

SACRAMENTO

A bi-monthly publication of the Sacramento Blues Society



BLUE NOTES!

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VOL. 5



President's Column

By Marcel Smith

Greetings Sacramento Blues Society,

As summer draws to a close, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has continued to support the Sacramento Blues Society and our affiliated events. Your enthusiasm, attendance, and dedication are vital to our success and to our mission of preserving and promoting the blues.

A special thank you goes to our committee chairs, event organizers, and, as always, our incredible volunteers who do so much of the heavy lifting behind the scenes. Your commitment, energy, and countless hours of service make these events possible. Simply put, we could not do it without you.

I encourage all of us to continue supporting SBS events and programs. Every show, gathering, and community outreach effort helps keep the blues alive for future generations. Together, we are making a meaningful difference.

The recent Chris O'Leary show was outstanding. It was wonderful to see Rick Estrin in attendance and joining The Chris O'Leary Band on stage. Special recognition goes to Mindy Giles for her hard work and dedication in helping make the event such a success.

I would also like to publicly acknowledge and thank our members for your generous donations to the Sacramento Blues Society. Your financial support is greatly appreciated and plays a critical role in sustaining our organization and advancing our mission.

Over the past several weeks, I have been fortunate to be on the road performing. At the time of this writing, I am playing the Tacoma Blues Festival. It is always an honor to serve as an ambassador for our blues community and to showcase the incredible talent and passion that Sacramento has to offer.

In closing, thank you for your continued support, dedication, and



belief in the Sacramento Blues Society. Every contribution, large or small, helps strengthen our organization and ensures that we can continue bringing quality blues programming to our community.

Blues In The Schools Update

By Rick Snyder (aka Rico)

Blues in the Schools Committee Chair

A Busy Summer, A Bigger Year Ahead

It's been a long, hot summer here in the greater Sacramento area, but that hasn't slowed down our Blues in the Schools (BITS)



2026 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 Withycombe

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

Merchandise & Member Care - Lynette Shumway Withycombe

Blue Sunday - Cari Chenkin

Blue Notes Newsletter - Cari Chenkin

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 Withycombe
Sally Katen
Bobbie Felt Armstrong

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

Sacramento Blues Society Publications

Blue Notes, Bi-Monthly Newsletter -
Cari Chenkin & Jan Kelley, Co-Editors

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program one bit. We're proud to have wrapped up this year's Artist in Residence program at four campuses: Rosemont High School, West Campus High School, Cal Middle School, and Miwok Middle School. At each site, our musician-teachers spent weeks working directly with students, sharing what the blues sounds like from the inside and helping young people find their own voice through the music.

We closed out the school year the way we like best: with a showcase. This year's BITS Showcase moved to a new venue, The Boardwalk in Orangevale, and it did not disappoint. Students from across our Artist in Residence campuses took the stage to perform what they'd built over the year, and the energy in the room made clear that the program is working. Wow, was that ever awesome.

With summer winding down, we're already deep into planning for the 2026-2027 school year. We're booking bands for elementary school assemblies and lining up musician-teachers for the next round of Artist in Residence placements. Both programs have become a backbone of what BITS does in the Sacramento area, and we want to build on that momentum.

We're also rolling out something brand new this year. We'll be reaching out to elementary and middle schools throughout the greater Sacramento area to offer a one-time classroom visit, at no cost to the school. A BITS musician will come in, talk with students about the blues and its history, walk them through how a blues song gets written, and then challenge the class to write one of their own. Our musician will take what the students come up with and turn it into a real song, performed right there in the classroom.

One more idea we're excited about: bringing the blues to Sacramento's senior community. Plenty of folks who'd love to hear live music aren't able to get out to shows anymore, so we're planning to reach out to senior centers, senior residences, and other places where seniors gather, and bring a blues band straight to them.

Between the Artist in Residence program, elementary assemblies,

our new classroom songwriting visits, and this senior outreach effort, it's shaping up to be a very busy 2026-2027 for Blues in the Schools. Stay tuned to *Blue Notes* for updates as these programs take shape, and as always, thank you for supporting BITS.

What's On Your Playlist?

By Barbara Katen



On August 12, the Chris O'Leary Band treated us to a fabulous concert at The Press Club, with old tunes and songs off his number-one-charted new album *Blue Collar* on Alligator Records. We asked Chris what's always on his playlist and this is what he told us:

Muddy Waters – Anything off the LP “Hard Again”

Bobby Bland – “Ain't No Love in the Heart of the City”

Al Green – “I'm a Ram”

Dyke & the Blazers – “Funky Bull Pt. 1”

Bruce Springsteen – “She's The One”

Levon Helm – “Tennessee Jed”

The Band – “King Harvest (Has Surely Come)”

The Meters – “Just Kissed my Baby”

Professor Longhair & Earl King – “Big Chief”

Sonny Boy Williamson – “Too Close Together”

Hound Dog Taylor – “Sadie”

If you missed his performance at The Press Club, all I can say is “You snooze, you lose!” SBS is serious about bringing you the best we can in blues music and Chris O'Leary definitely brought it to Sacramento. Great show, great music, great guy, great band. And great Playlist. Oh, what a night!

Pssst... SBS Family & Friends, Where Were You?

Well, this is awkward. We were hoping we wouldn't have to bring this up, but...here we are!

On August 12, SBS brought nationally-known blues artist Chris O'Leary and his terrific band to The Press Club for an evening of live blues. Chris came to Sacramento with the #1 record on the July 2026 national Big Blues Chart, and he and his band absolutely blew the roof off the place! There was just one little problem: not enough of us were there to see it. SBS currently has more than 400 members, but only 51 tickets were sold for the show.

Here's something members may not realize: when SBS brings nationally known artists to Sacramento, the money comes from our General Fund. We don't expect to make a profit on these shows—although we certainly wouldn't complain!—but we do need to come close to breaking even so we can continue bringing great live blues to you. Unfortunately, this time we took a pretty good financial hit.

We'll be okay, but it does mean we'll need to tighten our SBS belt a bit for the remainder of the year when it comes to spending on live entertainment.

We WANT to keep bringing you great blues! But to do that, we need our SBS family and friends to come out, buy a ticket, bring a friend, fill the room and help us support the music we all love. So next time you see SBS bringing a great artist to town, don't make us come looking for you! Great blues needs a great audience—and that's YOU! Donate here: <https://www.sacblues.org/support-us>

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Help Shape the Future of the Sacramento Blues Society!

We Need You!

Do you love the blues? Would you like to help ensure the Sacramento Blues Society continues to thrive for generations to come? **Here's your opportunity to make a difference!**

As the third-oldest blues society in the United States, the Sacramento Blues Society has spent nearly five decades preserving, promoting, and celebrating the music we all love. From presenting outstanding live music and supporting local artists to fostering blues education and building a vibrant community of music lovers, SBS has become an important part of the Sacramento region's musical heritage.

Now it's your turn to help write the next chapter.

On December 6, 2026, the Sacramento Blues Society will hold its Annual Membership Meeting in conjunction with our festive Annual Holiday Gala. As required by our bylaws, members will elect the 2027 Sacramento Blues Society Board of Directors.

The SBS Board currently has **two open Director positions, and six current Board members whose terms expire December 31, 2026 may also choose to run for reelection.** Under our bylaws, the Board consists of no fewer than seven and no more than eleven Directors.

Serving on the Board is a rewarding opportunity to work together to plan events, support live blues music, oversee Society programs, strengthen our membership, and help ensure that SBS continues to grow and serve the blues community for years to come.

If you have the enthusiasm, ideas, and time to make the commitment, we encourage you to throw your hat in the ring! Whether you've been a member for years or are looking for a new way to become involved, we'd love to talk with you about what Board service entails and answer any questions you may have.

