

Sound Waves

Volume 27
Issue 1
January 2017

An
Interview
with

**NELLIE
McKAY**

A Southern New England
Entertainment & Dining Guide Since 1990

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THE BLUES 2016
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INSIDE THE WAVE

Music Notes.....Pg. 4
World's A StagePg. 6
Best in the BluesPg. 7
Bar Fly JournalsPg. 8
Band DatesPg. 10
Concert Dates.....Pg. 11
Cover Story.....Pg. 14
Hearing Aid.....Pg. 17
Blues CookingPg. 18
Classified.....Pg. 22



Ali Kaufman
Morning Mojo
WCNI 90.9fm
Tuesday Mornings
9am-noon



Event Specialist
Emcee
Freelance Writer

www.cticcb.com/mojo/Default.htm

a k c l i c k s @ c o m c a s t . n e t

Sound Waves

January 2017

VOLUME 27, NUMBER 1

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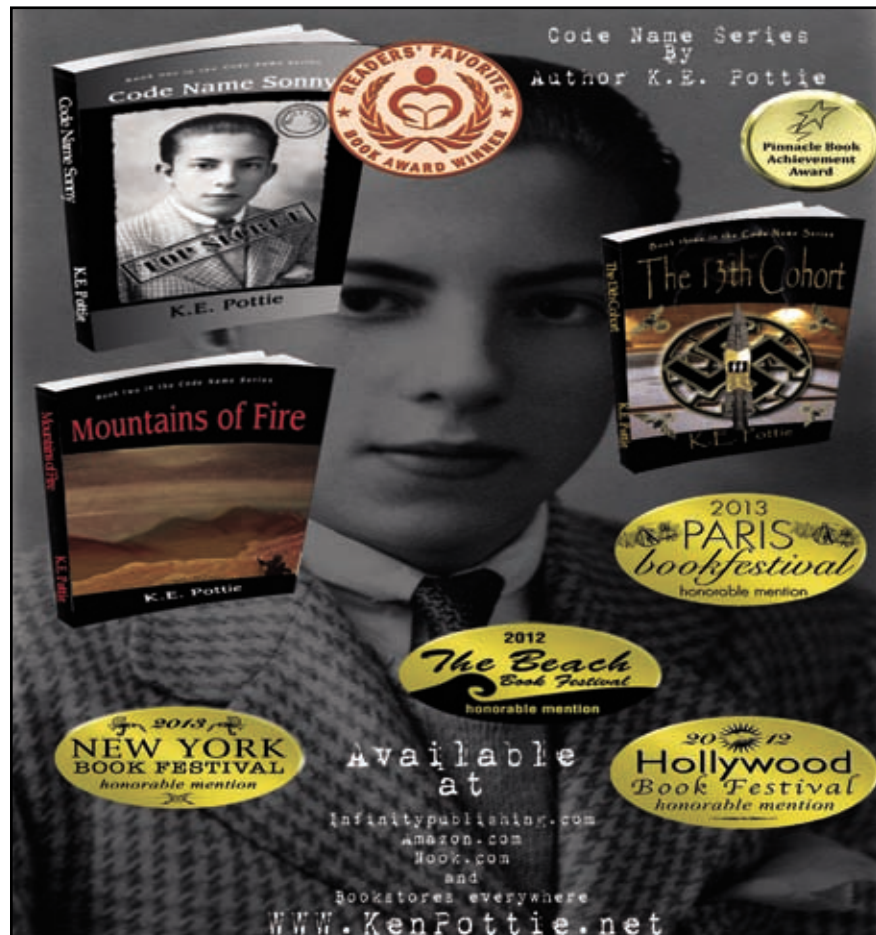
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	19 DAN WATSON DUO	20 DOUBLE D'S
	26 PHIL ADAMS	27
	2 TBA	3 ETHAN CASH

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MUSIC NOTES



“With A Little Help For My Friend”

By Mark T. Gould

“You’re my go-to music guy. Do you know anything about the Beatles?”

Well, yeah, and my response led to quite a tale.

You might even call it “Magical.”

It was the middle of last month, and I was busy in my chambers, writing a decision after a long trial. I stood up to stretch, and noticed that I had a text

from my good friend, Meteorologist Matt Scott at Fox 61 in Hartford.

I figured it was a holiday greeting, so I didn’t look at it for a few minutes, at least until I sat back down at my desk.

It turned out that he was reaching out about a news feature, which, being the multi-talented and tasking guy that he is, he does from time to time.

That is, when he not giving us amazingly accurate weather forecasts, both on television and radio, without resorting to the usual ratings-driven hyperbolic “Storm of the Century” crapola we get from most weather media. We noticed that about him when we started to watch him at Channel 8 in New Haven, and he’s the same, interesting, clever, accurate (did I mention accurate?) forecaster at Fox 61.

As we say in our house, “Quiet. Matt’s on.”

To say nothing of the fact that this gig with him took place during the holiday season, and Matt’s a great, single father of two of the most remarkable children I’ve ever seen in my life. (If you haven’t watched the video of his Christmas Eve broadcast with his beautiful daughter with him at the anchor desk, well, you just haven’t really celebrated what the holidays are all about).

To that end, I trusted him even before he became a good friend, and I trust him even more now.

And, now that friend was asking for my help.

I called him, and he explained that he was driving down to Foxwoods Casino, which was showing an exhibit about the Beatles’ musical and cultural history, called “Magical History Tour” (get it?), and he needed someone with a modicum of Beatles knowledge to wax poetically about them, on camera.

That, I told him, I could do.

I dropped what I was writing, threw on my coat, ran down to my car, and pointed it south down Route 9, merged it onto I-95 and headed toward Exit 92 for beautiful, downtown Mashantucket.

Now, as most people know, I’ve been just a bit (ha!) of a music fan for about half a century, and, like most of my friends and colleagues, a passionate fan of the Beatles, not only their music, but their effect on our culture; particularly in America, where their appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show in February 1964 helped pull us out of our tragic national hangover following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy only a scant three months before that time.

So, I had to do it right, both for the Beatles, but also for my friend Matt, who was asking for the favor, and who is a music freak in his own regard,

4 SOUND WAVES

as well as all of my other friends who feel as passionately, if not more so, about music than I do.

So, I prepped while I was driving, trying to recall the details of easily the most important musical group of the 20th Century, if not any century.

“Hamburg, Germany, where it started for them in ’60.”

Check.

“Back to the Cavern Club (more about that in a second), where ‘Beatlemania’ first screamed its collective head off.”

Check.

“Ed Sullivan.”

Duh. Check.

“The end of touring.”

Check.

“‘Rubber Soul,’ ‘Revolver,’ and the piece de resistance, ‘Sgt. Pepper.’”

Check.

“Yoko.”

Uh, better not go there.

I actually said all of that, and more, out loud in the car. I also sang a few Beatles songs, just to get in the mood.

Trust me, James Corden and Adele had nothing on me that day.

Suitably studied, reviewed, and sung out, I pulled in the casino parking garage, confident that, as John Lennon said on the Apple rooftop in January 1970, I thought I could “pass the audition.”

I met Matt outside the exhibit. It seemed like he had only been there for a few minutes, but he had it all scoped, and therefore directed, out.

First, I’d stand in front of the recreated Cavern Club stage (which was amazing), near the Vox amps, the iconic Hofner bass and Ringo’s drums with “The Beatles” stenciled on the front, and talk about the group’s early days.

