

# Mountains of Blues

'lectric news



West Virginia  
Blues Society

KEEPING THE BLUES ALIVE

"Mountains of Blues"

Thursday February 19th, 2008

Vol. 2, Issue 8

I'm gon' grab me a train,  
goin' back to Baltimore...

I'm gonna find my baby,  
cause she rode that B & O...

*BLIND WILLIE McTELL- B&O Blues, 1933*

The [WVBluesSociety](http://www.wvbluesociety.com) 'lectric bluesletter aka "Mountains of Blues in the Mountain State" is a semi-weekly newsletter of blues information in the Mountain State and beyond. Brought to you by the West Virginia Blues Society the "bluesletter" goes out as a service to our "blues friends" wherever you might be. The bluesletter is an attempt to CONNECT & INFORM of the happenings in and at times outside our area. We never use your e-mail address for anything without your consent, and no one has access to our e-mail list. If you know of someone who would like to receive our 'lectric news in the future a membership service form is provided on the webiste. If you do NOT want to receive any future updates please reply with, Please No More.

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**WHATS HAPPENIN' IN "MOUNTAINS OF BLUES":**

## **SCENIC VENUE TO REMAIN OPEN-**

The scenic *Chimney Corner Cafe*, with its outstanding grub and beautiful outdoor stage *WAS* to be sold. The owners are relocating to Arizona to be nearer family. However, Chef Scott plans to lease the venue so it will remain open. Located 40 miles SE of Charleston and 2 miles from *Hawks Nest State Park*, it clings to the mountainside at intersection of US 60 (Midland Trail) and WV 16. Chimney Corner has been a landmark in the New River Gorge for many years. Thanks Scott!

## **THIS WEEK "THE DIXIE HUMMINGBIRDS"-**

Thu Feb 19th *Williamson High School*, Williamson

Fri Feb 20th [The Smoot Theater](#), Parkersburg

Sat Feb 21st [Randolph Co. Community Arts Center](#), Elkins

Formed in 1928 in Greenville, SC by JAMES B. DAVIS and his classmates. Lead singer IRA TUCKER joined the group in 1938 introducing his energetic showmanship of running through the aisles, jumping off stage, falling to his knees in prayer. Showmanship that was copied by many quartets that followed. [The Dixie Hummingbirds](#) have performed with B.B. KING, LESTER YOUNG, PAUL SIMON, DJANGO REINHARDT and countless others. And have influenced the likes of BOBBY 'BLUE' BLAND, CLYDE McPHATTER, JACKIE WILSON and JAMES BROWN. Many who adapted their style and showmanship to create "soul music" of the 1960s.

In 2003, the Hummingbirds were the subject of an award-winning book about their 75-year career span, "Great God A'Mighty! The Dixie Hummingbirds: Celebrating the Rise of Soul Gospel Music" by *Jerry Zolten*.

February 2008, the feature length documentary/concert film featuring the life and history of the Dixie Hummingbirds was released in commemoration of their extraordinary eighty years as performers. "The Dixie Hummingbirds: Eighty Years Young" has been shown on the Gospel Music Channel and has played at numerous film festivals.

Ira Tucker passed away from heart failure June 24th 2008. He was 83. The group continues on preserving the legacy left by Tucker and others.

## **THURSDAY NIGHT @ THE SMOOT-**

In honor of *Black History Month*, Thursday Feb 19th, [The Smoot Theatre](#), Parkersburg will host writer and advocate of roots music, Musicologist *JERRY ZOLTEN*. Author of the book tracing the 75-plus year career of [THE DIXIE HUMMINGBIRDS](#) and their influence on both sacred and secular music. Associate Professor, Communication Arts & Sciences and American Studies at Penn State University; known for numerous articles and CD liner notes on blues, country, and gospel music.

Zolten was also instrumental in resurrecting the career of the Grammy-winning [FAIRFIELD FOUR](#), producing two CDs, "Wreckin' the House(Live at Mt. Hope)" and, by bass singer ISAAC FREEMAN, "Beautiful Stars (Lost Highway)." Public Radio productions (WPSU-FM) are "Chimpin' the Blues" with cartoonist ROBERT CRUMP, a history of early blues and pre-blues. "In the Spirit" a history of African American gospel music and "Boppin' With Pekar" an overview of jazz history. Beginning at 7:30PM, Jerry Zolten will discuss the evolution of "Black Gospel Music" from the 1920's

until now. Admission is FREE. For more contact Felice @ 304-422-7529. (reminder- The "Birds" @ The Smoot Fri Feb 20th)

### **BLUES COMPETITION-**

[BJFM Society](#) presents the 17th Annual River City Blues Competition Fri Feb 20th and Sat Feb 21st. Friday will feature 6 acts beginning at 8:00PM. Saturday features 10 acts beginning at 12:30PM. After a dinner break at approx 6:00PM, the finals will begin at 8:00PM all at the *Lafayette Hotel*, Marietta.

