

JULY 2010



# BLUES PAPER

Cool Issue 192

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

July 2010



also appearing with Deanna Bogart,  
**Reverend Raven**  
& The Chain Smokin' Altar Boys!  
The Avey Brothers will kick it off!



In this July 2010 issue —

- Pat Hazel shares music biz insights
- Larry Easter of the Linn County Band interview
- Big Mo's CD review
- Reverend Raven & The Avey Brothers
- Local LIVE music schedules
- South Skunk Blues Society needs your help!

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# Patrick Hazel shares insights “trying times for musicians”

article by Patrick Hazel

Having been in the music business since the early 1960s I've played in a “million” clubs and dance halls and witnessed much of what Jasco writes about. My “old school” sensibilities generally associates a high ticket price with quality music regardless of whether or not I'm familiar with the name of the act. But, in today's market, that's not the case. My son has owned venues in Burlington since 1997, and I see what brings in the biggest crowds--local bands playing cover material. From what I gather this is pretty much the same all over the USA--it all seems to be young people hanging with those they know in pick-up and party scenes; music to this crowd is necessary, but mainly as a backdrop to the socializing going on in the club. These people will not pay a cover charge if they think there might not be a room full of hot pickup possibilities, even if the best band in the world is playing. Local bands generally make for the best entertainment and income gamble for a club, and from what I hear, this is what is happening all over the USA.

In contrast, if the scene promises to be full of hot pickup possibilities, people will pay \$10 or higher with no band! It seems that the women are more likely to not go where the attention may be focused more on the musicians on stage than upon them as dancers and possible pick-ups, and, of course, the young men won't come into a club unless the women are there. Guys will come in for the music, but their interest generally seems to be limited to loud and fast electric guitar-oriented stuff. If the guitar player has long enough hair, is skinny (125-150 pounds) and is covered with tatoos, then maybe the women will come in, too. Once all this happens, then the club has a successful night.

Meanwhile, a huge amount of great American music never gets heard because nobody supports it. It really is unfortunate. Those people raised before 1980 will come in and listen to music. They grew up buying albums and actually listening to them without needing to have a social event to go along with the listening. Today's young are not like that. There are many, many things vying for their attention in a typical social setting. They're used to multitasking with no real focus on anything other than the beer they're slamming and the blurry female form in front of them. Though I was much the same back in my late teens and early 20s when it came to beer and women, I do believe there was a focus upon music--a passion for it that I do not see in younger Americans today.



Patrick Hazel

I have found international audiences, old and young, far more receptive, attentive, and willing to pay, and I imagine most American musicians who have been fortunate enough to play overseas have had similar experiences. For me, my interest in touring the USA is pretty much dead - too much hassle for the meager scene that exists. Unless one has a tremendous national press buzz going on, it would likely prove to be a short-lived touring experience, ending once the tour vehicle runs out of gas.

I do think there are some vital things going on in the USA with live music, but they are secluded and outside the general public's awareness - various niche “market” things going on, etc. But, these can be difficult for the general public to find out about - and very difficult for national touring acts and their agents to know about. The internet is a big part of it if one has the time and knowledge to work it. Again, it becomes a very localized scene that only an in-crowd knows about. State and local liquor laws and enforcement don't help the issue one bit.

Trying times indeed for American musicians and public venues for them to play - lots of challenges.

*The above commentary by Patrick Hazel was published with his permission. It was in response to an email the editor received from jascoguitar.com on the real world experiences of the club scene. If you wish to read the original email from jasco, it will be linked on the LCBS homepage (lcb.org). I would personally like to thank Patrick Hazel for his seasoned perspective on today's live music scene.*

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: lcb.org

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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.
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NEWTON, IOWA- June 21, 2010- The South Skunk Blues Society needs your help to stay alive.

Our 18th Annual Bowlful of Blues was cancelled due to the weather. Although it did not rain during the event's scheduled time, the morning showers made it impossible for the artists and sound crew to easily maneuver behind the bowl. Our rain insurance did not pay because there were six consecutive dry hours between 12:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. In addition to not receiving the money from our rain insurance and spending time and money on promotional efforts, we were also required to pay for the artists, sound crew, t-shirts, programs, and waste facilities although they were not used.

The South Skunk Blues Society is one of the oldest blues societies in Iowa. Jasper county community members enjoy the festival at Maytag Park, and there is quite a demand to continue it. We still want to bring the Bowlful of Blues to Newton! Too much has been taken away from Newton already with the closing of Maytag and lay-offs at other companies.

