

May 2010



BLUES PAPER

Cool Issue 190

The Publication of the Linn County Blues Society - lcbs.org

May 2010

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& the Demolition Band

Craig Erickson

Bob Dorr & The Blue Band

Kevin "B.F." Burt & the Instigators

northlibertyiowa.org/bluesandbbq

In this May 2010 issue —

Hot Hand Blues Band at Parlor City Pub
1st Annual Irish District Music/Arts Festival
Big Mo's CD review
Diplomats of Solid Sound still performing
Flock Of Funk rocks New Bohemia district at Parlor City Pub
Local LIVE music schedules
Blues at CSPS
McMurrin & Johnson bring Blues to the schools

Bluesmore 2010
is in the bag!
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2010

Linn County Blues Society
PO Box 2672
Cedar Rapids, IA
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BBQ Contest!
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5:30-9:30PM

Avey Brothers

Saturday, July 17
5:30PM - 9:30PM

Mark Selby

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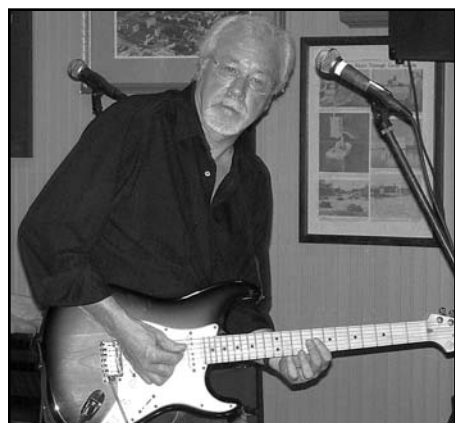
Hot Hand Blues Band

A very cool show at Parlor City Pub



photos and story by Bill Ray

Easter Sunday, April 4, the Hot Hand Blues Band gave a very cool performance at Parlor City in Cedar Rapids. A good-sized crowd showed up to hear the music even though it was a holiday.



Ron DeWitte on lead guitar

Band members include Ron DeWitte on guitar and vocals, Frank Zahorik on harmonica and vocals, Tim Razor on bass and vocals, and Butch O'Connell on drums. The band plays a combination of blues, soul and rock standards, with a touch of cowboy blues thrown in for some extra spice.

DeWitte, veteran guitar player and Iowa Music Hall of Famer, always gives a superb performance on his instrument. His smooth vocals on songs like "Georgia," "You'll Never Find Another Love Like Mine," and "Stand By Me" are as good as you'll hear anywhere on any stage.



Butch O'Connell on drums, Frank Zahorik on harmonica

Frank Zahorik, of Lisbon, plays a mean blues harp and also has an excellent voice. He took lead vocal duties on songs like "Caldonia" and Hank, Jr.'s "Family Tradition." Zahorik also played harmonica and interchanged leads with



Tim Razor on bass

DeWitte on guitar during a slow, melodious version of the instrumental classic, "Sleep Walk."

Tim Razor added to the vocal mix with his raspy blues renditions of "Sweet Home Chicago" and "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag." Tim plays bass with authority and high energy--a fun guy to watch as he always enjoys the beat.

Then there's local favorite Butch O'Connell on drums who seems to be able to play any genre of music with crisp rhythm and polished experience. The guy could play drums for any band.

Probably my favorite tune for the evening was a slow, haunting five-minute version of "Ghost Riders In the Sky" with Frank Zahorik taking lead vocal and Ron DeWitte laying down those deep guitar notes that remind one of Wyoming and Montana vistas. It was truly a classic rendition of a classic cowboy blues song.

The Hot Hand Blues Band is most active in the summer. As with most musicians in this area, each is a member of other musical groups and enjoys playing a variety of musical styles.

Talking with DeWitte during a break, he mentioned that he and his wife, singer Lynne Rothrock, spent much of the winter on the cruise ship musical circuit. Traveling thousands of miles on the ocean to all parts of the world, he said the food was good and the pay was excellent for playing just a few times during a week. But though the overall experience was rewarding, sometimes being on board a ship for so many days was confining. He seemed to be glad to be back in Iowa and playing music on dry land.

