

MAGIC CITY

BLUES NEWS



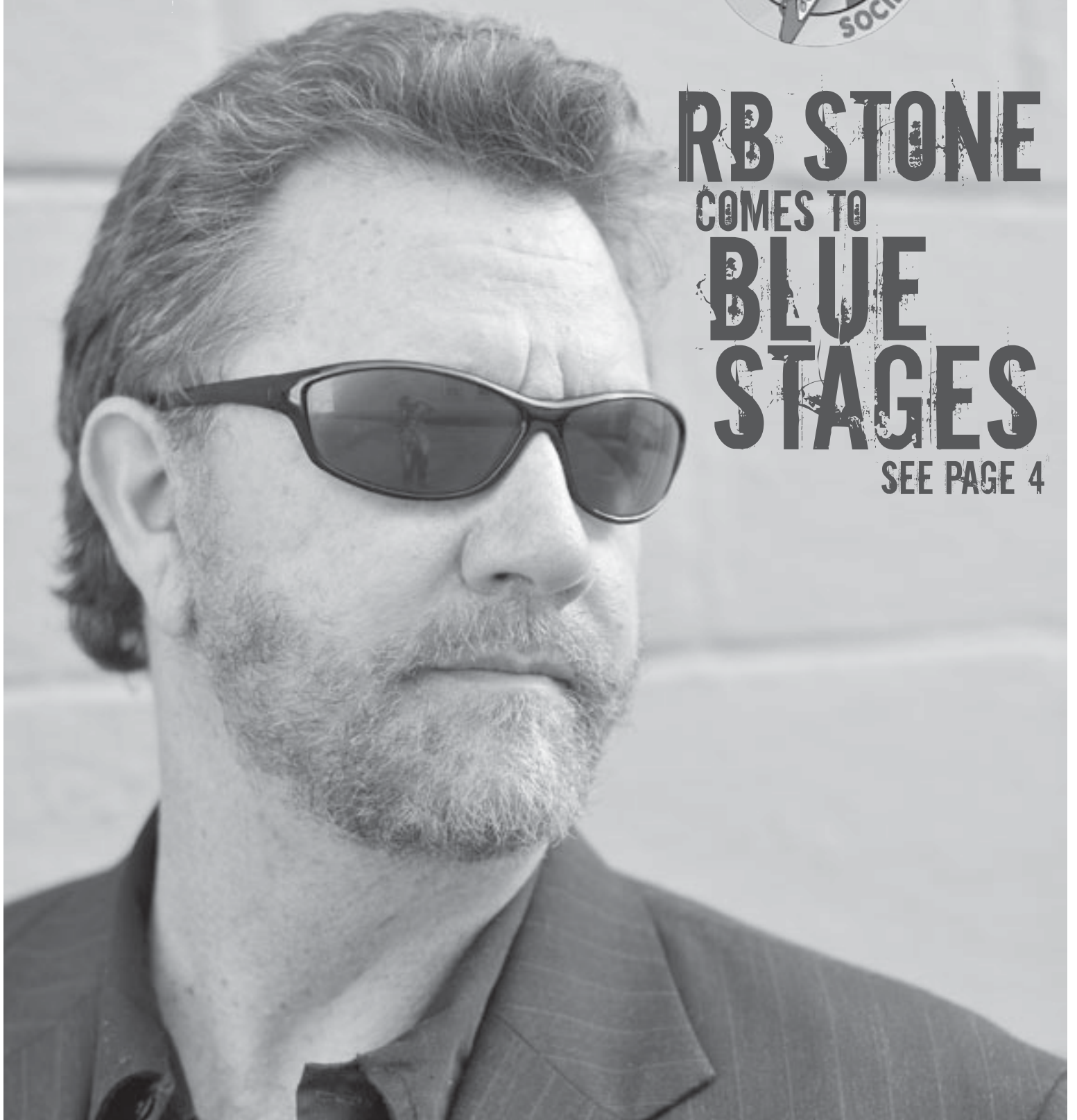
FEB 2012
ISSUE# 223
BIRMINGHAM,
ALABAMA

RB STONE

COMES TO

BLUE STAGES

SEE PAGE 4



Joe Louis Walker brings down the *Hellfire* p8

FROM THE PREZ

Our birthday Bash and election went well. The crowd was just right for Moe's upstairs. It's a small room and we filled it. Not one seat left. However that was only forty people. Those that didn't come missed some great music from the Randy Buell Band, AND missed Chiemi Fujio, a bass player from Osaka, Japan, who is currently playing with Super Chikan, Dr. Feelgood Potts and other Beale Street acts. Chiemi sat in on a few numbers with Randy and it was one of those special moments that will be remembered by all present.

