

A bi-monthly publication of the Sacramento Blues Society



# BLUE NOTES!

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2023  
ISSUE 44  
VOL. 1



## President's Column

By Sally Katen

Happy New Year! Wow. It's hard to believe it's already 2023 but SBS stands poised and ready to take on the New Year with a vengeance!



By now, many of you know that I spent some time in the hospital in December battling COVID, COPD, and the flu. And to top it all off, started having an A-Fib episode while hospitalized. But here I am, and I want to express my gratitude for the prayers, well wishes, positive thoughts and good juju sent my way during that time. I felt all the love from my blues family, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Now back to business! I am pleased to introduce you to our 2023 Board of Directors: Barbara Katen, Rex Smith, Jim Coats, Renee Erickson-Sullivan, Rick Snyder, Barbara Ray, Lynette Shumway, Cari Chenkin and myself (returning Directors) and new Directors: Marcel Smith and Julio Covington. We are all honored to represent and serve you, our membership.

We have an article in this issue called a "Spotlight on Volunteers" which I hope you will all read and appreciate. We are proud of the small group of volunteers that we call on time after time and that always answer our calls for help. But we need more of our members to step forward to get involved as Volunteers. Please give it some consideration and contact me if interested. WE NEED YOU!

We have much in the works for 2023, some of which you can read about in this issue, our first of the new year, and in subsequent issues.

I look forward to seeing you out and about. Please stay safe and again, I wish for you all to have a very Happy and Healthy 2023!

## Blues In The Schools (BITS) Update

by Rick Snyder, BITS Chairman

We have had a rather busy and good month during November. We made an appearance on Fox 40 at the beginning of the month to promote BITS, SBS, and the Blind Lemon Peel Fundraiser we did at the Sofia on November 4th. BITS collected about \$1000 in donations during the event. Thanks to all who came and to those who donated either through the purchase of a raffle ticket, participating in the silent auction, making a cash donation, or purchasing BITS merch.

We are reintegrating into on site presentations at schools in the



### 2022 Committee Chairs

*Blues in the Schools* - Rick Snyder

*Hall of Fame* - Sally Katen

*Events* - Mindy Giles

*Membership* - Linda McShane

*Sponsorships/Fundraising* - Barbara Ray

*Public Relations & Social Media* - Mindy Giles

*Volunteer Coordinator* - Sally Katen

*Big Day of Giving* - Rick Snyder

*Merchandise* - Lynette Shumway

*Blue Notes Newsletter* - Cari Chenkin & Jan Kelley

*IBC Competition* - Renee Erickson Sullivan

*Webmaster* - Mindy Giles

*Board of Directors Development* - Open

*Help keep the Blues alive - Contact a Chair or Board Member to volunteer for the Board or a Committee!*

**The Sacramento Blues Society (SBS)** is one of the oldest blues societies in California, founded in 1979. SBS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization formed to preserve and promote blues music as an art form. SBS has kept the blues tradition alive in the Sacramento area by promoting the local blues music scene, bringing internationally renowned artists to the region, acknowledging our local blues artists, providing a Musicians' Crisis Fund and publishing the **Blue Notes** six times a year. SBS is an affiliate member of The Blues Foundation (which honored us with a 2015 Keeping the Blues Alive Award) which provides educational opportunities for young people with The Blues Foundation's "Blues in The Schools" Program.

### Board of Directors Meetings - 2nd Tuesday of each Month, 7:00 p.m.

All SBS Members in good standing are invited to attend.

Meetings are held via Zoom; to request an invitation, email: [president@sacblues.org](mailto:president@sacblues.org)

### 2023 Board of Directors

Sally Katen, President  
Barbara Katen, Vice President  
Jim Coats, Secretary -  
Renee Erickson Sullivan,  
Treasurer  
Rex Smith, Parliamentarian  
Cari Chenkin  
Rick Snyder  
Barbara Ray  
Lynette Shumway  
Julio Covington  
Marcel Smith

### Sacramento Blues Society Publications

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**Facebook: [www.facebook.com/sacblues/](http://www.facebook.com/sacblues/)**

**Twitter: @SacBluesSociety**

*Blues in the Schools Update, Con't. from P. 2*

greater Sacramento area. We did an assembly on November 7th at Taylor Street Elementary School that was very well received, and a good time was had by all.

We did an assembly at Cordova Meadows Elementary School on November 15th. Once again, the students had a great time and learned about the Blues in the process. Somewhat like learning through osmosis.

We will be starting the afterschool program at West Campus on February 1st and continue once a week until May 3rd. Kyle Rowland will be the musician providing the instruction. We can't wait because from this program we will glean the musicians for the BITS Showcase on Big Day of Giving (that's right it's coming, and you could actually make donations now). Keep checking our website at <https://www.sacblues.org/> and our Blues in the Schools Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/sacbits>

We have already secured either Stoney's Rockin Rodeo or the space next door for our May 4th BDOG Showcase. Both venues are outdoors, with food and adult beverages as well as for kids. CU there!

## IBC Is Back for 2023!

*By Renee Erickson Sullivan, IBC Committee Chair*

The International Blues Challenge Committee will be holding our first meeting the beginning of January 2023. This meeting will cover setting up our agenda for the year including deadlines to apply, competition dates, etc.