To express your interest or learn more, please contact either: Barbara Katen – bkaten2@gmail.com or Cari Chenkin – caried-awaycc@gmail.com.

All candidates must submit a brief statement introducing themselves and explaining why they would like to serve on the Board, along with a current headshot photo. Candidate statements and photos will be published in the November/December issue of *Blue Notes*, giving members an opportunity to become acquainted with those seeking election before voting.

The deadline to submit your name for the ballot and *Blue Notes* is **Monday, October 12, 2026.** Current Board members seeking reelection are also asked to submit an updated statement and photo by that date.

Ballots will be distributed to the membership in November, with the election taking place during the Annual Membership Meeting in December.

The Sacramento Blues Society has always been powered by dedicated volunteers whose passion keeps the blues alive in our community. If you've ever considered becoming more involved, there has never been a better time.

Help us preserve our proud tradition while shaping an exciting future for the Sacramento Blues Society. We hope you'll join us!

The Boys Are Back in Town: Rick Estrin & The Nightcats Bring the Blues Home

by Julio Covington

Photos by Julio Covington

When Sacramento blues fans hear the phrase "the boys are back in town," one band immediately comes to mind: Rick Estrin & The Nightcats. Long embraced as hometown heroes by the Sacramento-area blues community, the group has also earned an international following throughout North America and Europe.



Their latest release, *The Hits Keep Coming*, arrived on Alligator Records in 2024 and captures the band at full strength: sharp songwriting, deep grooves, fearless musicianship and plenty of wit. That momentum carried into 2025, when Rick Estrin & The Nightcats were named Band of the Year at the Blues Music Awards.

The present-day Nightcats grew from the legacy of Little Charlie & The Nightcats. Frontman Rick Estrin leads with vocals, harmonica

and sly showmanship; Christoffer "Kid" Andersen supplies imaginative guitar work; Lorenzo Farrell anchors the sound on bass and keyboards; and Derrick "D'Mar" Martin drives the band from behind the drum kit.

On July 19 at the Powerhouse Pub in Folsom, a packed house welcomed the band with unmistakable hometown love. The Nightcats felt it and returned the favor, turning the room into a full-on dancing environment. Across two generous, roughly 90-minute sets, the performance



never lost its spark.

Rick commanded the stage with his expressive harmonica, conversational vocals and quick-witted delivery. Kid answered with guitar lines that were dazzling without

overwhelming the songs, while Lorenzo provided the rich low end and harmonic color that kept the arrangements moving. Together, they showed why this lineup is both musically sophisticated and built to entertain.

D'Mar was electric in action. Fresh



Rick Estrin & the Nightcats, Con't. from P. 4

from being honored as Best Instrumentalist—Drums at the 2026 Blues Music Awards, he played with precision, power and a deep sense of groove. He did more than keep time: he pushed the music forward, energized the dancers and gave every musical turn an extra charge.

What made the evening memorable was the connection between band and audience. The crowd did not simply watch a celebrated blues act; it welcomed home musicians who



have carried Northern California's blues spirit around the world. The band answered with

a performance that was loose, confident, joyful and completely alive.

Rick Estrin & The Nightcats proved once again that the hits do, indeed, keep coming. At the Powerhouse Pub, Sacramento's hometown heroes delivered world-class blues with humor, heart and enough rhythmic fire to keep the room moving all afternoon.



Winner! Winner! Winner!

SBS & The Sacramento River Cats = A Home Run!

By Liz Walker

Everybody was a winner Tuesday July 21 at Sutter Health Park. The Sacramento River Cats won over the Oklahoma City Comets, 7-3.



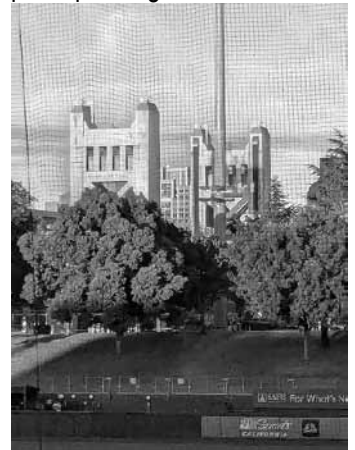
Susi Brothers was the winner of a \$20 SBS gift certificate, and all who joined us at the stadium won goodie bags filled with peanuts and Crackerjacks, candy, CDs and (thanks to the Cats organization) everybody got RC hats!

The thing that I enjoy the most about going to Cats games is the hometown feel. I enjoy all the silly audience participation games: dice roll,

copy cat, logo trivia, air guitar and dizzy derby to name a few, along with the seventh inning stretch and sing along.

"Two for Tuesday" meant hot dogs, nachos and ice cream for \$2 (though you better get there early for the ice cream, it sells out fast!)

The weather was perfect, our seats were in the shade, and we caught some excitement on the field with double plays and homeruns. We even had a visit from the River Cats' mascot, Dinger.



Thanks so much to everyone who came out to the park. Everybody had a really fun night and a little money went into the Genera Fund. Looks like we'll make this an annual thing!



SBS Weekly Blues Calendar Is Back!

The weekly blues events calendar, previously managed by Willie Brown, which then morphed into Jan's Jams, by Jan Kelley, has been on hiatus for over six months. We're grateful and happy to say long-time member musician and blues supporter Bill Mylar has stepped up to produce the "Blues & Roots Music" calendar, which is now attached to our Friday weekly email blast to all members. Please check those weekly emails and download the calendar, in order to know all the blues happenings in and around our area.

Torch Club WWW.TORCHCLUB.NET		
SEPTEMBER 2026		
SEP 4TH	BILL MYLAR AND FRIENDS	6-8PM
SEP 6TH	BLUES JAM	4-7 PM
SEP 13TH	BLUES JAM	4-7 PM
SEP 20TH	BLUES JAM	4-7 PM
SEP 24TH	DANNY SANDOVAL & HIS AMIGOS	9PM - 12AM
OCTOBER 2026		
OCT 2ND	BILL MYLAR & FRIENDS	6-8 PM
OCT 3RD	KATIE KNIPP BAND	9PM - 12AM
OCT 4TH	SBS HOF AFTER PARTY JAM	5-7 PM
OCT 10TH	CAMPBELL'S FOLLY	6-8 PM
OCT 11TH	BLUES JAM	4-7 PM
OCT 16TH	TOO MANY SQUIRRELS	6-8 PM
OCT 17TH	PETER PETTY'S DOUBLE P REVUE	9PM - 12AM
OCT 22ND	J.W. JONES	9PM - 12AM
OCT 24TH	RAIN DOG	6-8 PM
OCT 25TH	BLUES JAM	4-7 PM
904 15 TH STREET SACRAMENTO		

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**LIZ
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Celebrating the Sacramento Blues Society Hall of Fame Class of 2026

By Sally Katen, HOF Chair & Barbara Katen

Photos by Dale Roberts



Every year, the Sacramento Blues Society Hall of Fame recognizes the musicians, volunteers, educators, artists, and supporters whose dedication has helped shape and strengthen our blues community. Their contributions extend far beyond the stage, preserving our musical heritage, inspiring future generations, and ensuring that the blues continues to thrive in the Sacramento region.

On Sunday, October 4, 2026, we will proudly honor the Sacramento Blues Society Hall of Fame Class of 2026 at the Press Club in Sacramento. This year's inductees represent decades of extraordinary talent, service, creativity, and commitment to the Society and to the blues we all love. Two of this year's honorees will be inducted posthumously, recognizing lives whose influence continues to be felt throughout our community.

We invite you to join us in celebrating these remarkable individuals whose passion, generosity, and enduring legacy have helped write the story of the Sacramento Blues Society.

