

BLUES NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE KENTUCKIANA BLUES SOCIETY

"...to preserve, promote and perpetuate the blues tradition."

Louisville, Kentucky

November 2017

Incorporated 1989



Photos by David True

On Saturday, November 18, the Kentuckiana Blues Society (KBS) will celebrate its 29th anniversary with a show at New Direction Bar and Grill. Doors open at 6:30 pm with the first act, Dick and the Roadmasters from Covington, KY, taking the stage at 7:00 pm. Dick Buchholz (photo right), started the band in 2002. They represented the KBS at the 2010 International Blues Challenge and have played several Cincy Blues Festivals over the years. Our second act and headliner is Stacy Mitchhart (photo left) from Nashville, TN. Originally from Cincinnati, Stacy has built a national reputation as a professional blues musician and has become a fixture at the Bourbon Street Blues and Boogie Bar in Nashville. New Direction is located at 2630 Chamberlain Lane. Admission to the show is \$10 but as always, it's free if you are a KBS member.

Letter From The Prez- - - - -	3	2017 KBS Anniversary Party - - - - -	7
MERFest 2017- - - - -	4	Back To The Blues- - - - -	8-9
2017 WXOX/ARTx FM Fundraiser - - - - -	5	Kentuckiana Blues Calendar - - - - -	10
Crossroads - - - - -	6	Please Patronize Our Sponsors - - - - -	11



**November 2017
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The views expressed by the authors and advertisers are their own. Contributions by anyone offering pertinent and thoughtful discussion on blues issues are welcomed.

news@kbsblues.org

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Blues News

The monthly newsletter of the Kentuckiana Blues Society

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Louisville, Kentucky

We appreciate your support and welcome your input. If you have any comments, suggestions, ideas, etc., contact us at this address:

**Kentuckiana Blues Society
P. O. Box 755
Louisville, KY 40201-0755
news@kbsblues.org**

Our single membership is a bargain at only \$20.00 US per year. Double membership (two members at the same address, two membership cards, one newsletter) is only \$25.00 US per year, and we now offer a special band rate of \$30 per year, which includes one newsletter plus a membership card for each band member.

KBS LEADERSHIP FOR THE YEAR 2017:

**Mark Sneed – president
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KBS MONTHLY MEETING

If you are interested in reviewing new blues music, come on out to the KBS monthly board meeting (**held the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM at Check's Café in Germantown**) and take your pick! We receive promo releases from the major blues labels as well as regional and local bands. If you review a CD, it's yours to keep!

**The Louisville Blues Compilation Volume II
is available exclusively at**



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A FUNDRAISER FOR WXOX/ARTXFM

\$10 - ALL DOOR PROCEEDS GO TO WXOX

Stax Recording Artist

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Down In The Alley Artist

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**DOWN IN THE
ALLEY**
RECORDS



Crossroads

by John Sacksteder

I attended the recent Bourbon and Beyond Music Festival at Champions Park, which was well attended despite a hot September weekend. The festival featured a great cross-section of music from country artist Nikki Lane to featured performances by Stevie Nicks and The Steve Miller Band. The blues was also well represented by Buddy Guy, Kenny Wayne Shepherd, Gary Clark, Jr. and Joe Bonamassa. It was Buddy Guy who struck a chord in me that has prompted this column. Buddy has certainly inherited the mantle of the senior living blues artist spokesperson following the demise of BB King. During the festival, Buddy lamented that he cannot get his music played anywhere anymore. He cited that he feared that he had turned off some people with his sometimes profane rants, but then he noted that he listened to some of the modern music and cited that those bands go further in profane and sexual materials than he would ever dream. His performance played across his vast history, but then he said he was going to play a song off his most recent album which he doubted that most people had even heard.

Gene Simmons of Kiss recently set off a furor by announcing that "Rock is dead". Robert Plant responded in an interview in Rolling Stone that "I think it's still here, it's just morphing. And long may it morph." The festival showed some signs of the morphing with Gary Clark, Jr. moving from traditional blues to rock to Prince oriented guitar work. But even more so was G. Love who has long played a 2 person harmonica/guitar driven blues-oriented hard rock but performed a mostly rap-oriented set at the festival. The exceptions being a couple of songs he performed with surprise guest Devon Allman.