We are excited to once again send one of our Sacramento Blues Society member bands, or solo/duo acts, to Memphis and we want to get started early to do everything we can to make our 2024 contestant successful at the competition! Our committee would love to add some committee members to help us accomplish this; if you are interested in becoming involved and would like to help create our 2023 IBC Competition, please contact me, Renee Erickson Sullivan at [Renee.sacblues@gmail.com](mailto:Renee.sacblues@gmail.com).

We will have more details in our next Newsletter. Stay Tuned!

## Editor's Column

***Become a Published Author or Photographer – Contribute to the Blue Notes!***

*By Cari Chenkin*

As the SBS has grown and evolved, so have our communications. When we first began in 1979, there were no cell phones, no Internet, no Instagram, Tik Tok, Facebook or LinkedIn. And before the blossoming of electronic communications, the newsletter served the important purpose of keeping our membership informed about what the Blues Society was doing.

Each person who's taken on the creation of the **Blue Notes** has helped define it and grow it, and this tradition continues today. I'm proud to be the current editor of our **Blue Notes** newsletter, and with the help of a great committee of dedicated volunteers (thanks Jan Kelley, Bob Cosman, Barbara Katen and Gregg Jamnetski) we've consistently put out a really good mini-magazine that our members look forward to receiving six times a year.

The biggest reason for our success is the content. While our committee regularly contributes articles and photos, we're also seeing various members volunteer to send us reviews, articles and pictures. We want to increase this participation, and invite you, our

readers and members, to join us!

Seen a blues show that impressed you? Write a review and submit it. Bought a new album you love? Review it for the **Blue Notes** so other members can decide to buy it. Took photos at an SBS or other show? We'd love to use them! If you'd like to contribute to the Blue Notes, or have questions, please contact me at: [editor@sacblues.org](mailto:editor@sacblues.org). And enjoy the thrill of seeing YOUR name in a byline!

**BOOKKEEPING WITH DEE**  
YOUR NUMBERS. OUR STRENGTH.

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## 2022 Valerie Jean Anderson Volunteer Award Winner - Cari Chenkin

*By Sally Katen*

I am proud to direct the blues spotlight onto Cari Chenkin, the recipient of our 6th Annual Volunteer Award at our Holiday Membership Party in December. SBS began this award in 2016, and which is awarded for volunteerism in honor of the late, and much loved, VJ Anderson, who received the first Volunteer award posthumously.



Cari has been instrumental as Editor, in turning our **Blue Notes** into the quality, informative, and enjoyable publication it has become. In addition, Cari is the face behind the monthly SBS "Blue Sunday" program at the Torch Club, which was initiated to highlight our member bands. She has been a member of SBS since 2006 and is currently on the all-volunteer (and elected) Board of Directors and is also a past President of the Sacramento Blues Society.

Please join me and the entire Board of Directors in recognizing Cari's achievements on behalf of SBS and in congratulating her on being the recipient of the prestigious 2022 Valerie Jean Anderson Volunteer Award.

## SBS Board of Directors Election Update

In addition to being a rockin' good time celebrating the holiday season, our December 11 event was also our Annual Membership Meeting, during which the votes for members of our Board of Directors were counted, and the results announced. (Sadly, only about 10% of the total membership bothered to return ballots – surely, we can do better, peeps!)

We're pleased to say all seven candidates were duly elected to the B.O.D. Please welcome Barbara Katen, Cari Chenkin, Julio Covington, Lynette Shumway, Marcel Smith, Rex Smith and Sally Katen as they join incumbent Board members Barbara Ray, Renee Erickson Sullivan and Rick Snyder on the Board. At the first 2023 meeting in January, the new Board will elect its slate of officers for the year. Stay tuned for that announcement in the Mar-Apr issue of the **Blue Notes**. It's exciting to have our full complement of 11 Board members ready to jump in and get to work making 2023 a great year for the Sacramento Blues Society!

## Spotlight On SBS Volunteers

by Barbara Katen



Critical to the success of any non-profit organization is the contribution of our volunteering members. We have been fortunate to have a group of volunteers who are always "in the ready" when we are in need.

This group includes those on our various committees and those smiling, happy faces you see publicly representing SBS at various events. It's the last group I would like to spotlight in this issue. I am referring to **Julio Covington, Ernie and Esther Vasquez, Bobbie Armstrong, Lynette Shumway and Earl Withycombe, and Liz and Bill Van Houten**. So, I asked them about why the SBS, and why they feel their volunteerism is important.

**Blue Notes:** How and when did you come to join the Sacramento Blues Society?

**Julio:** I joined SBS in 2020. I have been involved in the music scene off and on since 1969. I was



looking for a volunteer position that helps musicians in our area and allows me to see concerts within my budget.

**Ernie & Esther:** We have been long time patrons of the Torch Club and it was Willie Brown who gave us an application to join the SBS. We did it to support the blues. We had developed

relationships with a lot of the musicians. We were close to Jimmy Pailer and Lew Fratis. Of course, we also knew Stacy Eakes and so many more.