Then, we’d walk through and talk about the various exhibit pieces (which included George’s sitar, handwritten Lennon/McCartney song lyrics, photos of screaming girls, the aforementioned ‘Sgt. Pepper’ album cover, and, magically, on and on).

Finally, we’d do a “walkout,” through the end of the exhibit and talk about the Beatles’ influence on music.

Whew. OK.

I tell ya, it was like working with Scorsese.

To say it went like a charm would be an understatement.

I, uh, like to talk about music; Matt asked great, and I mean great, questions; and, somehow, I managed to simultaneously wear and hide a cordless microphone, look in the right direction while talking, and walk along without tripping all over myself.

We taped about 10 minutes, and, TV news time being what it is, they used about a minute or so.

Matt’s “lede” to the piece said it all: “this is a story about four lads who started a band....”

And, as they say, the rest is history....

If you didn’t see it that night, here it is:

<https://youtu.be/1q2aHEUgys8>

Like they say at Foxwoods, “oh, the wonder of it all.”



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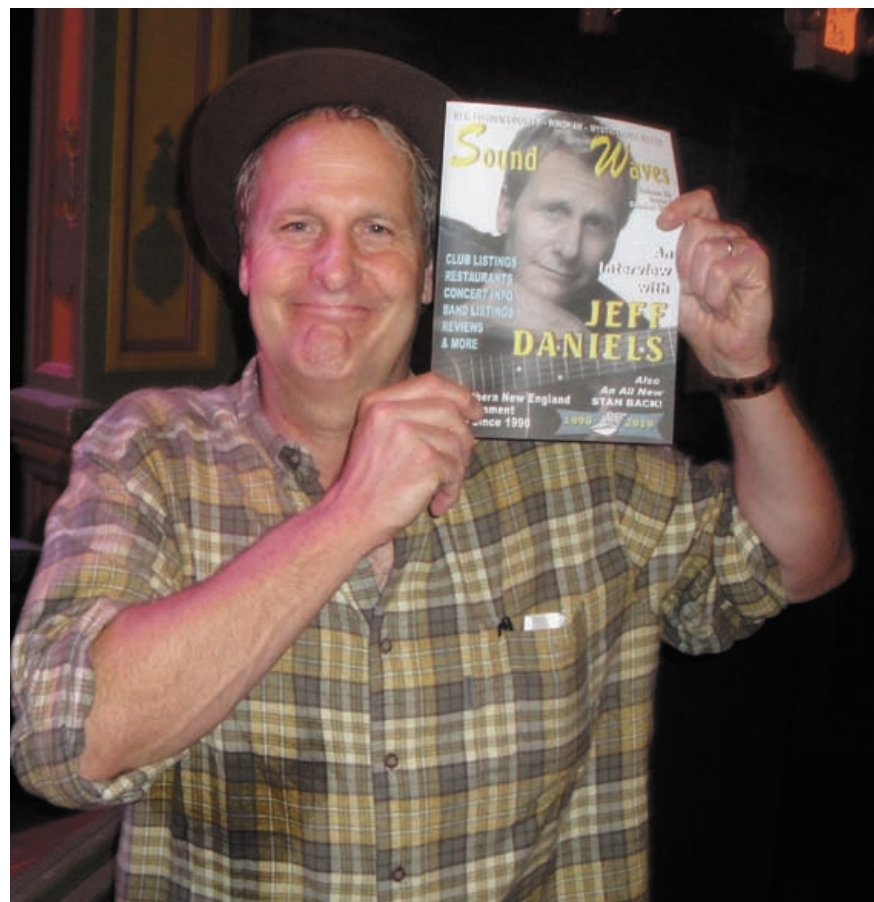
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All The World's a Stage



"Winter Gigs"

By Sue Menhart

It's gonna be cold. It's gonna be grey. And it's gonna last you for the rest of your life, says Bill Murray. Now is the winter of our discontent, as it were. The holidays are over and we can't remember the last time we had a piece of fruit or a good hearty salad. We've forsaken alcohol for all time and want to hoard every coin we earn. It gets dark by 4:30

p.m. in the Northeast and with the absence of sunshine, our long-lingering depression seeps into our souls like a drafty old scuttle hole. Fireplaces, fuzzy socks and fleece blankets beckon us, and we can't get off the couch. The last thing we want to do is get all layered up, pray the car starts and venture out to drinking establishments for one more night on the town.

But I say hogwash to all that! That's all rubbish! The dark days of winter are actually the best times to gather with friends, listen to music, and get the heck outta the house. What would you rather: suffer in silence or dance the night away? Succumb to seasonal affective disorder or rejoice in the fruits of friendship? Watch Mariah Carey's New Year's Eve performance on repeat or experience musicians who actually sing and play in front of your eyes? Oh it's a glory to behold I say! And the musicians who brave the elements to load up their gear and slip and slide their way through ice-packed back entrances know that while their efforts may be fruitless, to the trained eye, one can see, there ain't nothin' gonna keep us down! While gig opportunities in these cold and dreary months may be sparse, the courageous and admirable club owners who continue to host live music are the modern day heroes of our time. We love you all. We toast a green smoothie drink filled to the brink with kale and wheatgrass to your moxie!

Say yes to the invites. Get the Uber app. Start a group text with your high school friends and mean it when you say, "We must get together some time."

We're in this together. We must endeavor to slay the winter beast. We must never allow our mobile devices and fear of bad winter drivers to triumph over our need for human interaction. Summer gigs are no fun. Winter gigs are where it's at. Hope to see you at the shows!

Peruse more cautionary tales, rants and raves over on my blog "Menhart Musings" at www.suemenhart.wordpress.com.



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The Best in Blues - 2016

Sound Waves Magazine continues its longstanding tradition of honoring the best blues records of the year. Once again I've asked Dana Fargnoli to share his opinions with me. Dana is the blues director for WCNI radio and you can hear his show every Saturday morning from 9 to noon at 90.9 FM. Both of us thought this past year was an excellent one for new blues music. Congratulations to Sugar Ray & The Bluetones and Kenny Neal for claiming the top spots. Dana will be playing these records throughout the month of January. Feel free to give him a call at 860-439-2850 if you have any requests.

Bill's list:

1. **Kenny Neal** "Bloodlines" Cleopatra Blues
2. **Sugar Blue** "Voyage" MC Records
3. **Luther Dickinson** "Blues & Ballads (A Folksinger's Songbook) Vol. I & II" New West Records
4. **Lurrie Bell** "Can't Shake This Feeling" Delmark Records
5. **Lucky Peterson** "Long Nights" JSP Records
6. **David Bromberg** "The Blues, The Whole Blues and Nothing But The Blues" Red House Records
7. **Rory Block** "Keepin' Outta Trouble: A tribute to Bukka White" Stony Plain Records
8. **Tinsley Ellis** "Red Clay Soul" Heartfixer Music
9. **Johnny Rawls** "Tiger in a Cage" Catfood Records
10. **Bruce Katz Band** "Out From the Center" American Showplace

Dana's list:

1. **Sugar Ray & The Bluetones** "Seeing is Believing" Severn Records
2. **Lurrie Bell** "Can't Shake This Feeling" Delmark Records
3. **Bobby Rush** "Porcupine Meat" Rounder Records
4. **Curtis Salgado** "The Beautiful Lowdown" Alligator Records
5. **The Fabulous Thunderbirds** "Strong Like That" Severn Records
6. **Knickerbocker All-Stars** "Texas Rhody Blues" Cadillac Records
7. **Compilation** "Blues for Walter" Eller Soul Records
8. **Tinsley Ellis** "Red Clay Soul" Heartfixer Music
9. **David Bromberg** "The Blues, The Whole Blues and Nothing But The Blues" Red House Records
10. **Trudy Lynn** "I'll Sing the Blues For You" Connor Ray Music

Dana and I would like to dedicate the 2016 Best in Blues to the memory of Preston Hubbard, Buckwheat Zydeco, Leon Russell, Sharon Jones, Mose Allison, Long John Hunter, and Lonnie Mack. I would personally like to wish all Sound Waves Magazine readers a happy and healthy new year.

