

Sound Waves

Magazine

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Volume 30
Issue 1
January 2020

**CLUBS
RESTAURANTS
CONCERT INFO
BAND LISTINGS
REVIEWS & MORE**

Plus
- Big Lux
- Mike Zito

**BEST IN
THE BLUES 2019**

**A Southern New England
Entertainment & Dining Guide Since 1990**

NEW LONDON COUNTY - MYSTIC - WESTERLY - RHODE ISLAND

**An
Interview with
HUGH
BIRDSALL**



**Don
Imus**



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



Event
Specialist
Emcee
Freelance
Writer

www.cticcb.com/mojo/Default.htm

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Sound Waves

January 2020

VOLUME 30, NUMBER 1

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Dear Readers,

It's been awhile since I wrote this little introduction. But this year is the start of something special. In 2020 we are celebrating 30 years of publication! 30 years! It definitely doesn't seem that long. This has been one amazing journey. We have met and interviewed hundreds of great musicians. And have made many friends along the way. We have made some great memories.

The people that make us Sound Waves Magazine are some very special folks. We have become a family. Many have been writing for the publication for over 20 years. Mark Gould, Bill Harriman, and Rex Rutkoski are as they say the elders. They are my brothers, they have been writing for the magazine the longest. They are heartbeat of the magazine. Then there's Jack, Sue, Ali, Jon, Tom, and Andrew. And now Adrian. They make up the rest of this amazing group of writers. And lastly we have Kathy, who has been a great help in getting this magazine out to the public. She is my cheerleader. Thanks Team.

But the staff of Sound Waves is only part of why we have lasted so long. The biggest reason is because of you our readers. By supporting the venues and advertisers in the magazine, you have made it possible for us to last 30 years. And to remain a FREE publication! Thank You!

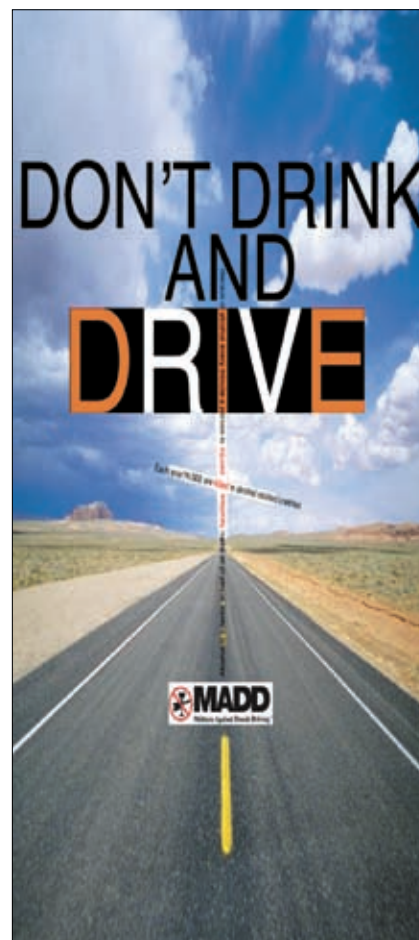
As the years have passed we have adapted to the world. The print use to be the main focus, but now that has shifted. Our web presence at www.swaves.com has spread our name worldwide. Our site averages over 30,000 viewers per month!

Soon there will be some more evolving. Something that we are very excited about will be happening.

Thank You & Happy New Year

David L. Pottie

Publisher



The I-Man Go-eth: Don Imus In the Extremis, An Appreciation (Sort of)

By Mark T. Gould

Writer's Note: The following is adapted from an article that appeared in April 2018.



Call it the bumper-to-bumper yuck fest.

I was, as usual, stuck in seemingly immovable traffic, traveling south-bound on I-95 traveling from my office in New Haven to court in Stamford.

I had the radio on for distraction. Over and over, as I sat there fuming in the fumes, I laughed out loud. Not mere chuckling, you understand, but belly-hurting, major-league guffaws.

As I caught myself doing it, I somewhat self-consciously glanced around at my fellow frustrated commuters sitting in their cars. Most of them were laughing, too, just like I was.

It was then it hit me. They were listening to the same radio program as me.

"Imus in the Morning," hosted by the irascible, invincible, yet always hilarious Don Imus, who passed away last month at the age of 79.

John Donald Imus. Imus in the Morning. The I-Man. Call him what

you want, or what he wants you to call him, but call him one thing: the original, one-of-a kind, original shock jock.

Were there no Imus, there'd be no Howard Stern, there'd be no Opie and Andy, and there'd arguably be very little, if any, talk radio as we cringingly know it today.

John Donald Imus. It could all be fake news, but most I-Man historians seem to agree that he was born in Riverside, California, and raised on a sprawling cattle ranch near Kingman, Arizona.

Imus was a brakeman on the Southern Pacific Railroad, but, after winning a talent contest at R&B legend Johnny Otis's nightclub, he began working as a singer/songwriter, managed by Otis. Soon after, he heard a morning disc-jockey on the radio, and probably thinking he could do better, he went to the nearby radio station and persuaded the owner to hire him.

That ever so Imus-ly brazen act (of which so many would follow) in June 1968 started his career as a radio disc jockey, at KUTY in Palmdale, California. He stayed at the station for about a year, then left for a job at KJOY, a small radio station in Stockton, California. He was later fired for saying "hell" on air. (Not having learned his lesson, much worse, discussed below, would follow). He was then hired at KXOA in Sacramento, where his on-air shenanigans, such as calling up a restaurant and ordering 1200 hamburgers to go, made his show immensely popular and boosted ratings.

It wouldn't be the last time that happened, either.

After a stint at WGAR (AM) radio in Cleveland, Ohio, Imus moved to New York City and WNBC radio, in December 1971. "Imus...In The Morning... In The Evening" aired nationally in the fall of 1973, part of NBC Radio's attempt to revive Monitor, its long-running weekend magazine. The Satur-

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day night segment rotated popular hosts Imus, Wolfman Jack, and Robert W. Morgan, the latter two radio icons who were inspirations for Imus.

He was fired from WNBC in August 1977 along with several of the station's other personalities, in an effort to revamp the station's sound and boost ratings. A year later, he returned to Cleveland radio as afternoon drive host on WHK. He kept his presence, and his mouth, in the Big Apple, though, as he commuted between Cleveland and New York to tape a TV talk show, "Imus Plus" at WNEW-TV.

In 1979, Imus was rehired by WNBC in September 1979, and revived his morning drive show. From 1982 to 1985, the station also employed Stern, and WNBC heavily promoted the pair in print and television ads, which often featured the slogan "If We Weren't So Bad, We Wouldn't Be So Good." Although Stern's show aired later in the day, Imus and Stern often made brief appearances on each other's shows, giving the audience an occasional glimpse of the genesis of an on-and-off-air rivalry that continued, not always good naturedly, for many years.

During that time, Imus was probably best known for the character 'Billy Sol Hargis,' a quasi-fictional radio evangelist whose name was a cross between infamous real-life radio and television preacher Billy James Hargis and equally real-life Texas fertilizer swindler Billie Sol Estes.

As Hargis, Imus touted on-air the merits of the "First Church of the Goopy Death and Discount House of Worship." In one classic skit, the "Reverend Hargis," riffing off the historical fact that Jesus was a carpenter, tried hawking "The Holy Furniture, made by the Lord His Ownself."