Saturday night after the competition winners are announced, there will be an "After Jam" at *The River City Tavern & Grill*, located in The Comfort Inn, 700 Pike Street in Marietta.

### **RIVERSIDE (SCHOOL) BLUES FEST & WV BLACK HISTORY-**

Joe and Alice in Elkins tell us of plans for the 1st of what hopefully will be an annual event. The *RIVERSIDE BLUES FEST* to be held on River Street directly in front of old Riverside School in Elkins will be Saturday July 18th from 11AM to 9PM. This comes directly on the heels of *Augusta "Blues Week"* held each year at Davis & Elkins College. This year "Blues Week" ends on Friday July 17th.

Details such as admission and other amenities are being finalized. So far a deal has been struck with a smoked pork vendor, fish & chip and booking for bands has begun. More details will be announced soon.

To get to River Street, turn off Randolph Ave (US Rt 33) onto Kerens Ave. El Gran Sabor will be on your right. Go 5 blocks directly to River Street and Riverside School.

The Riverside Blues Fest is only part of the efforts to raise awareness, and finances to save the former Riverside School. A pre-desegregation, 12 year African American school in Elkins, built in 1906 to serve the educational needs of the African American community in the Allegheny Region. The only school of its kind in the area at that time drew students from many surrounding counties. After desegregation in 1954, the outstanding educational standards and traditions of excellence at Riverside were abandoned, and the school closed. Since that time the old brick building overlooking the Tygart Valley River has stood as a quite memorial to the opportunities offered and shared within its walls.

Currently the Riverside Alumni Association is putting together efforts to save this historic structure and part of West Virginia History. The planned upcoming festival is only part of these efforts. Also they are in the process of recording the Oral Histories of the Alumni that remain, and their stories will be featured in the school after its restoration.

For more information go to <http://www.randolphcountyyouth.org>. Also for an article by Hilary Magacs of WVNS written in Oct 2008 go to <http://www.wvnstv.com/story.cfm?func=viewstory&storyid=45972&email=1>

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### **QUOTE:**

*"The blues was like that problem child that you may have had in the family. You was a little bit*

*ashamed to let anybody see him, but you loved him. You just didn't know how other people would take it."*-- B.B. KING

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## **IBC's & BEYOND REPORT (part 2)-**

Friday morning, we attended a Blues Society Roundtable and met several nominees for the Keeping the Blues Alive awards and a representative of Mental Health America. That organization is wanting to remove the negative stigma to one of "every one gets the blues at some point in life." Jay Seilman of the Blues Foundation has offered the affiliates as partners. Friday afternoon, we split a burger in the Rum Boogie while we listened to Blind Raccoon's Showcase. Then up the street, we meet up with the Biscuit Rollers at the King's Palace where we meet our friends Bill Ellis, Fiona Boyes, Rich DelGrosso and Mike Powers. Donna went over to the Club 152 and saw Tallon the 9 year old "T-man" perform in the Youth Showcase. Note: The IBC's may include a youth competition next year.

Friday night, the word was out about Ms. Freddye. Some noteables were in da house to hear her. - namely, Bobby Rush, Taj Mahal, Tab Benoit and Zach Harmon. Ms. Freddye took em up on the invitation to sing with others at BB Kings later that night.

Saturday, we had the pleasure of Ms. Freddye's company for lunch at Alcenia's (Charlie Musselwhite's favorite Memphis restaurant). B.J. blessed us all with her signature hug and kiss, and served up the Saturday Brunch including a taste test of her mother's tomato gravy. Then we went on up to the Orpheum for the band finals. A who's who of industry representatives were in the crowd. Ringo Star was spotted two rows behind us. After all that excitement, Donna and I headed over to Gus's World Famous Fried Chicken and were invited to join Mike Powers, Mary Flower and Steve (the producer of Telluride Blues Fest). That was like icing on the cake or sauce on the ribs!

We made it back home toting a movie poster from [The Honeydripper](#) autographed by Danny Glover and John Sayles, the producer. Damn we're tired but satisfied!