Bob Cosman (Posthumous)

Bob Cosman was a gifted photographer, artist, and devoted supporter of the Sacramento Blues Society, whose creativity left an

enduring mark on the local blues community. Working in a variety of artistic media, Bob approached every project with exceptional talent, thoughtfulness, and heart.



For well over a decade, Bob designed the iconic covers of *Blue Notes*, giving the Society's newsletter its distinctive visual identity. He was also the creative force behind the annual "Gone But Not Forgotten" video presentations, a cherished tradition of the Sacramento Blues Society Hall of Fame induction ceremony that honors those we have lost.

Whether documenting Society events with his camera, or supporting blues performances throughout the region,

Bob was always a welcome and familiar presence. His artistry, generosity, and dedication helped preserve the history of Sacramento's blues community for future generations.

Bob passed away on November 3, 2025. His legacy continues through the countless images, artwork, and memories he created for the Sacramento Blues Society.

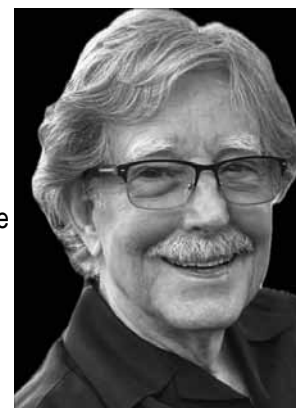
David Croall

David Croall has been a dedicated harmonica player for more than 50 years, beginning his musical journey after purchasing his first harmonica while serving in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War.

Rather than imitate other players, Dave developed his own distinctive style by approaching the harmonica with the mindset of the horn player he originally was. Over the decades he refined his craft while performing alongside and learning from many of Sacramento's blues greats, including Omar Shariff and Johnny "Guitar" Knox.

In addition to leading his own group, Dave Croall and the Soothers, Dave has become a respected and sought-after performer throughout the Sacramento blues community. Today, audiences can also hear his unmistakable harmonica work with The Dave Segal Band and Chrissie O'Dell.

His unique voice on the harmonica and decades of dedication have made him an important contributor to Sacramento's blues tradition.



Liz Walker



Liz Walker's love of the blues began as a teenager listening to artists such as Eric Clapton, Boz Scaggs, Leon Russell, Van Morrison, The Allman Brothers, and Jimi Hendrix before discovering the legendary performers who shaped the genre, including Muddy Waters, Luther Allison, Albert King, Howlin' Wolf, and B.B. King.

Her passion for live blues truly came alive after discovering Sacramento's Torch Club, where performances by The Lumminators—Pat Balcom, Dave

Garrity, and Lew Fratis—cemented a lifelong commitment to blues music.

Liz's involvement with the Sacramento Blues Society began when she was invited to facilitate an early planning meeting for what would become the Society's Blues in the Schools (BITS) program. Instead of simply facilitating, she became one of its driving forces. Working alongside Cynthia Jaynes and later Dave Alcock for nearly fifteen years, Liz helped build BITS into a nationally respected educational program. Together they developed multiple after-school programs, partnered with regional arts organizations, produced a CD featuring songs written by students in juvenile court schools, created the 2016 *Out of the Box Festival*, provided employment for dozens of local musicians, and introduced tens of thousands of K–12 students throughout Sacramento, Yolo, and El Dorado counties to the blues.

Liz also served on the Sacramento Blues Society Board of Directors and later as President, helping modernize the organization through improvements to its website, newsletter, and accounting systems while overseeing numerous successful events that strengthened the Society for years to come.

Her leadership, vision, and unwavering dedication have left an immeasurable impact on both the Sacramento Blues Society and the generations of students and music lovers she inspired.

Peter Philis

Originally from the Boston area, Peter Philis began drumming at age fifteen after joining a local drum and bugle corps. A year later he purchased his first drum set, beginning a lifelong musical journey that would take him from neighborhood practice rooms to stages throughout the United States and around the world. His passion for music also led him into recording, purchasing a four-track recorder and beginning a lifelong interest in audio production.



In 1985 Peter competed nationally with the renowned Concord Blue Devils Drum and Bugle Corps, earning a World Championship Drum Captain title before eventually relocating to Sacramento. Introduced to the Torch Club in 1992, he soon joined The Amazing Johnny Nugget and immersed himself in Sacramento's vibrant blues scene.

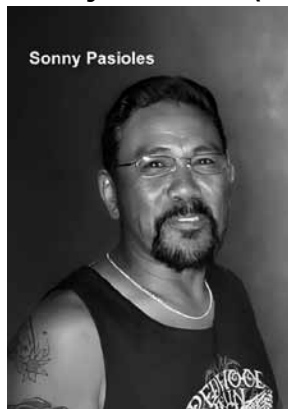
After returning to Boston in 1994, Peter toured extensively throughout North America and Europe with Texas blues and soul artist Frankie Lee, including an appearance at the prestigious Montreal Jazz Festival. He also performed internationally with legendary Clarksdale bluesman Big Jack Johnson, bringing his music to audiences across the United States, Canada, Sweden, Australia, and Japan.

Returning to Sacramento in 2003, Peter earned an Audio Production Certificate from Sacramento City College and became deeply involved with the Sacramento Blues Society's Blues in the Schools program, performing for students and teaching after-school classes. Throughout his career he has performed and recorded with numerous outstanding musicians across multiple genres, including collaborations with Melvin Seals of the Jerry Garcia Band.

Peter's remarkable musicianship, dedication to music education, and decades of performing continue to enrich the Sacramento blues

community.

Sonny Pasioles (Posthumous)



Sonny Pasioles discovered the guitar at the age of fourteen and quickly developed a lifelong passion for music. Alongside longtime friend Paul Viera, he played his first public performance in 1966 at the Catholic Cathedral in downtown Sacramento.

Following graduation, Sonny explored funk music before returning to his blues roots. In the 1980s he formed Sonny Boy Blues, where Paul once again joined him as bassist, renewing a musical partnership that had begun in their

youth.

According to fellow Hall of Famer Lew Fratis, Sonny's love of music stretched back to their teenage years when they would sing Beatles songs together simply for the joy of making music. Sonny later performed with bands including Milk and Patchwork Quilt, sharing stages with respected musicians such as Larry Davis, Jerry Lopez, and Ray Torres, with Lew frequently sitting in.

Known as an exceptional guitarist, gifted songwriter, and powerful vocalist, Sonny was equally admired for his generosity and infectious enthusiasm. Whether performing at the legendary Torch Club or providing the soundtrack for weddings, parties, and celebrations throughout the region, Sonny brought passion, energy, and heart to every performance.

Sonny Pasioles passed away from cancer in 2010. Though gone too soon, his music, friendship, and influence continue to resonate throughout Sacramento's blues community.

Help Make Our Hall of Fame Celebration Even More Special!

Raffle Donations Needed by September 20

The Sacramento Blues Society Hall of Fame Celebration returns on Sunday, October 4, at a new location, the Press Club, and we're asking our wonderful SBS family and community partners to help us make the evening unforgettable.

Our annual Hall of Fame raffle is a tradition, and we're currently seeking donations of gift certificates, restaurant experiences, themed gift baskets, artwork, music memorabilia, event tickets, handcrafted items, local products, professional services, and other unique treasures for the raffle.

Every donated item helps raise funds that support the Sacramento Blues Society's mission.

If you, or someone you know, would like to donate a raffle item, please contact Sally Katen at bluesforthe cure@hotmail.com. Donation receipts are available upon request.

Know a favorite local business? If you frequent a neighborhood restaurant, winery, brewery, music venue, salon, shop, or service provider, please consider asking if they'd be willing to donate a raffle item. Sometimes a personal request from a loyal customer is all it takes. Every donation helps keep the blues alive in Sacramento.