The election went well and we once again have a

full board. Joan Hilner was elected Vice President, John Wiles was reelected treasurer and Patti Langan was reelected to a Board At Large position. Wendy Walters has been appointed to the position of Secretary in place of Elaina Fowler

who was unable to serve out her two year term when she moved out of state. Congratulations and a big thank you to all the board members for their commitment to supporting the Magic City Blues Society.

Several people have volunteered to assist the board. But we still need more people willing to help. Over the next few weeks we plan to group volunteers into committees or street teams with specific responsibilities. So please let me of one of the other board members know if you can help us. Helping can be fun; you will make new friends and perhaps learn a new skill and learn more about your favorite genre of music. It doesn't harm to show community involvement with a non-profit on your resume. Even the IRS lets you deduct expenses and donations directly related to helping a non-profit.

Areas we need help in are event management, fund raising/grant writing, membership, Blues in the Schools, newsletter articles and CD reviews. A

meaty project could be to work with the Alabama Department of Tourism to initiate a Blues Trail. Our neighbor Mississippi has already done this. Let us know where you are interested in helping. Unsure how you can help? Talk to me or any board member, we'll figure out how to match your skills and interests to an area where we need help. We need your help to expand our reach and prominence in the Blues community.

The International Blues Competition will be held February 1-4 in Memphis. The winners of our Battle of the Blues Bands, 2 Blu and the Lefty Collins bands

will be giving the other competitors a run for their money. The board is proud to support these bands and wishes them well. We will cover the results next month in our newsletter.

Your board is planning several events. Representatives of the MCBS will

meet this month with the Five Points Neighborhood Association to discuss the dates for the Phelan Park Music Series. We hope to secure funding and the support of the association to hold at least four events this year. I think I'm correct in saying that this will be our 17th year organizing this event. We also plan on holding three Junkyard Jukes – the first is scheduled for March 30th at the Daniel Day Gallery. There will be open jams usually on the first Friday of each month (check our calendar, occasionally they may have to be scheduled on a different date). We will alternate acoustic and electric jams starting with an acoustic jam in February. Paul Walters has volunteered to coordinate the acoustic jams and Frank Ranelli will coordinate the electric jams.

Thank you for letting me be part of your Blues. Hope to see you at our events. Please come and talk to me and the other board members. Let us know your ideas for your Blues Society.

Roger Stephenson

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PLAN TO GROUP VOLUNTEERS INTO
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MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND PERHAPS
LEARN A NEW SKILL AND LEARN
MORE ABOUT YOUR FAVORITE
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FEBRUARY MEETING:
Open Acoustic Jam
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Moe's BBQ, Rocky Ridge

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FROM OUR MEMPHIS CORRESPONDENT

January 19, 2012 -- Your correspondent may not be able to work through this puzzle without the help of the 12 Blues fans required to recall whether Muddy Waters played a certain tune in "E" or 1947 but, when does it stop being Blues? And when does it start? To wit: Eric Gales is a terrific guitar player whom most fans would welcome to any Blues venue. His jam with Alabaster native and Reba Russell's axe-man Josh Roberts is a stunning YouTube Blues Classic. Later, he opened for the then alive and very well Hubert Sumlin at the 2010 Memphis in May Blues Tent with a rock inflected and pyronntechin Blues set. And when he walked the master on stage, silenced

his band and sat down with him on folding chairs, he was all ears and could have been on the porch in hometown Greenwood, MS. He played like it. Fast forward through a couple years of trials, rehab and growing success and, well, things are a little different. When he played the 1884 Room at Minglewood Hall on Madison last week it was all about Eric, not the music. Backed by a stellar rhythm section including local Paul Porter on bass, Gales mugged and rified brilliantly but didn't really get things moving in the right direction. In fact, the movement in the audience (in your correspondent's view, the best indicator of an act's character) was

strictly vertical. Bouncing up and down, ready to mosh. There's something about the syncopation, swing and shuffle of Blues that combines rhythm (maybe time's vertical punctuation) with propulsion (trains, walking, rivers, fast cars) and creates a tension that enlivens the most pedestrian lyrics or tired tune. Maybe that's what was missing from the mosh pit.

