, Kevin Lyons, and Reed Smith Herron.

Johnnie: The first question to the band is: When did Sister Lucille first hit the entertainment realm?

Kimberly: It was 2013 with the original band, including Terry Simmons and Chip Karnes on drums.

Johnnie: I'd say it was about that time around 2013 when I first heard of you

all. I met the sister Lucille band at "Grits and Groceries". I was a member of the band R.H. Silverwood at the time. The first time I heard Kimberly sing, I thought to myself - "What an amazing voice this young woman has"! I just knew there was talent here in Missouri.

Johnnie: What came about that brought on such a powerful and interesting name such as Sister Lucille?

Kimberly: "While hanging out at one of the clubs in Memphis, (which was one of the many elite blues clubs that we played in), we had a discussion about Lucille being the name of BB King's guitar. We paired that idea with

my singing and we struck on the idea to name the band "Sister Lucille".

Johnnie: I've always called Jamie "The Incendiary Man", for the heat and the fire that he brings to the stage when he starts to playing his guitar. I think of him as a "Rebel without a Cause"-guitar man, free and unencumbered. He touches every part of your emotions with every riff and he makes you feel what he is feeling at that time.

Johnnie: I asked Kevin Lyons where he has played professionally.

Kevin: I have played all over, including with some of the greats like Boxcar Willy, Jim Strafford, Mickey Gilley, The Les Brown Band and Swing, Swing, Swing, a musical at the Springfield Little Theater that was an adaptation of the swing music era and many more

venues.

Kevin: I love playing with Sister Lucille as they are such an innovative band.

Johnnie: Reed Smith Herron, you are not new to the music industry in the Ozarks are you?

Smith: Indeed, I was part of a band called "Speakeasy" that toured the country back in 2003.

It is noted that all of the band members have magnificent musical talented backgrounds. Sister Lucille has won so many awards in the past few years and has come tremendously far in the entertainment realm worldwide.

Kimberly is a natural born singer. She started singing since before she could walk and never looked back.



Early sister Lucille was once more country blues, but is now one of the hottest upcoming blues bands in the country.

Sister Lucille's accolades run the gamut from achieving the semi-finals in the IBC competition in Memphis to winning "The Pioneer Award" for an up-and-coming artist including winning the 2020 Blues Blast's magazines, New Artist's Debut album "Alive" that has international acclaim.



A worldwide tour may be in the band's future and that would be well deserved. Kimberly's deep-rooted, sultry voice makes Sister Lucille's sound unique, engaging and extraordinarily phenomenal. The band was asked what they think the future holds for them and they feel the future is bright. They have many bookings lined up once the pandemic subsides and everyone is able to get out and enjoy live music again. They can be found online in the meantime or on YouTube for a video clip. See: www.sisterlucilleband.com

It has been the author's pleasure to be able to interview this outstanding band and write this article, for not only are they extremely talented, but their characters and personalities are simply wonderful to be around. This band gets 5 stars, and we wish them the most well-deserved future that any band should ever have.



SHOWCASE-YOUTH IN THE BLUES

ETHAN LAKE

STORY BY ETHAN LAKE

Hello. My name is Ethan Lake, and I am an 18 year-old blues guitarist and vocalist from Baltimore, Maryland. Thank you for the opportunity to share my story of discovering blues music and my future plans to pursue a career performing blues music.

Like many people my age I discovered blues music indirectly through listening to my parents playing Led Zeppelin, Rolling Stones and Cream at home and in the car. My dad would sometimes freak me out on

and good luck would have it that Santa gifted me a Mini Strat. I soon after started guitar lessons to see if I could learn a few chords. As luck would have it, once a month the guitar lesson would be replaced with a group jam where they would gather all 10 kids in a room to play 'Wild Thing' or some other simple 3 chord song. Never being one for following instructions very well, instead of playing the chords I would instead pick out notes on the guitar that I thought sounded good with the song. I was on my way!



After a few months at this first music school. I transferred over to music schools that let me take lessons and play in a band once a week. The songs were mostly classic rock which I thoroughly enjoyed but I found my interest gravitating more and more towards the blues intensive side of rock along the lines of Jimi Hendrix, Stevie Ray Vaughn and Gary Clark Jr.

By the time I was 15, I was starting to take some voice lessons and my parents thought it would be a good idea for me to attend my first real adult blues jam at a serious blues club. Unsure if the bar would let me in to perform, my dad contacted the singer leading the jam and sent them a video of me playing BB King's 'Thrill is Gone'. The jam leader said she would

the drive back home from day care at night by playing *Dazed and Confused*. Fast forward to the ripe old age of 12 years old

give me a chance, so I was all set to go. When the big day finally arrived, I packed my guitar, had my dad escort me through the packed bar to sign the list. I finally got called to the stage, played 3 songs and at once knew my true calling was playing blues music.