Thank you for helping us celebrate Sacramento's rich blues heritage—and for keeping the blues alive!

He's Back!

The 2026 SBS Hall of Fame Event Coaxes Aaron "King" Moreno Out of Retirement!

By Sally Katen

It is with great pleasure I announce this year's Hall of Fame musical entertainment: Aaron King and the Imperials! The lineup features Aaron on guitar and vocals, along with original band members Steve Linn / drums, Ben Thompson / bass, Frank Maranzino / keyboards and special guest Kenny Marchese / guitar! This will be a special treat, as Aaron is a Hall of Fame Member (Class of 2014) and he has not played regularly for the past decade.

Here is a little bit more about Aaron from his 2014 bio:

A true product of the Sacramento blues scene, guitarist Aaron King has been an ambassador for Sacramento blues around the world showcasing a style that owes as much to jazz guitarists like Herb Ellis and country guitarists like Hank Garland as it does to blues guitarists like Albert King and Albert Collins.

Born and raised in Sacramento, King got his first lessons in blues from Sacramento Blues Hall of Fame Member Johnny "Guitar" Knox. He continued his blues guitar education under the mentorship of another Sacramento Blues Hall of Fame Member, Little Charlie Baty, developing a style that would combine blues, jazz, and country guitar. From there he spent his formative years playing guitar for, and recording with, the late, great pianist Omar Shariff.

Playing with renowned Sacramento jump blues band The Chrome Addicts, King won several Sacramento Area Music Awards (Sam-mies) including a Critic's Choice Award for Outstanding Guitarist.

After several national and international tours with the Chrome Addicts, he left the band to start his own group, Aaron King and the Imperials. In addition to playing with the Imperials he also toured with world-renowned boogie-woogie pianist Mitch Woods, playing such prestigious festivals as the Montreal Jazz Festival and Umbria Jazz Festival.

In recent years, King has broadened his musical horizons through his association with highly respected Sacramento jazz bassist Harley White, Jr., blurring the lines between blues, jazz, funk, and even hip-hop in an effort to continue pushing the music forward in ways his predecessors did decades earlier with the electrification of blues - a radical notion at the time.

Keep The Blues Alive *By Barbara Katen*

Join the SBS Rhythm & Blues Circle!

For more than four decades, the Sacramento Blues Society has worked to keep the blues alive, thriving and heard throughout our community.

We've brought incredible musicians to Sacramento stages, supported local artists, introduced new generations to the blues, and created countless nights when the music brought us together. And if you've ever been in the room when the band hits that groove and the whole place comes alive, you know exactly why we do it.

But here's the part that happens before the first note is played.

Putting quality live music on stage costs money. Artist fees, travel, lodging, production and other expenses continue to rise. At the same time, SBS wants to keep our ticket prices reasonable so that live blues remains something our community can afford to enjoy.

That's where you can make a difference.

We are inviting those SBS members, friends and blues lovers who are able to do a little more, to become part of our Rhythm & Blues Circle by making a special tax-deductible contribution to the SBS General Fund.

Whether it helps to pay an artist, cover production expenses or simply gives SBS the financial breathing room to take a chance on bringing an exciting performer to Sacramento, your contribution goes directly toward helping us continue the work we've been doing since 1979.

This isn't about replacing memberships or ticket sales. It's about giving those who have the means—and the desire—an opportunity to invest a little more deeply in the music we all love. The blues has survived for generations because people cared enough to pass it along. Now it's our turn.

If the blues has given you a lifetime of music, memories, friendships—or simply a whole lot of great nights out—please consider giving something back.

Join our Rhythm & Blues Circle and help us keep the music playing.

To make a tax-deductible contribution to the Sacramento Blues Society General Fund, visit sacblues.org or speak with an SBS Board member at one of our upcoming events. Look for us wearing our blue name tags!

Keep the blues alive. Keep it live. Keep it Sacramento.



Save the Date! SBS Annual Holiday Gala & Annual Meeting Coming in December!

We know the date - December 6, 2026. And we know the place - The Press Club. We're still working on the details, but want you to be sure to mark your calendars for our big event. More information to come in the Nov.-Dec. issue of the *Blue Notes*, so stay tuned!

"Blue Sunday" Update

By Cari Chenkin

Photos by Dale Roberts, Barbara Katen, Cari Chenkin, Julio Covington & 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.

I'm now booking March - December, 2027 Blue Sundays. **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 2027 dates. Reach me at: editor.sacblues@gmail.com.**

In this issue, we review shows from June and July 2026. August's show, which featured Yahmo, will have occurred too late for publication in this issue. But we'll catch up with them next issue.

There will be NO Blue Sunday in September, but we'll return on October 25 with The Spiral Sunset Band. And more great Sunday blues yet to come!

June 28, 2026 – The Hucklebucks

The SBS was delighted to welcome back to Blue Sunday our ALL-HALL OF FAME member band, The Hucklebucks. This band is a perennial favorite of Sacramento blues fans, for good reason. Their superior musicianship, fun and friendly stage presence and well-crafted repertoire, which includes blues classics and original tunes, make any Hucklebucks gig a fun time. With Doug Crumpacker on



guitar, harmonica and vocals, Tim Wilbur on drums and vocals, Ronnie James on bass and Joe Ibarra on pedal steel guitar, they created a musical vibe that invited dancers onto the floor, from the first note on.

Their first set included such classics as Chuck Berry's "You Never Can Tell" and "Lover Not a Fighter". They covered Slim Harpo's "Scratch My Back" and then played a couple

of original songs. "Steel Guitar Rag" featured Joe Ibarra (who's also a member of the Western Swing Society's Hall of Fame) showing off his expertise on the pedal steel. They ended the set with another Chuck Berry classic, "Memphis".

Set Two featured more classic and original blues tunes, with



Doug and Tim handling the vocals, and ended with the classic "Chicken Shack".

Fans got a bonus when the band invited up special guests Beth and RW Grigsby, from Red's Blues, to join in on some tunes. Then they invited up powerhouse vocalist Chrissie O'Dell as well, as an additional treat. It's easy to see why all members of the band are in the SBS Hall of Fame -



their expertise is undeniable! The dance floor was packed, and everyone had a great time at June's Blue Sunday. Catch up with The Hucklebucks at



<https://www.thehucklebucks.net/>.





Sunday, July 26 - Bad Cat

For July's Blue Sunday, we welcomed in member band Bad Cat, a 10-piece ensemble, complete with a four-piece horn section. The band included:

Vince Bunio - Guitar and lead vocal
David Harnish - Guitar, vocals
Aaron Granick - Keyboards, vocals
Phil Emonds - Drums, vocals
Logan Felkins - Bass, vocals
Paul Simmons - Trumpet, vocals



Mitch Wersky - Trombone

Pieter Chevalier - Baritone and Tenor Saxes

Bobby Rogers - Alto and Tenor Saxes

They created a fantastic "wall of sound" that served to highlight their eclectic and varied repertoire, which spanned blues, rock, old-school soul and pop from the 60s to the 2000s. To give you an idea of just how wide their repertoire is, the first set included blues classics like "Sweet Home Chicago" and Robert Cray's



"Smoking Gun", as well as Springsteen's "10th Avenue Freezeout", the Beatles' "Back in the USSR", Steely Dan's "Pretzel Logic" and soul hits "Soul Man" and "Knock on Wood", among others.

In the second set, they covered tunes by The Rolling Stones, Ray Charles, Steve Winwood, Lynyrd Skynyrd, the Allman Brothers and the Doobie Brothers. They brought Gia Shukar onstage to sing Tom Petty's "Breakdown" with them. Gia is the lead vocalist for the Spiral Sunset Band, who are booked to play the October Blue Sunday show. Coincidentally, she was celebrating her birthday that day, and the band serenaded her with their version of "Happy Birthday".