- Bill Harriman



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SOUND WAVES 7

BAR FLY JOURNALS

By Stephanie Shawn

Happy New Year My Sweet Bar Flies! Can you believe it? We made it to 2017! Go Us! My Resolution this year is to Never Again discuss my Resolutions from previous years. You remember? Last year? The whole freaking' gym thing! No seriously! I will! I'm gonna go!! I'm gonna do it! I swear! Uggg, such a loser!

Anyhow. Bucket List!! Heading to MADISON SQUARE GARDEN this month for the PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDERS TOUR or whatever the hell it is!! I'm so excited!! I wanna Ride a Cowboy! Is that the name of the song? Anyhoo....taking the train in with my Team and staying



at a hotel right next to the GARDEN. But of course, the Shenanigans begin right in Westerly at the AMTRAK STATION. Let's revisit our last trips in...

Given our own separate train car because of the histrionics of One, who shall remain nameless and shameless, of my Crew. And before that? Gum-my Bears, the flick, flick, flick of lighters that refuse to work and transvestites holding my hair back at a Penthouse Bar, and before that? A \$400 mini bar bill. Oh New York! You've been good to me!

Headed to PERKS AND CORKS in Westerly this month for a SQUIRREL'S NIGHT celebrating LISA KENNEY SHAW'S Birthday with all the Squirrels! Went with my besties...TAMI ALGIERE, LINA WOYCIK, BARBETTE PETTINI, MICHELLE BABCOCK, KATE SILVA,



KATHY MURPHY, KEVIN EVERETT, THE BAAAAFAAATHA DANNY BELL, ROCCO!, HEATHER SOARES, PAMTASTIC PAM ROSETTA and WENDY CARR! And then what to my wondering eyes should appear? But LISA DICK CYR! Along with another Birthday Girl KRIS PESCATELLO SLOCUM!



Things really got interesting then! DANNY BELL at the bar with friends GEORGE COMOLI,

DAN BARUTI and DENNIS BILLIAS showed up to complete the Party. Then poor BRAD BENSKE came to entertain us. An amazing musician, but I don't think he was quite prepared for us to play our version of Stump the Musician, where we yell out our preferred songs, which are obviously Not on our musicians playlist! I informed him I had just seen SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER for the umpteenth time and was looking for an all disco evening. KRIS and LISA were looking for a swing dance session and KEV EV was requesting KID CHARLAMAGNE. Poor Brad. I'm sorry, I'll try to behave! But BRAD played beautifully and put up with our nonsense, all with a smile! Well played, my friend!

Romper Stomper Time Again! It's your birthday, it's your birthday! Happy Birthday to DAN BURDICK, CAROLINE BALL, LUKE PINATELLO, JIM MOULTON, CHRIS MACKAY, KEN RICHARDS, JOHN HIGGINS, CANDICE LEE, JOEL TOMSKY, SAL MURANO, WADE!, CRAIG JOHNSON, DICK BROWN, GORDON GOULD, STEVE CLEARY, BECKY SICILIANO, ED ADAMS, HEATHER ST CLAIR, (miss sweet Ed and his birthday!), TODD TERRANOVA, DAVE TURANO, DANI MANN, KATE WICKLUND, GEORGE DEFREITAS, NELL MOORE CHEVALIER, RYAN CHAPMAN, ERIC DONCH, RONNY HOXSIE, FRANKIE SERRANO, RACHEL EVERETT, JASON WOLF CHASE, LARRY MAIN, GEORGE KELLY, MARCI CHEVIAN-HOOPER, JACK BURROUGHS, JODI SHAWN WALKER, JON LALLO, FRED BOGUE, RONNIE HARKNESS, TIM RIQUIER, newly found old friend CHRIS POST, ALICIA PICCOLO, CAROL SHAKESHAFT CANOVA, JAMES RUTH, PETER BEERS, STEVE BELGRADE, KEITH LIPPMAN, BRENDA CHAMPIGNY LEITE, JIM CAMPO, TODD BROOKES, ZACH GENESE, MIKE RAFFO, JENNIFER HARE LENSIS, JAY PALAZZOLA, KEVIN KOPCZA, DAVE HILL, DINO COZZOLINO, LARRY MATHEWS, WENDY GARAFOLA, my besties WENDY CARR and TAMI ALGIERE and of course, GRAMMA SHELL! Happy Birthday, my sweets!

And alas, I was amiss last month because as usual I was late turning in my BAR FLY JOURNALS and my homage to my dear friend, the BAAAAFAAATHA of all BAAAAAFATHA'S, Mr. DANIEL BELL celebrated his birthday in December and I was a Sh*t and forgot to put it in cuz I'm always running around like a chicken with her head cut off! I apologize, Danny! I'm so happy we were able to get together with KATIE, AL DRUIN, Editor DAVE POTTIE, BOBBY DEMING, JACKIE HILBERT, MISS PAM again, and the rest of the gang at PIER 27 and the HANDLEBAR CAFE and celebrate the milestone birthday of a very important man in my life! I love you, my sweet!



Speaking of birthdays, you may remember we celebrated my Father's Birthday at AMIGO'S last month, and the surprise turned out not to be, as one of his dear friends inadvertently sent him a copy of the invite...ugggg! Really? But a fabulous time was had by all! My entire family was on hand to wish GBILL a very Happy Birthday, while dancing to classics like LOWRIDER, PLAYED BY DJ 007! A big" Thank You" to WENDY CARR and her staff! Another beautiful Job Well Done!

January usually slows down a bit, away from hectic holiday festivities, but not for this Fly! CLYDESDALE'S TAVERN will be hosting Friday Night Karaoke with DJ VOLTAGE, as well as BOBBY CHRISTINA playing with the BEAVER BROWN BAND at CLYDES on Sunday the 11th from 6-10. Check out her FACEBOOK Page! Bartenders COLLEEN

RIX, STEVE HAGERTY and RICHARD AVERY from BROWN DERBY will be serving up your favorite food and drink this month, and remember Wednesday is Adult Hot Cocoa Night also saving Steak, baked potato or fries. Can't beat that with a stick! Stop by and see them!

INTERNATIONAL NIGHT at the VFW in Pawcatuck on January 27. Every month they will be celebrating a different Theme and January will be ITALIAN MONTH. Tickets are sold in advance by calling 860.599.2404 after 2pm. And BAR RESCUE is still trying to work out some kinda deal. Yikes!

in 2016 we unfortunately lost some amazing people in our lives, let's hope 2017 is kinder to us all. My new Motto is 'IF YOU CANNOT BE POSITIVE, THEN AT LEAST BE QUIET' Joel Osteen. I'm gonna try and live by that one. I love you, my Sweet Flies, love you long time!



