

SACRAMENTO

A bi-monthly publication of the Sacramento Blues Society



Blues Society

BLUE NOTES!

MARCH-APRIL
2026
ISSUE 47
VOL. 2



President's Column

By Marcel Smith



Greetings, Sacramento Blues Society family. I hope this message finds everyone grounded, focused, and in good spirits as we continue our shared mission of preserving, promoting, and celebrating the blues. Today, I want to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments and efforts within our community.

First and foremost, we are incredibly proud of our International Blues Challenge (IBC) representatives—Dirty Laundry and Mike Hammar and the Nails. Their dedication, musicianship, and heart represent the best of the Sacramento Blues Society. Congratulations to both acts for carrying our torch to the IBC with such excellence. I also want to extend sincere gratitude to our SBS IBC Chair, Shirley McCoy, for her guidance, supervision, and steady oversight in making this journey possible.

I'd also like to update you on our transition to our new CRM, DonorView. Progress is moving rapidly and smoothly, and we look forward to sharing more details in our upcoming weekly e-blast. After consultation with legal counsel, the Board has agreed not to pursue further legal action against our previous CRM provider, Flipcause. The cost of legal fees could exceed the \$3,058.45 still owed to SBS, and our priority is always to steward our resources responsibly. However, we remain open to exploring any additional appropriate avenues.

My heartfelt thanks go to Cari Chenkin for diligently ensuring we fully understood every legal option available to us. Thank you as well to Mindy Giles for her efforts in the careful transition of information from Flipcause to DonorView, and to Laurel Coppess for guaranteeing an accurate accounting of funds owed and received. Your work strengthens the foundation of this organization.

To our membership: I encourage you to consider donating to our General Fund, which directly supports the shows we produce and the operations that keep the Sacramento Blues Society thriving. You will hear more about this focus at upcoming SBS-sponsored and affiliated events.

Lastly—and with a heavy heart—I want to extend condolences to HOWELL DEVINE, and to the entire Blues community, on the passing of Pete Devine. Pete graced us with a performance at our SBS Winter Membership Gala on December 14, 2025. I am told that this was his final performance, and I am deeply grateful to have spent time visiting with him that evening. Please join me in sending love,

2025 Committee Chairs

Hall of Fame - Sally Katen

Events - Mindy Giles

Membership - Linda McShane

Sponsorships/Fundraising - Open

Finance Committee - Marcel Smith

Public Relations & Social Media - Mindy Giles

Volunteer Coordinator - Lynette Shumway

Blues in the Schools, Big Day of Giving - Rick Snyder

Merchandise & Member Care - Lynette Shumway

Blue Sunday - Cari Chenkin

Blue Notes Newsletter - Cari Chenkin & Jan Kelley

IBC Competition - Shirley McCoy

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, educating students with "Blues in the Schools", 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

2026 Board of Directors

Marcel Smith, President
Cari Chenkin, Vice President
Shirley McCoy, Secretary
Laurel Coppess, Treasurer
Rick Snyder, Parliamentarian
Barbara Katen
Lynette Shumway
Sally Katen
Bobbie Felt Armstrong

We have room for two more directors - YOUR name could be here!

Sacramento Blues Society Publications

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Cari Chenkin & Jan Kelley, Co-Editors

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Instagram: instagram.com/sacbluessociety/
"X", formerly Twitter: [@SacBluesSociety](https://twitter.com/SacBluesSociety)

light, and comfort to Pete's family, friends, fans, and all who were touched by his spirit. Life is precious; may we continue to cherish one another as we honor the Blues and all those who bring it to life.

With respect and gratitude, Marcel Smith

Blues In The Schools Update

What's it all about?

By Rick Snyder (aka Rico)

Blues in the Schools Committee Chair



OUR MISSION

Think back to the first teacher who believed in you. The first spark that made learning feel exciting. The moment you discovered your own voice. That's what Blues in the Schools (BITS) creates for students every day. Since 2005, the Sacramento Blues Society's BITS program has served more than 56,000 students. Our nationally recognized work earned the Blues Foundation's prestigious "Keeping the Blues Alive" Award in 2015. We partner with classroom teachers, professional musician-educators and community organizations to:

- Foster cultural understanding
- Address economic disparity
- Build creative confidence
- Strengthen community connection
- BITS has served students across Oak Park, Midtown, Del Paso Boulevard, Colonial Heights, Hagginwood, West Sacramento, Folsom, Woodland and beyond. We also reach youth who need support most, including those at Sacramento Children's Receiving Home, WIND Youth Center, and Sacramento Juvenile Hall.

WHAT WE DO

School Assemblies (K-8): High-energy, interactive presentations led by professional blues musicians. Students learn the roots of blues, Black American history, rhythm, songwriting, and how music connects to math, geography, sociology, and language arts. Our efforts have been supported by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts through the Any Given Child initiative in coordination with the Sacramento County Office of Education. Mentors and supporters have included nationally known artists such as Jackie Greene, Tommy Castro, Joe Bonamassa and many respected local professionals including Kyle Rowland, Red's Blues, Pinkie Rideau, Val Starr & John Ellis, and many more who are dedicated to youth mentorship.

8-Week After-School Artist Program: An intensive program where students learn to:

- Write original songs
- Form bands
- Practice discipline and teamwork
- Develop leadership skills
- Build self-confidence
- The program culminates each year at our **BITS Showcase held on the first Thursday in May (May 7 this year!) during the regional Big Day of Giving celebration.** Students perform for families, teachers, musicians, and the community. BITS leverages grants and donor support to keep these programs accessible.

WHY IT MATTERS

Social Impact because BITS builds:

- Creative expression

- Emotional intelligence
- Empathy
- Confidence
- Cultural understanding
- The blues teaches resilience. Born from hardship, it shows students how to transform struggle into strength. As blues songwriter Willie Dixon said, "The blues is the roots, the rest is the fruits."

ECONOMIC IMPACT

In just four years, BITS has hired 300+ professional regional musicians, many teaching in Title 1 schools. Our fundraising concerts and showcases bring families, teachers, and music lovers together, generating revenue for local venues, restaurants, and neighborhood businesses. Studies show that for every \$1 invested in the arts, up to \$12 circulates back into the community.

WHO WE SERVE

- 56,000+ students since 2005
- 49 Sacramento-area zip codes
- Majority Title 1 schools
- 68% of students from low-income families
- 4,000+ female students empowered
- Programs at Rosemont, West Campus High Schools, Cal Middle School, Alexander Twilight Secondary Academy, and more to come
- Presentations at youth shelters and juvenile facilities
- Most importantly, we change lives. One student shared: "You made me want to live again... I felt so sad after my mom died. Your music made me feel normal. I forgot for a while and felt like dancing and singing." That's why BITS exists.

SUPPORT THE BLUES. SUPPORT OUR YOUTH

We welcome donations of instruments, equipment, and financial support. Your contribution helps the next generation find their voice.

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SBS Hall of Fame Update

NEW Date for the Johnny “Guitar” Knox Memorial Pro Jam 2026

By Sally Katen, HOF Chair



The date has changed for the Johnny “Guitar” Knox Jam. The new date is Sunday, June 14, 2026, at the Torch Club from 4pm – 7pm.

This year’s Go Fund Me campaign to raise monies for the HOF has started, and will continue through the end of March, so if you can donate, please do!! Thank YOU! <https://gofund.me/105c1b9d4>

HOF Nominations Now Being Accepted

The SBS Hall of Fame is looking for Nominations for the upcoming event. Do you know of a local musician or musical supporter that would be a great nomination? A form for submittal of nominations is available on our website at: <https://www.sacblues.org/hall-of-fame.html>.