A couple years passed where I would take more lessons and play at open jams and open mic nights. By the time I was 17, my confidence was building so I explored more opportunities to play blues music and find others interested in playing blues. Fortunately, in 2018 I discovered the Blues Foundation and that even better they had an annual Blues Challenge in Memphis every January that included a Youth Showcase. Problem was I didn't have a band and the local blues society wasn't especially active due to low community interest. So my father picked up the phone and luckily reached Joe Whitmer at The Blues Foundation and asked him if he could find a way to get me involved. Joe delivered in a big way in that he made a ton of calls despite his crazy schedule

and put us in contact with The Spa City Youngbloods (Blues in the Schools) out of Hot Springs, Arkansas that were willing to back me up on stage before performing their own set. I sent the Youngbloods my set list and we would end up playing together for the first time at my showcase in front of a packed house at the Blues City Cafe on Beale Street.

During my time at the International Blues Challenge, I discovered the Pinetop Perkins Foundation when I watched many of their alumni performing at an opening night fund raiser at the Rum Boogie. I clearly remember being able to see Grace Kuch, Jake Kulak, and several other Pinetop alumni demonstrate their tremendous talent. This led me to apply for the Pinetop Perkins Workshop in 2020 which was held virtually this past summer. During the



I am not sure we would have been so inspired to collaborate in this new way.

Today I continue to pursue a career as a recording and touring blues artist and have recently been accepted by Jan Smith aka Mama Jan in Atlanta as an artist development client to help me improve my vocals and performance skills.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share my blues story so far and I hope to meet you down the road as I pursue my passion for performing blues! Below are a few links to my social media accounts including two of the song videos I recorded with Paige O'Rourke this past summer.



workshop I had the opportunity to learn how to collaborate online with other workshop participants to record music.



The workshop also served to inspire me to learn slide guitar on a more serious level to which I owe tremendous thanks to Bob Margolin and Fiona Boyes for showing me how much emotion slide guitar can add to a song. The breakout room sessions were a ton of fun and helpful in building my confidence.

After the workshop was completed, I collaborated on three songs with another first time Pinetop Perkins Workshop student drummer, Paige O'Rourke of Chicago. Paige and I recorded and made videos of Chicago blues legend Linsey Alexander's *Somebody Call My Wife*, Skip James' *Hard Times Killing Floor*, and Muddy Waters' *Twenty Four Hours*. We would send music files to one another over Google Drive and my father combined our parts into single tracks using GarageBand. Had it not been for my experience at the Pinetop Workshop

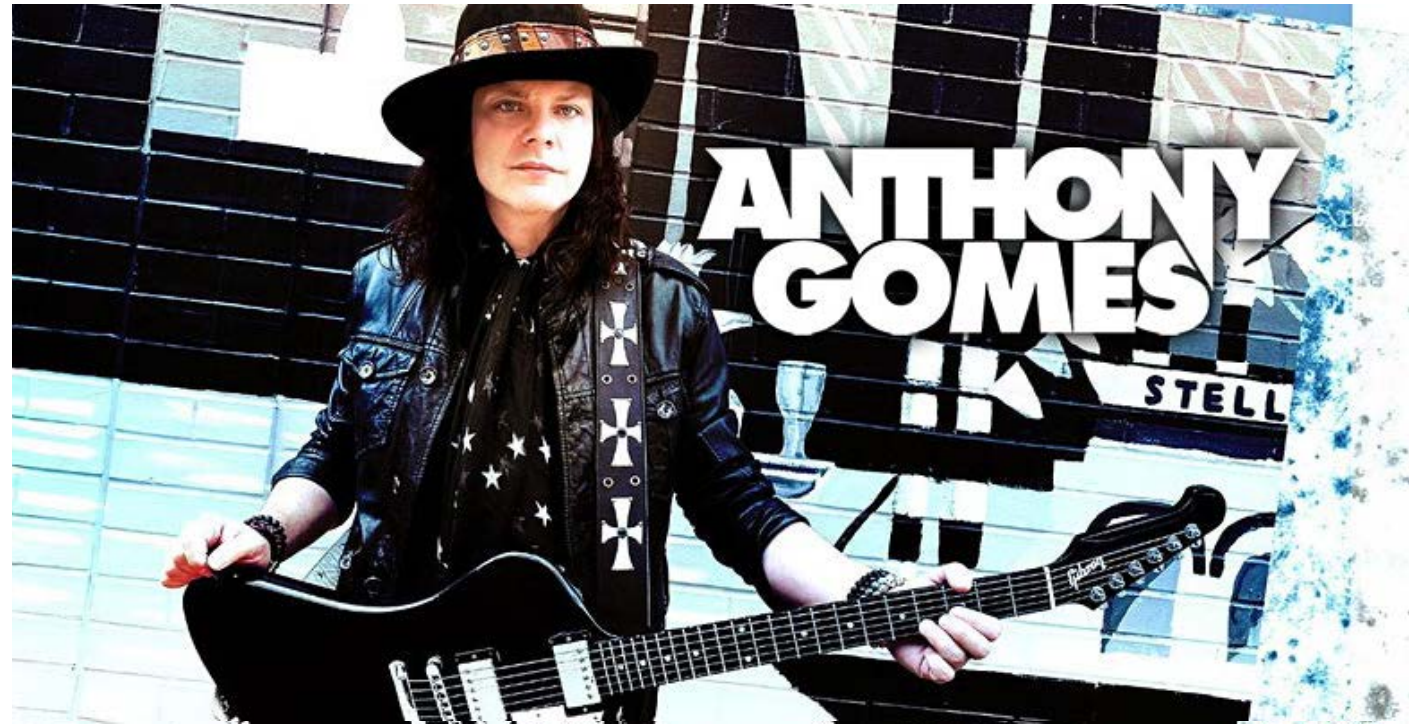
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Anthony Gomes and How the “Big House with Many Rooms” - That Is How Blues Became Home