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EPISODE 2

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BAND DATES

ANDY & BETHANY

6,14,27 - Pizzetta, Mystic, CT
11 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7-10
13 - Shipyard Tavern, Mystic, CT 7-10
24 - Rathskellar, Charlestown, RI 8-11

ANDY CHANEY

16 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT

ANDY CHANEY & MARCY KELLEY

5 - The Irons, Mystic, CT 5-8

THE ATTIKS

14 - 33 Golden St., New London, CT

THE BEN CHARLES BAND

7 - Burkes, Niantic, CT 8:30pm

BRANDT TAYLOR

6 - Turnpike Cafe, Montville, CT 6-9pm
12 - Bar Louie, W.Hartford, CT
13 - Apricots, Farmington, CT 7pm
14 - World of Beer, W.Hartford, CT
20 - Lindy's, N.Smithfield, RI
21 - Theodore's, Springfield, MA
22 - Dunny's, E.Brookfield, MA 4pm
26 - Solun, New Haven, CT 6:30pm
27 - Latitude, Mystic, CT 7pm
28 - VFW, Putnam, CT
29 - Paradise Hill, Wallingford, CT 2pm

CADILLAC HOTEL

8 - Sneekers, Groton, CT 4-7pm

THE CARTELLS

4 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7pm
7 - Bridge Market, Groton, CT 8pm
8 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 3pm
11 - Knickerbocker, Westerly, RI 7:30pm
13 - Pazzo Cafe, Rocky Hill, CT 7pm
14 - Bill's Seafood, Westbrook, CT 7:30pm
20,27 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 6pm
21 - Community Center, E. Lyme, CT 8pm

10 SOUND WAVES

DAN STEVENS

3,10,17,24,31 - Nightingale's, Old Lyme, CT
4 - Bee & Thistle, Old Lyme, CT
6 - Shovel Handle, Jackson, NH
10,17,24,31 - www.icrvradio.com, 4pm
13,14 - Manhattan Pizza, Burlington, VT
14 - Nectars, Burlington, VT 7pm
20 - Westside 2 Pint 0, New Haven, CT
21 - Fire at the Ridge, Middlefield, CT
22 - Bill's Seafood, Westbrook, CT
27 - Bullwheel, Jay, VT

DAN WATSON

3,13,17,28,31 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
6 - Harbor House, Mystic, CT
7 - Harp n Hound, Mystic, CT
10 - Angies Pier 27, Mystic, CT
11 - Mystic Pizza II, N. Stonington, CT
12,15,22,26 - Ancient Mariner, Mystic, CT
14 - Black Sheep, Niantic, CT
18 - Tipping Chair, Southington, CT
19 - Voodoo Grill, Mystic, CT
20 - Greers & Beers, Southington, CT
21 - Breachway Grill, Charlestown, RI
27 - Dog Watch, Stonington, CT
29 - Tara's, Matunuck, RI

DARIK & THE FUNBAGS

14 - Tipping Chair, Southington, CT
20 - Shamrock, Waterbury, CT
28 - Brown Derby, Uncasville, CT

THE FAKE EXPERIENCE

28 - Sneekers, Groton, CT 8-11

FRANKENPHIL

6 - Dan's Place, W. Greenwich, RI 8pm
8 - Stomping Ground, Putnam, CT 1pm
9 - Rathskellar, Charlestown, RI 7:30pm
13 - McBrides, Providence, RI 7pm
14 - Harbour House, Mystic, CT 8:30pm
21 - PennyLane, Old Saybrook, CT 7:30pm
27 - On The Waterfront, New London, CT 7pm

GEOFF KAUFMAN, STEVE GILLETTE & CINDY MANGSEN

20 - All Souls, New London, CT

GREEN TEA

12,26 - The Irons, Mystic, CT 5-8

HART STRINGS DUO

6 - Haversham, Westerly, RI
7 - Triple B, Gales Ferry, CT 8pm

JAMES HARRIS

3,10,17,24,31 - Harp & Hound, Mystic, CT 8pm
4,11,14,18,21,25 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
6 - Hilton, Mystic, CT 8pm
7,28 - Pizzetta, Mystic, CT
13 - Venice, Westerly, RI 7pm
26 - Steakloft, Mystic, CT 7pm

27 - Latitude41, Mystic, CT 7pm
29 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 6pm

KEEP IT ROLLING BAND

7 - Swinging Chicken, Webster, MA
13 - Black Dog, Putnam, CT
21 - Hungry Tiger, Manchester, CT

KEN SERIO JAZZ TRIO

29 - Perks & Corks, Westerly, RI

MATT n DEAN

12 - Hardrock, Foxwoods, CT

MUDFOOT

7 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT

STEVE DAGGETT

14 - Sandy's Lighthouse, Misquamicut, RI 8pm

STYFF KITTY

28 - Harbor House, Mystic, CT

SUNDAY GRAVY

27 - Sneekers, Groton, CT
28 - Wood River Inn, Richmond, RI

THREE2TANGO

20 - 99 Restaurant, Norwich, CT 8pm

VINCE THOMPSON & THE NEXT FUN THING

19 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7-10
26 - Bill's Seafood, Westbrook, CT 6:30-9:30
29 - Donahues, Madison, CT 4:30-8

THE WHALES

28 - Crocker House, New London, CT 7pm

WOOLY MAMMOTH

20 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT

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Nellie McKay

By Bill Harriman

If you were to put together a quick resume for Nellie McKay you would have to include the following: She's a multi-instrumentalist specializing in the unique combination of piano and ukulele, she's a singer/songwriter, an actress, a comedian, a political activist, an animal rights activist, and a proud feminist. She is also a beautiful person who is so charismatic that when she's on stage she practically glows. And in addition to that she is one of the most instantly likeable people you could ever meet. It's hard to pin down her unique musical style but someone once described her as a cross between Doris Day and Eminem. That's both kind of funny and kind of true. (Check out her song "Sari" if you want to be in on the joke.)

Digging into that resume a little more let's start in 2004 when Nellie released her debut CD called "Get Away from Me" on the Columbia record label. Supposedly Nellie became the first woman ever, at age 21, to have a double album of all original material as her first release. Many songs of those songs including "David," "Ding Dong," "The Dog Song," "I Wanna Get Married," "Toto Dies," and "Clonie" have remained staples in her live repertoire to this day.

The success of "Get Away from Me" led to an incredible couple of years for Nellie in the mid 2000's. She wrote several songs for the movie "Rumor Has It..." which starred Jennifer Aniston, Kevin Costner, and Shirley MacLaine among others. She also co-starred in the movie "P.S. I Love you," playing the part of Hilary Swank's kid sister in an all-star cast that also included Gerard Butler, Kathy Bates, Harry Connick Jr., and Lisa Kudrow. Also, around this time, she made her Broadway debut in "The Threepenny Opera" playing the part of Polly Peachum and co-starring with Cyndi Lauper. And if that's not enough she also released another double CD of original material called "Pretty Little Head" and then quickly followed that up a year later (we're in 2007 now) with "Obligatory Villagers."

As the decade came to a close Nellie released one more CD called "Normal as Blueberry Pie – A Tribute to Doris Day." It was with this record that it became clear there was a certain timeless quality to Nellie. She would have been great in any era. The first song of the disc is "The Very Thought of You" which is one of the most beloved songs of the great American songbook. Doris Day sang it in 1950. Bing Crosby sang it in 1941. Others who have sung this tune include Nat King Cole, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Frank Sinatra, Etta James, and Andy Williams. Even in 2016 there were new versions by Michael Bublé and Kristin Chenoweth. Nellie's rendition is exquisite and her interpretation holds up against any of the immortals who came before her.