The third set continued in the same vein, starting out with Booker T's "Green Onions" and included James Cotton's "Jelly Jelly", the Staple Singers' "Respect Yourself", Kool & the Gang's "Ladies' Night", and more. Their expert musicianship, stellar arrangements, and the tight rhythm section and horn section proved equal to the material they covered and had the audience crowding the dance floor. Vocals were mostly handled by the lead guitarist, with other band members providing harmonies. They brought their bass player to the mic for lead vocals on "Money", the Berry Gordy-penned Motown hit that was later made famous by the Beatles.

They closed the sold-out show with a rousing rendition of the Doobie Brothers' "Long Train Running", garnering an enthusiastic round of applause from the crowd. Check them out at: <https://www.badcat.band/>.





Chris O'Leary Brings the Big Sound to Sacramento

By Frank Farmer

Photos by Barbara Katen, Cari Chenkin, Dale Roberts, Frank Farmer, Mindy Giles & Rick Snyder

Chris O'Leary and his band brought the big sound to Sacramento's Press Club on Wednesday, August 12, for a special evening presented by the Sacramento Blues Society.

It was a night filled with grit, soul, blues, context and a bit of humor thrown in for good measure.

Along the way, we learned a little about legendary drag racer Shirley Muldowney and our "Need for Speed," from *The Hard Line*. We heard "Bad Decisions" and "Daddy Was a Wolfman," among other selections from the band's latest release, *Blue Collar*.



In fact, *Blue Collar* seems an appropriate label for the band overall. O'Leary's powerful, articulate and expressive harmonica

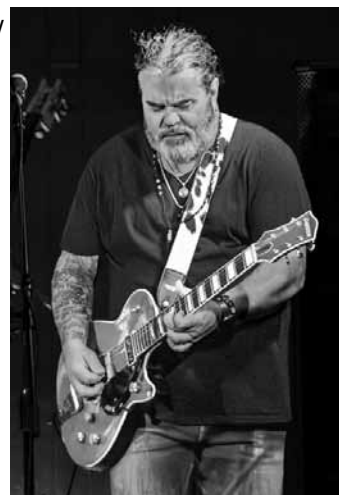
artistry is backed by a virtuoso group of musicians who know how to tell relatable, very human stories through the blues.

The evening featured Chris O'Leary on harmonica and lead vocals, Pat O'Shea on guitar, Sheila Klinefelter on bass, Chuck Cotton on drums, Andy Stahl on tenor sax, and Bronson Hoover on keyboards.

As an added treat, master harmonica artist Rick Estrin joined the band for a splendid song cap to an already memorable evening.

Chris O'Leary and the band closed out the night with a strong finish, leaving no doubt about the talent we had just witnessed.

See these performers any time you have the opportunity! Keep up with Chris and his band here: <https://thechrisolearyband.net/>





CD Review

Chris O'Leary – *Blue Collar*

Alligator Records

By Steve Cagle

Chris O'Leary's music career has been moving in the right direction for quite some time, and seven may be the lucky number that propels him to the top. *Blue Collar* is the seventh album from the singer, songwriter and master harmonica player, and with its release all the components are in place to facilitate his successful rise to prominence as a music artist.

The stars began to seriously align in 2023 when Chris signed with Alligator Records and in early 2024 released *The Hard Line* as his label debut to critical acclaim and commercial success. *Blue Collar* is the follow up release on Alligator, and like its predecessor, is comprised entirely of songs written by Chris who also served as producer once again. It's a collection of expertly written, rendered and produced songs with a stellar group of outstand-



ing musicians, created at Greaseland Studio in San Jose under the guidance and engineering mastery of Chris "Kid" Andersen, resulting in the perfect means of transport to new career heights.

With nary a wasted note, throwaway line or meaningless moment, the songs cover a broad range of styles, tempos and subject matter. Chris and company bust out of the starting gate with "Bad Decisions," a full-on dancefloor filler wherein the case is made that the best stories often result from human errors like blowing the rent money in Vegas or pissing off the biggest bouncer in the bar. And indeed, who in the hell thought Tijuana was a good idea?

Chris and his band keep the groove afloat on the blues strutter "Lady Luck" as he wonders where Ms. Luck went after she vanished from his life. It features some sonic guitar play from guest Greg Gumpel that's countered by Chris' mid-song harmonica attack.

The horn section joins in on "Am I the Only Fool," as Chris questions his own judgment in relationship choices.

If "One More Cup of Coffee" doesn't perk you up, turn up the volume for this high-octane, up tempo musical jolt to the system, as Lil' Ed Williams takes center stage with an aural assault on the slide guitar. Even if you're caffeine free you'll still be in overdrive after the last crunching chord.

"Nothing But a Memory" pays homage to Muddy Waters' signature Chicago style slow blues and features former Muddy guitarist Bob Margolin adding an authentic touch to the proceedings.

"Justice Must Be Blind" is a spirited, vaudeville flavored swing blues embellished by pianist Bronson Hoover gliding through the merriment.

The title "After 2 A.M." may conjure an image of a smokey, late-night bar-closing dirge, but in this steady roller the night's still young enough to wind up in trouble because "nothing good happens" after the aforementioned hour.

"One Way Street" creates the sounds of New Orleans with tuba, trombone, barrelhouse piano and a second line drumbeat, accentuated by lead guitar and fat harmonica solos.

Chris stays in the Louisiana swamp for "Live Baby Gators," a rollicking up tempo romp that's certified by the presence of Cajun accordion legend Wayne Toups.

Things slow down one more time for "How'd I Ever Get Along?" The song is shimmering with after-hours elegance and provides ivory-tickler extraordinaire Bronson Hoover one more opportunity to display his prowess on the keys.

The album rolls to a close with the roadhouse stroll "Daddy Was a Wolfman," the tale of a family man whose darker side takes over every time he wanders to the bars.

Chris O'Leary's career is on an upward path and considering that the wave of reviews for *Blue Collar* pouring out of the media.

"The Backstage Break with Shirley"

Interview with Ruthie Foster

By Shirley McCoy

This *Backstage Break with Shirley* features Ruthie Foster. I chatted with her ahead of her June 29th appearance in Grass Valley. Last year, Ruthie won her first Grammy for the Best Contemporary Blues Album for her *Mileage*



album. She has a new album, *Just Say Yes*, dropping at the end of August. We talked about this, also, how Ruthie enjoys spending free time off the road, and her hopes for the future.

As a reminder, full interviews are available for up to two weeks after their original air date on www.kzfr.org. The show is called *Studio 416* and I usually host on the third Saturdays of the month, 1:30-3pm.



SM: You've had several Grammy nominations and Blues Music Awards. Last year was your first Grammy win for the Best Contemporary Blues album- how did it feel to finally get that kind of recognition?

RF: Well, like a lot of blues singers, players, musicians, we've all been out here doing what we do for a long time... that was my sixth nomination, by the way. And to finally be rewarded the gold as they say, was huge. It really was. It's been extremely validating. There are a lot of wonderful musicians who were in that particular category that I consider friends and acquaintances who've been out here just as long, if not longer than I have. So it was a huge accomplishment, yeah.

SM: You have a new album that's going to be coming out on August 28, *Just Say Yes*. What can we expect from that album? Do you have any story behind the title of that album? Larkin Poe is on this one again with you.

RF: Oh yeah, they're all over it. Those are my co-writers. Rebecca and her husband Tyler are all over this album as co-writers. In fact, they started a lot of these songs for me before I even got into town.