Nominations for this year’s class will be accepted through June 1, 2026.

The 2026 Hall of Fame induction is September 27th, 2026 at Harlow’s from 12 noon – 4 pm. There will also be an after-party and jam at the Torch Club from 5 to 7 pm.

THE SACRAMENTO BLUES SOCIETY HALL OF FAME GUIDELINES

Hall of Fame Purpose

- To document the history of local blues music.
- To enhance and celebrate the existing blues music environment.
- To honor those who have made significant contributions to the blues in the Sacramento region.

Inductee Criteria

Nominees must have blues as their primary format or music style, at least a 20-year history of blues participation, and must have made a historical contribution and had an impact on the blues in the Sacramento region. Nominees are not required to be SBS members.

Nominations and Submissions

- All nominations will be accepted.
- No one may nominate themselves.
- Nominations can be submitted year-round, but only nominations received by June 1st of the current year will be considered for the Induction Ceremony in that year’s September.
- The nomination form can be emailed to bluesforthechuck@hotmail.com, or it can be printed and mailed to SBS, P.O. Box 60580, Sacramento, CA. 95860-0580.
- The form may also be printed, filled out and given to any SBS Board Member.

Nomination forms must include the name and email address of the individual making the nomination (so they can be contacted if necessary) and the Nominee’s name and background.

What’s On Your Playlist?

By Barbara Katen



As we started the New Year, I thought it might be interesting to check in with the 2026 Officers of SBS to see how their playlists have evolved since we last asked in prior years.

Blues lovers know that a favorite playlist is always changing, and this year is no exception—different songs, both old and new, have made their way onto the officers’ rotations. The hits keep on coming, offering a fresh mix for every mood and occasion.

Below, each officer shares what’s currently playing and inspiring them. From classic tracks to modern gems, here are the sounds filling their playlist:

Marcel Smith (President)

- “My Soul” – Sean McDonald
- “Leave It At The Door” – D.K. Harrell
- “Believe” – Southern Avenue
- “Ain’t That a Trip” – James Hunter (featuring Van Morrison)
- “The Hits Keep Coming” – Rick Estrin and the Nightcats

Cari Chenkin (Vice-President)

- “In These Shoes” – Kirsty MacColl
- “I’ll Play the Blues for You” – Albert King
- “If You Love Me Like You Say” – Albert Collins
- “Choo Choo Ch’ Boogie” – Louis Jordan
- “Nick of Time” – Bonnie Raitt

Laurel Coppess (Treasurer)

- “San Ho Zay” – Freddie King
- “Heads Up” – Freddie King
- “Little Miss Night and Day” – Boz Scaggs
- “I Ain’t Lyin’” – Little Charlie and the Night Cats
- “Can’t Keep It Up” – Little Charlie and the Night Cats

Shirley McCoy (Secretary)

- “Damn Your Eyes” – Beth Hart
- “Late Night Get Down” – Southern Avenue
- “Let the Demons Out” – Ghali Volt
- “I Put a Spell on You” – Samantha Fish
- “Save Me” – Danielle Nicole

Rick Snyder (Parliamentarian)

- “Killing in the Name Of” – Rage Against the Machine
- “Zombie Wolf” – Frank Zappa
- “For Free” – Joni Mitchell
- “I’m No Angel” – Gregg Allman
- “Voodoo Child” – Jimi Hendrix

If you’re looking for something new to add to your own playlist, try out a few of these recommendations from the SBS Officers. Whether you’re drawn to soulful ballads, cutting-edge blues, or classic rock, there’s sure to be a track that strikes a chord.

Support SBS Members’ Businesses!

We’re excited to announce we will soon launch a new *Support SBS Members’ Businesses* page on the Sacramento Blues Society website. This page is dedicated to highlighting and promoting the businesses of our SBS members—because supporting the blues also means supporting each other.

If you’d like your business featured, please send your advertisement and/or business card to Sacramentoblues1979@gmail.com. Let’s keep our Blues community strong by shopping local and supporting fellow members!



“Blues On the Green” Free Spring Concert Is Coming:

SBS Partners with Sacramento State and the Renaissance Society

By Mindy Giles, SBS Events Chair

It's time to get back on campus, people! A free Friday afternoon special spring blues music event/fundraiser on the Sac State campus is set for April 17, 2026.



The casual “Blues on the Green” outdoor concert is open to students and faculty, the Renaissance Society and the public. The 4 pm - 6 pm free gathering will celebrate the many years the ASI Food Pantry has served the Sac State students. Currently, the ASI Food Pantry serves nearly three thousand students yearly.

Blues fans and in particular, International Blues Challenge (IBC) supporters will be over the moon to know that two young friends, Little Village Recording Artist Kyle Rowland and our 2026 solo/duo IBC representative in Memphis, Dirty Laundry, will be pairing up to bring their exuberant front porch Delta and Piedmont-style acoustic blues to the stage.



The Sac State School of Music will also get into the act by providing a specially chosen group of faculty (led by Dr. Scott Perkins, Director of the School of Music and Steve Roach, Director of Jazz Studies)

and student players following our SBS duo.

Partners in this fundraiser and information opportunity are led by ASI Student Services Manager Ryan Choi (ASI Food Pantry/ASI

Student Engagement and Outreach Office) along with Scott Perkins, Director of the School of Music, Mindy Giles of the Sacramento Blues Society, and Barbara Ray, Renaissance Society Events Chair (and former SBS Board member) at Sacramento State. Hector Hernandez of KSSU Radio and Lauren Prieto, Events and Outreach Coordinator for ASI Student Engagement and Outreach Office will assist in promotion and marketing.

The Renaissance Society is a 2000-member-strong group of life-long learners. Created in 1986, the member-driven organization is celebrating forty years of intellectual curiosity, appreciating diversity, and building community through a vast program of seminars, forums and events both on campus and by Zoom.

‘Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young.’ - Howard Zinn

Go here: <https://www.csus.edu/college/social-sciences-interdisciplinary-studies/renaissance-society/>

Go here: <https://asi.csus.edu/asi-food-pantry>

WHAT: “Blues On The Green” Free Spring Concert

WHEN: Friday, April 17th, 2026. 4:00pm-6:00pm

WHERE: CSUS Campus -Between Library Quad & Capistrano Hall (School of Music Building)

General Campus Address: 6000 J St. Sacramento, CA 95819-6015

NOTES:

- Chairs and picnic blankets will be provided.
- Feel free to bring a picnic basket. The University Union Cafeteria will be open for carry-out.
- Use Parking Structure # 1

CONTACT:

Ryan Choi - ASI Student Services Manager (ASI Food Pantry/ASI Student Engagement and Outreach Office) 916.539.6445 / ryan.choi@csus.edu