STORY BY MEGAN THOMAS

With a milelong repertoire of Billboard hits, cutting edge music artistry, and genuine blues grit, Anthony Gomes has been consistently proving himself as a multi-faceted gem of the blues community. As master guitarist, songwriter, and vocalist, Gomes has been recognized as one of the “*Top 10 Guitarists in the World*” by Music Taster's Choice in 2012, *Best Musician and Live Performance Winner* by the 2017 European Blues Awards, and a *Best Blues Guitarist of 2019 Nominee* by Guitar World Magazine.



The question, however, is how does a kid from Toronto turn into a blues-rock sensation with two decades at the forefront of the community?

Gomes’s inkling to music began at a very young age. He often found himself developing his own melodies to songs he heard as a child. This was the beginning of a talent in songwriting.

“I would love the intro to a song when I would hear it on the radio, because I would

sing my own melody over it before the vocalist came in. It was a very natural thing for me to do. I didn't realize I was songwriting. I was just playing with music. I did get frustrated when the DJ would talk over the intro,” says Gomes while laughing.

As a child of a multicultural household, he became able to draw parallels between what it meant to be of multiple cultures to joining a genre of multiple layers. With strong ties to each aspect of his heritage, Gomes grew to understand one doesn’t have to be just one ‘thing’.

“Growing up in a multicultural household makes you feel like you can belong to more than one thing, whether it be a difficult culture or belief system, and it not be a compromise or hypocritical. I feel very connected to my Canadian identity. I equally feel a connection to my Mother's French and English heritage as well as my Father's Portuguese nationality. I don't feel half Portuguese and 1/4 French and 1/4 English. I feel Portuguese. I feel like I am French. I feel at home there. I feel as much my Mother's child as I feel like I'm my father's son. I think this helped me with blues. I didn't have to put it in a tiny box and get scared to let it grow.”



With a well-rounded understanding of cultural understanding and respect for one's roots, Gomes translated this into his search for musical knowledge. As an award winning blues scholar, he went on to complete his master’s thesis on the racial and cultural evolution of blues music. Gomes says understanding where something has come from is key to discovering your place in it.

“As a student of history, I believe that you have to know where you've been to know where you are going. I wanted to know how I fit into the blues. How did a white kid from the Canadian suburbs get the blues? Did I have a right to play this music? In the end I believe that, yes, I have a right to play the music. To me, it's a testament to the power and legitimacy of the blues. It grew from the pain caused by the horrible conditions of prejudice and intolerance to something

that is inclusive and worldwide. In the end, for me, blues is love. Out of the darkness comes the light.”

While passion for music was established early in life, it took years of combating internal turmoil to pursue a career in music professionally. A realization he could attain this dream came from tremendous amounts of hard work, and a fate-like meeting at a blues jam in college.

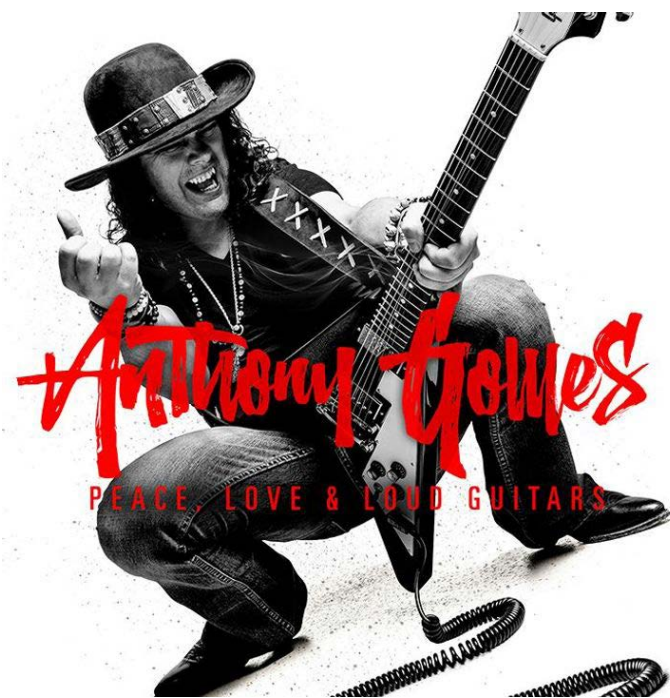
“I was very scared to pursue music professionally. It seemed like a very unrealistic dream. In the end I have come to find out it is a combination of a lot of hard work mixed in with some degree of natural talent. Luck is a factor as well but sometimes you just have to make your own luck by working harder. Work, work, work. Practice, practice, practice. Take a lot of rejection. Repeat,” he says.



“I had a big moment that pushed me to my dream. When I was in College, I would go to a small blues jam every Thursday and play guitar and sing. On one particular Thursday, there may have only been 20 people in the place, but one of them was B.B. King's bus driver. He took me to meet B.B. King the next day. B.B. took the time to share so much with me. That gave me the courage to move ahead.”