They live in Nashville. It's my pilgrimage to go to Nashville and we just sit and write. Basically, these guys are so great about just picking up on things that I say, because I'm usually in between tours when I go to visit with them. And we end up writing and then recording on the same day. We wrote this album in about ten days. They are really prolific writers and just really sharp, and I've written all my life as a kid. We got the best of us in a room together, and it was kind of a cut away the fat and get right to the facts. So that's how this album came about.

I guess you can say that the title of the album really came from me- I used to carry around this sticky note- this thing that just says "Just say yes" on it. All the time. I put it on my computer screen. I've been carrying that for years. Anytime I move, I make sure that goes on the bottom of my computer screen. It just reminds me to just say yes to opportunity. Nine times out of 10, something really great will come out of it. Or it doesn't even happen at all. And that's okay, too. And that's been my philosophy for a lot of years, and it's done me well.

SM: Being a woman in the blues, what's been the hardest challenge for you? Any advice to your younger self or other younger women that are coming into the music scene nowadays with the current state and AI taking over everything?

RF: Well, first of all AI hasn't taken over everything. And there is a way to stay relevant in this business. And that's get out and play, period. People still go to hear live music. And that's not going anywhere. As far as being a woman in the music business, and

in blues in particular, I've had haters and doubters all through my career- are you kidding me? But you just have to keep moving and keep going and know that you have worth- is my opinion. And there's always gonna be someone who doesn't think you belong in the room. That's okay. Just walk into the room knowing that you do have a place there and you have a voice. I think as women we have the stories. And these are stories that need to be told. We're the ones with the stories- we're the ones carrying the stories. Not to say that the fellas don't- but I guarantee you, we're gonna have a whole lot more to say because of what we experience, the adversity. That needs to be said. That needs to be sung. I'll stop there.

SM: There's some powerhouses out there just like you and several others. It's really awesome to see.

RF: Yeah, I think if anything, we as women in the music industry, and we'll just keep it right at blues, in the blues industry in particular, I think it's important that we get out here and sing and play and give our side of the story, if anything, to give someone else out there permission to do the same. It's so important. If you think that you're not out here and nothing's happening with what you're doing- if you're showing up on stage or helping someone get to the stage- I don't care what your role is with music- you have an important role and that role is to give someone else permission to be all of who they wanna be. Don't be scared. That is a simple role but it's so important. And I think as women, we understand that, we connect that way.

SM: When you do have free time, how do you like to spend it?

RF: You ask a very important question for me because I travel so much. In fact, I just returned from Australia after being down there for a month. That was a big trip, a long trip, a fascinating trip. The main thing I want to do when I come back from trips like that, and a lot of the longer trips, is be still. I have a 15 year old daughter. And you know, teenagers, they're fun being still too. If they've got a movie to watch or I get a chance to actually get into the Playstation with her. That's always fun, and educational for me. I like family time and I love checking in on my friends and making sure that they're okay, and they check in on me all the time. Family, friends, and cooking- me and my daughter, we cook together as much as we can. That's our together time.

SM: What do you hope for for the future of the blues and what are your hopes for your own future as far as continuing on to play music?

RF: Wow, great questions. Hm... the future of the blues, what I hope to see is that more and more people realize that it's just everyday music. And that more people realize that it's not just a genre they may or may not know about. But if they give it a chance, they'll find their life in something- in a song or you'll find, if anything, a witness to your life in a song, in the blues. It's just a witness to life, really. In any occasion, you name it, we've got a song for it that will help you through it. That's how I found it.

SM: I totally agree.

RF: I won't go sacreligious on anybody, but it's like the Big Book. It's the Big Book to life. We've got a song for everything. And you look for it, you'll find it. You may not even have to look for it, it'll find you. It will find you and hook you. Even if it's just one song. And it's that one blues song you just have to hear once in a while. We all have that.

My hopes for the future for myself, is that I can still get out and do

this for as long as I can and as long as I want to. I look at people like Buddy Guy, who's about to turn 90 years old, doing the blues all of this time. And I so love that for him and so many other great players, musicians, songwriters, singers of the blues out here have been making it work. Getting up on the weekends, and playing somewhere, even if it's just somewhere local and finding your joy in that. That's what I hope to do- to continue to find my joy in playing the blues and any other music- to appreciate the blues and to help other people appreciate it, too.

CD Review

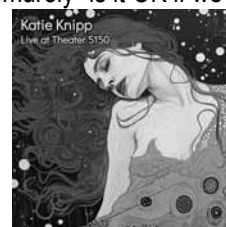
Katie Knipp – *Live at Theater 5150*



By Mindy Giles

A written dedication rests at the bottom of this new album— "...to the memory of Mick Martin," Knipp's champion/mentor and a giant of Sacramento blues. But there is no rest from the minute this vibrant live recording kicks off with "Santa Cruz Blues," as she asks the crowd only slightly demurely "is it OK if we

blast your face off?" The musical power feels gloriously akin to another NorCal area band's anthem--Blue Cheer's 1968 "Summertime Blues." Locked-in monster drums and bass from Neil Campisano and Pancho Thomaselli pound, and Knipp is in total control. Sixteen tracks, all but three originals, culled from her life catalog, no waiting.



Piano/guitar/harmonica playing Knipp has always found top-notch players who have sensitive and wide command of their instruments. Along with the rhythm section, Chris Martinez, (an SBS Hall of Fame member), is a dazzling guitar player and understands every nuance in all her songs, as does Steve Utstein on both his mighty Hammond B-3 and Wurlitzer organs.

Knipp's unconventional vocal phrasing in her melodic music is bold, fearless and has ancestral sisters in the music of two legendary 1960s singer-songwriters, Blues-folk chanteuse Judy Henske and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame member Laura Nyro. Jump forward a decade or two, and Kate Bush and Fiona Apple would ring bells to the younger or uninitiated.

Her piano blues cabaret style shines in her original "I Don't Sing For You," a fierce freedom song, with Knipp's grand playing supporting this antecedent to "Mud," the scary, interior voice of the fictional woman stalker who inhabits their encore song. Steve Utstein's (Café R&B, Mick Martin Big Band) Hammond B-3 flies high on this.

In "Bullet Train" (from 2021 EP, *The Well*) she belts and soars in this confessional rhumba-ish aggressive love/lust song and I thought I caught an ending guitar tag of Blind Faith's "Can't Find My Way Home".

And from her 2018 album, *Take It With You*, she brings a favorite, jazzy, sassy "Metro in Paris" fictionalized account of her trip on public transportation. Hello burlesque dancers!

Justin Townes Earle's Delta blues "If I Was the Devil" continues her chosen themes of inner battles of seduction, possession, control. Snaky slide from Chris Martinez slithers around her equally alluring vocals, all held down by primal drumbeats.

"It gets boring when I write about myself all day long" she teases,

introducing a Western story song full on rocker "Outlaw Doc" who robs 1850's stagecoaches in "Maryville town".

A true song she admits took twenty years to write is "Bad Cables" At a youthful age, Knipp found that she lost her best friend and music partner born with a genetic disorder. A phone call from his mother came while she was solo on stage at the place they often performed together...

Off-covered blues/gospel "John the Revelator" gets a unique and hypnotic treatment with every player getting a chance to bear down on the prophetic Book of Revelation. Her raging rock cover of Springsteen's "State Trooper" from his legendary Nebraska album burns down a sonic highway.

"Chamomile and Cocaine," a crowd favorite from *The Well*, still fuels the imagination. "Gone To Town" an oldie, slyly swings, and is, in retrospect, a portent of her fully flushed out style.

"Stillness", rhythmic spoken word with a one drop reggae beat, counterpoints the ominous words based on the 2023 tragedy where 66-year-old Lauri Carleton was gunned down in her California clothing store for displaying a rainbow Pride flag. The piece morphs into a screaming warning about the "dangerous man." Hmm, it is "a song for the times"—we know who she is talking about.