We were able to distribute Appalachian Blues, Vol. 1 to Steve Simon, the producer of the St. John's Blues Festival & Bluzapaloosa, Liz Sykes of Ottawa Blues Society, Bill Wax of XM Satalite Radio (Bluesville), Bruce Agular of Alligator Records, Blind Pig Records, Mike Powers of Yellow Dog Records, Fiona Boyes from Australia, Rich DelGrosso, Steve with Telluride Blues Fest, Bob Cougar of Treasure Coast Blues Society (FL), Blues Bobby of South Florida Blues Society, press representatives from France and Holland. Kevin Gregory with Columbus Blues Alliance, Pickles of Creekside Blues Society, Greg Harrison from Long Island Blues Society, Theo Dasbach of the Rock n Roll and Blues Museum in Clarksdale, MS, La la from Cat Head Records, Joe Whitmer of the Blues Foundation, Dusty and Val, Bruce Wheeler of Heritage Blues Fest and Marv from Suncoast Blues Society and Rex Peoples of Colorado. Harold Trembley, House Party KFAI Radio - Minneapolis, MN. Gary Eckhart from MN. Lon Mickelson from Twin City Blues of Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN and Red of Red's Lounge in Clarksdale, MS. Plenty of people know the Blues are alive in West by God Virginia. (Prez Smokestac Jac)

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## **Blues Profile -Keith Lahti-**

Birth Date: 9-7-49

Birth Place: *Detroit, MI*

Bands You Have Played With: *Hard Times, Big Money, Rick Rivard & friends, Kill the Bunny*

Current Band/Instrument: *Holy Cow!/electric guitar*

Favorite Living Singer: *Sheryl Crow*

Favorite Deceased Singer: *Janis Joplin (love the ladies!)*

Favorite Living Blues Musician: *Robert Belfour*

Favorite Deceased Blues Musician: *Blind Willie Johnson*

First Record Purchased: *Amboy Dukes- Baby Please Don't Go*

First Blues Record Purchased: *Lightnin' Hopkins - Down Home Blues*

Personal Blues Statement: *"Blues is as much about the spaces between the notes as it is about the notes"*

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### **THIS WEEK(END) IN "MOUNTAINS OF BLUES":**

#### **Tue Feb 17th:**

LADY D @ Student Center Subway Stage, *Concord University, Athens*

#### **Wed Feb 18th:**

"Open-mic Nite" w/CRACKER STACKWELL @ *Blue Moose Cafe, Morgantown*

PAM ROBERTS @ *El Gran Sabor, Elkins*

#### **Thur Feb 19th:**

Musicologist JERRY ZOLTEN @ *The Smoot Theater, Parkersburg*

JORMA KAUKONEN, ROBBEN FORD & RUTHIE FOSTER @ *The Midland Theatre, Newark OH*

THE DIXIE HUMMINGBIRDS @ *Williamson High School, Williamson*

THE BLUES CANNIBALS @ *Nip & Cue, Parkersburg*

CRACKER STACKWELL @ *Black Bear Burritos, Morgantown*

#### **Friday Feb 20th:**

THE DIXIE HUMMINGBIRDS @ *The Smoot Theater, Parkersburg*

TIM BECKMAN @ *Honi Honi Bar, Deep Creek, MD*

River City Blues Competition @ *Lafayette Hotel, Marietta, OH*

JAMIE McLEAN @ *Blue5 Restaurant, Roanoke, VA*

CRACKER STACKWELL @ *El Gran Sabor, Elkins*

JILL WEST & BLUES ATTACK @ *The Royal Place, Pittsburgh*

ANDRA FAYE & KIM CAPPS @ *Bankok Blues, Falls Church, VA*

DAVE MARTIN BAND @ *The Brewery, Marietta*

SAM LAMONT @ *Mountain State Brewing, Thomas, WV*

THE CATCH BLUES BAND @ *Picks, ????, ??*

**Saturday Feb 21st:**

THE DIXIE HUMMINGBIRDS @ *Randolph Co. Community Arts Center*, Elkins  
River City Blues Competition @ *Lafayette Hotel*, Marietta, OH  
LARRY KEEL w/CRACKER STACKWELL @ *Mountain State Brewing*, Thomas, WV  
Post-Competition Blues Jam @ *River City Tavern & Grill*, Marietta, OH  
THE DIABLO BLUES BAND @ *The Blue Parrot*, Charleston  
THE PAWNBROKERS @ *Thunderbird Cafe*, Lawrenceville/Pittsburgh  
THE CATCH BLUES BAND @ *Hock's Bar & Grill*, Valley Grove/Wheeling  
COMMANDER CODY @ *The Thirsty Ear*, Columbus  
THE BLUE NOTES @ *Sam's Uptown Cafe*, Charleston  
VINNIE & THE LUBRICATORS @ *The Brewery*, Marietta