**Bobbie:** I have been a member since around 1994 or so (not positive of the year but did recently find a membership card from 1997). I loved getting the **Blue Notes** in the mail and loved the Sacramento Blues Festival. As a daughter of parents who loved jazz, I fell in love with the blues when they included it at the Sacramento Jazz Jubilee where they oversaw sound. I started going to the Sutter



Street Saloon where Kirby had the blues going on and artists such as Charlie Musselwhite and Little Charlie & the Nightcats would play.

**Lynette & Earl:** Earl has been "dancing-n-prancin'" since the old Torch Club on L Street and volunteered to help move it to its current location in the early 2000s. Joining SBS was only natural. Lynette loves to dance so when she moved to

Sacramento in 2014 (a temporary 13-week travel assignment) she looked for a place to dance, found the Torch Club and met Earl. And as they say, "The rest is history."

**Liz & Bill:** (Liz) I first became aware of the SBS in the early-mid 70's. I was



bass player for Little Charlie and the Nightcats. Phil Givant was prominent with SBS at that time. Not long after we met Phil Givant, I became a member of SBS. (Bill) I met Liz musically for a band project and quickly discovered her formidable blues pedigree. Thus began my serious blues education followed by my introduction to the SBS family.

**Blue Notes:** How soon after joining SBS did you volunteer and why did you decide to become a volunteer?

**Julio:** As soon as I was physically able, I started volunteering. I believe in live music, and I am extremely proud to be a member of SBS and help keep musicians working.

**Esther & Ernie:** We were attending a membership Holiday party at the VFW about 10 or 12 years ago. We noticed they needed help. We talked with Bobbie Armstrong and Sally Katen and they explained there was a shortage of volunteers. We were already involved in the Sacramento Music Festival and the Sacramento Jazz Jubilee as volunteers, so we stepped up to get involved with SBS as volunteers.

**Bobbie:** I started volunteering at the very first "Blues for the Cure" at the Torch Club and went on to do the Hall of Fame with Sally Katen. One of my favorites to this day.

**Lynette & Earl:** Earl has always been a dependable volunteer: set-ups, breakdowns and of course, Lynette's loving Sherpa. Lynette first joined SBS as an individual in 2015 and as a couple with Earl thereafter. As Covid-19 changed many lives, Lynette became "forcefully retired" in 2021. Looking for volunteer opportunities, she heard the call for volunteers for SBS and the Board at the Annual Hall of Fame Awards in 2021 and was subsequently voted onto the Board as a write-in candidate/appointment.

**Liz & Bill:** (Liz) In 2015, I was inducted into the SBS Hall Of Fame, becoming a permanent member of SBS. At that time, I began serving on the HOF Committee. Within a couple of years, I retired from my full time County job. As a retiree, I was available to volunteer for SBS events as the need arose. However, my work also increased as a bassist for multiple blues bands. It's actually been Bill's volunteer activity that has really prompted mine. (Bill) I've always contributed my time to worthwhile organizations. So, it was easy for me to step-up for the SBS. Sally Katen was so welcoming and inspired me to raise my hand.

**Blue Notes:** What are your favorite things about volunteering and what do you find most rewarding?

**Julio:** Absolutely it's the people involved with the Sacramento music scene. They believe in live music and helping the community. Also, working around the best musicians in the Sacramento area and with the musicians from around the world that I've had the privilege to meet.

**Ernie & Esther:** The most rewarding thing we love about being a volunteer is meeting new people and enlightening them about SBS and how we are trying to keep the blues alive. We also share about BITS and the discounts a membership with SBS has to offer.

**Bobbie:** The people. And the money every time we have a raffle. It feels exhilarating knowing that the money you are raising provides for so many things, including the Hall of Fame, which recognizes so many great musicians in our area and the Blues in the Schools program.

**Lynette & Earl:** Earl just loves to help; that's what he does; it's in his DNA. He also enjoys positive feedback for his efforts. Lynette also enjoys a kind word for a job well done! She enjoys organizing, as evidenced by her reorganization of the SBS merchandise display and inventory. Most rewarding is being a highly visible representative of SBS and in the process making new and lasting friends (you know who you are)!!!

**Liz & Bill:** (Liz) I enjoy volunteering. I feel like I am giving back. I also get better acquainted with other SBS members and volunteers. (Bill) The SBS gives us all a shared mission. We all love the blues, the volunteers...musicians...events. Win! Win! Win!

**Blue Notes:** What is the funniest/oddest thing that's happened while volunteering?

**Julio:** Funniest moment? Mick Martin saying, "Me and Julio down by the schoolyard" when I had the opportunity to see him backstage. Oddest moment? Stepping up to be MC at the BITS Blind Lemon Peel fundraiser. It was scary but also so much fun. A "bucket list" moment I will never forget.

**Ernie & Esther:** One of the funniest/oddest things that seem to happen is that Ernie is often mistaken for a musician.

**Bobbie:** The oddest was meeting up with Bob Weir on Grateful Dead night at the Arena during a Kings game. They have the REX Foundation which supports arts, sciences, and education. I took that opportunity to speak to him courtside and told him about our Blues in the Schools program. They reached out and supported BITS for many years. So, I guess you can say that volunteering never ends just at the event.