We are trying to reschedule the Bowlful of Blues for July 24th 2010, but in order to do so we need money and artists. Because of all the resources lost from the first rain date, we are now calling on you, the community, to help. If you have enjoyed the Bowlful of Blues in the past, would like to experience the excitement for the first time, or simply enjoy blues music, please consider helping in any way possible. Any donation would be greatly appreciated.

The South Skunk Blues Society has been active in the Jasper county area for 18 years. They provide the community with entertainment such as Blues Under the Blue Roof, which is a free weekly concert series in February and March each year hosted by the Newton Public Library in addition to the Bowlful of Blues every summer. The South Skunk Blues Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and cultivating Blues music. The Society promotes public performance opportunities for Blues artists, and seeks to increase the appreciation of Blues music by the general public. If you are interested in sharing your resources, please contact Eric Leedom, South Skunk Blues Society president, at (641) 781-0271 or visit our website: southskunkblues.org.

**A very special THANK YOU to these businesses who have signed up to help us Keep the Blues Alive!**

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# Local Music 2010

## July Calendar

Thur. 1	J.M. O'Malley's Clear Lake	4Box O Rocks, 9-1 Blue Band, Band Shell, 7-11PM
Fri. 2	Leo's Gen. Lounge Checkers Tavern Ernie's	Kevin BF Burt & Tony Brown 8PM, Oelwein Levee Town, 9PM McMurrin & Johnson, 6-9PM
Sat. 3	Fire House Tipton Street Dance	Jam, Various players 4-8PM 4Box O Rocks, Tipton, IA. 5-7PM
Sun 4	Parlor City Pub Winsor Heights, DM Cooters	Bearquarium 6-10PM Blue Band, July Celebration Mike & Rob Show, 4-7PM
Tue. 6	Parlor City Pub	Gibby's Lab Jam, 9PM
Thur. 8	J.M. O'Malley's Checkers Tavern	Gibby & Friends, 9-1 Rev. Raven & the Chain Smokin' Altar Boys
Fri. 9	Checkers Tavern Chrome Horse	Trux Band, 9PM Flock of Funk 6:30 out/Stranded in IA (inside)
Sat. 10	Fire House Lake Okobji, IA V.I.P. Marion	Jam, Various players 4-8PM Blue Band, ReMax w/e party Bryce Janey & Merrill J. Miller reunion, 9-1
Sun. 11	Parlor City Pub	Ken Valdez, 6-10PM
Tue. 13	Parlor City Pub	Gibby's Lab Jam, 9PM
Wed. 14	Sammy's, Cedar Rapids	Mike & Rob Show, 8-12
Thur. 15	J.M. O'Malley's Checkers Tavern	Gibby & friends. 9-1 Craig Erickson duo, 9PM
Fri. 16	Leo's Gen. Lounge Checkers Tavern Scooters, Anamosa	Bruce Bearinger, 8PM, Oelwein Meerkats, 9PM Mike & Rob Show, 9-1
Sat. 17	Fire House Nevada, IA Bluebird Diner Fifth Gear, CR Chrome Horse	Jam, Various players, 4-8PM Blue Band, street dance The Blue Midnight Trio, 8-11PM Iowa City Electric Mule, 9-1 Funk Daddies, 9PM
Sun.18	Parlor City Pub Colfax, IA	The Mayflies, 6-10PM Blue Band, Women's Club Park TBA
Tue. 20	Parlor City Pub	Gibby's Lab Jam, 9PM
Wed. 21	Sammy's, CR	Mike & Rob Show, 8-12
Thur. 22	J.M. O'Malley's Grinnell, IA Lincoln Wine Bar Shuey's	Gibby & Friends, 9-1 Blue Band, Central Park, 5-7:30PM The Blue Midnight Trio, 7-10PM, Mt. Vernon Mike & Rob Show, 7-10PM
Fri. 23	Leo's Gen. Lounge Checkers Tavern Beaver Creek, CR	Doug Rees, 8PM. Oelwein Vipers, 9PM Mike Williams solo, 7-11PM
Sat. 24	Fire House Davenport, IA Pitchers, Marion	Jam, Various players 4-8PM Blue Band, One Bix Street Festival, 7-9PM Bryce Janey, 8:30PM
Sun. 25	Parlor City Pub	Twin Cats, 6-10PM
Tue. 27	Parlor City Pub	Gibby's Lab Jam, 9PM
Thur. 29	Parkersburg, IA	Blue Band, RAGBRAI lunch stop
Fri. 30	Ottumwa, IA Checkers Tavern City Beat, CR	Blue Band, Central Park 5-8PM Chubby Trio, 9PM Mike & Rob Show, 8-12
Sat. 31	Fire House Monticello, IA Jerseys, Cedar Rapids Chrome Horse	Jam, Various players, 4-8PM Bryce Janey, South Main Events, 9PM Mike & Rob Show, 9-1 Flock of Funk, 9PM