In 1981, Imus published the best-selling novel "God's Other Son," which further immortalized "Hargis'" life story. The novel was republished in 1994, and spent seven weeks on the New York Times bestseller list.

Other regular Imus characters at that time included the supposed general manager "Geraldo Santana Banana" (played by doo-wop singer Larry Chance), and "Moby Worm," a monstrous creature who devoured local schools (which was dutifully reported on the show's "breaking news updates").

Imus was also the utility announcer for Geraldo Rivera's monthly TV series "Good Night, America," which aired as a recurring segment of ABC's Wide World of Entertainment program, and he was one of the inaugural video jockeys for the launch of the VH-1 cable network in 1985.

"Don Imus was a great talent, who scorched the airwaves with smart, irreverent funny, entertaining, envelope-pushing, comedic commentary, Rivera said."

In 1988, WNBC radio was sold to Emmis Broadcasting and permanently signed off the air, with Emmis' WFAN was moving from its 1050 AM slot on the radio dial to WNBC's former spot, at 660 AM.

"Imus in the Morning," as he called his show, remained at 660 AM as a powerful, ratings-grabbing lead in to WFAN's sports programs. The program coupled his music and comedy bits as the staples of the program, amid sprinklings of a political forum for which his show was known in its later years. The radio show became nationally syndicated in 1993, and began simulcasting on MSNBC in 1996.

The I-Man's listenership exploded. With each show, he could be crude, he could be lewd, and he certainly could be rude.

On the air, he called Rush Limbaugh "a fat, pill-popping loser," and a "drug-addled gas bag"; Peabody Award-winning journalist Gwen Ifill a "cleaning lady;" and CBS correspondent Lesley Stahl a "gutless, lying weasel."

If that wasn't enough, he said that Dick Cheney was "a war criminal," Hillary Rodham Clinton was "Satan," Oprah Winfrey "a fat phony," Ted Kennedy "a fat slob," Steve Forbes "a mean-spirited creep," and Dan Rather "a loony."

His comedic exchange of quips ("fat pig") regarding his show's former

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MUSIC NOTES

“New Year’s Musical Resolutions”

By Mark T. Gould

It usually hits me right about the time that I get that jet-laggy feeling of having stayed up far beyond my usual bed time in an effort to watch that confounded ball drop, hours after the last strains of “Auld Lang Syne” have faded away.

It frequently coincides with the beginning of the Tournament of Roses Parade, late on First Morning, with their much too sunny dispositioned Southern California hosts, whom, frankly, cause me to frequently have my sole hangover of the day.

It’s New Year’s Day, heck this time it’s New Decade’s Day, which brings us to that most peculiar of social oddities, resolutions.

Historically, for the very few among us who don’t know, or, better yet, don’t care, the New Year’s resolution is a tradition, most common in the Western Hemisphere, in which a person resolves to change an undesired trait or behavior, to accomplish a personal goal or otherwise improve their life in the coming year.

As such, it has no apparent social, religious, regional or political bounds.

The ancient Babylonians made promises to their gods at the start of each year that they would return borrowed objects and pay their debts.

The Romans began each year by making promises to the god Janus, for whom the month of January is named.

In the medieval era, the knights took the “peacock vow” at the end of the Christmas season each year to re-affirm their commitment to chivalry.

At watchnight services, many Christians prepare for the year ahead by praying and making their resolutions.

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And, over the years, the feat has seemingly spread like wildfire (although, given what happened to our climate globally last year, that may not be the greatest of analogies).

At the end of the Great Depression, only about 25 percent of American adults made New Year’s resolutions. By the start of the 21st century, about 40 percent took part. A study found 46 percent of the participants who made common New Year’s resolutions (like losing weight, exercising more, or quitting smoking) were likely to succeed, over 10 times as compared to those deciding to make lifestyle changes at other times of the year.

While many of us, including me, tend to fall back on the easy way out via generalities, resolving to be nicer to our family, friends, colleagues and the like, I have decided, this year, to make some specific resolutions about my strongest passion, music.

So, here we go:

I resolve to see more local music live:

Here in southern New England, we are enriched by a veritable plethora of incredible local musicians and songwriters, many of whom I am privileged to call my friends.

Among them are, in no particular order, Greg Piccolo (not to mention the Founders), Sue Menhart, Mark Mirando, Jim Paradis, Steve Med-

nick, Vinny Cervoni, Bob Lavalley, Randy Burns, Bruce John, Anthony Geraci, Christine Ohlman, Toby Walker, Al Copley, Duke Robillard.....

....well, you get the idea. I have written about many of them here in the pages of Sound Waves, and pretty much have an open invite to attend their gigs. In most cases, I have not done so, although not from a lack of interest.

Neil Young said it best: “live music are better bumper stickers should be issued.”

I need to get out there and see and hear them.

I resolve to see more national music:

When it comes to live national acts touring, we are also blessed around these parts.

We have the greatest concert promoter in the country, Jimmy Koplik; and we have a fellow working with him, Jimmy Riccio, whose middle name I swear is hospitality. We are in a great location, midway between New York and Boston, which means the biggest acts are usually on our concert radar.

Even better, we have a very cool club, called “Friends of Jimmy,” which gives us first crack at the best seats to see them.

There are also great venues, like the Oakdale Theatre (a mere 10 minutes from our house), The Mohegan Sun Arena, Webster Bank Arena, the Xfinity Theatre (where, thanks to improvements, you no longer sweat to death under the roof while semi-enduring the summer heat), and, starting next year, new outdoor facilities in New Haven and Bridgeport.

So, what’s not to like?

Well, for one thing, I’m gettin’ older. While we still do go to a number of shows, I have, frankly, reached that age where I am admittedly more concerned about the commute, parking, ingress and egress, not to mention the loud, obnoxious drunks talking on and waving their freakin’ cell phones around me than I am about ticket prices and the shows themselves.

Somehow, I gotta get around that,

and get out there more.

I resolve to seek out and listen to more new artists:

Ok, so I’m stuck in a musical time warp.

I came of musical age in the late 60s and early 70s. So, when your first musical exposure is to The Beatles, The Stones, The Who, Creedence, Poco, The Eagles, The Band, Little Feat, Joni Mitchell, Jackson Browne, Bruce Springsteen, Weather Report, and Miles Davis, and on and on, well, everything else that follows pretty much pales by comparison.

But, I am acutely aware that that is not fair to new acts. So, over the years, ok, over the decades, I have tried to seek out new music, either via friends’ recommendations, my own research, or by listening to those who are the descendants, familial or not, of those original artists who shaped, and continue to shape, my musical sensibilities. Presently, while I draw a strong line at hip hop and rap (I mean, c’mon, I barely survived the disco era, and I just ain’t going there again.....), I have sought out new stuff, particularly in the genre of what is commonly called “Americana,” which I have found to be just my cup of tea.

From that, and elsewhere, I’ve been exposed to, and really enjoy, artists like The Head and the Heart, Magpie Salute, Drive-By Truckers, The North Mississippi All-Stars, The Allman Betts Band, The Marcus King Band, The New Orleans Suspects, Norah Jones, Amy Winehouse, Adele, Ariana Grande (don’t hate), Harry Styles, and many others.