Nellie McKay's resume has become even more impressive this decade. She's written three musical shows including a 2011 production of "I Want to Live" based on the life and death of convicted killer Barbara Graham who died in the gas chamber in 1955. "I Want to Live" was the title of a movie about her that came out in 1958. Susan Hayward, who played the title character ended up winning an Oscar for Best Actress for her performance. Nellie followed that up a year later with "Silent Spring – It's not nice to fool Mother Nature," which was a one woman musical comedy about the writer and environmental activist Rachel Carson. And most recently there's "A Girl named Bill – The Life and Times of Billy Tipton." Tipton was a famous band leader through the 20th century. He was born a woman but lived his entire adult life as a man. This "secret" was not revealed until his death in 1989. In this musical Nellie takes a more serious look at stereotypes and gender identity role playing.

In addition to these musicals, Nellie also starred in an independent film called "Downtown Express." Released in 2011, she was perfectly cast as a bohemian singer/songwriter named Ramona who becomes the love interest of Philippe Quint's character Sasha, a Russian violinist. She also appeared in an off-Broadway production called "Old Hats," a musical comedy fea-

turing two clowns and a musician. Nellie played the musician.

And finally, there's been two more CD's. In 2010 she released a beautifully cool record called "Home Sweet Mobile Home." Many of the tunes here were recorded in Jamaica giving it a breezy, tropical vibe. Standout tracks include "Caribbean Time," "Dispossessed," and "The Portal." There are thirteen tracks in total on this record and they're all original Nellie McKay songs. There are also thirteen tracks on her 2016 release called "My Weekly Reader." Here Nellie pays homage to the sixties with her unique take on an eclectic mix of songs. There are familiar tunes such as "If I Fell" (The Beatles), "Sunny Afternoon" (The Kinks), and a gorgeous version of "Don't Let the Sun Catch you crying" (Gerry & the Pacemakers). There are also some not so familiar songs such as "Murder in my Heart for the Judge" (Moby Grape), "Bold Marauder" (Richard Farina), and "Hungry Freaks Daddy" (Frank Zappa). There's also some fun stuff like "Red Rubber Ball" (Cyrle), and "Itchycoo Park" (Small Faces).

Left off Nellie's resume is all the work she's done as an animal rights activist, an environmentalist, and a political activist who worked door to door for Bernie Sanders this past year. She'll touch on some of these topics in this interview. This January Nellie will be playing the Billie Tipton character once more with a show at the club Helsinki Hudson in Hudson, NY on the 22nd followed by three shows at Feinstein's 54 Below in Manhattan on the 27th, 28th, and 29th. This phone interview took place on Wednesday afternoon December 14th.

BH – When did you first learn about Billy Tipton?

NM – "My mother had come across a biography years ago, and picked it up and what a story! It took me more than a decade to actually do a show but it's kind of hard to beat."

BH – Would he have to keep any secrets if he was alive today?

NM – "Well it depends. A lot of people still hide that they're gay or they try to lighten their skin or they try to hide their age. Certainly, people try to hide what they truly believe if it's inconvenient to the majority."

BH – The last time I saw you in concert I was taken by how passionately you sang the Beatles' song, "I'm so Tired." But then I realized it was probably because it was about the musical about Barbara Graham, "I Want to Live."

NM – "Yeah, she's waiting to find out if she will live or die."

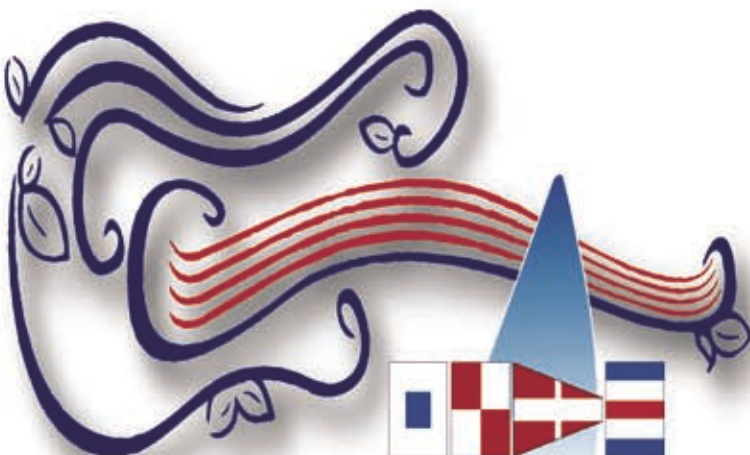
BH – I know you're very much against capital punishment. I thought that your video about Troy Davis, the Georgian man who was executed in 2011 whom many thought was not guilty, was very powerful. But I also felt that if Jimmy Carter couldn't stop the execution, what chance did you have?

NM – "I wrote a song with the line 'why does Jimmy Carter always have to play the martyr?' Because there are so many things, particularly as an ex-president, that he's right on and doesn't get listened to. We've got two major parties in this country and they're both pro death penalty. Bryan Stevenson, who's a social justice advocate, said that the death penalty is lynching's child and I agree."

BH – You followed up the Barbara Graham musical with the Rachel Carson story, "Silent Spring – It's not nice to fool Mother Nature." What is it that drew you to her story?

NM – "I started reading 'Silent Spring' and I thought 'this would make a great cabaret show!' I don't know what that says about my instincts but Rachel Carson, she basically was echoing the Native Americans which is we are all one with the earth. And through most of history humans have been not just battling for survival but indoctrinated into exploiting and abusing the earth and the animals and other people, sometimes just for kicks. So, we still haven't learned the lesson of Rachel Carson. I saw a documentary called 'The Hazda,' which is about one of the last tribes in the world that continues to live much as they have for centuries. It's the way their habitat is being encroached upon. You can't even look out for people. We really

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have learned nothing. When you look at climate change, the greatest cause of climate change is animal agriculture. Not just from the methane, the carbon dioxide, or the nitrous oxide that they put in the atmosphere but because of the clear cutting, especially in the Amazon which has all that bio mass which absorbs the carbon. And it doesn't get discussed because food is emotional for people. It's sentimental, it's psychological, and its way beyond sustenance and environmental groups don't touch it. There's a great movie called 'Cowspiracy,' please check it out. Environmental groups are purely focused on energy, whereas the greater threat and continuing agent of climate change is animal agriculture. So, I just kind of feel if they're going to keep focusing on the energy, we're doomed anyway."

BH – I know there are so many causes that you are passionate about, let's just touch on a couple. Many people have a romantic idea about the horse drawn carriages we see in Central Park, but you don't feel that way, do you?

NM – "Well you don't see much. You basically see the horse's ass or the driver's ass. I mean it's a much better idea even if there was no hardship for the horses. But they're worked in all kinds of weather conditions from the extreme heat of summer to the extreme cold of winter. The hours and the temperatures that they are supposed to be worked in are not followed. There's a good documentary about this by Donny Moss called 'Blinders: The Truth behind the Tradition.' So, if people are interested, that's a good source of information."

BH – Also the Westminster Dog Show is presented as a feel-good story. I'm assuming that you don't see it that way.