Since then, Gomes has released countless hits; from his 1998 debut album Blues in Technicolor, to his first Billboard Top Blues Album Music Is The Medicine, to his most recent album which debuted at Number 1 on Billboard's Blues Charts Containment Blues.

Though his musical accolades are vast and impressive, he has pushed himself outside of his musical craft; writing a book The Black and White of Blues which was nominated for “Best Book of 2014” by Blues 411 and founding a nonprofit in 2010 called Music Is The Medicine. Music Is The Medicine has helped countless causes including childhood cancer, autism in young



adults, and war veteran's with PTSD. Proceeds from the foundation have gone towards songwriting scholarships, offered musical education programs, and donated musical instruments. Gomes says his passion for this cause is derived from his own use of music to cope through difficult times in his childhood.

“My mother was diagnosed with schizophrenia and paranoia when I was young. It made some of my childhood years difficult. Music came to my rescue and was a lifeline to me. I know that music can heal and change the world. I wanted to give the gift that helped

me to others. It is a small and humble foundation, but we have been able to make some wonderful changes in some people's lives. That makes you feel good!”

Through over two decades navigating the blues scene Gomes has been able to present fresh and original content with each album, while still maintaining true to himself. The variation is not forced, however a testament to his evolution as an artist.

“One thing I am grateful for is that I have been able to evolve with each album and I am making some of my best music today. Each album I make is slightly different. I always felt like a lot of bands' best albums are their first ones. Because there are no rules, and they aren't repeating themselves. By changing things up ever so slightly I feel like it keeps me fresh creatively,” says Gomes.

The true connection to each of Gomes's bodies of work is the true blues soul his work is conceived by.



He explains how regardless of the genre he is playing; he is always approaching them as a blues artist.

“Blues is at the core of all modern music. It is part of the foundation from which many musical forms have grown from. So, an argument could be made that blues is in everything. For myself, I feel most connected to the blues and the power of its raw emotion. I may be influenced by other types of music, but it always comes back to the blues. If I play something that has a bluegrass or rock vibe, I don't do it as a bluegrass or rock musician. I play it as a blues artist experimenting with those sounds. Blues Rock doesn't so much shape my meaning of the blues as it defines my mission statement of 'Blues In Technicolor'. I am open and willing to accept and enjoy all times of blues. To me it's a big house with many rooms.”



Following his highly well received 2020 album Containment Blues, Gomes has already confirmed a new project to be released in late 2021 or early 2022.

“Literally the day Containment Blues was released I started working on our new album, Rock N Roll Bluesman, which should be out late this year/early next year. I had the pleasure of working with producer Jim Gaines (Stevie Ray Vaughan, Santana) and his advice was to learn from each album you do and make the next one a little better from what you learned before. I have tried to apply those wise words from a great man!” 🎸

After announcing a Spring tour, Gomes sold out his April 23rd stop at Shuffle Pub. Since receiving such high demand, he has added a second night at Shuffle Pub on April 24th. If you weren't lucky enough to get tickets for the first show, act quickly! Tickets are available for purchase on his website at anthonygomes.com.



SPOTLIGHT ON THE BSO BOARD

TYSON MARTIN INTERVIEW BY GEORGE HUNT

Tyson Martin is a board member for The Blues Society of the Ozarks. Tyson was born in Springfield Mo. Tyson's parents and two younger brothers live in Springfield also. Both brothers are married and have families. The Martin clan are very close. Keri, Tyson's wife grew up in Springfield . They were

married in 1998. They were high school sweethearts. They have two sons Jackson and Preston. These boys play music with Fishing for Saturday. Growing up Tyson and his brothers played baseball, basketball, and football through college. Tyson played on traveling sport teams.

As an undergraduate at Drury, Tyson majored in psychology, criminology. Minored in biology. Tyson graduated from Drury in 1996. He then went to law school at The University of Missouri. He graduated with a law degree in 1999. Coming back to Springfield to a Prosecuting Attorney job until 2008.

Soon he started his own private practice in Springfield. "It is an interesting profession. People have thoughts about what attorneys do. My work is mostly in the courtroom. Most attorneys are not. They make TV shows about courtroom attorneys - not civil cases. Truth is stranger than fiction when it comes to the legal work. You can take the craziest legal drama on TV and I can match it easily."

Music has always been a huge part of Tyson's life. "When we were young, we did not watch TV, we listened to music. My mom was very big on the



singer songwriters of the 70's. Mamas and the Papas, Peter, Paul and Mary, James Taylor, John Denver. I literally listened to the Eagles from the time I was born." About the age of eight Tyson got his first radio. Rock 99 was the hot station then. "I heard Huey Lewis and the News Tom Petty, Bob Segar. At that time rock music was not what we think of rock music today." "It certainly was not pop music. It was just good rock music. It really drew me in." Your musical tastes change over time, but we come back to what you like. My older cousin listened to Lynyrd Skynyrd. I thought this is kind of cool. It does not matter what music I play or listen to. I always come back to that swampy southern dueling guitar attack is always going to be my favorite; The Allman Brothers, Blackberry Smoke. From Metallica to Sturgill Simpson." Tyson likes all kinds of music. "If you're a good songwriter, I will listen to you. That is something I am drawn to". Jackson not being a big country fan, has come to appreciate Sturgill Simpson."