Parlor City continues to sign and feature excellent bands. The performance by the Hot Hand Blues Band certainly added to this most welcome trend.

The Linn County Blues Society is a way cool, non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of Blues music in Eastern Iowa as well as to provide charitable contributions to other community organizations. LCBS is an Affiliated Organization in the Blues Foundation's international network. The BLUESPAPER is a monthly publication of the LCBS. Website: lcbs.org

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Membership

To learn more about the Linn County Blues Society or to join, see the membership form in this Bluespaper or the LCBS website. Your membership includes;

- Discount admissions to many local Blues activities.
- Monthly LCBS Bluespaper.
- Voting rights in the LCBS elections.
- Being a part of the groove!

Bluespaper Contact information

Send news, band or club live entertainment listings or advertising to:
Evan Vulich at: evulich@mchsi.com.

Bluespaper Ad Rates

\$15.00 - Business card size - 2" x 3.5"
\$25.00 - Quarter page ad - 3.5" x 4.75"
\$50.00 - Half page ad - 4.75" x 7.25"
\$100.00 - Full page - 7.5" x 10"

Submission Requirements- All ads, photos or scanned images, either color or black/white, need to be 300ppi. Native Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, JPG, TIFF, EPS, PDF, BMP accepted. Ads created in Word may cause dementia, severe cramping and diarrhea. **Deadline for submissions is the 19th of the month.**

Moving? Send your new address to; LCBS, PO Box 2672, Cedar Rapids, IA 52406-2672 so you won't miss a single issue of your Bluespaper.

Blues at CSPA

The Holmes Brothers May 5 • Carrie Rodriguez May 12

Legion Arts X

legionarts.org



The Holmes Brothers

Wednesday, May 5, 8 pm

The spine-tingling harmonies, boundless energy and telepathic musicianship of the Holmes Brothers, Sherman Holmes, Wendell Holmes and Popsy Dixon, are all but unique in the world, mixing Saturday night's roadhouse blues with the gospel harmonies of Sunday's service. USA Today calls the Holmes Brothers' vision of American roots music "masterful and convincing," while Entertainment Weekly says, "The Holmes Brothers are juke-joint vets with a brazenly borderless view of American music."

CSPA, 1103 Third St SE, Cedar Rapids, 319-364-1580
legionarts.org, midwestix.com
\$17 in advance, \$21 door



Carrie Rodriguez

Wednesday, May 12, 8 pm

Carrie Rodriguez' journey from teenage violin student to touring the world with the likes of Chip Taylor (famed songwriter of "Wild Thing"), Lucinda Williams and Alejandro Escovedo has resulted in eight albums in as many years. The acclaimed singer, songwriter and violinist returns to her roots on her new release, Love & Circumstance, a covers album featuring songs by Richard Thompson, Townes Van Zandt, M. Ward and Merle Haggard.

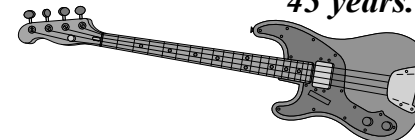
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Blues in the Schools!

The McMurrin and Johnson Band will be performing at two independent 'Blues in the Schools' programs in May 2010. The first is at Johnson School Friday, May 21 from 5:30-7:30 PM. The second is at Polk School Wednesday, May 26 from 1:30-3:30 PM. The times were set so parents could attend with their kids. The band members are Dennis 'Daddy-O McMurrin' on guitar and vocals, Dan 'DJ' Johnson on bass and vocals, 'Skeeter' Louis on sax and vocals, and Eric Douglas on drums. The goal is simply to expose kids to blues, rhythm and blues, and roots rock n roll.