NM – "I've done protests outside holding signs reading 'every dog bred is a shelter dog dead.' And it is just that pride of breeding over soul. A mutt or a rescue can be just as loving and can feel just as much joy or sorrow and suffer equally to a pedigree. It's a form of genetic supremacy and that doesn't work out well for humans or animals."

BH – Let's talk about the CDs. It sure seems to me that you really enjoy singing all those sixty songs on "My Weekly Reader."

NM – "Oh yes, definitely. I think that the music of the sixties hasn't found a home the way jazz has. But that might be a good thing because when there's a whole industry around a medium, it can be a bit institutionalized. But those who have heard the record, I hope they like it. I think partly it's the politics of the times. It's difficult to co-opt them because they still feel relevant and so threatening. You have to find different ways of getting the word out."

BH – The interesting thing about music in the sixties was that one week maybe something by the Jefferson Airplane would be number one, and then the next week it would be some kind of bubblegum tune like "Sugar Sugar" by the Archies at number one.

NM – "Yeah, and some of the music making a statement could be quite bubblegummy itself which is especially fun. You know, like 'Itchycoo Park,' it's transcendent but it's kind of a pitch for universal basic income. I know there's a drug angle but even without that the whole idea is you don't have to go to school to learn anything. It's just the 'opt out' of society idea. What is this ambition we have? We're not getting anywhere. And it seems like so much aspirations to the middle class is to achieve the right to be mindless. Whereas we could just start that way, and go on that way, and end that way. It's a Puritan thing. It's a colonial, imperial idea that we have to work. Why can't we just survive and try to be good to one another and try to all belong?"

BH – Do you have hopes about the next generation being good to one another and trying to all belong?

NM – "Yeah, I have tremendous hope. It's just that there are economic interests and like Lucy Parsons once said, the rich are not going to allow us to vote their money away. And the media has been so propagandized, and this includes parts of the internet media, it's hard to overcome. I just

16 SOUND WAVES

hope this generation does hold on to what it was hoping for with the Bernie Sanders campaign and does see it to fruition because people just get so beat down in life and overwhelmed."

BH – Let's talk about your records some more. With the "Normal as Blueberry Pie," your tribute to Doris Day, what first attracted you to her? Was it her activism or her music?

NM – "Gee I guess I first knew of her as a champion for animal rights. And then I loved her music growing up. It was such a respite from the crassness and volume of the culture."

BH – I especially loved your "Home Sweet Mobile Home" album. I hope it doesn't get overlooked as your career moves forward.

NM – "You're so nice to say that. That's very lovely. Thank you, that means a lot. We loved going to Jamaica. I'd love to go there and record some more. And I love recording in L.A. I think it was an old RCA studio from the 1910's. I appreciate that. I think she gets a little neglected. I don't know if it's because there was a drawing on the cover or what but I appreciate your compliment."

BH – With your first CD, "Get Away from Me," so many of those songs seems to be a part of your live repertoire, haven't they?

NM – "It's funny what works live because I don't always think it's the most fun to listen to. Some songs, they're just hard to replicate live and some songs that work live, they don't really carry on the album and I wish I knew the formula."

BH – Are you happy with where your career is as we head into 2017?

NM – "Oh yeah but you always like to do more. A lot of it is logistics and I'm trying to figure out what to do next like getting the laundry done. I think some people have much more of an aptitude for the career. Some people can really do both like Yoko Ono. But I'm more like John, I'm a house husband!"

There have only been a handful of entertainers in the history of this country who have won an Emmy, a Grammy, an Oscar, and a Tony. Nellie could be one of those people. This article has touched on her career in music, movies, and Broadway and as far as television goes she has contributed music to such shows as "Madmen," "Boardwalk Empire," "Weeds," "Grey's Anatomy," and "Nurse Jackie." One time when asked what she's been up to since her last record, her reply was that she had been eating potato chips, scratching her ass, and watching reruns of Mr. Ed. Who knows, maybe the one prize she'll win is the Eisner, which is awarded to the best comic of the year. One thing for sure is that it'll be both interesting and fun to see what happens next with the silly, sexy, sarcastic, witty, and wonderful Nellie McKay.



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HEARING AID



Leonard Cohen *"You Want It Darker"* Columbia / Sony

Leonard Cohen always blurred the lines between life and death. His deep voice was sorrowful, powerful and humble. He almost defies categorization, as he mixes dark brooding archetypes with religious imagery and a feeling that he's just not telling you everything. He has made a huge impact on the world of music with his originality and his powerful sense of drama.

Cohen passed away this past November just weeks after the release of his final album, "You Want It Darker". The critics had already been writing that with this release he seemed to be preparing for his passing on to the next world.

"You Want It Darker" delivers on its promise. Like much Cohen material, it is deep, slow and peppered with choirs and conversations with higher powers. Ever philosophical, he delves into his familiar metaphors of light and darkness, life and death, pleasure and pain. The album kicks off with the title track. It's a sparse arrangement where Cohen is almost speaking to you in his quiet, deep voice. So much of this album showcases his restrained power. He has such a powerful voice, but only brings it out for moments of great contrast when he's already got your feelings in his grasp. He is almost a master of persuasion with his subtlety, mystery, and sense of grand wisdom.

I love the second track, "Treaty". Cohen lays down some nice metaphoric imagery. The song has a thematic throwback to his hit "Anthem" from his 1992 masterpiece "The Future". He www.Swaves.com

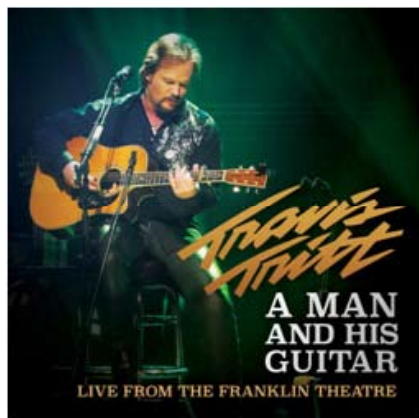
speaks of struggling to come to terms with the battles of life, and wants to lay down his arms.

"On the Level" has a little bit of a gospel feel to it, with a shuffling beat and full line up of backup singers. He always straddles the line between dark and light – sitting on the fence with a leg dangling on each side. The chorus intones "They ought to give my heart a medal/ For letting go of you/ When I turned my back on the devil/ Turned my back on the angel too".

Cohen telegraphs his own passing with "Leaving the Table". The theme is pretty clear in the slow, melodic lullaby: "You don't need a lawyer/ I'm not making a claim/ You don't need to surrender/ I'm not taking aim/ I don't need a lover, no, no, no/ The wretched beast is tame/ I don't need a lover/ So blow out the flame".

It's always sad to see legendary artists give up the ghost and leave us behind. Leonard Cohen takes us to church with him one last time with "You Want It Darker". It's a fitting tribute to his own life which was so full of dramatic contrasts. He always seemed to be wrestling with the gods. I'm grateful to have been touched by his works. Rest in peace, poet of the deep.

- Tom Matthew
Two Ton Music



Travis Tritt *"A Man and His Guitar"* Post Oak

Travis Tritt is a Georgia born and bred, opinionated, certified old-time country

music star with Grammy Awards, number one hits and platinum-selling albums. He can pretty much do whatever he wants. People in the country music biz had been telling him for 15 years to do some live acoustic shows and he always turned them down. Until now. He set about doing just that (because why not?) and his people recorded him at a show that happened at the Franklin Theatre in Tennessee. With his new double-live CD "A Man and His Guitar," we get to hear what stripping down this country music star sounds like. And it's glorious.