Still, no matter how good they are, I always default back to, and compare them, perhaps unfairly, to those who got me started back in the day.

I resolve to keep looking and listening.

And, finally, I resolve to always, always, listen to music, the one constant that gets me through every day.

Happy New Year!!

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All The World's a Stage

"Hope"

By Sue Menhart

I heard a hootin' owl howling out my window last night, just like the song, "She went calling Wild Flower...", the one with the epic piano coda at the end. In the song, the singer thinks that because he hears a hootin' owl that his long-lost love will come back to him and they will both go riding on the horse Wild-flower. He's heard it three nights in a row so it must be true! For decades, because this guy said so, I thought hearing owls was some sort of good luck. As the sweet mystical sound echoed through my backwoods on a foggy Connecticut evening, I thought, OK, this is it. Something really good is going to happen.

Oh you silly bird.

Upon further investigation, I discovered that hearing a hootin' owl is actually a BAD omen, as owls are believed to be harbingers of death.

Who knew?

Now that the holidays are over, and our holiday hopes and dreams and wishes upon a star are over, it's time to get real. My hootin' owl is definitely not going to bring me oodles of good fortune, so it's high time I figure something else out. Or perhaps, except my fate.

When we're young we feel invincible and we are sure beyond a doubt that everything we want is going to come to us if we just work hard enough. If you can see it, you can be it, as it were. That sort of thing. But as we get older, and we've worked and we've worked but still things haven't worked out the way we had envisioned, and we find out the hard way that little things like luck and hootin' owls bringing luck ain't so easy to come by, or is just

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misguided thinking, our hopes diminish, our dreams scale down. We graduate from the School of Hard Knocks. We get real.

I watched the musical fantasy "Rocketman" about Elton John and I pondered, if fame had found me, would I have turned into an alcoholic cocaine-drenched bloody nosed drug addict who would down a bunch of pills and jump into a pool in a suicide attempt in front of a ton of family and friends? Or would I have just taken it in stride like Springsteen? Would I have built an amusement park like Dollywood?

Anyhoo, because I'm hopelessly stubborn, and will probably never know that answer, I will continue to play gigs, write songs, drop new albums, work on my skills and try out new gear, until I'm as stiff as a stuffed owl.

"A bird does not sing because it has an answer. It sings because it has a song." - Maya Angelou

By the way, hootin' and howlin' will still be encouraged at all shows.

Thank you and good night.

I wrote a book about this stuff! "They Made Me Play a Polka" is available here:
https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1725534584/ref=dbs_a_def_

rw_t_bibl_vppi_i0

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



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BAR FLY JOURNALS

By Stephanie Shawn

Hello My Sweet BarFlies..whoot! Those of you reading this? Well we made it! 2020! Who would have thought we'd see this? And those we've lost...well, it's just been such a sad year for So many. Hold your loved ones close. Life is soooo freakin' short!

So for those who've made it into the Roaring 20's, let's not waste a moment! Let's live each day to the fullest! And we can begin with all the Amazing Christmas Events that went on this past Holiday Season. (Which went by freakishly fast, no?) The BOAT PARADE in Mystic, the LED LIGHT PARADE through Westerly, BACK IN BLACK @ PHOENIX, SUE MEN-



HART (with her Rock Star hair) killing it at 21 ROCKS, and SANTACON at The ENGINE ROOM and throughout Mystic.

There was also a ROCK & ROLL XMAS SHOW @ the KNICKERBOCKER with THE FRIENDS, AMIE COFFEY, SANDY ALLEN, CRAIG EDWARDS and SWEET MERCY, all proceeds going to SUFA STAND UP FOR ANIMALS! Football and delicious food at CC O'BRIENS, TAILGATE PARTIES at ANGIES PIER 27, delectable Grinders at PASTA FRESCA AND PIADINA and of course Live Music every Friday and Saturday at DADDY JACK'S.

So for 2020, I'm doing a GIRL'S LUNCH @ MANANA in Groton to visit with JUD, try some delicious shrimp tacos by CHEF DAVID and maybe a little corn shucked by CHIQUITO fresh from WHITTLES FARM (although that season may have come and went). And also headed to the GARDE for 3 shows GET THE LED OUT: A CELEBRATION OF THE MIGHTY ZEP on Jan. 31, the VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR, with my girl, WILLOW on Feb 22 and the SIMON & GARFUNKEL STORY on Jan 18. and oh dear god, who could miss the THE MUSIC OF ABBA with THE ARRIVAL FROM SWEDEN on April 4! They all sound spectacular!



Romper Stomper Time! Happy Birthday to my niece CANDICE, MICHELE MITCHELL, and lo and behold...lovely FACEBOOK or ASSBOOK as I will be referring to it for the rest of my life, has stopped me from seeing all my "friends" Birthdays. It's just ridiculous. Whyyyyyyyyy????? I have the attention span and memory of a flea, so unless I click on each of my "friends" to see if it's their Big Day



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then I got nothing! Oooo ooo....TAMI ALGIERE and WENDY CARR. Now I remember! Got them too!!! Love you, girls!



So, big Extravaganza for New Year's Eve at the HANDLEBAR CAFE. RINGING IN THE ROARING 20'S with the Gang, BARB, GERI (been talking her through season 1 of STRANGER THINGS) ROCCO, LISA, LINA, ARTIE, BRUCE, DAVE, SUE, MIKE, STEVE, CYLVER, BOZ, GINA, CHRIS, ROGER, JANINE, JOEY, BRUCE, JANIE, DAWN, KRIS, KATIE, LISA, MICHELLE, MARK, AMY, big KENNY, KEVIN, KATHI, KATHLEEN, ED, DONNY and all my faves! And sweet! Birthday Girl TAMI ALGIERE and I will be celebrating her Big Day In CANCUN with LINA and TRISH!

Whoot, remember our last Girl Trip? Italy? And the one before? Cabo! It's gonna be an excursion filled week of debauchery!

Well, into the New Year I jump, head first! MBAR on Friday for HAPPY HOUR to see PHILADAMS! Here's to all of you! My friends, my family, and to the Bar Flies of the world! Say Hello to 2020!

Happy New Year!



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BAND DATES

ANDY CHANEY & FRIENDS

4 - Vineyards, Stonington, CT 2pm
6,11 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
9,30 - The Irons, Mystic, CT 5pm
16 - Friar Tucks, Mystic, CT 8pm
24 - Shipyard Tavern, Mystic, CT 7pm
25,29 - Mystic Pizza 2, N. Stonington, CT 7pm

ATLANTIC AVE BAND

17 - Phoenix, Pawcatuck, CT 8pm

AZALEA DRIVE

18 - Harp & Hound, Mystic, CT
24 - Black Sheep, Niantic, CT

BETHANY AND KEN

28 - Angie's, Mystic, CT 5-8

BETHANY MCGILL & TODD FAKE

18 - Shipyard Tavern, Mystic, CT 7-10

BRAIDEN SUNSHINE

3 - Cuckoos Nest, Old Saybrook, CT 6-9pm
11 - 30 Mile Brewing, Old Saybrook, CT 5-8pm
20 - Angie's, Mystic, CT 7:30-10:30pm
24,31 - The Manhattan, Southington, CT 7-10pm