When Keri was in high school, she sang with choirs all over the world. Music has always been a part of our lives. When the kids were little, we would dance with them to Allison Krauss. I had an Algebra teacher in middle school, Tim Roberts, and for whatever reason we hit it off. I would leave study hall to get tutored in Algebra . We would end up talking about Jimi Hendrix, The Who, The Doors. I got exposed to this new music. He told me you need to learn to play guitar and start a band." Tyson learned to play. "I played in high school and college. I play not very well," he said. "But I still enjoy playing.

You can take the finest player in the world. They still do not know everything there is to a guitar. That is part of the joy of playing." Yes, there is never an end to learning. "When my boys started playing, this was going to be a summer activity. They attended Pellegrino's school of music."

They came back from the first lesson and said, "This is fantastic." I would ask them, "What did you learn?" "Jackson was playing a country lick and Preston was playing the opening to Back in Black. I thought what kind of lessons are these? They were teaching them how the song was written and put together. So, they were being taught that theory plus learning to play the guitar. Keri and I both agreed that if we would have had that kind of teaching, we would be better for it."

The thing that Tyson and Keri like to do is see concerts. So does his boys. This time has hurt us all in that respect. "There was a stretch in 2018 when we saw shows every other week. Dave Matthews, Black Berry Smoke, Journey and others."

The Martin family have a farm in Polk county where they like to spent a lot of time. I asked about the future of his sons. "Jackson is at the University of Arkansas on a guitar scholarship. He wants to make his profession in music. He is spending a lot of time writing and recording. He is getting ready to release a solo CD. It is cool because Preston has played drums on the CD with him. Preston wants to be involved in music, but he is

not sure how. Preston is mathematical in his thinking, so he likes computers. He likes the idea of mixing and producing music. I'm sure Preston and Jackson will work together in the future."

It's been a musical journey for the Martin family. "I do not get to do the cool 'be on stage' stuff. Which is completely fine. I have gotten in to music forms, the management, and business side." "Showing my sons the business principals of the music. They have got to see that in the band I work with. I started working with the band T.R.O.Y. 9 years ago, on the legal side of it. They have had a fair amount of success. I had a crash course in the music industry. We always hear the horror stories. What is the saying- 'The music industry is filled with shifty people and drugs, and then there is a bad side also!' Funny but true." Learning that side of music gives me my music fix from a different angle." T.R.O.Y. toured with a major headliner- Skillet. "One day, I'm reviewing a production deal from a studio in Los Angeles for them, the next, I'm drawing up a rider for what they want backstage."

Tyson enjoys the legal work that he does with rock and roll bands. "The music scene in Springfield is really pretty good and having those connections are a benefit, whether booking a band, or expanding the bands you work with." "There is a producer in town that has worked with Jackson. Whenever a band he works with has a legal issue they call me. Next thing I know I'm working with a rock band out of Kansas City or a pop band from Florida. That is a way for me



to be involved in the music industry. Jackson was very serious very early on. When he took the stage at his first big show, it was clear to me that he was going to be a musician." I wanted to learn this side of the business to help my boys through their career.

We then looked at guitars of the house. Even if you do not play, it is great to look at guitars. The first three shown were made by Jackson. The psychedelic one was made by Preston. Yea, I think his boys are going to be just fine in music. I am including a few pictures of guitars Tyson's sons have made. The double neck and the Telecaster were made by Jackson. The psychedelic one was made by Preston. 🎸





Hey everyone it's O'Neill Blues' Sound From The Street, a new Podcast airing weekly on Anchor.fm. Thank you so much for tuning in. Here is the latest word from the street.



Bob Bledsoe:

Scratch the DNA of the music scene in Springfield, MO and you will find a branch that will lead you to Bob Bledsoe. Bob has played with or influenced just about every musician here in town and has been entertaining and inspiring fans for decades.

No Blues Society of the Ozarks event, Open Mic Jam, or Songwriter Showcase is truly complete until Bob Bledsoe shows up. With his witty humor and natural charm, the night is going to be all right when Bob Bledsoe arrives in the building.

Bob Bledsoe came on the podcast and spoke about his times in music and his latest CD, "It's About Time."

The album was recorded here in town at Orange Grove Studios by John Twomey and Josh Bittner and it features a 'who's who' list of guest



appearances by some of Springfield's greatest artists.

All of the songs are Bob Bledsoe originals and speak about the working men and women of this great country that Bob was so proud to serve in the U.S. Navy.

Check out Bob's CD on Spotify or wherever fine music is heard and listen to his interview on the show to learn



about the man and the life he has lived, the family he loves and the music he graciously shares with us.

"These are my people".....Bob Bledsoe

Meanwhile off of Boonville Ave.....:

With Valentine's Day last month, I released one of my romantic instrumentals, "Song for her: Candlelight Dinner." It was recorded with the Jersey Stone Band at 'The Green' on 4th Street during their Jazz/Blues week. The story behind the song is.... well sometimes the boy doesn't always get the girl....but then again

sometimes he does! LOL. Enjoy and play it during your own candlelight rendezvous.