## July Calendar Cont.

Sat. 3	Yacht Club, IC	Demolition Band, 10PM
Wed. 7	Parlor City Pub	McMurrin & Johnson, 8-11PM
Thur. 8	Schuey's	McMurrin & Johnson, 7-10PM
Sat. 10	Screaming Eagle	Skeeter L. All Stars w/ C. Erickson, Waterloo
Thur. 15	Grinnell Park	Billy Janey Band w/ Dan Johnson 6PM
Sat. 17	Red Frog	McMurrin & Johnson 7-10PM
Thur. 22	Dublin City Pub	McMurrin & Johnson 8-11PM
Fri. 23	City Beat	McMurrin & Johnson 8-11PM
Sun. 25	Mahoney's	Funky Posse 6-10PM
Thur. 29	Shuey's	McMurrin & Johnson 7-10PM
Fri. 30	Eagles Club	McMurrin & Johnson 8-11PM

**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, Parlor City, 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 July 12, 6:30PM for the LCBS general meeting. Guests are welcome!  
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"Be sure to bring cake!" — Bob Dorr

## The Linn County Band

### Original member, Larry Easter, recounts

Interview by Phillip Smith

Larry Easter, the original sax player for Linn County was in town recently and was gracious enough to sit down and share some moments and a brief history of the band, Linn County with me. Larry now resides in Pasadena, CA and still plays on a regular basis.

Linn County, a band originating in Linn County, IA, migrated to Chicago and then later transplanted themselves in San Francisco. They recorded three albums in a three year period for Mercury Records (1968 - 1970). Original members were Stephen Miller (organ, vocals), Larry Easter (saxophone, flue), Dino Long (bass guitar), Fred Walk (guitar, sitar), and Jerry 'Snake' McAndrew (drums) who left the band and was replaced by Clark Pierson.

Phillip: What brought you into the band?

Larry: I went and sat in with them at a club called the Cougar Lounge. So I got hired on the spot. And then they said well, we were going to be going to Chicago and I said, "That's fine", because I had nothing better to do and so I just went up there with them. And what that band did was become the house band of the most prominent blues venue in Chicago at the time, it was called Mother Blues. We played five or six nights a week from like 9:30pm to 3:30 in the morning.

Phillip: Were you still the Prophets when you were in Chicago?

Larry: No, they had already changed the name. It was originally called the Linn County Blues Band. Then it became Linn County because we went past blues, strictly speaking. None of this was my call. I just played ball; I played saxophone. They ended up signing with Mercury Records; made three records with Mercury. After we moved from Cedar Rapids to Chicago, we went on the road a lot. We went to Detroit, Cleveland and Montreal which was really the best one of them. People loved that band in Montreal.

This guy Jerry Rubin; does that name ring a bell with you? He was the guy that



was with the Chicago Seven - the political thing. He comes into the club and says; "we're going to make a riot here... in Chicago. Do you want to be a part of it?" And we didn't want to. We were just a bunch of guys that played. We weren't into that whole political thing.

Martin Luther King got assassinated. We left Chicago three days before that happened. I think, or maybe two. And so, Chicago burned after that. That whole club got burned. We got out of that by the skin of our teeth.

Phillip: So when you got out of Chicago, were you on your way to San Francisco?

Larry: That's right. It was coincidental but this did happen. So we got out and just kept going to San Francisco.

Phillip: That was 1967?

Larry : 1968. We were signed to a record contract by Mercury Records at the time. We got a big advance at that time - a lot of money. What happened after that was basically downhill. It was a hell of a good band. When we were in Chicago, everybody loved us but you go to San Francisco where

Continued on page 5



**Johnny Moeller**  
**BlooGaLoo**  
**Seven Records**  
**Release date: 4/20/2010**

*Johnny Who?*

Johnny Moeller! Never heard of him? If you've listened to anyone in the Severn Records stable - Lou Pride, Darrell Nulisch or The Fabulous Thunderbirds, then you've heard his work. He's been everybody's favorite sideman for years so it's really not surprising that this is a strong album in its pacing, coherence and style selections. Above all, it's a funk/blues fusion of the highest order with Austin oozing out all over. Johnny brings in guests Lou Ann Barton, Kim Wilson and Shawn Pittman for some needed vocal help and added spice in the mix. He gathered recordings over time to showcase his muscular but tasty guitar playing into a tight package that's worth some listens. BlooGaLoo is a good title - get up and dance.