Barbara Ray - Renaissance Society Chair, 916.205.3874/ bray38@hotmail.com

Torch Club			WWW.TORCHCLUB.NET
MARCH 2026			
MAR 6TH	MYLAR & FRIENDS		6-8 PM
MAR 7TH	TOO MANY SQUIRRELS		6-8 PM
MAR 7TH	MATT AXSTAR		9PM - 12AM
MAR 8TH	BLUES JAM		4-7 PM
MAR 13TH	AKI KUMAR BIRTHDAY SHOW		9PM - 12AM
MAR 14TH	AARON KING & THE IMPERIALS		9PM - 12AM
MAR 20TH	MITCH POLZAK		9PM - 12AM
MAR 22ND	BIG SANDY & HIS FLY RITE BOYS		4-7 PM
MAR 27TH	LEAPING BLENNIES		6-8 PM
MAR 28TH	MERCY ME BAND		9PM-12AM
MAR 29TH	SBS SUNDAY W/ GLORIA & THE GROOVE MASTERS		4-7 PM
MAR 30TH	LEAPING BLENNIES		6-8 PM
APRIL 2026			
APR 3RD	MYLAR & FRIENDS		6-8 PM
APR 12TH	BLUES JAM		4-7 PM
APR 18TH	LIBERATION ROCK CAMP - BENEFIT FOR GIRLS ROCK SAC		3-5 PM
APR 24TH	THE GOLD SOULS		9PM - 12AM
APR 25TH	CAMPBELL'S FOLLY		6-8 PM
APR 26TH	SBS SUNDAY W/ THE CALIFORNIA BLUESTONES		4-7 PM
904 15 TH STREET SACRAMENTO			

"Volunteer Spotlight"

by Barbara Katen

Getting to Know Our Membership Chair: Linda McShane

Photo by Barbara Katen

Behind every membership card, renewal reminder, and welcome letter is a dedicated volunteer quietly keeping the wheels turning for the Sacramento Blues Society. That person is Linda McShane, our Membership Chair — a role that blends organization, consistency, and a genuine love for the blues community.



Linda's journey with SBS began back in 1990, when a friend first introduced her to the organization. While she officially joined in the early '90s, it wasn't until 2002 that she truly jumped into the action — thanks to a persuasive friend named Jan who "invited" her to a Board meeting and promptly put her to work. The rest, as they say, is Blues Society history.

What first drew Linda to the Blues? "It's easy to dance to," she laughs — especially her favorite style, Chicago Blues. Over the years, she has served on the Board of Directors, worked countless events, and steadily became one of the behind-the-scenes anchors of the organization.

When she's not managing memberships, Linda enjoys traveling, reading, volunteering at the SSPCA, and spending time with her beloved feline companion, Ziggy — whom she proudly describes as "the best cat companion ever."

What the Membership Chair Really Does

Most members see the friendly reminder emails or receive their membership cards in the mail — but few realize how much work happens behind the scenes.

Linda manages the membership database using Google Sheets, maintaining records for current and lapsed members dating all the way back to 2014. Her work involves tracking forms, managing emails, printing welcome letters and thank-you notes, ordering membership cards and supplies, preparing mailings, coordinating calendar updates for the Board and the Blue Notes editor, and responding to member questions and changes.

Each month, Linda dedicates approximately 10 hours to keeping everything running smoothly.

Challenges pop up more often than you might expect: incomplete and illegible forms, rejected emails, returned mail, and missing change-of-address information can slow things down. Still, Linda keeps the process moving with her trademark efficiency.

When a new member joins or someone renews, Linda personally enters the information into the database, prepares the membership card and thank-you letter, stuffs the envelope, and sends it on its way — a true hands-on labor of love.

Why Linda Volunteers

For Linda, volunteering is about giving back. "I enjoy doing my part for the blues community," she says. She values the inclusive and welcoming nature of SBS, noting that the blues community is largely nonjudgmental and supportive — a place where everyone belongs.

When the workload gets heavy, Linda's philosophy is simple and powerful: "My work ethic is to get it done." And get it done she does!

One of her most memorable moments? Processing 75 membership applications after a wildly successful membership party a few years ago — a busy but rewarding testament to the Society's growing reach.

Linda also regularly hears from grateful members, especially after sending renewal reminders — small notes of appreciation that make the effort worthwhile.

Looking Ahead

Linda believes membership is the foundation of everything SBS does. "A Society would not exist without its members," she says plainly. She reminds members that their dues and participation truly make a difference: "You are the lifeblood of the organization. By paying dues and showing up, you are helping to keep the blues alive in our community."

Looking ahead, Linda hopes to see SBS continue growing and offering great music for years to come.

Her message to members is both practical and heartfelt: renew early when possible, keep your contact information updated, and don't hesitate to reach out if something seems amiss.

And for anyone thinking about volunteering? Linda's advice is simple: show up, talk with current volunteers and Board members, and be reliable.

Because behind every great blues society is a group of dedicated people — and leaders like Linda McShane — quietly making the music possible.

"Blue Sunday" Update

By Cari Chenkin

Photos by Cari Chenkin, Barbara Katen, Dale Roberts & Mindy Giles

Now in its fifth full year, our "Blue Sunday" program has become a beloved feature of the Sacramento Blues Society experience. We started the series in August of 2021 as a way to benefit our member bands and it's grown in popularity with both bands and audiences.

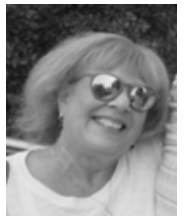
Member bands, especially those new to the SBS or who haven't played a "Blue Sunday" yet, or who played one back in 2021, 2022 or 2023, please contact me if you want to book our 2026 dates. Reach me at: cariedawaycc@gmail.com.

In this issue, we review shows from December 2025 and January 2026. February's show, which featured Jen & Tonics, will have occurred too late for publication in this issue. But we'll catch up with them next issue.

On deck for March 29 is returning band Gloria T & the Master Groovers, with The California Bluestones scheduled to appear on April 26. And more great Sunday blues yet to come!

Sunday, December 28 - Tony & The Tuff Times

The period between Christmas and New Years can be kind of an "iffy" time for shows — but Tony & The Tuff Times brought terrific energy and a great crowd to the Torch Club for December's "Blue Sunday" show. The band featured a great mix of classic and original blues tunes that kept the crowd on the dance floor all afternoon. With Tony Westlake on harmonica and vocals, Robin Montgomery on guitar, Dan Cresci on bass, Tony Montoya on drums and Greg Langlois on saxophone, the groove was soulful and driving.





The first set started out with "Black Dog Blues", and went on to cover such classics as "T-Bone Shuffle", "Woke Up This Morning", "Walter's Boogie" and "My

Babe". Tony's harmonica work was both impassioned and precise, and solos



from Robin and Greg showcased their expertise as well. The rhythm section was tight and together, and the repertoire offered variations in tempo

from shuffle, to swing, to rumba and slow blues. A couple of times during the show, sax player Greg came off the stage and wandered through the crowd while playing his solo!



They went on in subsequent sets to features some original tunes such as "Smooth Talking Man", "Social Distancing", "Kitty Kat Blues" and "Empty



Space". And covered more fun classics including Slim Harpo's "Scratch My Back", "Blues with a Feeling", a great cover of War's "Low Rider" (featuring drummer Tony Montoya on vocals) "Linda Lou" and "Kidney Stew".



The band continued to mix it up with the original

"Covid 19 Blues" and more classics including "Hip Shake", "Help Me", "Mellow Down Easy" and Tommy Castro's "Nasty Habits". The audience ate it up like candy, and had a wonderful time. It was great to welcome Tony & the Tuff Times back to Blue Sunday (they last played one back in 2022) and I know we'll bring them back again in the future.



Sunday, January 25 - The Dave Segal Band

We owe a special thanks and debt of gratitude to our January "Blue Sunday" act, the Dave Segal Band. They very graciously made themselves available at very short notice, after Almost Blue, the band originally booked for that date, had to suddenly cancel at the last minute for a band member family



emergency. (We hope to bring Almost Blue back for some time later this year.)