The Blues Society is dedicated to preserving and promoting the blues music we love so much. Gary Sampson does an excellent job with his weekly news blast of the weekly events and upcoming bands coming to the region. The newsletter provides reviews of some new albums and a monthly calendar of events. But the size of the newsletter limits how many reviews are contained. Major performers like Buddy Guy cannot get air time and many others cannot get their albums in the stores for the enthusiasts to even be aware that there is new music available. How many are aware that Jeff Beck had a new release on October 6? I could not find it in any of the local stores. The membership of the Blues Society needs to help by attending concerts, bring others into the fold by developing an increased interest in the music and purchasing the artist's merchandise. The opening song on Rick Estrin and The Nightcats' latest album "Groovin' In Greaseland" is "The Blues Ain't Goin' Nowhere". It is our efforts that will make this true. We are at the Crossroads.

The future purpose of this column will be to provide more information about some of the artists coming to our local venues and to provide a more capsulized view of the many new releases and bands that are out there. I will start by commenting on a few upcoming shows:

November 3 @ Stevie Ray's – Miller & Other Sinners/ The Blues Drifters – New York vocalist/guitarist David Michael Miller has won awards for vocals for solo albums as well as for his group albums. His music has been described as "swamp funky" and is noted for his soulful approach. The four man touring group has recently included Buddy Guy's sax player Jason Moynihan. Local favorites The Blues Drifters with players Robert Newlin, Matthew Swenson, Tom Truly, and Lester Young play a self-described "Rowdy mix of traditional and contemporary blues."

November 4 @ Stevie Ray's – The Beat Daddys/One Shot Johnny – Two local favorites team up for this show. A review of One Shot Johnny's most recent album was in the September newsletter. The group also just won the Kentuckiana Blues Challenge and will represent the Blues Society at the International Blues Challenge in Memphis. This is an opportunity to provide support for the band. The Beat Daddys led by Tommy Stillwell and Larry Grisham first formed in 1986 and have had nine album releases. The band provides a harmonica and guitar driven blues and rock sound.

November 14 @ Zanzabar – Reverend Peyton's Big Damn Band – The Big Damn Band is actually a very unique Indiana-based piece band led by Josh "Reverend" Peyton on guitar and vocals, his wife Breezy Peyton plays washboard and provides vocals also, and currently has Maxwell Senteney on Drum. The Reverend will likely pull out his cigar-box guitar and the Big Damn Band is the only one around who is currently featuring the washboard percussion sound regularly. The band has released 9 albums since 2004 with their most recent "The Front Porch Sessions" released earlier this year features a stripped down, country style blues similar to what can be found on front porch sessions throughout the south.

November 15 @ Stevie Ray's – Andy T Band featuring Alabama Mike – Andy T. (Talamantez) is a talented guitarist who played with Smokey Wilson and five years with Guitar Shorty before going out on his own. Alabama Mike (Michael A. Benjamin) is a recent addition to the band singing on only half of "Double Strike", the band's release earlier this year where Mike replaced previous vocalist Nick Nixon who became ill. The band most recently played Stevie Ray's in August to a near capacity house. At the time, guitarist Anson Funderburg, who produced the album, was touring with the group. But the calendar does not mention him for this second appearance.

November 25 @ Stevie Ray's – Charles Walker Band/ Soul Circus – Wisconsin-based Charles Walker started as a jazz saxophonist playing in numerous jazz and blues bands including with Reverend Raven. He versatily added keyboards and organ to his repertoire and started his own blues driven band. Lead vocalist Shanna Walker is a gritty blues belter. The band is filled out with guitarist Misha Siegfried, bassist Kent Hamela, and drummer Joey B. Banks. Five man band Soul Circus from Crestwood is considered a funk band playing the songs of The Temptations, Commodores, etc. Band Members include Shaun Wallace on vocals, Steve "Pop" Wallace on vocals and guitar, Mike Vest on sax, Earl Dickerson on bass and vocals, and Tim Flowers on Lead Guitar.