— John Heim (A.K.A. "Big Mo")

Hey, armchair blues fans! There is no better time to join the LCBS than now! We could use your help now. We have positions open. Bluesmore 16 is now behind us, we are planning next year's festival. Just fill out the application on our web site and send it in with your 20 bucks and we'll see that you are a part of a really great organization! Help us keep the blues alive! Be a part of the groove!

# Reverend Raven revs up for Bluesmore 17!

## August 7! Celebrate our 17th year with us!

In case you missed it, Deanna Bogart's bio was in last month's issue of the Bluespaper or go online to read it.

You know I hate these cookie cutter bios. I know they are necessary but you are only as good as last night's gig. I really haven't done anything special except open and meet B.B. King and have the honor of backing up Madison Slim for 10 years, playing with great guys like R.J. Mischo, Cadillac Pete Rahn, Benny Rickun, PT Pedersen SC, Bobby Lee Sellers Jr, Big Al Groth, Bryan Lee, Billy Flynn, Pat Hayes and all the guys in my band present and past. Guys like Rick Holmes, Chico Johnson, Devil Roberts, Diesel, Evil Evans, Craig Panosh, Kern, Barefoot Jimmy, Frankie Panosh, Capt. an Chuck Might, Mickey Larson, Benny Rickund and many more. I get to go to festivals and see my heros, friends like Perry Weber, Jim Liban, Billy Flynn and get paid for it. That is cool. I've been blessed with great love, good friends and family and the ability to earn a living playing guitar and standing on chairs and tables. If I can put a smile on your face and get you to shake your rear end, I've done a good job.

Now here is the standard one: Born and raised on south side of Chicago, the Reverend has been playing the blues since 1971 when he first saw Freddy King play at the Kinetic Theatre in Chicago. After 15 year hitch in the Navy, he moved to Milwaukee where he began a long friendship and collaboration with Madison Slim, long time harmonica player for Jimmy Rogers. Since 1990, he has opened for B.B King, Gatemouth Brown, Pinetop Perkins, Koko Taylor Band, Junior Wells, Billy Branch, Magic Slim, Elvin Bishop, Sugar Blue, Lonnie Brooks, William Clarke, Lefty Dizz and numerous others at festivals and at Buddy Guy's Legends. Local-

ly he has performed with Billy Flynn, Perry Weber, Piano Willie, Stokes, Jon Paris, Clyde Stubblefield, Bryan Lee and the Lamont Cranston band. The Reverend was the Wisconsin Music Industry (WAMI) award for best blues band in 1999, 2000, 2004, 2005 and again in 2008. They also received the People's Choice Award in 2006 and 2008.

Bobby Lee Sellers Jr: Drums The newest Chain Smokin Altar Boy, Bob is world class blues musician. A veteran of the Michael Coleman Band he also fronted his own great "The White Brother's" and the "Rhythm Dawgs". He is also an in demand session drummer, most recently recording on Delmark Records with Michael Coleman, Lurrie Bell and many others during the Chicago Blues Festival. Bobby is one of the best blue eyed blues singers in the midwest and a great chef in his own right. He is also tough with a microphone stand on Wabash Avenue.

P.T. Pedersen SC: Bass P.T. honed his skills on the road and recording with Charlie Musslewhite in the late 60's early 70s, replacing one of his idols the great Jack Myers. He went on to play with Charlie Musslewhite, John Brim, Big Walter Horton, Johnny Young, Luther Tucker, Lowell Fulson, Fenton Robinson, Koko Taylor, Big Time Sarah, Pinetop Perkins and Sunnyland Slim. At home in Milwaukee he played with Jim Liban and



Reverend Raven at Checkers Tavern and Eatery

Brian Lee. Blessed with a great sense of rhythm and time he takes the rock at our live shows and gives the old man a break by tearing up the house with his great choice of grooves.

Big Al Groth has been playing and performing all around the world for over 40 years. First with the U.S. Navy aboard the USS Shangrila and throughout the years with his own bands. Formerly with The Rhythm Dogs, Big Al is tearing it up on the road with us everywhere we play. and I hope to get him in the studio with us soon. A fine combination of excellence and showmanship "Racine Tribune".

"I takes my eatin' seriously" — Big Moe



The Kansas City Blues Society's nominees to the International Blues Challenge, the electrifying group Levee Town, advanced to the semifinals after a great performance on Thursday night; however, the awesome, whiskey vocals and fuzz guitar of the Avey Brothers blues band out of Iowa were enough to advance them to the finals for tonight, Saturday, January 23, 2010, while Levee Town prepares for the trek home.