CARLY MCGILL

4 - Shipyard Tavern, Mystic, CT 7-10

THE CARTELLS

2,9,16,23,30 - Norwich Inn, Norwich, CT 6:30pm
3,17 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 6pm
4 - Bill's Seafood, Westbrook, CT 7:30pm
8 - Knickerbocker, Westerly, RI 7:30pm
11 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7pm
18 - Community Center, E. Lyme, CT 8pm

DARIK & THE FUNBAGS

4 - Poor Richard's, Chicopee, MA
5 - WolfDen, Uncasville, CT 7p-8:30p
10 - Woodbury Brewing, Woodbury, CT
11 - Phoenix, Pawcatuck, CT 8p
18 - Crestview, Agawam, MA
24 - Maria Vs, Shelton, CT
25 - Chicago Sam's, Cromwell, CT
31 - Shamrock, Waterbury, CT

DOS AMIGOS

11 - Stony Creek, Foxwoods, CT 9-12
24 - Angies Pizza, Mystic, CT 7:30-10:30

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Dr. G & THE BELIEVERS

11 - Sneekers, Groton, CT
25 - Daddy Jacks, New London, CT

EIGHT TO THE BAR

18 - Black Eyed Sallys, Hartford, CT 8:30
24 - Tennis Club, Poughkeepsie, NY 8-11
31 - Knickerbocker, Westerly, RI 8-11

THE FAKE EXPERIENCE

24 - Sneekers, Groton, CT 8:30-11:30

F & BLUES BAND

11 - Toyo Hibachi, Colchester, CT 8:30-11:30pm
25 - VFW, Preston, CT 5-10pm

FRANKENPHIL

4 - Noble Jay, Niantic, CT 5pm
8 - Scotch Plains, Essex, CT 5:30pm
10 - McBrides Pub, Providence, RI 8pm
12 - Askew, Providence, RI 1pm
16 - Filomena's, Waterford, CT 5:30pm
17,31 - Break Hotel, Narragansett, RI 6:30pm
23 - Public House, Old Lyme, CT 6pm
26 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 6pm

GEOFF KAUFMAN & JUDY GORMAN

11 - At All Souls, New London, CT

THE GUY ZINDA BAND

4 - Taprock, Unionville, CT 8-11pm

JAMES HARRIS

1,3,8,15,20,22,29 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT
4 - Tuscany, Uncasville, CT
7 - Angie's, Mystic, CT 5pm
8,22,29 - Main Street, Stonington, CT 5pm
8 - DPI, Mystic, CT 9pm
9 - Perks & Corks, Westerly, RI
10 - Water St. Tavern, Mystic, CT 10pm
11 - Latitude 41, Mystic, CT 7pm
12 - Maugle Sierra, Ledyard, CT 3pm
16 - Iron's, Mystic, CT 5pm
17 - Christo's, Mystic, CT 8pm
18 - Vineyard, Stonington, CT 1:30pm
23 - Steak loft, Mystic, CT 7pm
26 - MBar, Mystic, CT 4:30pm
30 - Public House, Lyme, CT 6pm
31 - LaGrua, Stonington, CT 7pm

JAY DEMPSEY BAND

15 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7pm
23 - Sneekers, Groton, CT 7:30

KEN SERIO JAZZ TRIO

26 - Perks & Corks, Westerly, RI

THE LOCOMOTIVES

18 - Steady Habit, Higganum, CT

NICK BOSSE

24 - Phoenix, Pawcatuck, CT 8-11pm

25 - Haversham, Westerly, RI 9-Midnight
31 - Hilton Irons, Mystic, CT 8-11pm

NINA J

3 - Christo's Pizza, Mystic, CT 8pm

NORTHERN ROOTS

24 - Phoenix, Pawcatuck, CT 8-11pm

RAMBLIN' DAN STEVENS

3 - Noble Jay, Niantic, CT 5pm
5 - Cultural Center, Hamden, CT 6pm
7,14,28 - Nightingale's, Old Lyme, CT 6pm
10,11 - Jay Peak, Jay, VT
16 - Steak Loft, Mystic, CT 7pm
17 - Daniel Packer, Mystic, CT 10pm
18 - Packing House, Willington, CT 7:30pm
19 - Bee & Thistle Inn, Old Lyme, CT 6pm
20 - Nightingale's, Old Lyme, CT 7pm
21 - Theodore's, Springfield, MA
23 - King Ro, Round Pond, ME
24 - Gritty McDuff's, Auburn, ME
25 - Publick House, Newcastle, ME
26 - Steady Habit, Higganum, CT 2pm
30 - Ideal Tavern, Southington, CT 6pm
31 - Chamard Vineyards, Clinton, CT 5pm

SEX & CANDY

3 - Main St Tavern, Stratford, CT
17 - Olive Bar, Unionville, CT

SUGAR

3 - Knickbocker, Westerly, RI
10 - Rooftop 120, Glastonbury, CT 8:30pm
18 - Blues Cafe, Newport, RI

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28 - College St, New Haven, CT

Jeff Dunham

8 - XL Center, Hartford, CT

Randy Rainbow

17 - Garde Arts Center, New London, CT

Snoop Dogg

17 - Oakdale Theatre, Wallingford, CT

Tab Benoit

8 - Kate Center, Old Saybrook, CT



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Hugh Birdsall

Songwriter, Performer, Activist

By Jon Persson

Hugh Birdsall brings a calm and practiced confidence to his performances, which is driven by an energetic dedication to the music that has been central to much of his life. These days he mostly plays acoustic sets, a troubadour with Gibson guitar who appears at scheduled venues to set up and play as the occasion calls for. These can range from solo gigs at farmer's markets and fair trade stores, shows where customers pause from their errands to listen for an extended moment, to large scale shows with multiple performers united to further the works of local causes.

In the beginning, though, Hugh Birdsall followed a different musical track, as a member of the locally legendary punk rock band called the Reducers. Founded in 1978, they became the band at the center of New London's vibrant music scene, drawing both audiences and emulators who expanded the city's rep as a musical destination. Originally a punk cover band, the Reducers began to write their own songs "pretty early on," recalls Hugh, as they needed to "maintain our punk credibility; we realized we needed to start writing our own material." From this, nine albums were recorded, published on the Indie label Rave On Records, which still actively markets the band's work. Hugh co-wrote songs with fellow guitarist Peter Detmold; Tom Trombley played drums and Steve Kaika, bass.

While there were discussions with some major labels that ultimately did not manifest, the Reducers remained a vital presence in the region until 2012, when the passing of Steve Kaika prompted the decision to not carry on without him. Hugh had in the meantime become a schoolteacher, and Peter, a small business owner in New London. Electric guitars had

begun to make way for acoustic, and new collaborations and musical combinations began to form and take center stage. This was in some ways a closing of a circle, as Hugh had played, albeit informally, with acoustic groups starting even before the Reducers formed.

In 2000 this became an official band, originally a duo with Micky Williston, called Dogbite (so titled because they "needed a name" for the group.) These days Dogbite performs regularly along the shoreline, from New London's Hygienic to Chester's Cedar Lake and points between. The makeup of the band varies from two to six performers, playing a mix of covers and originals. A frequent band member is violinist Dana Takaki, with whom Hugh plays yet more engagements in the region as a duo, her violin providing melodic fills to a wide range of songs. The variety of mu-

10 SOUND WAVES

sic sees Hugh frequently shifting from fast paced flat pick to intricate finger pick styles, the latter securely donned as he gives an introduction to the upcoming song. Dogbite has released three albums, with a fourth currently in the works.