On the other hand, there is Patrick Dodd and his Trio who have been putting in journeyman hours on Beale St while cutting a CD. His band is anchored by local drummer Harry Peel, who conjures amazing beats from a minimal kit, no wasted motion and a cinematic mad scientist hairdo. His drum solos are as lyrical as the tunes he accompanies. Dodd is a very serious, dreadlocked youngster who developed his gravitas in ultra-marathons and is reputed to have

beaten a horse in a fifty mile race. He is a super guitar player and a singer who often draws the comment "great pipes". In fact, so great that Ward Archer, owner of the Music + Art Studio, came out of his office to see who was recording when he overheard the piped-in session. So great that he's been observed to make a great preacher tear up. On first blush Dodd sounds like Bad Company or some 1970s rock band singing gospel, in church. But wait, that's his girl bringing redemption. So, given his age, which is probably early 30s, he's sort of reverse engineering the blues from gospel and rock. But he's there.

Your correspondent's puzzle is not likely to be solved, here or now, anywhere or ever, but it's the sort of thing that makes him appreciate the fluidity of the answers and the permanence of the questions.

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WENDY WALTERS, Editor
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BLUE STAGES PRESENTS RB STONE

When: Feb. 18, 7:30pm

Where: Close to downtown - email your reservation to bluestages@att.net we'll confirm the address

How much: \$10

Time to get out and enjoy our first Blue Stages event of 2012.

The Blue Stages shows have proven very popular since their inception. Artists and audiences have loved the opportunity to interact in the close intimate and relaxed setting of a member's home. If you have never attended one of these events, stop missing out. Sign up for this event and meet the regulars that don't ever miss a Blue Stages event. Seating is limited to 60 people, so email your reservation immediately so as not to be disappointed. Limited seating will be provided so bring a small folding chair and your favorite beverages.

RB Stone is a true county Bluesman. He was born in Huntingburg, Indiana. RB's family moved to Ohio when he was one. Both his parents were huge music lovers

and he credits them for his versatile musical upbringing. His father, a blues/boogie and rock n roll lover, exposed him to the sounds of Little Richard, BB King, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Elvis while his mother exposed him to Janis Joplin, Johnny Cash, Herb Alpert, The Beatles, Motown and the hits of the '60s.

At 12, his mother showed him some chords on the piano and Bill Withers' hit, "Lean On Me" was the first song he learned. He soon started playing blues/boogie songs without lyrics, humming melodies as well as pounding out beats on desktops, boxes and anything that had a drum sound. His parents got him a used drum set for his 14th birthday and though he took right to them all those listening didn't!

At 18 and just out of high school, music was still a far off dream that only happened to others, so he hired on with the railroad traveling the Midwest with a 90-man rail gang living in camp-cars. He learned about life fast and hard once outside his small town.



Special to Magic City Blues News

RB Stone

At age 23, with music and travel bugs nipping at his heels, he sold everything except a guitar, some harps, and a truck then moved to Colorado. He taught himself to play guitar at night in a barn on an Indian reservation in Ignacio, CO where he lived while learning to break horses. A few months passed, he was well versed in both skills and took a job leading expeditions in the mountains on horseback, and entertaining the patrons at night.

He learned a lot in the '80s in the Durango, CO area music scene. He watched carefully as legendary acts like Clarence "Gatemouth"

Brown, Charlie Daniels and various blues, rock, western, bluegrass and country bands frequented the area. In 1985, he wrote and recorded his first blues song, "Fairweather Friends", which is on his latest CD, *Lonesome Traveler's Blues*.

The southwest, while a great proving ground for entertaining, didn't bring fruit through a record label, so he started his own called Wild Stallion Records, recording 3 albums with his band Highway Robbery. They achieved both regional and national acclaim thru airplay and a nationally released music video called, "Frank and Jesse", in a co-deal with

Continued on page 10

RB Stone *Lonesome Traveler's Blues*

RB Stone got blues on his country and country on his blues. It makes for a satisfying combination on his latest self-produced album "Lonesome Traveler's Blues" which features ten original tracks.

Since starting his music career at age 23 with nothing but a guitar and a few harmonicas in his truck, RB has produced 15 albums, toured 32 countries and picked up a good number of fans along the way. You can hear the road in his voice and in his lyrics. You'll also find the ten songs on this album quite varied – it's not

the same old 1-4-5 all night long. There are up-tempo rockers, straight-ahead blues and others that would find themselves right at home on a cool alt/outlaw-country station.