Local Music 2010

May Calendar

Sat. 1	Fire House The Spy Bar, Marion Shuey's	Jam w/ various players, 4-8PM Bryce Janey 8-12 Brian Muench from St. Louis
Sun. 2	Parlor City Pub	Skeeter Lewis & The All-Stars
Mon. 3	Blues On Grand ★	Tommy Castro, 8PM \$15.00
Tue. 4	Parlor City	Gibby's Lab Jam, 9PM
Wed. 5	CSPS Next Door ★	The Holmes Brothers, 8PM \$15 adv \$21 door McMurrin & Johnson
Thur. 6	J.M. O'Malley's Shuey's	Electric Mule, 9-1 Last Call
Fri. 7	Chappy's Safari ★ Ernie's The Hub, Cedar Falls	Trailer Park Romeos reunion, 9-1 McMurrin & Johnson, 6-9PM Blue Band, 6-9PM
Sat. 8	Fire House Jerseys Next Door South Main Events	Jam w/ various players, 4-8PM Mike & Rob Show, 9-1 4Box O Rocks, 9-1 Bryce Janey, Monticello, 9-11PM
Sun. 9	Parlor City Pub	Useful Jenkins
Mon. 10	George's, Iowa City	Kilowatt & CannonSaul 8-11PM
Tues. 11	Parlor City	Gibby's Lab Jam, 9PM
Thur. 13	J.M. O'Malley's Next Door Shuey's	Skeeter Lewis All Stars, 9-1 Mike & Rob Show, 8-11 Jason Brown
Fri. 14	Ernie's-Houby Days	McMurrin & Johnson 8-11PM
Sat. 15	Fire House Duma's, Marion Ernie's-Houby Days Ernie's-Houby Days Pitchers, Marion Shuey's	Jam w/ various players, 4-8PM Mike & Rob Show, 9-1 Tom Bruner & Dan Johnson Trio, 3-6PM McMurrin & Johnson w/ Skeeter 8-11PM Bryce Janey 8:30-12:30 Terry McCauley
Sun. 16	Parlor City Pub	Shawn Kellerman
Tue. 18	Parlor City	Gibby's Lab Jam, 9PM
Thur. 20	J.M. O'Malley's Shuey's Dublin City Swisher	Gibby & friends, 9-1 Mike & Rob Show, 7-10PM McMurrin & Johnson, 8-11PM Bryce Janey 5-7:30PM. 1441 Marak Rd.
Fri. 21	Fifth Gear, CR Next Door	Electric Mule, 9-1 McMurrin & Johnson Band w/ Skeeter 9PM
Sat. 22	Fire House Cooter's Shuey's	Jam w/ various players, 4-8PM Slide Williams solo, 3-6PM 4Box O Rocks, 9-1
Tue. 25	Parlor City	Gibby's Lab Jam, 9PM
Thur. 27	J.M. O'Malley's ★ Piano Lounge, CR Shuey's	Perry & The Pumpers, 9-1 Mike & Rob Show, 8-11PM McMurrin & Johnson, 7-10PM
Fri. 28	Beaver Creek, CR Friday' Loo, Waterloo IC Concert Series ★	Mike Williams solo, 7-11PM Perry & The Pumpers 5PM Dave Moore, David Zollo, Shame Train
Sat. 29	Fire House Gus's, N.Liberty Chrome Horse ★	Jam w/ various players, 4-8PM Mike & Rob Show, 9-1 Perry & The Pumpers, 9-1
Sun. 30	N. Liberty Blues & BBQ	Noon -10PM See cover for lineup ★

* Notice: Gibby's Lab Jam will be moving to Parlor City beginning in May!

Be sure to tune in to **Bob Dorr's** Blue Avenue blues show on Iowa Public Radio, Sunday evenings 5-6:30pm. (90.9FM in Linn and surrounding counties)