Now semi-retired from teaching, Hugh has found a new outlet for his creative energies: "taking social action through music." This has led to founding collaborations or participating in such perennial events as Pass The Guitar, where musicians take turns playing the same guitar while raising money to aid the homeless: and Hoot for Hunger, a benefit for the Community Meal Center. The impetus for this work was the realization that "many people can raise funds for a cause," more than just one person, or band. Other events raise awareness of social causes, such as Neighbor

Day and the Witness for Peace concerts. And, he participates in the Make Music Day event on the summer solstice, a gathering in song held "all over the world, a generous and joyful thing." He is mindful that these causes should take center stage, saying "I'm not comfortable with all the attention" that the performances bring to him personally. He is quick to mention and credit the musicians and supporters with whom he has worked in every phase of his musical career.

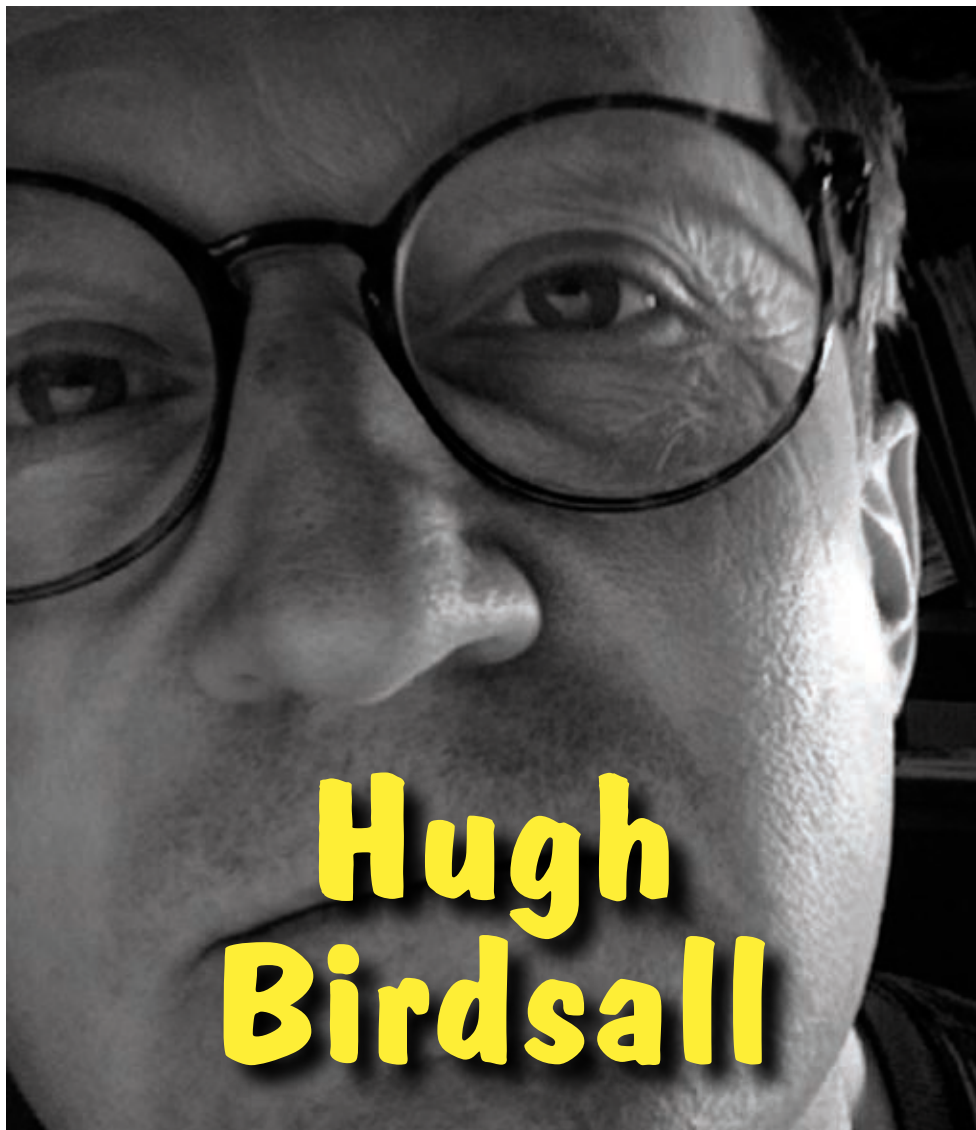
Hugh's work as a part-time teacher has meanwhile taken on the great cause of our time: "climate change is my job now," he notes, in which he brings a presentation to schools and invites students to "invest in a forest." This work is done through Reforest The Tropics, a Mystic based non-profit, which has funded the reforestation of 500 acres in Costa Rica, with 40 to 50 species planted around the large, fast-growing Klinkii tree, creating a sustaining biodiversity and local sources of income. Not surprisingly, Hugh has written songs about climate change, three so far, which he

considers to be "teaching tools, working with kids."

Songwriting is, Hugh says, "my obsession; I write songs all the time." His approach is to "plant a seed," which can be "a note, a word, an idea. I thrive on collaboration, I like working with other people," he adds. This has been true since his co-writing days with Peter Detmold and the Reducers: these days he has been working with Tom Deedy of New London, who is a "prolific writer" with about twenty new songs in a working stage. Hugh's biggest influences as a songwriter came from the work of Kevin Kane and Troy Campbell, whose style and perspective on songs carry through to Hugh's songwriting today.

The performing schedule maintained by Hugh Birdsall is at times frenetic ("three shows in one day is a bit much," he observes: two in a day

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is not unusual, though). Organizing and then orchestrating the large fundraisers sees Hugh, always calm and timely in assisting other musicians, nevertheless in a state of activity and awareness that presents an easy flow to the complex shows. Through it all, Hugh has reached for a central theme in all his musical work: "having fun." Perhaps it was always so, but this would seem to also be a coming full circle, to the early days in the Reducers, a band meant to be a bit edgy and so, fun for the players and audience. There are still some edges to Hugh Bird-sall's music, subtle lights shone on the issues of hunger, homelessness, and the decline of Earth's climate. There is also much entertainment, and always good music, in the many personifications of Hugh's musicianship.

Show and booking info may be found at Dogbite Band on Facebook.



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LOCAL BEAT

"New London's Oasis Pub Caters to a Variety of Tastes Between Classic Metal and Dance Music in New London"

By Andrew Krebs

As I wander the streets of New London looking for some new musical act to write about I stumbled across a bar I used to frequent in my 20s but which I had not attended regularly in quite awhile: the trendy Oasis Pub (former Finns). Within it was Cookie Policy, a long-haired DJ with a Hawaiian shirt bobbing his head to his funky dark and bass-driven techno mixed by long-time soundman Sean Murray. There were whistle samples take from Peter Bjorn and John's "Young Folks," Philo-soul sounds of 70s Bowie or the Stylistics and a slower mix of some Wings song. But the crowd really came up to dance once they heard hits like the "Safety Dance" with its dinky octave keyb hook sound. As the riff to this song reached a sweeping crescendo it segued into rap-beat over Prince's 1986 hit "Kiss" and its funky wah guitar hook. Yet he never over-indulged in the hits but tried to be different with unexpectedly spiritual 70s undercurrents, sonorously echoey 80s vocals and casio hip-hop rhythms that failed to fadeout but only kept on pulsating onwards . . . There was a groove but not enough hits to keep the

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dance going and the crowd appeared to thin out. As the night went on so did the smooth quality of Cookie's catalogue drone onwards with the darker sounds of Depeche Mode meeting Daft-Punk-like beats and Calypso feedback loops . . . Then around about 11:30 he came back with the Steve Miller sample "Fly Like an Eagle" which stepped it up a bit and got people back on the dance floor once again with some hot disco.