The band consisted of Dave Segal on guitar and vocals, Kirk Hooper on drums, Dean Chance on bass and Dave Croall on harmonica and

vocals. The two Daves are some of the bluesiest guys in town, and with them trading off vocals and leads, you know it was going to sound great! Each of these musicians is a true expert on their instruments, and it shows.



Dave Segal started off the show with a rousing version of "Hey Bartender", then rolled right into "Let the Good Times Roll", which got the party off to a roaring start! Another tune or two, and it was Dave Croall's turn to take the



lead with some harmonica-focused songs. Other tunes in the first set included "Good Time Charlie" and "Bad Case of Love".



The second set saw guest artist Jeff Harper sit in on bass and vocals to sing the Fabulous Thunderbirds' "Why Get Up". A couple of tunes later, Dave S. did "Some Kind of Wonderful", "Hey Bob a Re Bop",



Chuck Berry's "Nadine" and the classic "Help Me". Dave Croall came back with some more great harmonica tunes as well.



The band started off the third set with "Kidney Stew" then George Harmonica Smith's "Telephone Blues". Since the news had just broken about the passing of Grateful Dead member Bob Weir, Dave S. offered a tribute to Bobby with a medley of "Not Fade Away" and "Goin' Down the Road Feelin' Bad". Dave C. sang "Mind Your Own Business", then it



was back to Dave S. for the instrumental "Talk to Me Baby" (which he said was just an excuse to show off on guitar, LOL!). They closed the show with "House Party", and it sure was a good time party that Sunday at the Torch Club!



Kyle Rowland Record Release at Harlow's by Frank Farmer

Photos by Dale Roberts, Frank Farmer, Laurel Coppess & Cari Chenkin

Friday, January 16 saw Kyle Rowland and his band Rowland and Tumblin' bring big-time blues music to Harlow's in Sacramento, CA. Kyle is an extremely talented musician, shining on guitar and keyboard as well as vocals, and especially his mainstay, harmonica. His deep knowledge and respect for blues artistry, from its origins to the



present day, were evident throughout the evening.

Rowland and Tumblin' features Justin MacCarthy on guitar, Myles Silveira on drums, and Mike Phillips on bass. Together, they delivered a powerful

sound that resonated with an appreciative crowd. The performance was made even more special by guest appearances from Rick Estrin on harmonica, Marcel Smith on vocals, and Todd Morgan on vocals, each adding their unique touch to the night's festivities.

The occasion was a release party for Kyle's new album, *Not Holding Back!*. Produced by Rick Estrin and Kid Anderson at Greaseland Studios, the album is a fabulous testament to Kyle's talent and



dedication to the blues tradition.

It was a thrill to witness this event, and I'm eager to see this band again. Their new album is truly fantastic and is sure to draw well-deserved attention in the weeks to come. Big thanks to Mindy Giles, Harlow's, and the Sacramento Blues Society for making this memorable evening possible!



International Blues Challenge (IBC) Update

By Shirley McCoy, IBC Chairperson



The Sacramento Blues Society is very proud of both of our International Blues Challenge contestants who represented us in Memphis in January. Thank you to Bo Ely for being our unofficial on-site reporter. You can read his review of the experience in Memphis and his take on the sets performed by Mike Hammar and the Nails and by Dirty Laundry (Marcus). Mike Hammar and the Nails made it to the semi-finals, and though Marcus did not advance, the band, Marcus and his mother all expressed gratitude for having the opportunity go. The trip to Memphis was worthwhile and I am sure that Sacramento made an impression on the judges.

So, what did Mike Hammar and the Nails and Marcus have to say about their experience?

Marcus reflected that he was "...happy to have had the honor of playing in the blues contest. The first time there I was busking the streets and reading about the history, and now I got to play inside one of those places. Happy with the connections made and happy to help represent Sacramento."

Letisha, Marcus' mother, who accompanied him to Memphis had this to say: "Being in Memphis was an experience! Much slower pace of life, and everybody was very friendly. It was neat to see all of the competitors and different styles of blues being played. I was able to visit the Civil Rights Museum and try some different local restaurants."

Mike and the band had these things to say about their experience:

Mike Hammar: "Thank you to the leadership of the Sacramento Blues Society for making the trip possible. The fundraising show and the GoFundMe helped cover much of the travel and lodging expenses! Thank you to all of the SBS members, family, friends, and fans who showed up at our shows and donated directly to the cause and/or by purchasing merch at our shows. Every little contribution added up and made a significant difference in our out-of-pocket expenses. Much love to all of you."

Special thanks to radio stations KZFR with Shirley McCoy and KVMR with Jennifer Robin, KYOS Roger Woods and KZAP for publicizing our IBC fundraising activities and for shining a light on our newest album. From the firm handshakes filled with ten-dollar bills to large donations to text messages wishing us well to personal phone calls, the support has been humbling. In Memphis, we bragged about our SBS family often!

I am proud of my band. They played well and enjoyed the experience. Being with so many musicians from our genre was amazing. We made many meaningful connections with performers and fans who love the blues. The experience has left us inspired and more creative than ever! I'm writing songs for our next record as I have lots of music and lyrics on my mind. Stay tuned blues fans!"

Mike Boykin aka "The Professor" (harmonica): "The IBC, what an amazing uplifting experience. Rubbing shoulders with fine musicians and great bands. The crowds where we played were great. They were looking to have a good time and hear the music they love. They inspired us and lifted us to greater heights. It was a blues challenge after all, and we had to bring our best, but the atmo-

sphere was really positive and supportive. It must be said that B.B. King's Club on Beale Street with that crowd packed in like sardines was a transcendent experience.

Thank you to the Sacramento Blues Society for selecting us and supporting us on this adventure. We did our best to make Sacramento proud."

Allan "B3 Blues" Carol (Hammond Organ): "The four-day experience in downtown Memphis was positive and I am grateful for it. Every venue was pro and the feeling was safe."

Greg Merino (drums): "I had a good time, felt safe. The stage turnaround time should have been 15 minutes instead of 10 minutes. I am very thankful for the support from the Sacramento Blues Society for helping make the trip financially possible through fundraising efforts."

Sparky Gehres (bass): "Big fun!"

Congratulations to Derrick Dove and the Peacekeepers of the Wiregrass Blues Society (Alabama) who were the first-place winners in the band division and to the Weary Ramblers of the Central Iowa Blues Society who won first place in the solo/duo division. Derrick was also awarded Best Guitarist while Chad Elliot from the Weary Ramblers Duo received the same award in the Solo/Duo Division.

We're now planning for the 2027 International Blues Challenge which means that it will again be time for our Local Challenge. Our Local Challenge is open to all current member bands and solos/duos, and will take place at the Torch Club, final date TBD. This year, we can only send ONE challenger, whether that is either a solo/duo, or a band. The application details will be available soon - please keep an eye out on our website, socials, and e-blasts for more information.

IBC: Sacramento Blues Society Shines in Memphis

Mike Hammar & the Nails and Dirty Laundry
By Bo Ely
Bring the Blues to Beale Street

Photos by Bo Ely, Letisha Velez, Mike Hammar & Jay Hiatt

The International Blues Challenge (IBC) in Memphis, TN is more than just a competition—it's a gathering of passionate musicians and fans from around the globe. This year, the Sacramento Blues Society proudly sent two acts: Mike Hammar & the Nails and Dirty Laundry, both ready to bring their unique sounds to the historic Beale Street.