Tritt launched his career 25 years ago with hits like "Help Me Hold On," "Can I Trust You with My Heart," and "Foolish Pride." When he cut "I'm a Member of the Country Club," poking fun at the snootiness of exclusive houses of ridiculousness, fans went down-right crazy. Tritt's last album was released in 2007 and re-released in 2013 with a new name "The Calm After..."

The CDs include acoustic renditions of his own hits, country classics, and some Waylon Jennings tunes in tribute. The album itself seems more relevant than ever with country music's ever longing for "real" country. It's sparse, raw and true, and his authority is undeniable behind the microphone. His hair is shorter, but his rock-n-roll roots still come through in his voice. His acoustic guitar picking is crisp and clear, and sturdy as ever. Though Tritt is known as a top hit-maker, you can't deny his traditional country rooted soul.

Tritt's rasp and range sound a little like Chris Stapleton and compared to his older recordings, his voice is deeper, grittier and more self-assured. He starts off with "It's All About the Money" from his 2004 "My Honkey Tonk History" album and segues into "Where Corn Don't Grow" from 1996. He then performs the haunting minor key Hank Williams, Jr. tune "The Pressure is On."

If he felt any pressure to make this recording project succeed, he sure doesn't show it. He simply glides from one song to the other, just him and his guitar, and the audience loves it. "I'm Gonna Be Somebody" from 1990 never sounded more sure-fire. He brings his pal James Otto on stage for a duet at this point to perform their simple but brilliant song "Lord Have Mercy on the Working Man."

He says, "This one got it all started for me," as he eases into the mega hit "Country Club" to the audience's tumultuous glee. From 2002, he performs

"Country Ain't Country No More" which of course remains as relevant as ever in more ways than one. His cover of the Bobby Bare classic "Five Hundred Miles Away From Home" features some sweet guitar pickin', smooth as a whip-poor-will. When he blasts through "Here's a Quarter" from 1991, the crowd can hardly contain themselves.

Tritt's last number one hit, the ballad "Best of Intentions," had 'em screaming in the aisles. He further tugs on the heartstrings in attendance with the back-to-back love songs "Drift off to Dream" and "Help Me Hold On."

The second CD in the package starts with Tritt delivering a heartfelt introduction to his good friend, country music legend and Grand Ole Opry staple Marty Stuart, who then joins him on stage for some duets the first of which is "Whiskey Ain't Workin'." The two were just meant to sing together. "Pickin' at It" provides a preview into a new album the two are working on and is an instrumental. Like Tritt says, "There ain't no singin' in it" for those who don't get it. The crowd laughs and laughs.

The bluesy "Come and Go Blues" is next and shows off once more, how versatile and talented Tritt really is. When he performs the 1991 number one hit "Anymore," I can't help but be fascinated with how for some singers, the older they get, the better they sound. He sings it in the same key, but it just sounds deeper and richer, and just plain better.

With a shout-out to Johnny Cash, he then performs a slow and haunting rendition of "I Walk The Line" before launching a series of Waylon Jennings songs. "Are You Sure Hank Done it This way," "A Long Time Ago," and the super familiar "Mamas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to Cowboys," complete with a hilarious Willy Nelson impression, round out the set.

Tritt admits he's always felt a bit like an outsider in the country music business as he launches into "Lone Wolf" by Hank Williams, Jr. but he takes some liberation with the lyrics: "I've been chased and I've been bit... My name is Travis Tritt."

"Most of us have been pinned up, but I'm still runnin' wild," and the crowd goes wild.

His number two hit "It's a Great Day to be Alive" sounds better than ever and on "T-R-O-U-B-L-E" his pickin' is just exceptional. It's near the end of the

Continued Page 21
SOUND WAVES 17

COOKING WITH THE BLUES



By Jack Chaplin

Well, it is now 2017 when you are reading this but as I'm writing this I am looking out the window on this late December day. The sun is shining and it's going to hit 40 degrees, a blessing after the arctic cold snap that came from Siberia and down into little Old New London. Now I know why the Russkies don't smile so much! I'm smiling today as I write this, listening to a live recording from Jody and Michelle's Misty Meadows Blues Fest. Be sure if you see Jody to ask him to burn you a copy! Mark, Brandt, Mickey, Mike, Brian, and Paul tore it up. Only thing missing was my cheese grater! The recording might not be perfect like studio recordings

but like I always say, the perfection is in the imperfection with the blues. I regret over the years all the great music that had been played in my places that had gone unrecorded, off into thin air but burned only in our memories! I've been playing the grater a lot lately. This past year I've jumped up with Dave Fields, Three Bean Row, Ket Atkins and The Honky Tonk Kind, J.T. Laurent, Brother Big Eye, Fuse, Dan Stevens and Clayton, The Franklin Brothers, Andre and Eddie, Chris McKay and The Tone Shifters, The Sidewinders, and the Chris Leigh Band. January 26 I'll be grating with the great Lucky Peterson here at Daddy Jack's. I'll be shredding it! It has been a real joy being next to these great {not grate} musicians! Dan Stevens is who got me started. I'm still waiting to have a grate off with this guy named Big Gooda that Dan has been telling me about! I want to wish all of these bands Good Health, Prosperity, and Keep Cooking With The Blues!!

Speaking of Jody Sheeley, he invited me to lunch at his pal Manny's restaurant in Norwich, 724 Boswell Ave. I had been mixing it up with the Norwich Pizza Palace, they have the same last name Konstantanintis. My girls went to school with George who's parents own the Pizza Palace. A funny thing I remember about Georgie was that everyday at noon he would jump up and say, "I Just Have To Dance!" He said that was a tradition in his family to the dismay of his teachers he would jump up and do his thing! Back to Manny's, we had just had some snow, there were many town trucks outside which is always good to see, they do know where the good food is. When I walked in Jody was talking to a group of Norwich firefighters, he had been a member for 20 years. After the introductions and pleasantries we sat down and got down to business. The menu was huge, anything you could ever want. So big that I couldn't make up my mind. Apps, salads, sandwiches, grinders, catch of the day, pasta, pizza's, dinner specials, blue plate specials, chicken dishes, to name a few! Jody stepped in and ordered us up a fried seafood platter to split and a couple cups of beef barley. I knew from the first taste that Manny knew his stuff. You can always tell how

18 SOUND WAVES

good a chef is by their soup and sauces, old school!! The waitress, Maria, was really nice. She works while also going to school. I knew that we had ordered right when I saw the New England Seafood truck pull in to deliver an order, comes in fresh daily!! I think the platters Manny gave us were two full orders and not one. I had to go to work after but it was so good I couldn't control myself, I could have used a nap right after. The cole slaw was on point, another true test and the tartar sauce tasted house made. We had a real nice time talking to Manny. He had come to the USA in 81, right to Willimantic where he had relatives, then after a number of years found a location in Norwich. Years later he bought the old Kentucky Fried Chicken and with extensive renovations opened his spot and became his own landlord. We had met Manny's son, Costa earlier who is a Norwich firefighter, his daughter Christina waits tables and helps her Dad manage, what's better than that? They talked about building a house in Greece on land that has been in the family for generations, with grape vines and olive trees Opa ! Manny's is open 7 days a week 11:00am to 10:00pm. I don't know how he does it, I guess you have to be Greek!! I'll be back to taste more of Manny's cooking, I hear he has some good steaks and that Mous-saka caught my eye! God Bless Manny and His Family! Like the rest of us small business owners, after all the years grinding out a living, putting our children through school, working so hard we hope to live long enough to enjoy some of the good life ourselves. I think it's important to enjoy life along the way, to have good balance and quality of life, take the time to smell the roses! Nobody said on their deathbed that they wish they had worked more! Well, I know it's a good day when after the Misty Meadows Blues Fest Live CD finished The Best Of Freddie King came on, hard act to follow but Freddie is holding his own!