KENTUCKIANA BLUES SOCIETY

PRESENTS

29TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

**FEATURING THE STACY MITCHHART BAND
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Sat, Nov. 18, 2017

6:30 - 10:00 p.m.

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\$10 Admission • Free for KBS Members

For more information, visit the KBS website at kbsblues.org

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The Courier-Journal **FourRoses**



Back To The Blues



Perry Aberli

This column is the story of two books, one that is written by authors who claim that, “we try to write solid, unimpeachable scholarly works that are also readable;” the other by an author known for bold remarks, stunning language, and insights of profound depth that seem to have only occurred to him as he was writing. The first is, **The Original Blues: The Emergence of Blues in African American Vaudeville**, by Lynn Abbott and Doug Seroff (University Press of Mississippi, February, 2017). The second is, **Where Dead Voices Gather**, by Nick Tosches (Little, Brown and Company, 2001).

I had started reading the Abbott and Seroff book about a month ago, intrigued by their premise that the roots of Blues are to be found in African American Vaudeville. Such a view parallels that of Elijah Wald in seeing the Bluesman (used here generically) as merely an entertainer using a musical form to achieve success. (See Wald’s, **Escaping The Delta**.) This idea, of course undercuts much of previous Blues scholarship that stressed the ethno-cultural experience as the source of the Blues. Which, if either, is correct?

The Abbott and Seroff book is an impressive tour de force of scholarship and history of Black Vaudeville, focusing on long forgotten stars of that stage such as Butler May and Baby Seals; and name dropping the presence of such early Blues performers as Ma Rainey, Trixie Smith, and Jelly Roll Morton. However, its success as an, “unimpeachable scholarly work,” is also its critical flaw.: the book is a classic example of silo scholarship, so intense focused on the subject at hand as to miss or ignore significant peripheral events or persons that might challenge their preconceived conclusion as to the roots of Blues. It is a fatal flaw in an otherwise superb book.

How can I make that statement? A fair question as I have no depth of expertise in Black Vaudeville. However, while reading that book, a second one was brought to mind – one that I had read in September of 2001, on a sparsely populated 747 headed to Sacramento only 5 days after 9/11. (My boarding pass was my bookmark and is still in the book.) I have long been fascinated by an obscure, white, blackfaced minstrel performer named Emmett Miller. In the early ‘70s I was given a bootleg lp of his recordings from the 20’s and was hooked. Miller, at that time, was the Robert Johnson of minstrelsy: no one had any picture of him out of blackface and he had recorded a version of Lovesick Blues that sounded exactly as if Hank Williams appropriated it whole cloth! He yodeled on record before Jimmie Rodgers. He was a mystery.

In 1977, Nick Tosches, in his book, **Country: The Twisted Roots of Rock ‘n’ Roll** (Da Capo) featured a chapter on Tosches’ fascination with Miller. In 1996, Columbia released an album of his material with a cover depicting him in blackface from one of the ads posted by a minstrel show. This cover has since been changed to one featuring the label of one of his issued 78’s in deference to political correctness. In 1982 Tosches wrote a biography of Jerry Lee Lewis that would leave its readers breathless. He came back in 1984 with a text on obscure “Heroes” of early rock ‘n’ roll; and delivered a landmark work on Dean Martin in 1992.

Then came 2001, and the publication of, **Where Dead Voices Gather**. And we arrive at the counterpoint, albeit earlier in time, to the Abbott and Seroff work.

Ostensibly as biography of Emmett Miller, whose dead voice does gather along with others in its pages, this book is really a raw edged telling of the roots of American music in a very unscholarly way.