I left feeling something was missing until I returned 2 weeks later to see Witch Meadow play bluesy heavy metal . . . the sound that takes that genre back to its 70s hard rock roots. The stage was decked with a Christmas tree, blue neon "relax" sign and faces I haven't seen in years. Guitarist Will Walls and bassist Evan Sang were showgazers who, like the feet of the band, held the music down with long, drawn out power chords. They created a dark minor diminished sound by using lots of unexpected half-step chords in the scale of their chord progressions

. . . providing drummer James Maple with the noise he needed to showcase his talented moves which were not necessarily fast but just HEAVY. Meanwhile drummer James was the star performer in which most of the action happened, flailing his arms and singing vocals only sparingly. The Sabbath influences were undeniable and there was even a bit of 70s era-Twisted Sister (although their grunge-meets hippie outfits were anything but glam in either sound or appearance). At first I was reluctant to consider them anything other than another repetitive lumbering proto-met-

al band until my intestine absorbed the alcohol into my blood stream and I began bobbing my head in unison to the deep bass sound with the rest of the crowd as if hypnotized into trans-like communal state (like their generation of followers which has comprised this subculture for 40 years). As a ritual, headbanging is sexy and I now I understood why rock n roll fans that bridged the Hippie and Metal generation had lots of sex (and kids) in the 80s . . . Its like a "metal funeral" one of the smokers outside said, a sound that has supposedly influenced even one-man reggae

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--	--

GREAT HOLIDAY GIFT!

guitarist Guno. What few leads Will Walls played were faint, not flashy, grungy not shreddy (90s not 80s).

This band got their start a year ago when drummer James Maple was asked ambivalently to do a blues-based recording after returning from Nashville. In addition to the Deep Purple and Sabbath influences, this band also cites lesser known metal bands "Windhand," "Mono-Lord" and "Cough" as influences. Fred McDowell was a big influence on the guitarists as well. Their favorite song from their catalogue is a jam called "Covert" which they anticipate including on a whole side of an album release expected sometime in the Spring and influenced by horror movies. The band's future plans include drinking, finding support to pay for a vinyl release,

and having a great time frying the vac tubes in their old amps by cranking their dials to 11 once they hit the road on tour. Check out DJ Cookie Policy and metalists Witch Meadow online or at your local music store.



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HEARING AID

Best in Blues 2019

This is the 25th year that we've done "Best in Blues" lists for Sound Waves Magazine. When we started back in 1994, immortal bluesmen such as Luther Allison, Eddie Clearwater, and Albert King made the lists. Also included were people who are still going strong today such as Jimmie Vaughan, Tinsley Ellis, Tab Benoit, Kenny Neal, Joe Louis Walker, and Lucky Peterson. They were the young guns then. Now they're the seasoned veterans.

Throughout this past decade I've enlisted the help of Dana Fargnoli who is the host of the "Out of the Blues" radio show which can be heard every Saturday morning from 9 to noon on WCNI 90.9 FM. I always look forward to seeing what records Dana and I agree on and this year the two albums that appears on both lists are Dana's number one choice Billy Branch, along with regional star Paul Gabriel's excellent new record. As far as my number one goes, I'm sure there are blues purist out there who feel like Gary Clark Jr., with his hip hop and Hendrix influences, shouldn't be included. I'm of the opinion that he is the ultimate contemporary bluesman and that "This Land" was the best record of the year bar none! So anyway, here are our picks for 2019.

Bill's list:

1. - **Gary Clark Jr.** "This Land" Warner Bros.
2. - **North Mississippi Allstars** "Up and Rolling" New West Records
3. - **Lucky Peterson** "50 Just Warming Up" Jazz Village
4. - **Billy Branch & Sons of Blues** "Roots and Branches" Alligator Records
5. - **Zac Harmon** "Mississippi Bar BQ" Catfood Records
6. - **Keb' Mo'** "Oklahoma" Concord Records
7. - **Jimmy Vaughan** "Baby, please come home" Last Music Company
8. - **Ronnie Earl** "Beyond the Blue Door" Stony Plain Music
9. - **Paul Gabriel** "Man of Many Blues" Smoke Ring Records
10. - **Harpdog Brown** "For Love & Money" Dog House Records

Dana's List:

1. - **Billy Branch & Sons of Blues** "Roots and Branches" Alligator Records
2. - **Delbert McClinton and Self- Made Men + Dana** "Tall, Dark, & Handsome" Hot Shot Records
3. - **Dave Specter** "Blues from the Inside out" Delmark Records
4. - **Cashbox Kings** "Hail to the Kings" Alligator Records
5. - **Johnny Burgin** "Live" Delmark Records
6. - **Rick Estrin & The Nightcats** "Contemporary" Alligator Records
7. - **Tommy Castro & the PainKillers** "Killin' it Live" Alligator Records
8. - **Suraray Rayford** "Somebody Save Me" Forty Below Records
9. - **Christone Kingfish Ingram** "Kingfish" Alligator Records
10. - **Paul Gabriel** "Man of Many Blues" Smoke Ring Records

Dana and I would like to dedicate this year's top ten lists to the memories of Malcolm "Dr. John" Rebennack, Leon Redbone, Art Neville, Beverly Watkins, Eddie Taylor, Yonrico Scott, Kofi Burbridge, and all the other musicians who passed away in 2019. I would like to wish all of you who read this magazine a happy and healthy new year!

- **Bill Harriman**



Mike Zito & Friends

"A Tribute To Chuck Berry"

Ruf Records

Mike Zito (born November 19, 1970) is an American guitarist, singer, producer, and songwriter from St. Louis, Missouri. He is a co-founder of Royal Southern Brotherhood that features Cyril Neville, Devon Allman, Charlie Wooton and Yonrico Scott.[1]

In 2011, Zito released his album "Greyhound" that was nominated for "Best Rock Blues Album" at the 2011 Blues Music Awards in Memphis and as a matter of fact, Zito's song "Roll On", from the album Greyhound, was featured on FX's hit TV series Sons of Anarchy ...

Fast forward to 2019, after releasing several successful albums I have the pleasure of reviewing his latest work; "A Tribute To Chuck Berry" that came out Nov, 2019. We at Sound Waves were fortunate to retain a copy hot off the press. I say a pleasure to review because it was so refreshing to find a current artist paying tribute to old school rock & roll" and introducing it to a totally new audience as well seasoned oldie fans alike.

Immediately after the first track starts; "St. Louis Blues" with Charley Berry III (Chuck Berry's grandson) a big'ol smile is plastered on my face because I know I am in for treat with this compilation of great music and great artists.