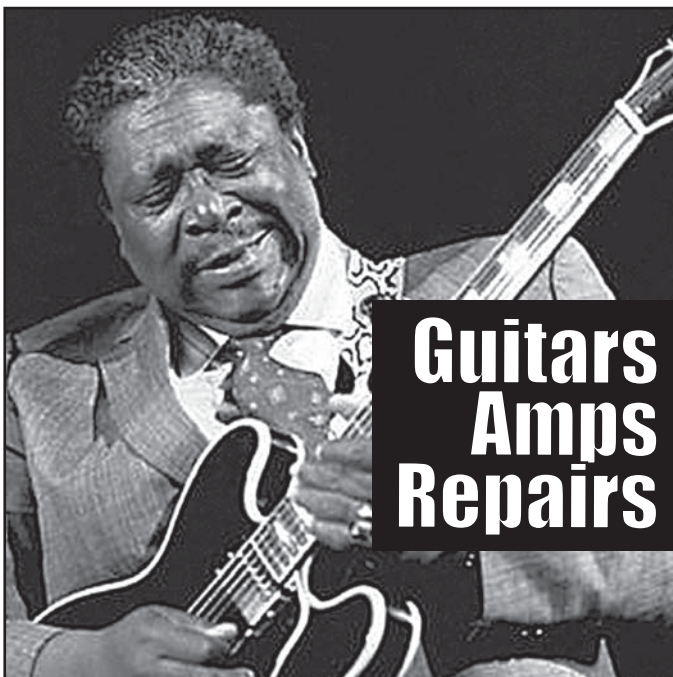
EVERY

Sat. - The Firehouse- Jam with various players 4-8PM
Sun.- Mahoney's - Various artists-Never a Cover, 6pm
Sun. - Parlor City Rocks New Bohemia District!
Tue. - Gibby's Lab Jam, Chrome Horse, 8-11PM
Thur. -J.M.O'Malley's-T-Bone Giblin Jam Fest

The LCBS meets the 1st Monday of each month. See you at the Longbranch on May 3, 6:30PM for the LCBS general meeting. Guests are welcome!
90 Twixt Town Rd., Marion • 377-6386.



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District

1st annual Irish music fest music & art converge at Shores Central Park



The Pumpers include from left to right; Tom "T-Bone" Giblin-keyboard, Troy Harper on drums, Bryce Janey on lead guitar, Perry Welsh lead vocal and harmonica and Dave Bader on bass guitar.

The first annual "Irish District Music and Arts Fest" will be held Sat. June 12th at the historic Shores Central Park building lot at 700 16th St. N.E. in Cedar Rapids. The event is a neighborhood based celebration of music, art and food, designed to bring together creative fun-loving people of all ages. Our intent is to bring folks down to the neighborhood for a good old summer gathering. The fest will kick off at 1:00PM. with Craig Erickson and Flying Carp, an up-and-coming jam band of the highest order, followed by the eclectic Pawned Scum at 2:15. Next up at 3:45 is Iowa City-based Dr. Z's Experiment followed by the famous Perry Welsh of old Linn County blues band fame and his latest group, the Pumpers. Finally at 7:30, the partying O'Connell Brothers will take the stage to round out a full day of music and fun. In between bands, there will be dance troupes, performing artists displaying their wares and a general carnival atmosphere. The fest will be held rain or shine and coolers with the beverage of your choice are encouraged. Admission is \$5.00 at the door with proceeds going to a special neighborhood friend and cancer patient in need. Visit the web site at: irishdistrictfest.com.



Pawned Scum includes from left to right; Dave Bader, Ball Headed Capon, Scott Larsen, Tom Erger and Phil Seidel.



Johnny Lang
LIVE at the Ryman
Concord Records

Style Vs. Affectation

We all remember Johnny Lang as one of the best in a generation of "Mini Jimis" a few years ago. But it's "Mini Jimi" no more with Johnny Lang at what seems to be the peak of his game. He's got the licks and the chops and his songs are first rate. Not really a celebratory set, this recording features music dealing with subjects that have taken some thought. It's paced well and the CD recording is nicely done. He's developed an individual hard-edged blues/rock crossover sound with backing from a fine professional band mostly from the Twin Cities. He sings in tune and the harmonies are extra nice and his vocal sound is really intense - which gets me to part 2.

Johnny Lang's singing begs the question: When does style become affectation? What do I mean by that? That his vocals never hold still & settle in - busy - over the top - and after a while it wears me out to listen to him. I've had the same complaint with other artists in all genres but in the blues: Joe Louis Walker & Candye Kane come to mind - where the artists' individual vocal sound distracts from the performance. Am I getting old or do I get an "Amen" from the congregation?

Style is a distinctive manner of expression. Affectation is speech or conduct not natural to one's self. Where is the line between an artists' ability to express themselves and a human vocal sound that is almost freakish? Answering that question is the responsibility of the listener.

While you're pondering that, enjoy a butt-kicking live set recorded at one of the world's hallowed halls.