RB Stone kicks it off with "Mississippi Women" which is a driving blues-rock that features some greasy slide work and RB's workman-like harp that serves the song well. "Lonesome Traveler's Blues" juxtaposes a cool rhumba beat with Stone's country-twined vocals. "Fairweather Friends" strips things way down with some tasty National Steel Guitar and vocals. "Ain't Gonna Bring Me Down" and "Born Into The Blues" are straight-

up electric blues played quite well by Stone's full band. "Master Of The Craft" is a slyly-penned song about what sounds like one heck of a woman. RB serves up a big slow blues torch song with "Find Yourself A Fool" before closing out the disk with the humorous "Man With A Minivan" and the funk-driven "Don't Be Mean".

"Lonesome Traveler's Blues" is a fun and well-produced album that is full of songwriting that you can tell comes from RB's heart. I certainly urge you to pick it up from him personally when RB Stone plays solo at the first MCBS Blue Stages house Concert of the season. It ought to be a very good show.

Bob Harrison



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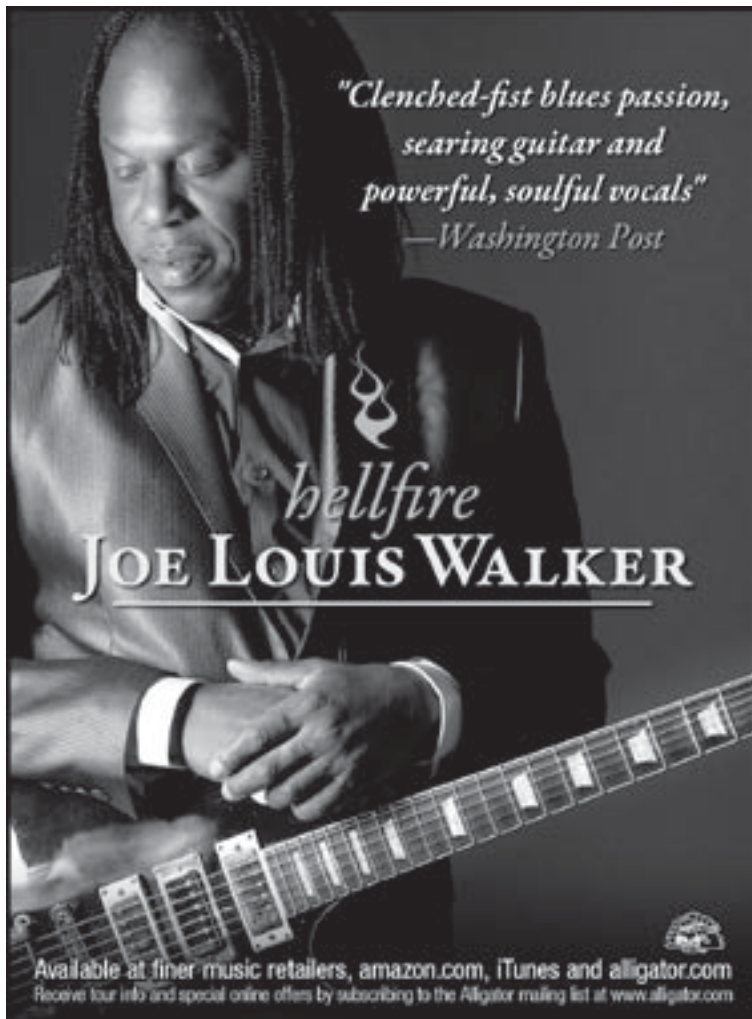
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Thanks to the following people for showing their support of the Blues by joining or renewing their membership in the Magic City Blues Society:

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Hank Wegener
Penny Wegener
John Williamson

(Editor's note: My sweet husband, Sleepy Gumbo Bailey, aka Paul Walters, has recently taken on the membership role. Please communicate with him at mcbsmembership@bellsouth.net for any issues with membership, name butchering, address corrections, etc., WW)



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PHOTOS BY
ROGER STEPHENSON





Joe Louis Walker
Hellfire
Alligator Records

Joe Louis Walker lays down eleven mostly long tracks to provide 50 minutes of brilliant and intense Blues music. This CD needs to be played loud. Better still, catch one of Joe Louis Walker's shows and hear it live. This CD exudes so much energy I'd never have guessed that he was born in 1949. Well, maybe the two hard driven rock & roll numbers should have given it away. Black Girls – "you got to have black girls to put that Soul back in your song" and Too Drunk to Drive.