Levee Town, a much loved Kansas City blues mainstay, was expected to do well at the IBC and their advance to the semifinals attests their formidable abilities and experience. The band did not enter the blues challenge in 2008, so they will be eligible for nomination again in 2010. It is doubtless that the band, whom have become an even tighter and more energetic crowd pleaser in recent years, will continue to hone their abilities and add to their repertoire for another contest bid in the future.

The band is comprised of a pair of brothers, Chris and Mike Avey, along with drummer Bryan West. Brother Chris handles the guitar and vocals while Mike takes on the bass lines. Mike Avey has competed at the IBC before with a band called the Mercury Brothers, so he knows the ropes of the contest well.

Larry Easter continued from page 3

the Grateful Dead was, there was a lot going on – very provincial. They were really taken with people from San Francisco and anyone from outside of San Francisco had a really rough uphill battle. We played the Fillmore but it just wasn't the same. Because prior to that, even going outside of Chicago in places like Cleveland, Detroit and Montreal. Everybody loved that band. In Montreal, for instance, they'd rate the top ten bands. We're talking about the Beatles, Rolling Stones, all of that. We were listed among the top ten. It had that kind of impact. But when we went to San Francisco, it wasn't the same thing. It was just like we were a year or two too late. We just couldn't crack. I'd say we played on the same bill with the Grateful Dead four times. But for whatever reason, we couldn't bridge the gap.

Phillip: Which album was your favorite to record? Did any one of them stick out as being a lot of fun to record?

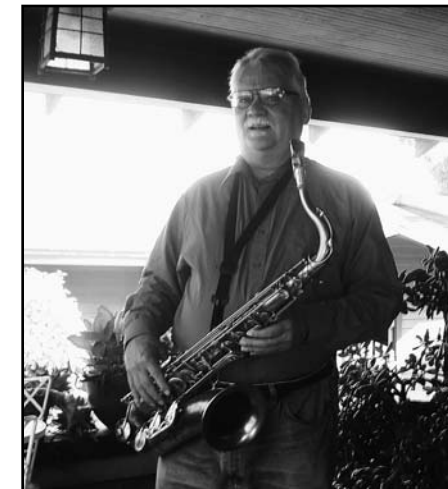
Larry: I'm actually a little frustrated by all of them because I was so young at the time, I was like nineteen or twenty when this was all going on. So as I look back at my own playing, in terms of what I do now, I am kind of embarrassed by it a little bit. Most people will tell you Fever Shot was the best. They might be right. The first one was called Proud Flesh Soothseer. That was really psychedelic.

Phillip: Of all the bands you shared a stage with, does any one strike you as one you really liked to work with?

Larry: That's a tough call. We did the Grateful Dead a bunch of times. Quicksilver Messenger Service. I liked those guys and they liked us, too. Steve Miller was a guy in our band but there was another Steve Miller, too and he would sit in with us. A lot of people would sit in with us; James Cotton, Paul Butterfield.

Phillip: Is there any particular live performance that stands out the most?

Larry: The thing is that the best ones are not the ones that would jump out at you. There was a place in Montreal Canada called The New Penelope. It was just a coffee shop but Frank Zappa played there. The Mothers of Invention... Paul Butterfield... there was a whole circle that played at that particular club. Anyway, we were really popular at that particular venue. That's what sticks out in my mind. We played the



Larry Easter

Fillmore East with Eric Burdon and the Animals and Sly and the Family Stone.

Phillip: You played both Fillmores. Which one, if you had to pick, one was your favorite?

Larry: Well, we only did the Fillmore East one time. That was in New York City, and that made it special in and of itself.

We played in Detroit with Led Zepelin. A funny thing happened at that show. Our bass player, Dino was playing this Hofner Bass, like Paul McCartney played, and the neck breaks off. So he had to borrow the bass from Led Zeppelin. Our band manager who is still alive and a dear close friend, got it into his head to get us all these psychedelic clothing items to play this thing. And so we are playing on stage and they're shrinking.

Phillip: Reminds me of George Costanza's cotton baseball uniforms.

Larry: You got this guy, Steve Miller, who is six foot four and all the buttons had popped off everybody and he was so mad. You can't believe this, but it did go down. We played and our clothes shrunk on us during that performance and none of us wanted to wear that crap in the first place because we just wanted to wear jeans and shirts.

Phillip: Is there a possibility in the future of any of your albums being re-released on CD?

Larry: It's obscure. But believe it or not, there are CDs of us out there, but not a lot.

Phillip: Larry, I want to thank you for taking the time to talk with me. I really appreciate it. Your stories have been very informative and enlightening. It's been a real pleasure talking to you. Thank you!