A few weeks back Rod from Hot Rods asked up on Facebook "Who Has The Best Mexican food around?" People talked about the usual place but Victoria's kept being mentioned (they are across from the Navy Sub base).

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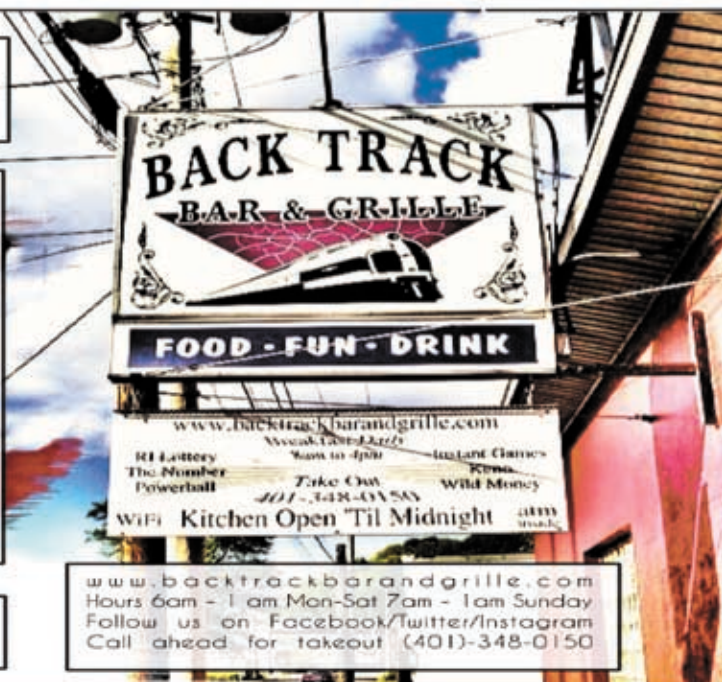
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It was a Monday and a much needed day off during a busy holiday season so LaKisha and I decided to go see Manchester By the Sea. The Regal had a showing at 10:15 so we hustled it up and got there just as the previews started, just how I like it. \$10.00, for a matinee, I told You I was cheap!! By the way I'm passing as a Senior, ok a few years early but... I thought about popcorn but \$4.50 for a small and \$7.00 for a large, sodas also out of sight! I don't think so, maybe if it was fresh popped Orville or Newman's! I kicked myself in the ass we didn't have time to pick up some Smartfood! With high expectations the movie started off slow and crawled at a snails pace. It was to me poorly written, badly acted, and the cinematography was weak but what do I know? What I do know is an hour or so into it we looked at each other and decided we were out of there, faked the flu coming on suddenly we got a raincheck. With a few extra hours to kill we decided to check out Victoria's, I had a hankering for some TexMex. They are open 7 days a week, Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner, I thought, who do you think you are the Groton Townhouse? The hours are crazy and the menu even crazier!! Italian, Mexican, American, Home Cooking, Seafood, Sandwiches, you name it, they got it! We ordered some chips, salsa and guacamole. It took a long time but when they came out the chips were straight out of the fryer, dripping grease but ok, the salsa was like none I had ever seen. I'm not sure if it even had any tomato in it, I sent it back and asked for pico. We ordered the steak nachos which was more like chili than steak but still tasty and the Beef Enchiladas Ranchera which was also ok, but the prices were what got me. We got the bill and they charged \$9.95 for the guac. and chips and were going to charge another \$6.95 for the chips and salsa, almost \$17.00 for both! Nachos weren't bad at \$9.95 but the Enchilada's at \$11.95 were steep. I guess I'm use to Texas where a combo plate is \$8.95 The waitress was real nice and we left her a nice holiday tip. For My money I'm sticking to Jalisco in Westerly as a benchmark for local Tex-Mex until I find otherwise. I have a good friend and chef from Texas via Mexico who is coming up in March to work with me, You may see some kicks ass TexMex in the near future at Daddy Jack's. As I'm putting the finishing touches on this Jan. article it is the absolute end of 2016. We had a bad storm yesterday but only rain, if it was snow we would have gotten hammered. I bet Jody is uber thankful, he does some serious snow plowing! Today the sun is shining bright! I was passing a local fishing spot and saw two youngsters fishing and enjoying being outdoors, the scene just made me smile! Maybe it was memories of my youth, no worries, enjoying a winter vacation day with some pals. Goodbye 2016 and Hello 2017, Prayerfully I Wish You All Peace, Good Health and Prosperity in the coming year. Keep Cooking With the Blues, Jack





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show and he's still going strong. His callouses have got to be super tough I tell ya. The CD concludes with his last top ten to date, "Modern Day Bonnie and Clyde."

As far as I'm concerned, if you're a music artist, no matter what genre, and you can sit by yourself with an acoustic guitar or a piano, and can pull it off without the help of a massive production of backing tracks, backing musicians, and backup singers, including that retched auto-tune, then you are a TRUE artist. You are miles and miles above the so-called main stream artists of today. Travis Tritt wins.

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- Sue Menhart



Childish Gambino

"Awaken, My Love!"

Glassnote Entertainment

2016 was a banner year for Donald Glover. Between his 2013 album "Because The Internet" being certified gold, and the release of his critically acclaimed FX show "Atlanta", the world was ready to hear what new music Glover would release under his hip-hop persona Childish Gambino... or at least, that's what they thought. Even though Gambino has never been one to stay focused on one sound for multiple projects, the pure amount of contrast between this album and his last shocked the world, and took music fans by storm.

"Awaken, My Love" is a straight up funk project, drawing deeply from the sounds of genre legends like Parliament-Funkadelic, Prince, Sly & The Family Stone, and many more. To the dismay of some, the album has NO traditional rapping, only small spoken word moments from time to time. While this has turned off a lot of fans, the bold de-

cision has garnished him with respect music fans and legends alike.

Fans of Glover will know that whenever he sets his sights on trying something new, he really focuses on all the intricacies and small details it takes to polish the product, and "Awaken, My Love" is no different. On this album Gambino really took his singing and songwriting to the next level. Songs like "Boogieman" and "Terrified" not only draw influence from music of the past, but also showcase the ability that music today has to create fully immersive experiences. The album's second single, "Redbone", is another great example, featuring vocals so high-pitched, and emotion filled, that critics couldn't believe that Glover hadn't used any pitch alteration on the track.

While Childish Gambino is certainly not the first artist in the hip-hop world to draw influence from the world of funk and soul, he is definitely the first person to dive this deep into it. Much like today, the 70's were a time where music brought people together to combat the feelings of fear and unrest within the people. Albums like this, which promote love and courage in the face of adversity, are important in a world where so much tragedy happens on a daily basis. With Glover's newfound respect in the music community, we can only hope that other artists follow in his footsteps.

- Niles Wilson



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JAN 28 | 7PM
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JAN 28 | 8PM
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