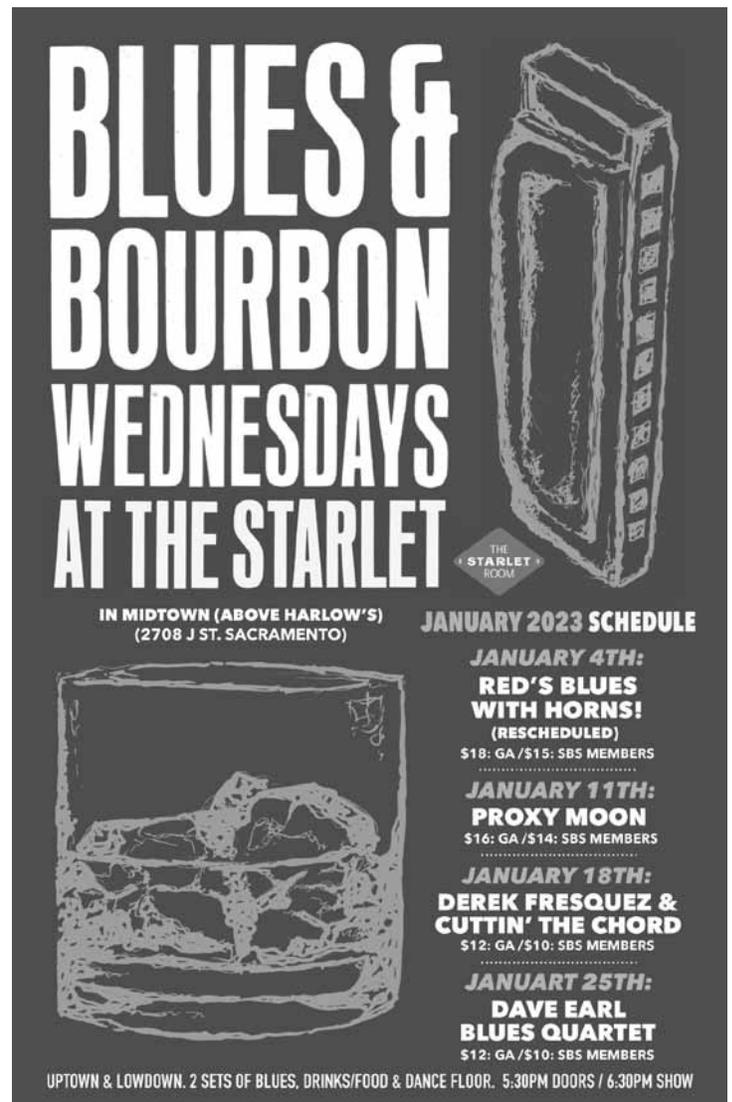
**Lynette & Earl:** Earl had gone up a tall ladder to bring down the SBS banner at the end of the "Battle of the Saxes" event. He was so high he was above eye level, so Lynette didn't see him. Earl's

back was to the room, so he didn't see Lynette looking for him. Lynette even went outside from three different doors. Earl came down the ladder, no Lynette. They just kept missing each other for about 30 minutes. Lynette decided to practice what she taught as a Cub Scout Den Mother: if lost, stay put so you can be found. Once again, they found each other!

**Liz & Bill:** (Bill) The most fun for me is watching all the crazy, funny chaos prepping for big events...SBS HOF...Christmas event; then, watch it all magically deliver a great event!

These are the responses from some of our "die hard" volunteers sharing their personal perspective on SBS volunteering. We appreciate and applaud our valued volunteers and we extend an open invitation to you to consider becoming one of them. We need volunteers for committees such as the Newsletter, IBC, BITS, Hall of Fame, Events, and others. Or you can offer up your time and service to work the Membership or Merchandise table at events we sponsor and/or where we have an SBS presence. We need you! And who knows...someday it might be YOU featured in our next Spotlight on Volunteers Article!

If interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Sally Katen at bluesforthecure@hotmail.com.



**BLUES & BOURBON WEDNESDAYS AT THE STARLET**

IN MIDTOWN (ABOVE HARLOW'S)  
(2708 J ST. SACRAMENTO)

JANUARY 2023 SCHEDULE

**JANUARY 4TH:  
RED'S BLUES WITH HORNS!  
(RESCHEDULED)**  
\$18: GA / \$15: SBS MEMBERS

**JANUARY 11TH:  
PROXY MOON**  
\$16: GA / \$14: SBS MEMBERS

**JANUARY 18TH:  
DEREK FRESQUEZ & CUTTIN' THE CHORD**  
\$12: GA / \$10: SBS MEMBERS

**JANUARY 25TH:  
DAVE EARL BLUES QUARTET**  
\$12: GA / \$10: SBS MEMBERS

UPTOWN & LOWDOWN. 2 SETS OF BLUES, DRINKS/FOOD & DANCE FLOOR. 5:30PM DOORS / 6:30PM SHOW

## Show Review - Aki Kumar at Harlow's

November 30, 2022 By Julio Covington

Let's start with a question... "How do you kiss November 2022 goodbye?" With the right attitude, that's how...and with Sacramento blues people! SBS members and the local music lovers are real musical people...they love every show and are the best human beings you will ever meet!