For example, when discussing W.C. Handy’s and his “The Memphis Blues,” Tosches says: “The true story of “The Memphis Blues.”...is the story of American music itself: the story of the black stealing from the black, the white from the white, and the one from the other; of Tin Pan Alley songs culled from the air and taken into the pines and fields, gone feral and misperceived as primitive folk expression; of ancient breezes from those pines and those fields drifting endlessly anew through the rhythms of generations.” (p.33)

Speaking of a string band called “The Georgia Crackers,” Tosches offers the following:

In its own rough-hewn way, this hillbilly string band from predominantly black Hancock County in central Georgia, echoed the same sources that informed their more sophisticated contemporary Jimmie Rodgers and his black counterparts: those motes of vaudeville, minstrelsy, and the black songster tradition aswirl in effulgence of that beautiful thievery that in the hands of one became the blues, in hands of another, country music. It was the nineteenth-century fiddle-based string bands, black and white, through which the mongrel motes swirled. It was the symbiosis and synergy and estuary of those nineteenth-century fiddle-based string bands, black and white, that brought forth, simultaneously, before the ascendancy of the guitar, what came to be called the blues and country music. It was the music of those fiddle-based string bands, black and white, that was the true indigenous and autochthonous sound of the nineteenth century South, mother and wild bride and fickle daughter, enticer and enticed of all that swirled, of that eventual bastard song, neither black nor white, of the midnight bottomland cross-

roads and the great lighted dazzling of Broadway alike. (p140)

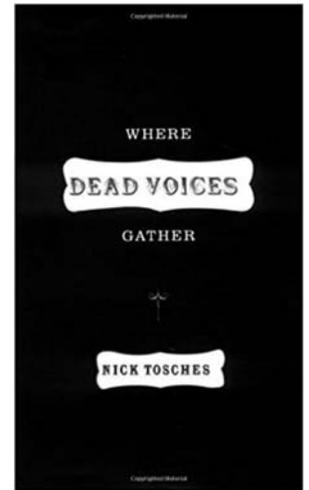
Wow, what exhausting and penetrating prose. One more quote and then to my point...finally.

"We must bear in mind the unknown ghosts Charley Patton and Son House; the ghosts behind Lonnie Johnson and others; those from whom these men afterwards took as they grew, as all who grow take, as Robert Johnson took from them. To praise the primitive for its own sake is to patronize and to embrace in arrogance the "purity," the "naturalness," the "beauty" of downtroddenness and misery. Charley Patton's best shirt and tie, Son House's white shirt and black tie, Robert Johnson's chalk stripe suit, fancy necktie and snap-brim hat: such was the image, far from the primitive, that those men wanted to project." (p218)

So, there you have it: a choice between a silo of scholarship that reads like a laundry list of pasteboard bills of vaudeville performances that misses the forest for the trees; and, a wild romping siren song proclaiming the depths and diversity, the mystery and mayhem, and the baseness and beauty of American music.

The Abbott and Seroff book attempts to lay claim to the Blues for a defunct cultural phenomenon.

Nick Tosches' work infuses the reader with awe, and joy, and wonder at the power and glory of that sprawling beautiful swamp that is at the roots of our music, taking us back Back To The Blues.