Oh, and for all of you fans of the Tin Can Jones episodes, I am working on a short book of several stories about the man who rode the rails and told the tales. Plenty of great characters and intrigue as Tin Can Jones makes his way traveling this great land of ours. I'll keep you posted.

Well that's all for now. So stay tuned because we will have a lot more for you in the months to come....This is O'Neill Blues', Sound From The Street.



BLUE CONTAGION

CD REVIEW BY DEBRA ROONEY

Dictionary.com defines **CONTAGION** as: 'the ready transmission or spread as of an idea or emotion from person to person... a contagion of fear, happiness, or in this case The Blues! I was asked to listen to this CD and give a review on it. I was thrilled to be able to lend a helping ear to the Blues Society of the Ozarks.

Listening to Blue Contagion, as I did, many times, during the same day, different days, various times of the day and night, when it was raining, when the sun was shining, when it was chilly or nice temps, I found myself taking notes each time as if it were the first time, I was hearing it. I wanted to know the music and I wanted to feel the music.

Blue Contagion is not your typical blues album. Now don't get me wrong, that is not a derogatory remark! What I mean is this CD covers a plethora of

genres and every one of them keeps your foot tappin'. But mostly the Blues comes dripping through in each song.

There is a little something for all music lovers in this CD. It starts off with a bit of soulful blues on the first track, "If You Ever Get to Memphis" that includes a fine harmonica solo. Keep listening, it lets loose with full blown Blues on one of my favorite tunes, "Build It on a Rock" complete with a harp solo and a piano solo.

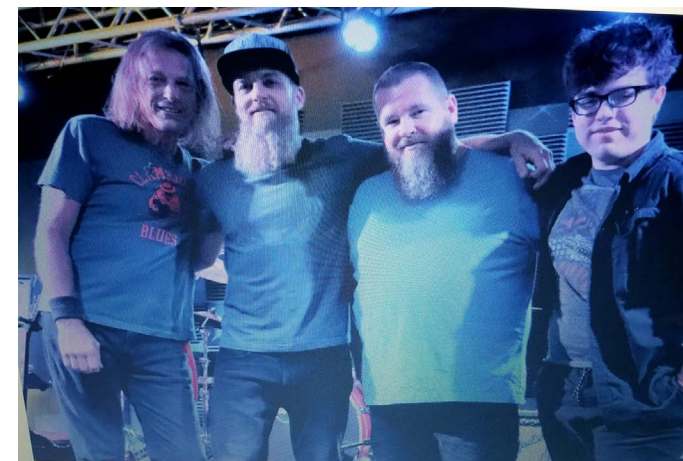
Want more? It's in there! While there is a lot of excellent blues coming from the background music, guitar, drums, keyboard, the lead vocals compliments that with some bluesy ballad

sounds. How about some Rockin' blues and gravelly guitar akin to ZZ Top vibes on track 7 "It Ain't No Joke".



Wrapping out this contagious music is track 8, "My Momma Said" and track 9, "Just Another Fool" that highlights true old-fashioned Blues with some awesome guitar licks in each. Track 10, "At the End of the Road", ends this CD with some good keyboard and guitar solos and all in all just good Blues.

So, my advice to all you reading this would be: get the CD. You know you want to! It's contagious... it's BLUE CONTAGION.



One more stanza! I personally got to meet Art Bentley (lead vocals, guitar and harmonica on this CD) in November as he was a one man show at a local brewery here in Springfield. Went up and introduced myself and told him I was a member of the BSO and had just heard his new band's CD.

Art was more than polite and throughout the evening we talked several times. I learned, as many of you may already know that he has been playing Springfield as well as the Lake Circuit for well over 25 years. Asking him who influenced him most (as he does play everything in the entire music world!) Mr. Bentley answered without "skipping a beat", Led Zeppelin, The Rolling Stones and his Grandpa and his banjo! Truly a fine entertainer. Good Luck to Blue Contagion and you, Mr. Art Bentley. 🎸





BLUES HISTORY SPOTLIGHT

BY MARY CERTAIN

Clara Smith was one of the first of the Blues Divas, who dominated the market for 'race music' in the early 20s, when recording opportunities first opened up for African American artists. Known as the 'Queen of the Moaners', Clara's voice was actually light and sweet, but she first used it to express her inner pain with hard-done-by love songs like, 'Every Woman's Blues' and 'Moaning the Blues'.

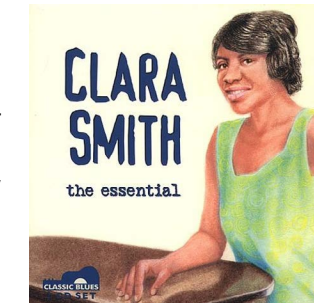
Clara was born in Spartanburg North Carolina, in 1894 (or maybe '95) and from the age of about 16, worked as a cabaret singer on the TOBA circuit across the Southern States, starting in the chorus line and eventually headlining vaudeville revues.