Anyway...what you do for the blues...you go rockin' out with an intimate Aki Kumar Show at Harlow's. Although the "Thanksgiving Blues" was apparent with a small attendance, it just didn't matter to harp man Aki Kumar and fellow musical masters of the "give them what they paid for attitude". These were blues tunes that either made you nostalgic or made you get on up!!

Rome Yamilov's guitar riffs were all over the blues/rock spectrum and excellently done! Drummer June Core kept a lively foundation of solid beats along with bassist Vance Ehlers keeping the pace. Very smooth!



Young and forceful, Aki Kumar believes in what he's doing and it shows with his 'years gone by' tunes to self-written expression. Guest and harmonica friend Andy Santana was doing what he does best - loving and playing wherever

he is. Harmonica playing like life itself was being created in front of you. These musicians play for the music and for the people. Bless their Bluesy hearts. Aki Kumar educated the small crowd on some "Bollywood" blues with some intense Eastern magic.

It was one of those nights you felt for the band, small crowd and all. But you felt blessed to see musicians play for the music and for you. Blues lovers that were there were as loving as an audience could be. They clapped, they yelled, and they bought the cd's Aki Kumar had on hand. Yes, he is a marketing magic man!

Much respect goes to Liz Walker, SBS Member, emcee and this night's events host for handling a tough, slow night for the absent Mindy Giles, who was missed but on a mission.

The SBS merchandise table was excellent as usual, thanks to Lynette Shumway & Earl Withycombe and with a backup hand by Julio Covington. Much respect to the Harlow's staff, Manager AJ, Josh and all personnel.

If you can see musicians of this



caliber play to a small crowd like it's a full house; when you can hear the microphone shake; or the ice hitting the cocktail glass during a laugh at intermission, it's a darn good night in Sacramento.

**THE TORCH CLUB LIVE**

**JANUARY**

1ST: BLUES JAM, NY HANGOVER PARTY 3-7PM  
5TH: CHICKEN BONE SLIM FEAT. LAURA CHAVEZ 9-12 PM  
13TH: ELVIS CANTU 9-12 PM  
20TH: DARYL ROWLAND 6-8 PM  
28TH: PETER PETTY REVIEW 9-12PM  
29TH: SBS BLUE SUNDAY W/THE LUNI TONES 4-7 PM

**FEBRUARY**

18TH: KATIE KNIPP, FOREVER GOLDRUSH 9-12 PM  
25: DARYL ROWLAND 6-8 PM  
18TH: SBS BLUE SUNDAY WITH ZOLA MOON 4-7 PM

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

## Show Review - Ruthie Foster

The Sofia, December 15, 2022 By Jan Kelley



A pleasant surprise to me was seeing Sacramento's own Michael Ray as the opener to Ruthie's show as a good beginning to a very enjoyable evening.

The stars were out last night at The Sofia! By that I mean, stars in everyone's eyes lucky enough to be there for Ruthie Foster! Once again, she dazzled her audience with her captivating voice and demeanor. This time she performed solo, as her band members were busy doing their own thing. It sure didn't matter to this crowd... everyone loved her!

Starting out with "Brand New Day", Ruthie then led us down a merry lane of "Small Town", "Richland" and "4 AM", delightfully singing and chatting with her audience as if we were in someone's living room.

There were times when a little tear would crop up in the corner of my eye, her voice is so beautiful and heartfelt. "Up Above My Head" was a good one for that along with "Freedom". This was a true artist at work, seemingly without an ego to get in the way, as she sang her trademark song "Phenomenal Woman" and exited the stage to a standing ovation. Ruthie then closed the show with "Ring of Fire" and everyone left with smiles on their faces.

Let's hope it won't be another three years before Ruthie's return to Sacramento!

# Blue Sunday Update

Photos by Mindy Giles & Julio Covington

## October 31, 2022 -

Our October band was The Dave Segal Band. They put on a great show, which was well attended, despite competition for audience that afternoon.

Because it was Halloween, we encouraged the band

by Cari Chenkin



and attendees to come in costume. Dave Segal, lead guitarist and singer for the band, came attired as Magnum P.I., and members of the audience also dressed up for the Halloween fun. The swing dancers showed up and filled the floor,



which always adds to the fun.

The band wound its way through a great variety of tunes, including plenty of blues favorites, as well as a smattering of original songs.



Selections included "Rollin' and Tumblin'," "Certainly All," and "Where You At?," "Ain't Your Business" and "Respect Me Baby." Onstage with Dave were Kirk Hooper on drums, Dean Chance on bass and Dave Croall on harmonica and vocals.



## November 18, 2022 -

November's band was the Papa Day Blues Band, who pleased the audience with a great variety of tunes, including blues classics, a few rock gems and some well-crafted originals.

Some of the standout songs included a Mike Ward original "Angel of Mercy", plus standards "Key to the Highway", "Help Me", "People Get Ready", "Take Me to the River" and "Walking Blues".