Track two "Rock & Roll Music" with rock and slide guitar artist Joanna Connor has the beauty of a tight horn section. First thought that came to mind was reminiscent of "Blues Brothers Band". Maybe Connor needs to reign in her slide guitar a little.

Walter Trout (Blues guitarist) was an excellent choice to work with Mike

Zito on the iconic Chuck Berry rock songs of all rock songs; "Johnny B. Goode". Trout not only contributed his guitar style but vocals too. Band was tight with a steady coherent drive that gave Johnny much justice.

Next up we have that soulful, sultry Chuck Berry blues lesser known tune "Wee Wee Hours" with none other than Joe Bonamassa. You can feel the mans pain crying for his woman through the music. First thing that comes to mind is a dark, smokey, boutique venue with table service and the audience just mesmerized at this incredible performance. The only thing I would ask of Joe is to taper down the guitar runs a little. As for the vocals?? PURRRFECT, Like a hell-cat on fire. This track alone is worth buying the CD.

Loved "Back In The USA" with Zito and Eric Gales, "No Particular Place To Go" with Jeremiah Johnson, and "Let It Rock" with Jimmy Vivino. Playing in many garage bands myself I took note on how tight these tracks produced good'ol hard driving rock & roll. The horn sections blended well and added just the right amount of "YEAH" to take these tunes to the realm of rock perfection.

There are 20 Chuck Berry tracks on this great CD but I have my editor telling me to wrap things up so in closing I have only three words to offer; "BUY THIS CD". If blues and vintage rock & roll is your thing (like it is mine) you will LOVE and truly enjoy Mike Zito's "A Tribute To Chuck Berry".

- **Adrian Webb**

** Adrian Webb is our newest contributing writer/reviewer for Sound Waves and we look forward to his future work



www.Swaves.com



Big Lux "Major"

Independent

Violin and Hip-Hop? Yes! Army veteran and Westerly native Kevin Lowther II, a.k.a. Big Lux, throws down just that, wowing crowds wherever he goes with his unique blend of jazz, bluegrass and yes, hip-hop. Classically trained on the violin, Big Lux has performed in Afghanistan, Korea and all over the U.S. His undeniable talent has garnered such awards as Top Talent Korea - Finalist (2014); Battle of the Bands (w/Bold Coast), Seoul - Winner (2015); Bagram's Got Talent, Bagram Airfield Afghanistan - Winner (2016); Kingman Island Folk Festival (w/Lisa Said), Washington DC (2017); and Vienna Idol, Vienna VA - 2nd Place (2017). His latest EP "Major" captures those mesmerizing live performances with five songs of sheer power, sometimes rage, poetry, and at all times, beautiful music.

With the opening track "Watch Me," complete with authoritative rapping prose, percussive drums and signature dancing violin, Big Lux implores you to take note of what he's got to say, sweetened with an enchanting melody and mystical background chords.

Westerly musical pal Laura Dowding guest stars on the second track "Chasing Bombs" complementing with vocals and piano. This anti-war social commentary has a haunting melody with downright courageous lyrics. As Dowding sweetly sings "Go ahead, go on chasing bombs," Big Lux replies with "I play my violin to take my mind off the carnage," because he's been there. This shout out to all service members results in an unforgettable and brilliant dichotomy between engaging in war and celebrating life and friendship.

The bluegrass number "Ghetto Grass" has a "Devil Went Down to Georgia" feel, fresh and new for 2019, with the righteous lyric "I settle my scores with the strings and a bow," and, "Forget you man, I'll be on the dance floor."

Pulsating bass, marching feet and a techno backing track accentuate the powerful messages in "Red March." Rising to an exploding crescendo, the hypnotic score and Big Lux trademark violin lure you in and leave you simply, inspired.

The final track is a jazzy, mellow, romantic and R&B style introspective on how easy the years go by. With a tinkling Rhodes-sounding piano and walking bass line, his solution is: "You wake up with a pen and start your story."

The Big Lux EP "Major" is a modern and cutting-edge work of art - I highly recommend!

Link:

<http://www.bigluxviolin.com>

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Julie Lynn Cardinal

SOUND WAVES 15

COOKING WITH THE BLUES

By Jack Chaplin

Well, it's the end of 2019 and I've finally met my year-end goal, I finally got a Chicken Sandwich from Popeyes, it took me months and five tries. I got talked out of the spicy version, so I may have to go back to check that one out. This one had a thick piece of well seasoned fried goodness on a Brioche type roll, mayo, and a few pickles. I needed some lettuce but not sure that is an option. I have to say my rendition on YouTube {cookingwiththeblues} is better, but it was still miles above the McChicken and other fasties out there. The hubbub has died down from what I can see. No more lines down the street and around the block, no more traffic cops moving things along, and no more assaults from customers being denied a sandwich! I have said for years that Popeye's needed a chicken biscuit for a few bucks, which I still think would be the bomb with some hot sauce and honey. I also have a vision of a smothered chicken version using their fantastic gravy. With my goals for 2019 complete, it's on to the New Year. I wish You all good health foremost; without that, we have nothing! Prosperity and Happiness come and goes, but without our health, nothing is possible. I tried the Keto for a while, but I had been reading up on what's best for me. I'm now leaning heavily towards a plant-based way of eating, I got into it late fall, and I feel it is doing me wonders. I just saw Valdez from High 5's at church, he has dropped some serious pounds and is looking great. I've seen him walking a bunch in downtown NL, so I'm betting the two combined is the answer. Our local boxing Champ Cassius Chaney has loaned me a nice bike that I plan to jump on whenever we get some sunny days.

Speaking of bikes, a friend was inquiring what my favorite charity



was, and I had to really think. There are so many good things we could donate to locally, statewide, and across our vastness. I think the answer for me is to keep it local and to be able to see it affect directly. I try to give where I see fit, and it makes me feel good. Our friend Kenny Weeks that was killed a few years back by a hit and run driver over by the mall, always comes to mind when I think of donating and this time of the year. The NL Soup Kitchen was his daily go-to. Kenny would always come in after having a nice meal and tell me all about it. The lasagna, the meatloaf, the great breakfast he had. He would often throw me a bag of chips that he knew I loved. He'd say, "Here You Go The Amazing Jack." If that didn't make me smile, nothing could. Let me say we are all a job lost, a significant issue health-wise, or a financial setback away from the street and the need of a meal or shelter. I use to see Kenny riding around on a shiny new bike until he'd put it down somewhere, and it would come up missing. He had so many bikes over the years, which had been donated

by Bike New London, which is now located in a great spot in the heart of Hodges Square. They help so many kids with repairs and show them how to fix bikes themselves. They have bikes donated and sell them at prices people can afford using a sliding scale according to income. So all this being said, my favorite charities are Bike New London, The NL Soup Kitchen, and organizations locally that help people in need. Reach into your pockets and put a little something into a hand in need; it will make you feel like a million bucks.

We just went into Josh Feldman's restaurant Noble on Bank St. It was Sunday after church at the Madry Temple. The street was quiet, it being after 1:00 and holiday shopping was in full panic mode just a few days before Santa was due! We sat at the bar and Angell poured me a real tasty Bloody Mary to start off. I had met the new chef Chris Lusk a few weeks earlier and wanted to see what he was throwing down. Chris is alumni of Go Fish, Ella's in West-erly, and Mohegan Sun, all excellent operations. We started with the NE Clam Chowder {7 for a big bowl}, Deliciously loaded with chopped clams and perfectly seasoned. I usually have to reach for the s&p, but not here! The Salmon BLT caught my eye along with a side of Mac & Cheese and Fresh Cut Fries. The sandwich came on a tasty toasted Ciabatta Roll, Grilled Salmon and the works, the M&C had a subtle hint of mustard and the Fries a perfect golden brown.