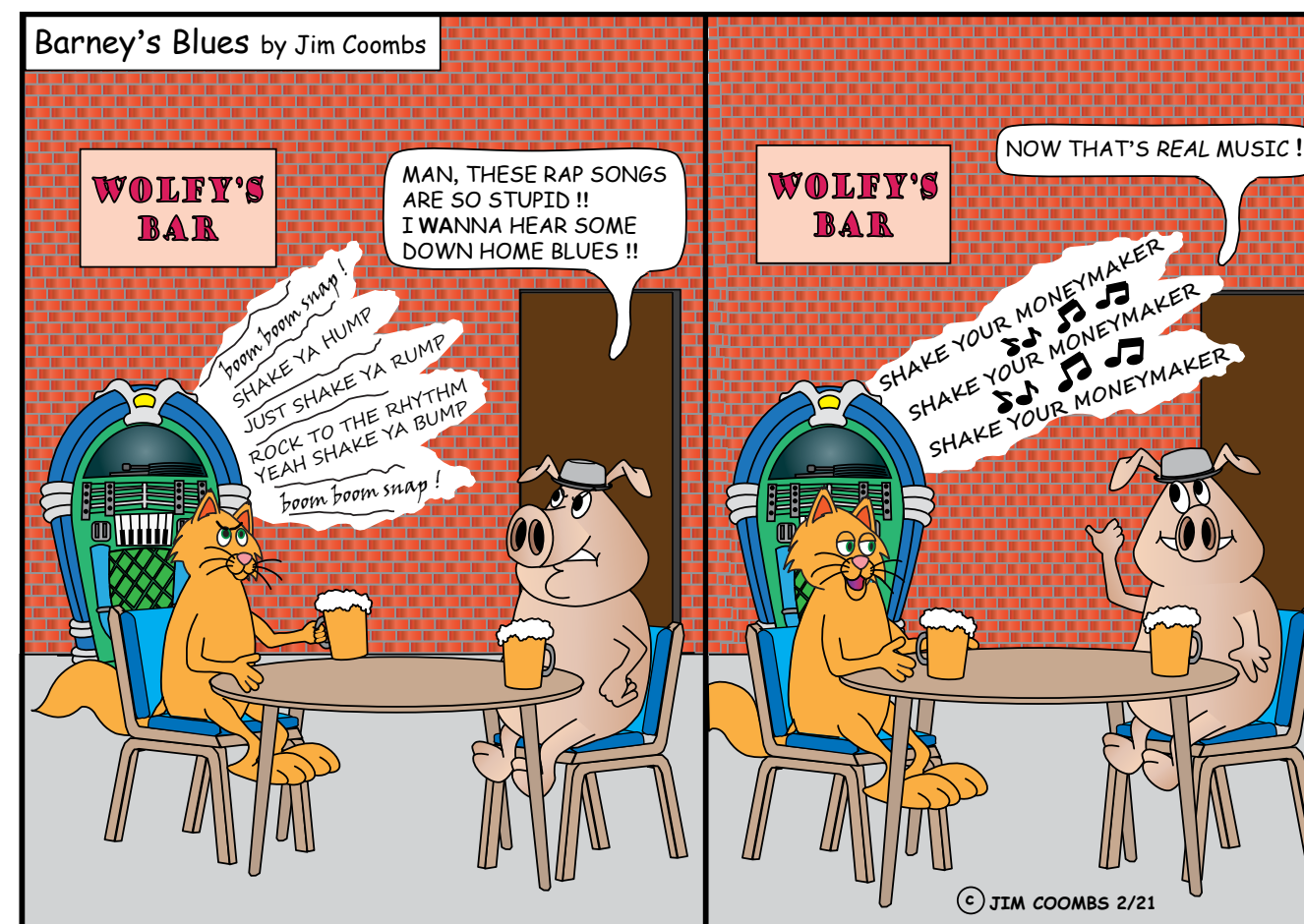
Although Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith are much better known than Clara, she was a big star in her day, and she always had a record in the stores.



She moved to New York in 1923 to get into recording, and was immediately signed by the Columbia label, who were desperate to get into a market that had been dominated by the Okeh and Paramount companies. That year, Columbia also signed Clara's (unrelated) namesake Bessie Smith, and the women recorded several duets together in the next few years and shared the services of pianist and arranger Fletcher Henderson. Clara was also joined on record by sidemen of the quality of Louis Armstrong, Charlie Green and Coleman Hawkins. She also recorded four vocal duets with guitar maestro Lonnie Johnson. Clara's material in the first couple of years concentrated on rather gloomy accounts of lost love, getting her that 'Queen of the Moaners' tag, but she soon moved to more risqué songs like 'Whip It to a Jelly' and 'You Can't Get It Now'.



In a ten year career Clara recorded more than 120 tracks, and her sales for Columbia were only bettered by Bessie Smith herself. ●



BSO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Dear valued members of the Blues Society of the Ozarks, Hello everyone! Our February Board meeting of 2021 produced a lot of activity from the Board and we are in the planning stages of some exciting benefits and projects, for our membership and the Blues community.

Our membership drive will continue through March with the \$5.00 discount for all levels of membership. Please plan to renew or become a new member of the BSO. For more information about membership, message us on our FaceBook page or come out to one of the great Jams.