**Sunday Feb 22nd:**

LADY D @ *Tamarack*, Beckley  
THE BLUES ORPHANS @ *Lutheran Church*, Brighton Heights/Pittsburgh

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**BIRTHDAY:**

Feb 18 1972 Will Barrett Oxford, MS  
Feb 19 1936 Sam Myers Laurel, MS  
Feb 21 1903 Francis Hillman "Scrapper" Blackwell Syracuse, NC

**RIP:**

Feb 17 1982 Thelonious Monk ???? , NJ  
Feb 21 2008 Calvin Owens Houston, TX  
Feb 23 1996 Brownie McGhee Oakland, CA  
Feb 23 1953 Big Maceo Merriweather Chicago, IL

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**"MOUNTAINS OF BLUES" AT A GLANCE:**

reports outa Chas-tun... [THE DEREK TRUCKS BAND](#) "live" radio show Mountain Stage, Cultural Center Theater last Sunday was great...get a glimpse at [WV Blues Society](#).

MUSICOLOGIST: One who studies Musicology... ex: *David Evans* (Memphis Univ), *James Bennighof* (Baylor), *Jerry Zolten* (Penn State)... the scholarly study of music. In the broad definition, the parent disciplines of musicology include history; cultural studies and gender studies; philosophy, aesthetics... ethnology and cultural anthropology; archeology and prehistory... yada, yada, yada...

Music history or historical musicology studies the composition, performance, reception, and criticism of music over time.

this Tue Feb 17th @ Concord University in Athens (Student Center Subway Stage), [LADY D](#) presents "Bessie's Blues" based on life and music of Bessie Smith... transports her audience back to the

1920's & 30's... showtime is 8:00PM

[TEENY TUCKER](#) "Miracle on Beale Street"... most excellent article @ <http://www.blues.org/about/news.php4?id=726>

nice to hear from Mississippi Delta native, BETH JACKS... author of poems and short stories for numerous publications and the Editor of [USADEEPSOUTH.COM...](#) and yes, when we get a little further south to Cleveland and Dockery we'll definatly let you know.... thanks Beth!

[AUSTIN WALKIN' CANE](#) on the IBC experience-- "As we all know art is subjective. Who would win Howlin' Wolf or Muddy Waters? B.B. King or Bobby "Blue" Bland? Robert Johnson or Son House? When it comes down to it the IBC's are the world's best blues showcase by todays standards & we were lucky to have been a part of it." Also Austin thanks many-many people for support and says he and wife Karen are still hurting from the accident last month but are lucky and slowly healing. Thanks Austin, hope to see you soon...

[SHEMEKIA COPELAND](#) on David Letterman Show Fri Feb 20th. Singing "Never Going Back," the title song of her new CD to be released on Feb 24th... (blueswax)

Ms. FREDDYE says thanks to WVBS for help and support... also Ms. Freddye's bass player says thanks WVBS for all the support... hey Freddye, thank YOU for the "thank you"... and thanks for being who you are and what you do!...

Robert Jr Whiteall of Big City Rhythm & Blues Magazine tells us their first Memphis Showcase during IBC's was sho nuf a hit... Quote Robert: "The juke joint was packed and the Blues was nonstop at Memphis' Ground Zero"... as if it wasn't gonna be! thanks Robert Jr...

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## **JES 'O DA HORIZONE-**

**Fri Feb 27th:**

[TERRANCE SIMIEN & THE ZYDECO EXPERIENCE](#) @ [Carnegie Hall](#), Lewisburg

**Sat Feb 28th:**

[Union Hall Theater](#), Chesterhill, OH host WILLIE PHOENIX & JESS KAUFFMAN

JASON RING @ [White Grass Cafe](#), Canaan Valley

[Columbus Blues Alliance](#) "Traditional Acoustic Blues Fest" @ Holiday Inn Worthington

[Charleston Blues Society](#) "Legacy Gala Kick-Off" Reception/Discussion/Exhibit @ Heritage Towers, Charleston

[6th Annual Living Blues Symposium](#) @ University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

**Mar 6-7:** [Pickles' Blues Extravaganze](#) @ Allen County's Memorial Hall, Lima, OH

in a little bit,  
crawlinkingsnake