Perry W. Aberli

Kentuckiana Blues Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Oct-29 Bearn's by the Bridge - Open Jam Lettersong Studio & Gallery - KBS Solo/Duo Contest Pizza Place - Open Jam 7:00 Rubbies Southside G&B - Open Jam Shamrock B&G (Lexington) - Open Jam	30 Tee Dee's Blues & Jazz Club (Lexington) Tee Dee Young Band & Friends	31 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) - Northside Sheiks 8:00 Off Broadway (Madison IN) Jam 8:00 Stevie Ray's - Blues Jam 9:00	Nov-1 Check's Cafe - KBS Board Meeting 7:00 Linda's Log Cabin (Vernon IN) Open Jam 7:00 Sidebar Grill (Lexington) - Willie Eames 6:00 Stevie Ray's - Brody Buster and The Amanda Fish Band 8:00 Volare - Robbie Bartlett Duo	2 City Hall - da Mudcats Noon Henry Clay's House (Lexington) - Nick Stump Band 8:00 Mick's Lounge (Jeffersonville IN) Open Mic 8:00 Stevie Ray's - TNT Open Jam 9:00 VFW Post (Madison IN) - Open Jam Volare - Robbie Bartlett Duo 7:00	3 Belterra Casino (Florence IN) - Chuck Brisbin & Cold Tuna 8:00 Brother's BBQ (Danville) - One Shot Johnny Check's Cafe - Alley Hounds Duo Desperado's (Richmond) - Five Below Band 8:00 Gerste's Place - Soul Circus 9:00 Levee at River House - Robbie Bartlett Stevie Ray's - The Blues Drifters / Miller and the Other Sinners	4 Backstretch B&G (Lexington) - Romn Crowder and Friends 7:30 Belterra Casino (Florence IN) - Chuck Brisbin & Cold Tuna 8:00 Chateau Thomas Winery (Nashville IN) Gary Applegate 7:00 Desperado's (Richmond) - Five Below Band 8:00 Diamond Pub & Billiards (St Matthews) Soul Circus 10:00 Elk Creek Vineyards (Owenton) - John Ford 5:00 Gerste's Place - V-Groove 9:00 Stevie Ray's - One Shot Johnny / The Beat Daddys
5 Bearn's by the Bridge - Open Jam Headliners - MERFest 2017 with Soul Circus, V-Groove, The Louisville Crushers, Radiotronic, and Wildwood Pizza Place - Open Jam 7:00 Rubbies Southside G&B - Open Jam Shamrock B&G (Lexington) - Open Jam	6 Cosmic Charlie's (Lexington) - Reverend Peyton's Big Damn Band 9:00 Tee Dee's Blues & Jazz Club (Lexington) Tee Dee Young Band & Friends	7 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) - Northside Sheiks 8:00 Off Broadway (Madison IN) Jam 8:00 Stevie Ray's - Blues Jam 9:00	8 Kroger (Euclid Ave - Lexington) Open Jam 4:00 Linda's Log Cabin (Vernon IN) Open Jam 7:00 Sidebar Grill (Lexington) - Willie Eames 6:00 Stevie Ray's - Louisville Fats and the Rhythm Cats Volare - Robbie Bartlett Duo	9 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) - Nick Stump Band 8:00 Levee at the River House - D Man and the Alley Hounds Mick's Lounge (Jeffersonville IN) Open Mic 8:00 Stevie Ray's - TNT Open Jam 9:00 VFW Post (Madison IN) - Open Jam Volare - Robbie Bartlett Duo 7:00	10 Jeff Ruby's - Robbie Bartlett 9:00 Stevie Ray's - Jenny and the Jets / Big Black Cadillac	11 Backstretch B&G (Lexington) - Romn Crowder and Friends 7:30 Boneheadz - D Man and the Alley Hounds Clifton Center - Blues & Jazz Kentucky Homefront with DJ Rice, da Mudcats, The Revelators and more Jeff Ruby's - Robbie Bartlett 9:00 Levee at River House - Soul Circus Planet Bar & Bistro - Kelly Richey 8:00 Stevie Ray's - Below Zero Blues / V-Groove