Artists and Bands, who are looking to sign up for this year's International Blues Competition Solo/Duo and Band competitions; we are tentative hosting this event in August. More information will be forthcoming in the next Bluesletter. Get prepared to sign up, get ready, and get in the mix. It's your career and your moment. Now is the time to take it!

If you would like to contribute an article to our nationally renowned BSO Bluesletter, contact Mike Fisher, our Editor. This newsletter has reached several major markets and the word is spreading across this country to other Blues fans and supporters! Get in on the action.

Blues Jam at the [Shuffle Pub!](#) On the second Sunday of every month, the BSO hosts a Jam at the Shuffle Pub, 2550 S. Campbell Avenue, from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Contact George Hunt for detail and we'll get you signed up.

NOTE: VENUE CHANGE FOR MARCH The second Sunday Jam this month will be at Carries.



Blues Jam at [Carries Bar!](#)

The BSO hosts an additional Blues Jam at Carries Bar. The upcoming fourth Sunday Jam will be March 28th from 6:00-9:00 p.m. Located at 1906 E. Meadowmere Street (just East of Glenstone). Included in the jam, we typically give away a CD and have a 50/50 raffle. NO COVER, NO EXCUSES. 🎸



IN OTHER BSO BOARD NEWS



The Blues Society of the Ozarks have had a lot of great supporters over the years. Al and Debbie Rule are two of those people. Debbie had a medical procedure that left her needing help. January 10th, we held a benefit to help our friends.

I was proud to play a set with my son Seth Dylan Hunt. Every time he sings, I am reminded what a talented son I have. We have great fun singing songs by Yes, Elton John, Traffic, and many other artists. A highlight for me was to have my sister-in-law Connie Henson, my wife Renee', and daughter Sydney to sing 3 songs with Seth and I. It doesn't get any better than that.

The benefit included: O'Neil Blues and his drummer Robert. Berry and John Wynn Jr.; The Wynn Brothers. Jack Wilson holds down the beat on Bass for them while their friend Brian, played drums. I played with The Wynns some years ago in their "Fly by Night Band". They are excellent musicians and guys. Also, my band, Uncle Buster performed. Ron Smith plays drums, Mike Hauk plays bass, Pat O'Conner plays Guitar and sings, yours truly plays guitar, harmonica, and sings, Bill Ed Huff plays keyboards and sings. Bill was unable to join us on that Sunday. The night's main act was Paul Thomlinson. Paul is a class act, a great guy and has a great rocking spirit. We were so happy to have him for this event. Brian Pitts sat in with Paul and sang a couple of tunes.

It was a great time, and we raised some money for our good friends. 🎸
George Hunt


The Blues Society of the Ozarks and AmazonSmile

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Show your support for the Blues in southwest Missouri with official BSO merchandise!

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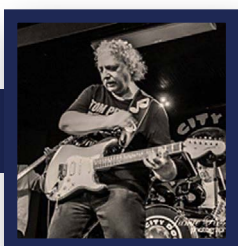
Guitar Pick Necklace
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Contact a BSO Board Member for purchase details! Show your support in style!



Since 1991, the goal of the Blues Society of the Ozarks has been to encourage the appreciation of the Blues, an original American music. The BSO provides a forum in the Ozarks for the performance of the Blues at live events, radio, and multimedia platforms, and does so, with a commitment to educate and entertain all people of the Ozarks. The BSO provides an organizational infrastructure through which people can share their common love of the Blues and to join with similar organizations to accomplish the common goals. To learn more about the BSO, and new opportunities for an active role in the Blues community, please contact any BSO Board member or visit the BSO [FaceBook](#) page, or visit the BSO web site at <https://ozarksblues.com/>



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

In this expanded March issue of the BSO Bluesletter, we continue with our focus on recognizing the extraordinary, talented musicians of the region. We also begin a new feature with highlighting the BSO Board Leadership. The BSO Board is represented by volunteers that share the same passion and appreciation for the Blues, as our BSO community. With the incentives for BSO membership extending through March, now is the time to become a member of an mature organization that has a clear focus for the future. Be it keeping the Blues alive through music Jams and live venue events, or Blues in the Schools, the BSO has a need for you.

This special issue also provides new opportunities to support the BSO by offering space for advertisers and supporters. For more information, please contact one of the BSO Board members. The Blues Society of the Ozarks wants to hear from you. Keep the music going and growing. Now is the time for you to take that step and start writing your contribution to the next BSO Bluesletter. Feel free to contact me, Mike Fisher at mikefisher@missouristate.edu.

MEET OUR BSO ADVERTISERS & SUPPORTERS

GEORGE HUNT
 Harmonica & Guitar Instructor & Performer
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Please join our advertising supporters and partners in keeping the Blues an active cultural contribution to the musical heritage of southwest Missouri.

For additional information regarding opportunities to advertise your business in the BSO Bluesletter, contact Mike Fisher at mikefisher@missouristate.edu.

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RENEWAL/MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNTS CONTINUED FOR MARCH

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As an active member in the **BSO**, I would be willing to help in the following areas:

- Events
- Fund raisers
- Bluesletter
- Blues Festival
- Public Relations/Marketing
- Other