Knipp has always packed her ambitious vision with soul-bearing confessionals. Dense lyrics for the "in the weeds" lyric-oriented listeners would call for lyric sheets and closed-captioned videos. But her music can fill a dance floor too, whether fans use a standard approach or dramatic interpretive movement. It lends itself to that too.

She has never been categorizable and should not be contained. Blues, art rock, off-Broadway cabaret, New Orleans piano, melodic rock are all there, and depending on your knowledge and background, you can hear many styles and influences.

The noir showstopper (from her 2024 album *Me*) "Mud" closes the album. A great culmination of her dramatic and emotional piano work enmeshes seamlessly with her direct emoting, hands akimbo, long dark hair flying—you really do experience what she explains.

"This 10th commercial release is my love letter to live music. In a world increasingly driven by AI, this record is a reminder that nothing can replace the experience of human beings gathering together in a room and creating something real."

The album was produced by Katie Knipp and Pancho Tomaselli (War, Tower Of Power, Rex Brown, Eric Burdon, Dos Lobos, Tricky, Nelly Furtado).

Street date: September 18, 2026. Available for pre-order i Vinyl, CD, MP3 @ <https://katieknipp.com/>

**If you have not seen the stunning animated black and white video from the 2024 studio version of "Mud", you owe it to yourself to watch this. <https://youtu.be/NETj0ix9uZM?si=oZodcEV8045WeBjB>

A Conversation with Joey Delgado

By Cari Chenkin

Photo Courtesy of Joey Delgado

When talking to Tommy King of TCKing Productions about his upcoming October "Blues by the River" show at Swabbie's, he mentioned that his headliner, Joey Delgado (of the Delgado Brothers Band) was available for and interested in doing an interview for the

Blue Notes. Of course, I jumped at the chance to talk with Joey, and here's the conversation we had.

CC: Many of our readers have heard or heard of your band, the Delgado Brothers. For those who may not be familiar with you guys, can you please give us a brief description of that band? When and how did you start, what you've been doing up to now, and then what led to starting a new project?

JD: Well, the original Delgado Brothers Band was created in my eighth-grade class at Muscatiah Junior High School.

It was a talent show. I recruited all my six brothers to perform. My little brother Stevie was in sixth grade and cute as a button; he was our lead singer. Anyway, that band started in 1970. After that, we just started playing weddings and parties and things like that for the next four or five years.

Then we developed into a Top 40 band playing five nights a week, five sets a night. And that was our day job at that point. That version of the Delgado Brothers Band had five of the six brothers. My brother Bob was not in that band at that time. That band broke up in 1979. We went on to take day jobs and raise our kids. We still played music, but it was for our own enjoyment.

In 1984, my brother Bob came out of retirement and wanted to start a blues band. He recruited me and my little brother Stevie to the blues band. We were doing primarily covers of artists like Robert Cray and B.B. King. We also did some reggae music and whatever other music that we wanted to play.

A couple of years later, we had an opportunity to play the Los Angeles Street Scene. It was a major event, citywide; they blocked off all the streets downtown, and they had bands on every corner. We played this little showcase there, and we played right after Joe Louis Walker.

If you can imagine, here we are, an upcoming young band, and Joe Louis played right before us. We were all excited to hear him, and for whatever reason, we weren't really intimidated by it. We were more excited about this audience that we hoped were going to get what we're doing. We played a song that was written by a man named Dennis Walker. (This kind of ties into what I'm doing now.) Dennis Walker was actually IN the audience because he was producing Joe Louis Walker at the time on Hightone Records. We didn't know Dennis was in the audience, and he didn't know that we were going to play his song. At the end of the show, he introduced himself to us and said, "Man, I like you guys' sound and that was my song you guys played." Wow!

This was on a Friday. The following Monday, my brother Bob got a phone call from Larry Sloven from Hightone Records who said he was interested signing us to a record deal. My brother Bob hung up on him because he thought it was just some joke! Fortunately, he called back and said, "I'm not joking, don't hang up." So, we signed a record deal with Hightone Records and released an album in 1987 on that label.

We were very excited to be on the same label as Otis Rush, Joe



Ely, and of course, Joe Louis Walker. But we weren't thinking that far in advance. They expected us to get on the road and promote the record. We all had small children at that time, and there was no way that we were just going to take a chance and drive across country. So, the record sold just okay. We sold 25,000 records worldwide, but they were expecting 250,000. We were way short, right? So, they ended up dumping us after one year, which was fine with me.

It was actually a blessing that they let us go, because we were supposed to do five records and we were never going to keep our publishing or copyrights or any of that stuff. We floundered on for a bit and then broke up in '92 - '93. because it was just discouraging. The music scene was not any fun anymore.

A few years later, John "Juke" Logan, who was a good friend of ours, started a record company. He said, "I'm going to sign you guys to a record deal". He gave us a one-page contract. It was the kind of deal you couldn't refuse, because it was really fair. We got back on the map in late 1999, when we released our second album called *Let's Get Back*. John wanted to shop our record (because he liked our original material) to other artists that maybe would record it, which would increase our exposure as a band.

John Logan shopped our record and John Mayall from the Blues-breakers heard two of the songs and decided to record them. The album that John Mayall was recording was a tribute to himself. He had all his very special musical friends on the record, including Billy Gibbons, Billy Preston, and Steve Miller. Eric Clapton was supposed to play on our track, on the song, "If I Don't Get Home", but he bailed at the last minute. John Mayall was able to call Gary Moore, who played on our song. And it's an amazing performance from Gary; one of the last recordings he ever did before he passed away. So, Gary Moore, my brother Bob and I are on that song on John Mayall's record.

After that record came out, it went through the roof, so we actually made quite a bit of money because of the way Logan had set up our publishing.

Fast-forward a couple years later. I created a recording studio in my house, and that's where we recorded *A Brother's Dream*. We had no money to actually pay to finish the record, get it mixed and mastered and published and all that stuff. So, we started our own little label, on which we released *A Brother's Dream*. And it's been like that ever since. We have *A Brother's Dream* record on Bell Asher. The second album is *Learning to Fly* on Bell Asher, the third is *Two Trains*, also on Bell Asher. And then we have one in the can. That'll be released, hopefully this year.

So, that's the history of the Delgado Brothers. It's been a long journey, but a good one. Dennis Walker and Bruce Bromberg are two producers, who wrote the majority of the material on that first album for Hightone Records. Meanwhile, they were teaching me about publishing, copyright recording and what to do, what not to do. Now, we're set up so we own 100% of our material and nobody tells us what to record or what to play or nothing.

CC: And that's what any artist wants.

JD: Absolutely.

CC: Let's talk about what's going on for you now.

JD: Dennis Walker contacted me again after all these years to say he's still writing music and would like my help. He had given up on

writing music and decided to just write lyrics. And I agreed, because on our very first album, we co-wrote a song called "Fair Warning". I had the original idea for the song, and he wrote the lyrics for it. He sent me a bunch of lyrics without any preconceived idea of what the music was going to be. We ended up co-writing 11 songs together.

I always wanted to make a solo record, and this was the perfect opportunity. This time I played all the music and instruments on the demos and Dennis Walker wrote the lyrics. Sadly, he passed away, a couple of years later. The working name of the record and band is the BLG Project. BLG stands for "Borderline Genius".

CC: So where did that name come from?

JD: That name came from the fact that, whenever we had an issue, e.g., we were short of a piece of equipment, or some cable didn't work or this lighting blew out or something, we would have to jerry-rig a fix. A friend made a comment one time: "that's borderline genius!" And that became my tag. This record is meant to be a tribute to Dennis Walker. While he's not well known as a famous songwriter, he worked with everybody. He wrote music for all the big guys.