Mike Hammar & the Nails: Electrifying the Stage



From the moment Mike Hammar & the Nails hit the stage, the crowd was hooked. Their set blended soulful vocals with tight, driving rhythms that got toes tapping and heads nodding. Audience members cheered wildly, clearly moved by the band's energy and musicianship. The group's progression to the semi-finals was a proud moment for Sacramento, proving their blues chops among



some fierce competition.

Dirty Laundry: Heartfelt Solo-Duo Magic

Dirty Laundry took on the solo-duo category, and his stripped-down performance brought a fresh vibe to the IBC. With heartfelt lyrics and impressive guitar work, he drew in listeners who hung



on every note. The crowd's enthusiastic response made it clear that Dirty Laundry left a mark, even though he didn't advance to the finals. His dedication and spirit truly represented the Sacramento Blues Society's love for the blues.

Event Atmosphere: Camaraderie and Talent

The IBC buzzed with talent, from seasoned pros to emerging artists. Musicians mingled, swapped stories, and cheered each other on, creating a sense of family among competitors. The global participation was inspiring—blues lovers from every corner of the world came together, united by their passion for music. The venues along Beale Street were alive with excitement, and every night felt like a celebration of the blues.

Competition Results and Acknowledgements

While Mike Hammar & the Nails advanced to the semifinals and Dirty Laundry gave a memorable performance, the Sacramento Blues Society's pride shone through. The event, organized by the Blues Foundation, ran smoothly thanks to dedicated volunteers and staff. Musicians, fans, and organizers all played a part in making the IBC a highlight of the blues calendar.

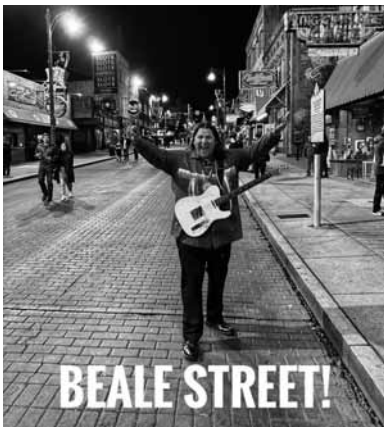
Reflections and Gratitude

Looking back, the experience was unforgettable. The Sacramento Blues Society's representatives embraced every moment, showing their gratitude to the organizers, volunteers, and the fans who came out to support. Memphis proved once again to be a home for the blues, and Sacramento's presence at the IBC left a lasting impression. Here's to more music, more camaraderie, and more blues in the years to come!

Midnight in Memphis: My Journey to the IBC

By Mike Hammar

The pilgrimage to Memphis isn't just a road trip; it's a rite of passage. After more than twenty years of loving, living, and performing the blues, my band, Mike Hammar and The Nails, finally stood on Beale Street for the 2026 International Blues Challenge (IBC). With our silver anniversary approaching next year, we weren't exactly wide-eyed novices, yet I'll tell you we felt as giddy as kids the moment we stepped into that



legendary neon glow.

Pit Crews and Power Chords

The IBC is a marathon, not a sprint, and I came prepared with my team of veterans. After a ritual meal of Southern delights at the Blues City Cafe, I headed to the band leader meeting. My main goal was simple: keep us sharp and avoid point deductions.

In this competition, timing is everything. I told the fellas we had to be show-ready in ten minutes and off in twenty-five. Thanks to our incredible tech crew—Ray Guerrero, Scott Besiwanger, Bill Stella, and Robert Carroll—who moved gear like a NASCAR pit crew, we had zero time deductions across all three performances.



All-Original, All Night

While many acts lean on the classics, we bet on ourselves. We drew from our three-album catalog of original material, trying to narrow twenty-five years of chemistry into five or six songs. During our quarterfinals at the 152 Beale St. Club, the energy from the crowd was electric.



I looked around at my brothers on stage—Greg Merino holding it down on drums, Sparky Gehres locking in the groove on bass, "The Professor" Mike Boykin wailing on the harmonica, and Allan "B3 Blues" Carroll painting the room with that Hammond organ soul. We played as well as I can ever remember, inspired

by the spirit of the challenge.

The camaraderie was the best part. We made sure to catch our fellow Sacramento Blues Society (SBS) representative, the pre-war style finger-picker "Dirty Laundry" Marcus Velez.. He absolutely slayed his set, and our whole crew—including the legendary Bo Ely—was there to cheer him on.

The Holy Grail: B.B. King's Blues Club

It was close to midnight on the second night when Blues Foundation President Kimberly Horton started announcing who would advance. When we heard we made the cut for the semifinals, we were beyond grateful.

The venue for our next round? The world-famous B.B. King's Blues Club.

Walking into that club, you could feel the history. We started our set



by proudly introducing ourselves as representatives of the Sacramento Blues Society (SBS). We'd been practicing these six songs for six months, but that night, we didn't just play them—we lived them. From the cheers in the balcony to our "roaring crash and burn finish," it was a moment of pure "acting a fool in the best way" right there on B.B.'s home turf.

Brotherhood of the Blues

One of the highlights was the friendships we forged in the hotel lounges after hours. We hit it off with Derek Dove and The Peacekeepers from Alabama.



We spent the week rooting for each other. While our journey ended at the semifinals and we did not make the cut for the finals, I was thrilled to see Derek and his crew eventually win Best Band, with Derek taking home Best Guitarist. They are a class act and truly deserved it.



Heading Home

We may be back in California now, but we left a piece of our hearts on Beale Street. In our minds, the support from our families, the SBS, and our fans made us feel like winners before we even played a note. As we look toward twenty-five years as a band, I'm immensely proud of what we accomplished. We didn't just compete in the IBC—we soaked up every second of the blues.



"Blues for Bob" Jam Fundraiser

January 18, 2026, The Torch Club

By Cari Chenkin

Photos by Cari Chenkin, Barbara Katen & Mindy Giles

Those of you who regularly attend the great Sunday afternoon blues jams at the Torch know what a good time they provide. On this particular Sunday, the jam was made special at the request of SBS Hall of Fame member Jan Kelley.

Jan and her late husband Bob Cosman frequently showed up to enjoy the free afternoon of blues, and it was in Bob's honor that Jan asked if this Sunday jam could serve as a fundraiser for the SBS General Fund. With the gracious agreement of jam host extraordinaire Dave



Segal and Torch Club owner Marina Texeira and staff, this edition of the jam brought out a terrific assortment of musicians and fans.

In addition to all the "usual suspects" who signed up to play and sing, the jam master for the afternoon was SBS Hall of Famer Paris Clayton, and featured plenty of other local blues stars. We heard sets from Val Starr &



John Ellis, Red's Blues' Beth & RW Grigsby, Angel Reyes and more.



While in keeping with the jam's "no cover charge" policy, donations were accepted, which went toward the SBS's General Fund. What you can't put a price on is the enjoyment experienced by the musicians and audience alike, and I'm sure that Bob's spirit was smiling down on the gathering.







Blues Women: Voices of Power and Change

Honoring the Women Who Shaped and Continue to Define the Blues

By Barbara Katen

This Women's History Month, the *Blue Notes* shines a much-deserved spotlight on the extraordinary women who have shaped, inspired, and pushed the boundaries of blues music. From the earliest days of the genre to the vibrant contemporary scene, women's stories and songs have powered the heartbeat of the blues, offering the world resilience, artistry, and unapologetic truth.