12 Bearn's by the Bridge - Open Jam Pizza Place - Open Jam 7:00 Rubbies Southside G&B - Open Jam Shamrock B&G (Lexington) - Open Jam VFW Post #1427 (Charlestown IN) - Toys for Toys Bike Run with Boogie Men	13 Tee Dee's Blues & Jazz Club (Lexington) Tee Dee Young Band & Friends	14 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) - Northside Sheiks 8:00 Off Broadway (Madison IN) Jam 8:00 Stevie Ray's - Blues Jam 9:00 Zanzabar - Reverend Peyton's Big Damn Band 9:00	15 Linda's Log Cabin (Vernon IN) Open Jam 7:00 Sidebar Grill (Lexington) - Willie Eames 6:00 Stevie Ray's - Andy T Band featuring Alabama Mike Volare - Robbie Bartlett Duo Willie's Locally Known (Lexington) - Frank Bang & the Cook Country Kings 8:30	16 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) - Nick Stump Band 8:00 Mick's Lounge (Jeffersonville IN) Open Mic 8:00 Stevie Ray's - TNT Open Jam 9:00 VFW Post (Madison IN) - Open Jam Wicked Eyed Women (E Town) - Alley Hounds Duo	17 Belterra Casino (Florence IN) - Leroy Ellington Band 8:00 Stevie Ray's - Mississippi Adam Riggie / Kirby Blind Squirrel - Soul Circus Hot's Tavern (Lanesville IN) - Boogie Men MOM's Music (Melwood Ave) - Open Jam New Direction Bar & Grill - KBS 29 th Anniversary Party Norton Center for the Arts (Danville) - Henry Butler Stevie Ray's - Kirby	18 Backstretch B&G (Lexington) - Romn Crowder and Friends 7:30 Belterra Casino (Florence IN) - Leroy Ellington Band 8:00 Blind Squirrel - Soul Circus Hot's Tavern (Lanesville IN) - Boogie Men MOM's Music (Melwood Ave) - Open Jam New Direction Bar & Grill - KBS 29 th Anniversary Party Norton Center for the Arts (Danville) - Henry Butler Stevie Ray's - Kirby
19 Bearn's by the Bridge - Open Jam Pizza Place - Open Jam 7:00 Rubbies Southside G&B - Open Jam Shamrock B&G (Lexington) - Open Jam	20 Tee Dee's Blues & Jazz Club (Lexington) Tee Dee Young Band & Friends	21 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) - Northside Sheiks 8:00 Off Broadway (Madison IN) Jam 8:00 Stevie Ray's - Blues Jam 9:00	22 Linda's Log Cabin (Vernon IN) Open Jam 7:00 Sidebar Grill (Lexington) - Willie Eames 6:00 Stevie Ray's - Jenny & Jets Volare - Robbie Bartlett Duo	23 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) - Nick Stump Band 8:00 Mick's Lounge (Jeffersonville IN) Open Mic 8:00 Stevie Ray's - TNT Open Jam 9:00 VFW Post (Madison IN) - Open Jam Volare - Robbie Bartlett Duo 7:00	24 Jeff Ruby's - Robbie Bartlett 9:00 Paddy Wagon (Richmond) - Dallas Cole Band Stevie Ray's - Louisville Fats and the Rhythm Cats / Most Wanted	25 Backstretch B&G (Lexington) - Romn Crowder and Friends 7:30 Jeff Ruby's - Robbie Bartlett 9:00 Lettersong Studio - da Mudcats 7:00 Smyna Inn - Blues and Greys 8:00 Stevie Ray's - Charles Walker Band / Soul Circus
26 Bearn's by the Bridge - Open Jam Headliners - Tribute to Tina Tina with Sheryl Rouse 7:00 Pizza Place - Open Jam 7:00 Rubbies Southside G&B - Open Jam Shamrock B&G (Lexington) - Open Jam	27 Tee Dee's Blues & Jazz Club (Lexington) Tee Dee Young Band & Friends	28 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) - Northside Sheiks 8:00 Off Broadway (Madison IN) Jam 8:00 Stevie Ray's - Blues Jam 9:00	29 Linda's Log Cabin (Vernon IN) Open Jam 7:00 Sidebar Grill (Lexington) - Willie Eames 6:00 Stevie Ray's - TBA Volare - Robbie Bartlett Duo	30 Henry Clay's House (Lexington) - Nick Stump Band 8:00 Mick's Lounge (Jeffersonville IN) Open Mic 8:00 Stevie Ray's - TNT Open Jam 9:00 VFW Post (Madison IN) - Open Jam Volare - Robbie Bartlett Duo	Dec-1 Elk Creek Vineyards (Owenton) - Keith Hubbard 5:00 Stevie Ray's - The Clark Band	2 Backstretch B&G (Lexington) - Romn Crowder and Friends 7:30 Legacy Casual Dining (Taylorsville) - Dallas Cole Band Stevie Ray's - The Suburbans / Lefty and the Lunatics

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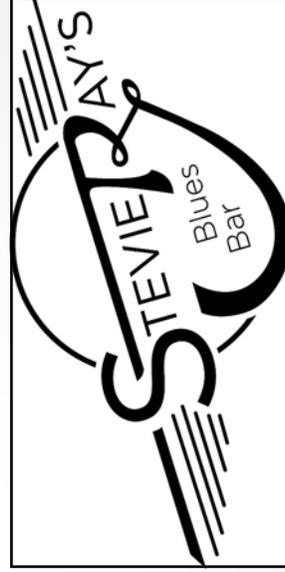
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