Band members included Obie Dee (aka SBS Hall of Fame member Ken Van Crumphaut) on guitar and vocals, Dave Faria



on drums, Mike Ward on guitar and vocals, and Tony Passantino (who was celebrating his birthday) on bass. It was a lively performance, and really kicked into high gear

toward the end of the gig, when about a dozen people came in who'd been at a wedding and wanted to continue the party at the Torch!



**December 18, 2022** - We closed out 2022 with a performance by local dancers' favorites the Hucklebucks (featuring more Hall of Famers) on December 18, too late to be reviewed for this issue.

## December Gala Recap

By Mindy Giles, Events Chair

Photos by Bob Hakins, Barbara Katen, Cynthia Juarez, Julio Covington, & Janet Hongola

In full disclosure, Angela Strehli is a woman I have known by reputation and her work, and then called friend for over 35 years. Like many women in history behind the Movements, the scenes and the famous personalities, there are the diligent, studied, visionary, humble movers who build and bind the bigger picture in dynamic fashion. Angela is one of these.



Angela co-founded the legendary Austin, Texas blues club, Antone's, in 1975 and with her debut EP, birthed the record label, Antone's Records in 1987. She taught her friend Stevie Ray Vaughan



how to sing. When you learn this about her, her place in the knowledge and interpretation of blues history, then watch her step to the mic and sing her West Texas/Chicago soul, you might begin to grasp how critical she has been to modern blues.

To be able to bring her here to Sacramento, with her magnificent band supporting **Ace of Blues** (New West Records), her first record in seventeen years, was so incredibly special to me personally and I do thank the SBS for allowing us to close out 2022 in such a beautiful, deep, and FUN way.

That way—the Strehli Way is drenched in the luxuriant West Texas alto drawl of Lubbock, her hometown—the same town of Buddy



Holly, Joe Ely, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, and Delbert McClinton. As she says in her original "Two Bit Texas Town," "back when radio could turn your life around," she could hear jazz and blues on her Zenith short wave. Her behind-the-beat pauses and the epiphanic testimonies she offers in her storytelling is verifiably born of her connection to these elemental blues stars--Muddy Waters, Jimmy Reed, Otis

Rush, Little Milton, O.V. Wright, Howlin' Wolf and more- first from that Zenith, and then when she made her way to Chicago in the mid-1960s and befriended them in real life.

All that deep connection was on stage this night, in her small frame elegance and home-grown worldliness. Ace, as all her blues mentors called her, performed many songs from her just-released album. Just buy the record to keep the memory of our special night intense—it is a gorgeous gatefold, housing royal blue vinyl, ten pages of amazing stories and historical photos from her friend, photographer Susan Antone. These songs, "Two Steps from the Blues" ( Bobby Bland), "I Love The Life I Live" ( Muddy Waters), "You Never Can Tell" (Chuck Berry), "Gambler's Blues" (Otis Rush) and "Howlin' For My Darlin' "(Howlin' Wolf" ) honor her real-life friends and mentors, and back up her perfect autobiographical title track where she name checks 'em all.

She and her crackling band: Mighty Mike Schermer (guitar), Tony Stead (keyboards), Timm Walker (bass), William Allums (drums), her three- piece horn section (Rod Sudduth, tenor sax, Doug Rowen, baritone sax, Steffen Kuehn, trumpet) plus dazzling Aki



Kumar on harp, brought us a wonderful night of complete traditional blues, soul, R&B, and gospel authority – they ACED it.

## Holiday Gala Impressions

### Attendees Share Their Thoughts

**Editor's Note:** In addition to Mindy's review of our Holiday Gala, we asked some members who attended to share their reviews of our party.

**Barbara Katen:** Waking up the morning after I felt a bit like an aged Cinderella after the Ball (minus the prince - LOL) but I had a smile on my face and joy in my heart after attending the Annual SBS Membership Meeting/Party/Gala. I have attended every annual Meeting/Party since I became an SBS member, and this event took the cake, stuffed it in my face, and I loved every bit of it!



Thanks to all those who made this event the success it was. Mindy Giles, the woman who can do it all – I must single you out here... WOW. You knocked it out of the park! Thanks to the Event Committee, all our fabulous volunteers, the new SBS Board, Harlow's

crew and our supportive SBS Membership! Now Angela Strehli and her band with Mighty Mike Schermer and Aki Kumar...unbelievable.

I am not known for getting on the dance floor but this night I was up and in the immortal words of Billy Idol I was out there "dancing with myself"! The "Ace of Blues", Angela Strehli, was phenomenal and she was just as fantastic as I remembered. I've missed her! Her band, the horns, Mighty Mike on guitar, Aki on harp... total musical bliss. I kid you not, this was an Event that will be hard to top and a wonderful SBS memory.

**Julio Covington:** It was a BONA FIDE SUCCESS to all! Mindy Giles was ON IT! The production had no flaws, and she was attentive as always keeping stage and front desk totally in control!

The arrangements at the tables (by the fabulous Liz Walker) were a salute to Angela's album **Ace of the Blues** and I heard Angela liked them too! The SBS team was as organized as a secret mission – Lynette & Earl, Ernie & Esther, Bobbie & Don and the team...in



place...on time...and looking good!