The roots of blues music are deeply entwined with the voices of remarkable women. **Ma Rainey**, affectionately called the "Mother of the Blues," brought rural Southern traditions to the stage, her singing echoing the joys and struggles of everyday life. There was **Mamie Smith**, and **Bessie Smith**, the "Empress of the Blues," who commanded both audience and industry with her unrivaled power and presence, becoming a cultural icon of the 1920s. Also worthy of mention are **Sippie Wallace**, **Josephine Baker**, **Billie Holiday** and **Ida Cox**. And **Memphis Minnie** redefined what it meant to be a woman in music, dazzling as a guitarist, songwriter, and bandleader, her wit and musical prowess unmatched.

As the music evolved, so did the influence of its women. **Etta James** and **Koko Taylor** each brought new dimensions to the genre: James with her genre-blending voice and Taylor with the raw energy that made her the "Queen of the Blues." Their passion and innovation influenced generations of musicians, both female and male. One of the most influential artists was **Sister Rosetta Tharpe**, whose electric guitar playing shaped the styles of many (male and female) guitarists to come. From New Orleans came the great **Irma Thomas**, and gospel brought us **Mavis Staples**.

Contemporary stars like **Bonnie Raitt** and **Maria Muldaur** have

bridged roots tradition with popular appeal, making the blues accessible to fresh audiences while staying true to its emotional core. **Shemekia Copeland** delivers powerful, socially conscious anthems that challenge and uplift, while **Susan Tedeschi** brings soulful musicianship and a new perspective to modern blues performance. There's also the Texas blues of artists like **Angela Strehli** and **Marcia Ball**. And who could forget **Debbie Davies**?

Today, the spirit of the blues is alive in dynamic performers around the world. **Rory Block** channels the Delta masters and mentors new generations. **Ruthie Foster** fuses gospel and folk into her blues, advocating hope and unity. **Janiva Magness** sings about what it means to be a woman and **Bettye LaVette** has a career spanning six decades. **Sue Foley** writes, plays guitar and sings, and blazing guitarist **Laura Chavez** proves women can totally shred.

Rising artists like **Valerie June** and **Jackie Venson** blend tradition with contemporary currents, proving that the genre is as vital as ever. Other exciting new female blues artists include **Vanessa Collier**, **Samantha Fish**, **Larkin Poe**, **Ally Venable**, **Nikki Hill**, and Kansas City's **Danielle Nicole**.

Let's also give kudos to some of the hard-working female blues artists right here in our own SBS community: **Beth Reid-Grigsby** of Red's Blues, **Dana Moret** of Zenn Vudu, **Pinkie Rideau**, **Val Starr**, **Chrissie O'Dell**, **Zola Moon**, **Julia Simon** of Julie & the Jukes, **Nedra Russ**, **Melonnee Desiree** and **Katie Knipp**, just to name a few!

The legacy of women in the blues is one of perseverance, creativity, and transformative power. These artists have not only enriched music, but also challenged social and cultural barriers, inspiring countless listeners with their courage and authenticity. Their stories—and their songs—continue to redefine what the blues means, ensuring that its future is as boundless as its past.

As we celebrate Women's History Month, let us honor the women who have built and sustained the blues. Their legacy is not confined to history books—it rings out in every note, every lyric, and every stage performance. The blues owes its soul to the women who sing it, write it, and live it

If you want to learn more about female blues artists, here are some recommended books and autobiographies written by or about female blues musicians:

Woman With Guitar: Memphis Minnie's Blues by Paul and Beth Garon

Lady Sings the Blues by Billie Holiday (with William Dufty)

Me & My Gin: Prohibition Blues and the Women Who Sang Them by Shannon McNally

50 Women in the Blues by Zoe Howe

Blues Legacies and Black Feminism: Gertrude "Ma" Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Billie Holiday by Angela Y. Davis

Black Pearls: Blues Queens of the 1920's by Daphne Duval Harrison

Bonnie Raitt: Just in the Nick of Time by Mark Bego

Weeds Like Us by Janiva Magness

UPCOMING SOON *Guitar Women* by Sue Foley

These books offer insights into the lives and contributions of female blues artists, both through in-depth biographies and autobiographies..

"The Backstage Break with Shirley"

Interview with Katie Knipp

By Shirley McCoy

Photo by Phil Kampel

This Backstage Break with Shirley features Katie Knipp. I chatted with her ahead of her show at the Crazy Horse in Nevada City at the end of January. We discussed her upcoming live album that was recorded at Theatre 5150 to a sold-out crowd, how she and her band have changed and evolved their sound over the years, and writing songs about the turmoil facing our world today.

SM: The Crazy Horse is a fun little venue. What's it like there for people who haven't been?

KK: Yeah, it's the favorite late night hang out spot there. It's funny, no matter what time of year, it seems like the whole town comes out and hangs out in that little town square every night until one in the morning. It's the place to be. And they always have the door open, so you can hear the music from the street. So it sort of feels like a street party even if you're not in the club. Also, The Fern is right across the street and we love them, too.

SM: Who else is in the band and how did you find your other band-mates? What exactly do you think makes this band work so well together?

KK: Let's start with my backbone - that is Neil Campisano on the drums. I did this random solo spot at the Torch Club probably nine years ago and he said I reminded him of one of his favorite artists, Ani DiFranco and I love her, too. He was like "Do you need a drummer?" and I was like "Yes". It was that easy. I already had a plan to record the *Take It with You* album that was released in 2018.

Then Chris Martinez joined about a year later via referral from Phil Kampel, my photographer. He's a Sac Blues Hall of Famer; he's just got such a great tone in his lead guitar playing and he doesn't even need any fancy pedals- he just does what he does. He kind of reminds me of Keith Richards meets Doug Pettibone.

It wasn't until about two and a half years ago that I met the perfect bass player for our sound - his name's Pancho Tomaselli. His knowledge of producing, as well as bass, is what I needed help with. I've always done everything myself as far as producing and arranging and I decided at this stage that I needed a real musical director to help me. He co-produced the *Me* album in 2024 and ever since then, he's been a crucial aspect to the sound that we have.

And then, when I did some shows with the late, great Mick Martin I met Steve Utstein, the Hammond B-3 player. I remember sitting on the side stage watching him. He's such a wizard. At the end of the show, I said "I'm gonna steal you". And I did.

This incarnation - this is why we just recorded a live album because I feel like the sound, including my singing, has changed; it's evolved and we needed to capture that. And I'm so glad we did. I'm riding high off that last recording show we did at Theater 5150. It was actually my first sold out show ever. It was a milestone to have to turn people away. I've never had to do that before. It's not like it's the biggest venue or anything, it was just really special, especially for this live album that we just recorded. They did so well - the hardest part is narrowing down which songs will actually go on the record. I'm very lucky.

SM: Have you had a live album before?

KK: We did live at the Green Room Social Club - I think that was five years ago. We had different band members except for Neil and Chris. We had just a completely different sound. I decided I didn't want that sound anymore, I wanted the screaming Hammond B-3 sound as we evolved. Even my singing doesn't sound the same. I kind of can't stand the sound of my voice on some of that older stuff. It sounded like I was trying to prove myself and then when I recorded the *Me* record, it kicked me into therapy. It was such a raw awakening for me.

SM: How so?