This CD was produced by Tom Hambridge (producer of Buddy Guy's two most



Michael Weintrob

Joe Louis Walker

recent Grammy-winning CD's). He got the sound just right. You can hear every word Joe Louis Walker sings and that's what you want because, yes, you do want to hear that great, slightly gravelly Blues voice. All too

often the instruments drown out the star of the show. Hellfire, the first track, gives a good taste of the blistering, wailing, string-bending fire of Joe Louis Walker's guitar playing. That's when you crank the volume. On the second track he brings it down with I Won't Do That. Ride All Night takes the tempo back up a notch. Joe's vocals are great. Even though the lyrics are crystal clear, I'm left wondering if it's a motorcycle, a train he is riding...or, in true blues double entendre fashion, perhaps we have to read between the lines to decide what, with happiness in his voice, he may be riding.

Walker's original Soldier for Jesus is my favorite track. Hallelujah, nothing like a

good gospel song to raise the spirits. Great guitar work with The Jordanares adding the backing vocals. The next track, I Know Why, also has gospel roots with a heavy soul influence and features a subtle and unobtrusive brass section in the background. Don't Cry is another gospel and soul influenced Walker original featuring The Jordanares. Very enjoyable listening.

Movin' On, an upbeat revamp of Hank Snow's 1950 classic song, is an excellent choice to finish on. It provides a great platform to showcase Walker's guitar playing and being upbeat puts a smile on your face and makes you want to get up and dance. I predict this will be an award winning CD.

Roger Stephenson

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ETTA JAMES

Etta James died on January 20, 2012 of leukemia. She had recorded since the early 1950's, and leaves a lasting legacy of soul and blues which few can match. Possibly best known for "At Last", a ballad from the 1960's which has been sung or played at countless weddings (and Obama's inauguration), James was a much grittier singer, from her first hit "Roll With Me Henry" through the driving soul of "Tell Mama" and a number of straight blues albums and songs. She had many great hits but her best effort was the haunting "I'd Rather Go Blind".

Etta was discovered singing on a street corner by bandleader Johnny

Otis, and after the success of "Roll With Me Henry" she toured with his band for a number of years. In the 1960's she recorded probably her best work with Chess Records, including the songs mentioned above, "Something's Got A Hold on Me", "Security" and many others. Her soulful sound was unusual for Chess and broadened its audience significantly.

After her success in the 1960's James' life took a downturn as her drug addiction took hold. She fought the habit for decades and had to climb back into the spotlight in the 1980's after so many years off and some damage to her voice. She did manage to kick the habit and made several notable blues albums in that



Special to Magic City Blues News

Etta James

period. She was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1993, and also won three Grammys in the 1990's and 2003.

Recently her health had declined swiftly, but she released a final studio album, "The Dreamer" in 2011. James

had an instantly recognizable voice that could soar sweetly or growl with equal ease. Her long career and success with 50's R&B, 60's soul, blues and jazz demonstrates her versatility and lasting effect on American music.

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CBT records of Texas. With the recent attention he was getting he moved to Nashville to make 3 albums with another indie label focusing on the European market, as well as in the USA establishing a radio DJ network that still supports him today.

In the early '90s, California called. He partnered with Gwen Gordy from the Motown dynasty on a catalog of his songs, which led to getting under the EMI umbrella with his catalog. This led him to meeting and befriending artists like Warren Haynes, The Marshall Tucker Band (who

recorded one of his songs on their gospel album), doing television commercials in LA and entertaining the troops overseas.

After 7 years in California, under the EMI umbrella, he headed back to Nashville, where he was asked to produce some demos for Bruce Burch of EMI Nashville after Bruce had heard his most recent project. Soon after that he was able to record an album at EMI Music's basement studio. It remains one of his best productions and collection of songs to date.

From 1998-2001, between tours, he became a pilot, flying Lear jets until 9/11 hit then all that came to a standstill. So in 2003, when

an opportunity in Las Vegas came his way, he made the move playing casinos and creating his own production show with producer Gino Venezia. They titled it, "RB Stone's Americana Music Café", a versatile roots music show built around his songs.