Harlow's feels like a third home – AJ, Joshua & Staff are always the most professional players on the street! The attendees were not only aware of Angela Strehli but it felt like a homecoming of sorts. So comfortable, and the dance floor was not lonely. A festive and friendly crowd to everyone. It was good for the heart and soul!

**Mick Martin:**

The SBS Membership Gala at Harlow's was memorable in so many ways, it's hard to know where to start. Hearing and seeing Angela, Mighty Mike Schermer and the band at the top of their game was stunning. It was one of the top 10 concerts of my music-loving life.



A fan of hers for decades, I told Angela, "You know I have a bad habit of gushing over you, but I watched you on stage and could tell you knew how good it was." She half closed her eyes, smiled, and nodded her head. As for being "Saint Mick" (ho ho ho), it was so much silly fun -- and a joy to see so many friends and fellow musi-



cians from over 50 years of being involved in the Sacramento music scene. Pure joy!

**Liz Walker:** Oh, what a night we had! Simply put, the music was hot, hot, hot and the audience was totally in the groove. I loved the point of view from the stage. So many happy, smiling faces eased



the butterflies of emceeing. Playing Santa, handing out CDs and the wonderful little charms (courtesy of newly elected Board member Julio Covington) was so much fun. I think folks really appreciated a little surprise! You just never know what's coming your way when you're digging the blues!



**Lynette Shumway:** What a fun and special evening!! Such great listening and DANCING music from Angela Strehli, Mike Schermer, Aki Kumar and the band. Woo-hoo, what a night; wished the party could last all night. Hats off to Esther and Ernie for manning the membership table – 42 new memberships!!!







## A Casual Conversation with Angela

**Strehli** By Mick Martin

Photo by Pinkie Rideau, w. Assistance from Bob Hakins, Photo of Angela by Bob Hakins



**Blue Notes (BN):**

Did you really grow up in a two-bit Texas town called Del Rio or was it Lubbock? That song has such evocative lyrics.

**Angela Strehli**

**(AS):** "Back when radio could turn your life around." It was

Lubbock. I had a Zenith short wave radio. Otherwise, I wouldn't have heard the blues and R&B that got my curiosity going.

**BN:** Your phrasing as a singer is remarkable. How did that develop?

**AS:** Thank you. I would say that since I also enjoyed jazz, I learned much from instrumentalists, especially on saxophone. And in blues, Muddy Waters "wrote the book" when it comes to phrasing.

**BN:** What was the music scene like in Austin, Texas in the mid-80s? Was it as exciting a time as it sounds?

**AS:** It became exciting as roots music venues started up.

**BN:** Your first EP "Stranger Blues" resulted in the creation of Antone's record label. How did that come about?

**AS:** Sheer necessity. There weren't any record companies in Austin looking for artists at the time. A fan of mine and my dad contributed enough money to establish a bona fide company. I also knew other artists who needed an outlet for their work.

**BN:** When did you meet Jimmie Vaughan?

**AS:** I had done a few good gigs in Los Angeles in 1971-72. When I returned to Austin and heard that Jimmie had moved there, I called and asked him what the "blues news" was. He could have made a ton of money playing rock 'n' roll in Dallas. We remain close friends.

**BN:** How old was Stevie Ray Vaughan when you first encountered him?

**AS:** Not sure exactly.

**BN:** The story goes that you helped Stevie develop his voice and vocal style. Is this true?

**AS:** Well, he was a fan of mine, so when he decided to start his own trio, and he would be the sole vocalist, he was intimidated. He asked me how to get started. So, I told him to just choose one song that he loved, and to sing it loud and proud until he "owned" that song. So, he chose a song I used to do at every gig I had---"Texas Flood"!

**BN:** "SRV" is a touching tribute to Stevie -- did it come to you all of a piece or did it evolve over time?

**AS:** It took quite a few years to be able to compose what I thought would be a worthy tribute to Stevie.

**BN:** Was the album "Dreams Come True" aptly named?

**AS:** Before we got together to make that record, people had started assuming that maybe we were rivals, (Marcia Ball and Lou Ann Barton) so this was an easy (and fun) way to prove them wrong. It was

a blast to get back together November 16th for an anniversary show at Antone's.

**BN:** How did the formation of the Blues Broads come about?

**AS:** Tracy (Nelson) and I were both on a couple of festivals.

We hit it off, and she loved my band. My husband had known Annie (Sampson) for years, so we invited her to join us for a casual occasion, and she was a knockout. Then, I met Dorothy (Morrison) when she attended a Sons of the Soul Revivers show at Rancho Nicasio. I explained that if we had one more powerful voice, we could have a great group together and try it out comfortably there. She had some concerns about joining a blues band because she mostly sang at church, but I explained that we didn't do anything raunchy, so she checked us out.

**BN:** Rancho Nicasio has been in operation for quite some time now, what has that experience been like for you?

**AS:** We've had 25 years of diverse styles of roots music. The best part is to see people enjoying themselves.

**BN:** It's been quite a while since your last album release. What made you decide to go back into the studio?

**AS:** Honestly-- Bob Brown, my husband of 33 years, said "It's been about 15 years since you made a record. Don't you think your fans would like to hear from you?"