KK: Some of the subject material and the adventurousness in production and realizing "Oh my gosh, in order to really tell a story, I don't need to sound pretty. I don't need to try to sound pretty anymore." And so, on some of that record you hear me screaming. Like in the song "Stillness"- there's no way I would've sung that in a "pretty" fashion. One of the highest compliments I've had recently is that I reminded someone of Patti Smith. That's all I wanted - to show and convey the genuine all-encompassing humanness that we all embody - which is sadness, anger, beauty, sex, all of it. Just all of the things that we feel. And so can I ever, again, sing a story that isn't in character with those feelings? You've got to be yourself, or it's not gonna stick.

SM: What kind of a message do you want your music to get across to people?

KK: To stand up for humanity and be kind to one another and love each other and don't give up hope. This ("Stillness") is the first song of the times I've written. In the past, it's always been about love, sex, murder. Sometimes you just have to spew out the reality of the world.

SM: From your perspective, what kind of an impact has community radio and stations like KZAP and KZFR had on you and your career?

KK: Oh, all of it! I don't get played on mainstream radio. I get played on stations that are willing to take a chance- all the community radio stations and this is all over the world for me. Overall, I owe so much to these stations for taking a chance.

SM: Any other gigs coming up you'd like to tell people about?

KK: If you're in the Vallejo area, we'll be headlining the Empress Theatre March 14.

SM: What are your plans for the new year? More touring; that live CD, when can we expect that to be coming out?

KK: Yeah, I'm hoping to release the live album in May. And we're just continuing to get out of state a little bit more- more dates will be announced. I'm really trying to get more worldwide. I'd love to get us to England, finally. I've had more press and radio there than the United States for the last six years. It's time I get the band over there as soon as I can. That's a big goal for me.

SM: Any final words to get out to the people?

KK: Thank you for supporting independent music and still going to shows even though they're not at Golden 1 Center and being backed by \$10 million dollar budgets. We really appreciate it!



Let's Keep the Blues Alive: Join Us for Big Day of Giving!

Why the General Fund Needs Your Help!

Hey blues lovers—are you ready to make some noise and help Sacramento swing? Picture our city without the soulful sounds, electrifying jams, and legendary gatherings that only the Sacramento Blues Society can deliver. Sounds impossible, right? That's because the magic of the blues depends on something you can power: the SBS General Fund!

On May 7, 2026, during the Big Day of Giving, you have an incredible opportunity to make a real difference. The General Fund is so much more than a bank account; it's the lifeblood behind every show, every newsletter, and every memory made. For 46 amazing years, it's kept the lights blazing on our stages, put your favorite *Blue Notes* bi-monthly newsletter in your hands, and covered everything from postage and advertising to insurance, accounting, and storage of our cherished records and gear.

But we can't do it without you. Your support on this special day ensures Sacramento keeps its groove and its heart. Every single dollar you donate helps us bring top-notch blues entertainment to town, keep the presses rolling, and share the stories—and the music—that make our community unique.

So, mark your calendar for May 7, 2026, and get ready to join the celebration! Let's show our love for the blues and turn up the volume on generosity. Whether you're a lifelong member or a new friend discovering the rhythm, your gift keeps the good times rolling and the blues spirit alive for generations to come.

Let's make this Big Day of Giving the biggest and best yet—together, we'll keep the blues alive in Sacramento!

The Blues in the Schools' Anniversary Fundraiser on May 17

Coincides with Mick Martin's Celestial Birthday Celebration

By Mindy Giles, SBS Events Chair

Mick Martin is always the gift that keeps on giving. In July 2025, we all suddenly lost a friend, musician, band leader, songwriter, mentor, media giant, and co-founder of both the Sacramento Blues Society itself, and the Blues in the Schools program.

Several gatherings and concerts were held in both July and August 2025. In the month that followed, Mick's pride and joy, his "dream band" the Mick Martin Big Blues Band, had a big choice to reason out, regroup, understand how to move forward. They determined last fall that they were going to carry on their fabulous big sound of original blues, R&B, soul/funk sound, and the carefully curated repertoire of songs Mick and the band brought to their creative worktable. Singer/entertainer Marcel Smith has always been a special part of the MMBBB, and now has become the principal vocalist.

For this Spring 2026 BITS fundraiser on Sunday, May 17, the MMBBB will be returning to the Sofia, 2700 Capitol Ave. where Mick annually staged his birthday party concert, always on a weekend



near his actual natal day (May 5). This is a showcase room with exemplary staging, sound, recording and amenities for both performers and audience. The intention of the MMBBB is for this to become an annual event.

Plans are still in the offing, but we can confirm that a blazing BITS Band, The Becketts - a family trio— will be doing a 35-minute opening set of some of Mick's British Blues favorites: Mayall, early Peter Green/Fleetwood Mac, Yardbirds, Animals, The Hoax, etc., plus special guest guitarist Steve Boettner, our long-time BITS teacher/leader.

Tix will go on sale at the Sofia box office and online in early March.

BREAKING NEWS! (Feb. 18, 2026)

Five SBS Member Artists Nominated in the 2026 Blues Music Awards!

By Mindy Giles

The Blues Foundation has announced the 2026 Blues Music Awards nominees. We have **five** member artists nominated!

Kyle Rowland is nominated in the "BEST EMERGING ARTIST ALBUM" for his terrific new record *Not Holding Back!* on Little Village Records. <https://www.kylerowlandblues.com/>

This category is defined by The Blues Foundation as follows:



That blues recording that was released during the eligibility period for an act that has not received a prior Blues Music Award or GRAMMY® award nomination. The age of the artist is not of significance, but this award is intended for an artist who is up and coming within the blues/music scene and is at the

"jumping off" point of his or her career. An artist's album may not be considered in this category if that artist has already had a professional release of more than three prior albums or EPs. (Albums submitted for this category may also be submitted in other appropriate categories.)



Multi-award winner through the years is the great Rick Estrin, nominated this year for both the prestigious "B.B. KING ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR" AWARD, and also for the "TRADITIONAL BLUES MALE ARTIST" AWARD. Rick, we hope you can make more room on your mantel for many more awards.

And two of his great band of brothers, The Nightcats, are also nominated. "Kid" Andersen for "INSTRUMENTALIST-GUITAR and Derrick "D'Mar" Martin for "INSTRUMENTALIST- DRUMS."!!

We are all excited to see Rick & The Nightcats on their big fundraiser on Thursday, March 12 at the 5th Annual Little Charlie Baty Celebration Concert in Sacramento. <https://rickestrin.com/>

We are also proud to say that our member band, The Anthony Paule Soul Orchestra feat. Willy Jordan is nominated for a big one-- "BAND OF THE YEAR" AWARD.