- John Heim (A.K.A. "Big Mo")

Diplomats of Solid Sound

Still performing



photos and article by Bill Ray

The Diplomats of Solid Sound are still around. As with any musical group that exists over a period of years, changes happen and adjustments must be made.

Hammond B-3 organ player, Nate Basinger, moved to Austin, Texas last fall to pursue wider musical interests. Diplomette singer Kathy Ruestow has moved to the Chicago area to pursue a master's degree in nursing and become an RN. She also had throat surgery at the beginning of 2010 and needed a few months for her voice to recover and strengthen.

Back in Iowa, the other band members were still working at their own day jobs and performing with various musical groups. And they will forego a European tour this summer to accommodate all the ongoing personal changes. But, the Diplomats are still together. They just won't be performing as frequently as they have in the past.



David Basinger and Eddie McKinley

So it was with much excitement that we learned that the entire group of Diplomats and Diplomettes would be performing



Doug Roberson, Sarah Cram (Parlor City). Kathy Ruestow and Nate Basinger on Hammond B-3

this Spring in Iowa. Starting with a four-day stint of appearances in mid-March at the SXSW music festival in Austin, the group returned to the Midwest and gave shows in St. Louis, Chicago, Dubuque, Iowa City and Cedar Rapids.

I caught their soul and blues show at the Blue Moose in Iowa City on March 25 and their performance at Parlor City in Cedar Rapids on March 28. Their fans were waiting and were rewarded with some great musicianship and soulful singing.

Eddie McKinley was wailing away on tenor saxophone, as was David Basinger on baritone sax. Doug Roberson deftly handled the guitar and bass guitar parts while Paul Kresowik provided spirited rhythm on drums. It was great to hear Nate Basinger on keyboards again with his inventive Hammond B-3 riffs and solos.

Sarah Cram and Kathy Ruestow, the Diplomettes, were obviously having a joyful time singing together again. From the opening vocal da-ops of "I'm Blue (The Gong Gong Song)" through "Nobody's Gonna Stand In My Way!" and "I'm Already Gone" to the personal and meaningful "Soul Connection," the two female



Paul Kresowik on drums (Blue Moose)

lead vocalists were delivering wonderful performances that had dancers and table listeners tapping their feet and singing along.

It was great to hear the Diplomats of Solid Sound again after so many months of not having them around. Music fans in this region should mark their calendars for June 18 when this excellent band (and that's all of them) will perform outdoors at the Iowa City Friday Night Concert Series this summer. They also plan on releasing their long-awaited CD of original songs sometime in October.

Flock of Funk

groove it up at Parlor City Pub



photos and article by Bill Ray

It was standing room only by the second set of Flock of Funk's performance at Parlor City on April 11. Playing lots of Motown, soul, and rhythm and blues, this local area band brought dancers close to the front of the stage and enthusiastic appreciation from the listening audience.



Dennis "Daddy-O" McMurrin and Tim Razor

Billy Davis on saxophone and lead vocals is perhaps the focus of the music show. But all the band members sing well and represent some of the best instrumental talent in the region.

Denny Ketelson plays Hammond B-3 and synth, Dennis McMurrin is on guitar, Tim Razor plays bass, and Bruce Chadima is on drums.

With total talent like that in one group, Flock of Funk really rocked the joint and made a warm, Spring Sunday evening even more pleasant.

Two songs stand out as performance gems in my recollection. A long, extended version (instrumental only) of "When A Man Loves A Woman" gave Davis a chance to play his saxophone with a smooth and sublime delivery that was simply gorgeous. Interwoven with great solos by McMurrin on guitar and Ketelson on key-



"The Governor of Funk", Bruce Chadima

boards, the old Percy Sledge standard was transformed into a tune of beauty.

The other gem was an extended version of the Spinners' classic "I'll Be Around," with Billy Davis crooning lead vocals that had many in the audience singing along and remembering old romances.

Flock of Funk only performs publicly about once a month. Billing themselves as "The Ultimate Party Band," they have upcoming shows this summer and fall at Parlor City and the Chrome Horse.

This group definitely knows how to offer pleasing entertainment!



Denny Ketelson on Hammond B-3 and synth



Billy Davis wails on the saxophone

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