**BN:** Do you have a particular formula in choosing the songs you record?

**AS:** First of all, I consider it a privilege to be able to make a record. If I didn't think I had something to contribute to my genre, I wouldn't record. Also, I was able to use a great studio and my favorite musicians.

**BN:** You've always collaborated with gifted musicians. Who is in your current band?

**AS:** Mike Schermer on guitar is the constant here in California and in Texas and beyond.

**BN:** How did you and Bob meet?

**AS:** That's a novel. Music brought us together.

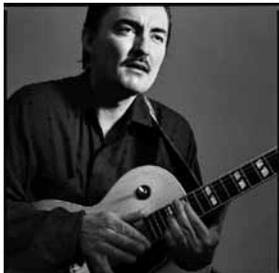
**BN:** What aspect of being involved in music do you find the most satisfying?

**AS:** Watching how music brings happiness and healing to all.



# SBS Little Charlie Baty Memorial Music Scholarship - Endowment Check Presentation

By Mindy Giles



There were plenty of warm smiles on December 8, 2022, when SBS members officially presented the “big check” --our first installment to Sacramento State for the Little Charlie Baty Memorial Music Scholarship Endowment. In attendance on a late rainy afternoon in the School of Music lobby were:



- Rick Estrin, Rick Estrin & The Nightcats
- Barbara Ray, SBS Board Member
- Mindy Giles, SBS Events Chair, Publicist
- Dr. Sheree Meyer, Dean, College of Arts and Letters, CSUS
- Dr. Stephen Blumberg, Director of School of Music, CSUS
- Barbra Pushies, Marketing, Events and Outreach Coordinator, College of Arts and Letters, CSUS
- Tess Dyer, Director of Development, CSUS
- Phil Kampel- SBS photographer



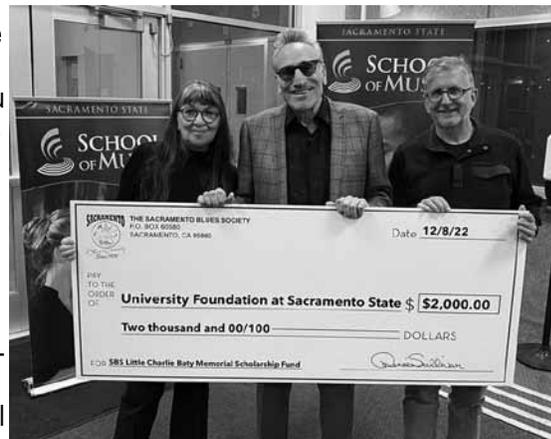
Standing in a wide circle, each one of us was able to give our thoughts about this endowment. I gave a bit of my background on having first learned of Charlie and Rick and

the Nightcats from afar, when they sent an unsolicited cassette of the band to us at Alligator Records in Chicago in 1986. We ended up signing them—the first time that has ever happened in the history of the label. It may still hold the record—Rick and the band are still recording with the legendary blues label 36 years later. When we lost Charlie suddenly in March 2020, I asked Rick if he and the band would be supportive of a way that the SBS could honor Charlie. My thought was a scholarship to a worthy student of music.

In late 2021, SBS Board member Barbara Ray was the key person leading the way to Sacramento State and the intricacies of setting up an endowment. An educator, and non-profit worker in the arts, she was ideal. Rex Smith, our Parliamentarian, tied in our SBS mission statement by suggesting the scholarship honor Charlie Baty’s commitment to lifetime learning and to the Blues In The Schools program. It will support the Sac-



ramento Blues Society’s commitment to continuing the education and preservation of Blues music. It is intended to support students in the School of Music within the College of Arts and Letters. You can read details about our criteria here: <https://www.sacblues.org/the-sacramento-blues-society-little-charlie-baty-memorial-music-scholarship.html>



Barbara spoke about the current success of the Blues in the Schools Program, and Rick spoke deeply about Charlie’s love of learning, first from the blues, then jazz and then, later in his life, gypsy jazz.



Both Dr. Meyer and Dr. Blumberg spoke of the boost that students will have, knowing this kind of endowment exists, a tangible way to support the idea of further learning the root of American music, Black American history, and a professional life in music.

Tess Marie Dyer wrote to us that very night: “Thank you, all, for a wonderful close to the workday. It was lovely getting to meet everyone in person. Please know, we consider it a true honor to have Little Charlie’s legacy carried on at



Sac State. Thank you for your support of our program and students. Much more partnership to come!”



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## Save the Date! 2nd Annual Little Charlie Baty Celebration Concert, March 23, 2023

### Benefit to Raise Funds for the Little Charlie Baty Scholarship Endowment



Photo by Rachel Kumar

YOU can help the SBS to fulfill its commitment to fund a music scholarship to Sac State! And enjoy a great evening of music in the process!

The next big fundraising event for this endowment is Thursday, March 23, 2023. This will be the "2nd Annual Little Charlie Baty Celebration Concert with Rick Estrin & The Nightcats, special guest Anson Funderburgh." The event is again at Harlow's and tickets are on sale now! It sold out last year, so do not miss your chance to experience this amazing event in 2023.

Tickets On Sale Now At: <https://www.harlows.com/event/2nd-annual-little-charlie-baty-celebration-concert-fundraiser/harlows/sacramento-california/>

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