Band Members:

- Anthony Paule - Guitar/producer/writer/horn arrangements
- Willy Jordan - Lead Vocals/producer/writer
- Timm Walker - Bass
- Tony Lufrano - Keys/horn arrangements
- Bowen Brown - Drums
- Charles McNeal - Sax
- Derek James - Trombone
- Ethan Pires/Richard Benitez III - Trumpets
- Nona Brown - Vocals
- Omega Rae - Vocals
- Larry Batiste - Vocals/producer/writer/horn arrangements



Based out of San Francisco, California The Anthony Paule Soul Orchestra, was founded in 2007, by guitarist/songwriter Anthony Paule. Inspired by authentic Soul and Blues recordings of

the '60s and '70s, this dramatic horn driven extravagant act took shape. Known for having great, authentic singers, APSO invited newest member, the incomparable vocalist Willy Jordan into the organization. Having worked with Elvin Bishop's Big Fun Trio (which garnered him two Grammy Award nominations), John Lee Hooker among others, Willy holds court from a throne previously occupied by Wee Willie Walker, Frank Bey, and Terrie Odabi. Jordan's commanding vocals and unpretentious stage presence, give audiences an honest, fresh, heartfelt experience. <https://anthonypaule.com/>

The annual Awards ceremony is in Memphis, Tennessee on Thursday May 7, 2026. Details: <https://blues.org/blues-music-awards-2/>

Good Eats & Good Beats

By Barbara Katen

Dish: Vegetarian Chili & Cornbread

Drink Pairing: Local Craft Beer (or Ginger Beer)

Record Pairing: Hoodoo Man Blues – Junior Wells (1965)

The Dish

Chili and cornbread are a match made in comfort food heaven. This vegetarian version is hearty enough for a main course, full of beans, peppers, and spice — with cornbread on the side to soak up every last drop. Even meat-eaters won't miss a thing.

Recipes

Vegetarian Chili

Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 bell peppers (any color), diced
- 2 carrots, diced

- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cans (15 oz each) kidney beans, drained
- 1 can (15 oz) black beans, drained
- 1 can (28 oz) crushed tomatoes
- 2 Tbsp chili powder
- 1 tsp cumin
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp salt (or to taste)
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 1 cup vegetable broth

Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot. Add onion, bell peppers, and carrots. Cook until softened.
2. Stir in garlic, chili powder, cumin, paprika, salt, and pepper. Cook until fragrant.
3. Add beans, tomatoes, and broth. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Cornbread (easy skillet or pan version)

Ingredients

- 1 cup cornmeal
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 cup milk (or plant-based milk)
- 2 eggs (or flax eggs for vegan)
- ¼ cup melted butter (or olive oil)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Grease a cast iron skillet or baking pan.
2. Mix dry ingredients in one bowl, wet ingredients in another.
3. Combine, stir gently, and pour into pan.
4. Bake 20–25 minutes until golden and a toothpick comes out clean.

Serve the chili topped with fresh cilantro or shredded sharp cheddar cheese and a dollop of sour cream, with a warm wedge of cornbread on the side. Fritos are a great addition to, or alternative to, cornbread!

The Drink

A local craft beer (like a malty amber ale) pairs beautifully with chili's spice, while a cold ginger beer (non-alcoholic, zesty and sweet) gives the same kick for those skipping alcohol.

The Record

Put on *Hoodoo Man Blues* by Junior Wells, featuring Buddy Guy on guitar. This Chicago classic has grit and spice, just like the chili. It's hearty, full of layers, and gets better the longer you let it simmer in your soul.

Got a chili secret — maybe a special pepper or a “don't tell anyone” ingredient? Send it to us with your favorite Blues track, and we may publish YOUR “Good Eats & Good Beats” twist in a future issue!

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Thank You Donors!

Our donors and members are the life blood of our organization. Without you we would be unable to accomplish our mission. Please join these major donors by making a tax deductible contribution by sending a check made out to "The Sacramento Blues Society" to SBS, PO Box 60580, Sacramento, CA 95860-0580. We need your continued support. When you renew your membership, why not add an additional contribution? Every little bit helps!

Ann Bailey	Linda Berlin
Kimi & Randy Carey	Cari Chenkin
Rick Clemens	Ross & Nancy Cofer
Cindy & Bud Collins	Rick Estrin & The Nightcats
Victoria Fong	Joel Foy
Beth & R.W. Grigsby	Linda Ham & Ron Noble
Jeff Herzog	Suzanne & Luther Hopp
Pete Horton	Suzanne Houlton
David Jared	Sally Katen
Jan Kelley	Mark Lawler & Kim Poppin
Ann Malveaux	Steve & Sharon Martarano
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Daniel Street	Jan Tamayo
Brian Tarkington	Lynette & Earl Withycombe
Andy Zdon	

The SBS is now an official sponsor of the Mick Martin Blues Party with Kyle Rowland!



Sacramento Blues Society Member Bands

Need music for an event or an occasion? Hire an SBS Member Band! And buy their CDs!

Aaron "King" Moreno & the Imperials

<https://www.facebook.com/p/Aaron-King-the-Imperials>

Blind Lemon Peel

www.blindlemonpeel.com

The Carmen Ratti Band

www.carmenrattiband.com

Danny Sandoval & His Amigos

<https://dannysandoval.com>

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www.bookthestuff.com

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www.thehucklebucks.com

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<http://julieandthejukes.com>

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www.mikehammarandthenails.com

Pinkie Rideau & Blioux Gumbo

<https://pinkie-rideau-1.ueniweb.com>

The Rockin' Souls

www.facebook.com/p/Rockin-Souls-100086431375411

Rusty Sterling

<https://www.rustysterling.com/>

Tony & The Tuff Times

www.facebook.com/tattblues

Zenn Vudu

www.zennvudu.com

Almost Blue

<https://www.almostbluesacramento.com/>

Bob Jones & The Chosen Few

<https://www.facebook.com/bob-joneschosenfew/>

Chaz and Jess

www.chazandjess.com

Dave Croall & The Soothers

www.soothersblues.com

Gloria T & The Master Groovers

www.mzgloriat.com

Jen & Tonics

<https://www.facebook.com/jen-andtonics/>

Marcel Smith

<https://www.instagram.com/marcelsmithentertainer/>

Nedra & Julio NJR Music

www.njrmusic.com

The Ray "Catfish" Copeland Band

www.raycatfishcopeland.com

Rooster

<https://roosterrockandroll.com>

The Skyway Blues Band

<https://www.facebook.com/people/Skyway-Blues-Band/61571197687183/>

Top Shelf Vintage

https://www.gigsalad.com/top_shelf_vintage_sacramento

Zola Moon

www.zolamoon.com

The Angel Reyes Band

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/719779323169840/>

The Bobby Young Project

bobbyyoungproject.com

Chicken & Dumpling

www.chickenanddumpling.net

The Dave Segal Band

www.davesegalband.com

The Herald Sessions

<https://www.facebook.com/people/The-Herald-Sessions-Trio>

Jeremy Norris & The Blues Cartel

www.dangerousblues.com

The Mick Martin Big Blues Band

www.reverbnation.com/mickmartinsbigbluesband

Night Messenger

<https://www.reverbnation.com/nightmessenger>

Red's Blues

www.redsbluesband.com

Rowland & Tumblin'

www.kylerowlandblues.com

The Tim Noxon Rockin' Blues Band

www.facebook.com/TimNoxon-RockinBluesBand

The Val Starr Band

<https://www.valstarrandtheblues-rocket.com/>

The Anthony Paule Soul Orchestra

www.anthonypaule.com

The California Bluestones

teriwilson.godaddysites.com

The Christian DeWild Band

www.reverbnation.com/christiandewild

Dirty Laundry

<https://www.instagram.com/dirtylaundrytheband/?hl=en>

HipNosis

<https://www.hipnosis.band/>

Joe Lev

<https://www.facebook.com/joe.lev.bassplayer/>

The Midtown Creepers

jmcmguire@comcast.net

Papa Day Blues Band

www.oldbluesdude.com

Rick Estrin & The Nightcats

www.rickestrin.com

Rube & The Rhythm Rockers

<https://www.facebook.com/steve.rubenstein.39>

Todd Morgan & The Emblems

toddmorganmusic.com

The William Mylar Band

www.mylarville.com



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