Like a true road dog, he's kept touring throughout 32 countries and 5 continents. All the while recording 15 CDs – his albums have been a mix of blues, roots rock and country music. Though his music was distributed worldwide thru military bases, Tower Records, Barnes and Noble, Borders, and other outlets, most were sold at his shows, over 40,000 total. He's currently based in Tennessee writing and

recording, but you are most likely to see him in a town near you, performing roots rock and blues music. Two of RB's latest accomplishments are charting his new album and winning a regional qualifier for the International Blues Challenge in the solo/duo competition. He will be going for the title February 1-4 just before his Birmingham Blue Stages show.

Remember, sign up early. This is a close up and personal show where you can chat with the artist. Ask him about his techniques, the inspiration for his songs, or whatever else interests you. Check RB's website at www.rbstone.com

Roger Stephenson

BLUES BAND DIRECTORY

2BLU AND THE LUCKY STIFFS

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Please direct all additions & changes to: Carolyn Pocus (pocusm@bellsouth.net).

CALENDAR OF THE BLUES - FEBRUARY

Call clubs to confirm! Birmingham listings in **BOLD** face.

To be listed in MCBS calendar, contact Carolyn Pocus (pocusm@bellsouth.net).

WEDNESDAY, 01

Glen and Libba Satterfield's

Microwave Dave
Bandito Southside, Huntsville, AL

THURSDAY, 02

Song Writers in the Round

**DanielDay Gallery/
Dream Mecca Studio**

FRIDAY, 03

**Happy Lemmy
DanielDay Gallery/
Dream Mecca Studio**

Microwave Dave
John T's BBQ, Winchester, TN
Debbie Bond & The Trudats
Fabulous First Friday at the Pie Lab
Greensboro, AL
Little G
Downtown Tavern, Gadsden, AL

SATURDAY, 04

**Matt Harvey Blues Band
Gip's Place, Bessemer**

Microwave Dave
St. Thomas Church (afternoon),
Huntsville, AL
Microwave Dave
Vittone's, Decatur, AL

SUNDAY, 05

**The Blue Devils
DanielDay Gallery/
Dream Mecca Studio**

MONDAY, 06

Microwave Dave
Mama Annie's, Huntsville, AL 5-7pm

WEDNESDAY, 08

Glen and Libba Satterfield's

Microwave Dave
Bandito Southside, Huntsville, AL

THURSDAY, 09

Microwave Dave
Hampton Cove Middle School
Huntsville, AL

FRIDAY, 10

**Elijah Butler Band
DanielDay Gallery/
Dream Mecca Studio
MCBS Open Acoustic Jam
Moe's BBQ, Rocky Ridge
Microwave Dave
Vittone's, Decatur, AL**

SATURDAY, 11

**Ms. Johnnie Nathan
Gip's Place, Bessemer**

SUNDAY, 12

**Debbie Bond & The Trudats
-Valentine Show
DanielDay Gallery/
Dream Mecca Studio**

MONDAY, 13

Microwave Dave
Mama Annie's, Huntsville, AL 5-7pm

WEDNESDAY, 15

Glen and Libba Satterfield's

Microwave Dave
Bandito Southside, Huntsville, AL

FRIDAY, 17

Microwave Dave
John T's BBQ, Winchester, TN

SATURDAY, 18

**Just Us Three (Rob Harris)
Gip's Place
Red Mountain
DanielDay Gallery/
Dream Mecca Studio
Blue Stages House Concert
with RB Stone
Buy tickets for details**

SUNDAY, 19

**Sir Truth w/ Earl Williams
DanielDay Gallery/
Dream Mecca Studio
Spoonful
Courtyard 280**

MONDAY, 20

Microwave Dave
Mama Annie's, Huntsville, AL 5-7pm

WEDNESDAY, 22

Glen and Libba Satterfield's

Microwave Dave
Bandito Southside, Huntsville, AL

FRIDAY, 24

The Bill Ledbetter Band

**DanielDay Gallery/
Dream Mecca Studio
Microwave Dave
Vittone's, Decatur, AL**

SATURDAY, 25

**Tim Boykin Blues Band
Gip's Place**

SUNDAY, 26

**Spoonful
DanielDay Gallery/
Dream Mecca Studio**

MONDAY, 27

Microwave Dave
Mama Annie's, Huntsville, AL 5-7pm

WEDNESDAY, 29

Glen and Libba Satterfield's

Microwave Dave
Bandito Southside, Huntsville, AL

DON'T GET LEFT BEHIND



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of the Blues
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favorite artists!

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For membership inquiries, please contact Paul Walters at mcbsmembership@bellsouth.net

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