I'm good friends with Tony Braunagel, an award-winning drummer who's played with Bonnie Raitt for years and he's currently the drummer for Taj Mahal. He's also a very famous producer who's produced hundreds of acts in Southern California. I convinced him to help me with this project, so he's co-producing with me on this record.

I got my engineer Ray Moore to come out. I got Tony on drums; I got Travis Carlton (who is Larry Carlton's son that I've known for 20 years). I got Michael Thompson, an amazing keyboard player, who was on the *Let's Get Back* record and was in our band for a minute, before he left us to join the Eagles. He's been with the Eagles for over 25 years at least. I looked at the Eagles' schedule, and saw that there was a window of opportunity, when they were taking a break. Michael was available and I flew him out here from his New Mexico home. He spent three days with me, and we had a wonderful time.

That was the core band. The special guest on the record is Kim Wilson from the Fabulous Thunderbirds. Yeah, he's a big fan of the Delgado Brothers Band. I had told him what I was doing. And he said, "If you don't call me to play on this record, I'm going to be *****". So, he came down and played one song with us. Same thing with Kid Ramos. There's a song called "Your Other Men" that I wrote specifically for Kim Wilson. It's just a jump blues that's really cool and Kid and Kim are amazing!

CC: So, the new project kind of is based on the recording. Now, are you guys going to be touring as a band under the BLG name?

JD: Yeah, I'm doing some events with these guys, but they're all high dollar performers. I'll use them when I can but at this point, I can't afford to maintain that kind of band.

My plan is to release the record with these special guests, and I do have a bunch of great players who'll tour with me. The guy that's playing with me now who you'll see when we play Sacramento, is Jacob Agueta who's been playing with me for the last six months and he's really great. I haven't really settled on a permanent drummer yet, but I've got a bunch of guys who like playing with me.

CC: Okay, so what's your vision for the BLG band? How many pieces and what instruments do you have?

JD: As of today, it's a four-piece band. We'll have guitar, bass,

drums and keyboards. And then occasionally I will hire a percussionist. Also, another artist who's on the record, who may join me occasionally, is Jade Bennett Matteo. Also, Lenny Castro, who's a very well-known percussionist, is also on the record.

CC: Cool. And do you have a title for the record yet?

JD: Yeah, I think it's going to be the Joey Delgado BLG Project 2026.

CC: Okay. And when is your recording going to be released?

JD: Well, I'm hoping for mid-August. Whether or not I have physical copies of it, I don't know. But it'll be available digitally.

CC: Will you be touring regionally, nationally, or just mostly local, behind this new project?

JD: My plan is to go international. I have contacts in Europe and Australia and New Zealand, maybe Japan, and that's my goal. You know who Chris Cain is – he's a good friend of mine and I'm going to follow his model. When he goes to Europe or to, Australia and New Zealand, he'll use a local backup band there. And I've done that before in Europe. I've gone to Europe and used a backup band, as it's more affordable for them and easier for me.

I do not plan on going on a 300-day tour. I'm going to be 69 this year and, not that I'm feeling old or anything, but I just don't have the desire to be on the road for three or four months at a time. That doesn't excite me. I do love to play and I love music festivals. I think I do really well at those things. But because I'm the front man now, I've got to be careful not to wear myself out. I'm going to go for it and see what happens. I feel I have a good 10 years ahead of me.

CC: So, how is this band and this project different from the Delgado Brothers?

JD: Well, it's a lot different. I'm not quitting the Delgado Brothers Band and Delgado Brothers are not breaking up. I just feel like it's a great project and the songs are great.

CC: Speaking of the songs, will it be all original music, or will you be doing some covers as well?

JD: Every song on this record is co-written by Dennis Walker and me. I even included the song from our first album, *A Fair Warning*, that we co-wrote together in 1987. The Delgado Brothers have been playing that song for years. We kind of revisited it. And it's really funky and fun.

CC: You're going to appear here in Sacramento soon. You're playing the 17th Annual Blues by the River event at Swabbie's on Saturday, October 3, from 12 noon to 4 pm. And you'll have your traveling band with you.

JD: I also have been doing, as a hybrid with my live performance show, a solo acoustic thing where I do I reinterpret a lot of the old Delgado Brothers songs with a solo acoustic guitar and my voice. And people seem to respond really well to that.

CC: Will that be part of your Sacramento show as well?

JD: I normally start off the show with a couple acoustic songs and then we go into the electric.

CC: Tell me a little bit about who is or was your most important musical influence and what bearing do they have on your current musical direction?

JD: I'd say the number one musical influence on me, and also as a person, is B.B. King. The Delgado Brothers opened up for him in

1992 on New Year's Eve. I was determined to meet B.B. King at the end of the night. So, I stood in line with all the other fans at his touring bus out in the back. My ex-wife and I were the last ones to get on his tour bus. It's one or two in the morning after New Year's Eve, and I'm sitting on the bus with B.B. King!

He's telling me about how he manages his wardrobe and the way he listens to music on his little micro cassettes. He didn't give me words of advice but said he liked my playing. And then he signed my guitar and the poster I had with me. After about 20 minutes, I said, "Mr. King, I'm sorry, but I have to go." He didn't try to get rid of me. He could have stayed and talked to me for hours if I wanted to.

I thought, man, this guy, was so kind and patient with me. And I never forgot that. I talked to a bunch of people who have met B.B. King, and they all say that he was so kind and gentle and patient, and he didn't rush you or nothing. I thought that what a great characteristic about a human that is. I've met other artists that I've idolized, but when I met them, I was disappointed that I did, so that's happened to me too.

The other person who influenced me is Chris Cain. *Southland Blues Magazine* would put on concerts, and they hired me to do the sound and open up for the touring headliner. So, one time he asked me to open for Chris Cain and do the sound.

On the night of the concert, we did our little show, then Chris came on and my jaw dropped to the floor. I said, "My God, this guy!" He just nailed it. I love guitar players like Larry Carlton, Robben Ford, and B.B. King, but I couldn't comprehend Larry Carlton or Robben Ford. It was beyond my pay grade. But when I saw Chris Cain, it all made sense to me. I could see he had the sophistication of Robben Ford and Larry Carlton, but he also had the blues of B.B. King, Albert King and Freddie King and all that style.

So, I credit him with helping me find my own voice. He's always been very generous to me, allowing me to sit in, and there's thousands of videos of me and him performing together.

CC: Just a couple more questions. Will this be your first gig at Swabbie's or have you performed there before? And at what other Sacramento venues have you performed?

JD: The Delgado Brothers performed at Swabbie's, three or four years ago. And then we played at the Torch Club on occasion, and then the Powerhouse Pub. We've been around since the 80s and we've played all those venues. We even played the Sacramento fairgrounds, for the county fair at one time. We used to play in Davis, and we do play a lot in the San Francisco, San Jose area. So, we do get up to Northern California quite a bit.

CC: Where can people learn about you and your current project?

JD: Well, as of today, I'm working on my Joey Delgado website page, but you can find me on Facebook or Instagram. I think in the spring of next year, I'll have an actual tour schedule.

I also want to mention the new release that'll come out mid-August. It's called, *Life and Love, Joey Delgado*, that's all Delgado Brothers songs written by me and my brothers.

CC: Thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate it.

JD: Oh, thank you for your time. I appreciate it. I need all the help I can get too. I don't have a lot of money for PR, so I'm counting on the goodwill of journalists like you to help me out.

Check out: <https://www.instagram.com/delgadobrothers/> and <https://www.facebook.com/joeyd335>

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Sacramento, CA 95860-0580

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Send information for the
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editor.sacblues@gmail.com, or mail to Editor at
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