We wanted to try the wings, so we ordered up the BBQ variety. It wasn't because we were hungry, but we had to take one for the team, Dave Pottie, and Co. and the sake of this article. They bake and then fry the wings or vice-versa, but they sure were tasty, meaty and tender, not fried into oblivion. Hot Rods next door is usually the goto spot for wings, but these are an excellent option here downtown on Bank St. I had some of Noble's wings months earlier, but it was a late night and a few drinks too many to remember the details. Josh Feldman runs excellent operations, and he had The Lazy Leopard, which was my favorite Thai joints. He has recently taken over his old Rice Spice and Noodles in Mystic, which is now called 4 Roosevelt. The restaurant business is very demanding, to survive as long as Josh has, he is a testament to his hard work and dedication to detail. Thanks, Josh, Chris, and Angell for a great meal, the perfect Bloody Mary, and a great Sunday afternoon. I also enjoyed the big screens with the football games. Josh is also a diehard Patriots fan too, Come On Tom Terrific, Get Er Done! Another great reason to check out Noble is that it has a great water view and deck for those sunny winter days, get your Vitamin D On!

Restaurant Week New London is coming up starting Jan. 20th; we are still working on who will be participating and will be getting the word out through the newspaper and radio. It's a great way to check out New London's dining scene with



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some great deals, three courses for \$20.20 at Daddy Jack's is what we are offering. This time of the year is tough on small businesses, please come out and support our downtown New London eateries.

I was catching up on my newspapers the other day and came across a few uplifting articles that made me feel good. One was a church in Los Angeles, Christian Assembly that bought \$5.53 million worth of medical debt for nearly 6,000 households. They were able to buy the debt of outstanding bills for \$53,000 from 5,555 families in 28 neighborhoods. They were also helpful to repair credit scores for these families, what a beautiful Christmas gift from Pastor Tom Hughes and Christian Assembly. That's Getting It Done! Another article that caught my eye and warmed my heart was a restaurant in Ashland City, Tenn. that offers Southern-style dinners to anyone who walks in the door on Christmas at no charge, no questions asked. Every Christmas since 2013, Candice O'Brien of O'Brien's

Southern Diner has cooked up a feast, this year the menu was turkey, ham, dressing, mac and cheese, broccoli casserole, and gooey fudge pie to serve on the house. Over the years, many volunteers have joined in. Candice delivers meals to people who have difficulties leaving their homes. Back a few years Jim Stidfole stopped in one afternoon and said he wanted to prepare omelets to order on Christmas morning for people to enjoy at a local church that served daily breakfasts. Chris Litkowski, who had Gaspar's at the time, joined us with a handful of elves, and we served over 120 omelets made to order with a bountiful list of meats, cheeses, and vegetables. We would each have a prep list and show up early enough to serve at 6:30 sharp. We were a finely tuned machine, and we even had our Mayor Mike Passero working the pans with us. Over the years, our crew grew, and it was such a great experience to be a part of. It gave such reward and meaning to Christmas. New owners of the church had other

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Cooking with the Blues Continued

ideas, and the last few years we haven't done it, but I think for next year I may do something at Daddy Jack's, whether it's a breakfast or lunch, who's on board? Let me know; we'll have a jolly old time, it will be in memory of our friends Jim Stidfole and Kenny Weeks.

Have A Happy and Healthy 2020. It's Going To Be A Great Year!
Jack



Don Imus Continued

news reader, Contessa Brewer, made news, as did Brewer's response ("cantankerous old fool"—the truth, I guess, being her defense). When Tucker Carlson brought up Brewer on the program in 2005, Imus hung up on him, calling Carlson "a bowtie-wearing little pussy."

There were many others who felt his wrath during his on-air tirades, far too many to list herein. Suffice it to say, he stretched the bounds, if not broke them altogether, on pretty much a daily basis.

And, that was on his good days.

Many times, he went too far. In April 2007, he was fired after an on-air discussion in which characterized the Rutgers University women's basketball team players as "rough girls," commenting on their tattoos, later calling the women "nappy-headed hoers." He returned to the air later that year, stating "Dick Cheney is still a war criminal, Hillary Clinton is still Satan. And I'm back on the radio."

CBS News reporter Anthony Mason hit it right on the head, saying "love him or hate him, and he gave his audience cause to do both, he was a giant in radio."

Although cantankerous, crotchety, and seemingly having no filter, Imus did have a deep charitable side to him.

He was instrumental in raising over \$60 million for the Center for the Intrepid, a Texas rehabilitation facility for soldiers wounded in the Iraq War. The largest technological center of its kind in the country, it is designed to help treat disabled veterans and help them with their transition back into the community. Imus has also taken on the cause of the living conditions at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C..

In 1999, Imus and his wife, Deirdre, founded the Imus Ranch, a working 4,000-acre cattle ranch near Ribera, New Mexico, for children with cancer and siblings of SIDS victims. Until its closing in 2014, the Imus fam-

18 SOUND WAVES

ily volunteered their time at the ranch between Memorial Day and Labor Day each year. During those months, Imus continued his broadcasts from a studio there, while the rest of his on-air gang continued to broadcast from New York.

Another brilliant side of Imus often got lost in those battles of outrage, blasphemy and incoherence. Having started his radio career as a disk jockey, he developed an indelible ear for great music, and, over the years, promoted the careers of Dwight Yoakam, Emmylou Harris, Delbert McClinton (his personal favorite), and his long-time friend Kinky Friedman, among countless others who often performed live on his show.

At one point, the immortal Levon Helm and his musicians were the virtual house band for "Imus in the Morning," appearing on countless occasions.

Imus won four Marconi Radio Awards, three for Major Market Personality of the Year, and he was named one of the 25 Most Influential People in America in Time Magazine in 1997. He was inducted into the National Radio Hall of Fame in 1989. In 2002, Talkers magazine ranked Imus as one of the 25 greatest radio talk show hosts of all time.

He was controversial. He was a maverick. And, yes, he was original. The original.

And, following his death, the tributes, such as they were, flooded in.

"Mike and the Mad Dog" host Mike Francesca, who arguably got his radio start with Imus, who called Francesca and co-host Chris Russo "Fatso and Fruit Loops," said "shocking news on the passing of my friend, Don Imus. He will long be remembered as one of the true giants in the history of radio."

"Morning Joe" host Joe Scarborough added, "'Morning Joe' obviously owes its format to Don Imus. No one else could have gotten away with that much talk on cable news. Thanks for everything, Don." Morning Joe started as a fill-in for Imus in the Morning after Imus was fired from MSNBC in 2007.

CNN political analyst Jeff Greenfield, who appeared on Imus' show numerous times, once said, "he's out there talking the way most of us talk when we're not in public."

Say what you want about him, but, between his biting and scathing comments and descriptions, the I-Man made me, and countless others, laugh every weekday morning for a very long time, making many interminable rush hours that much easier to bear.

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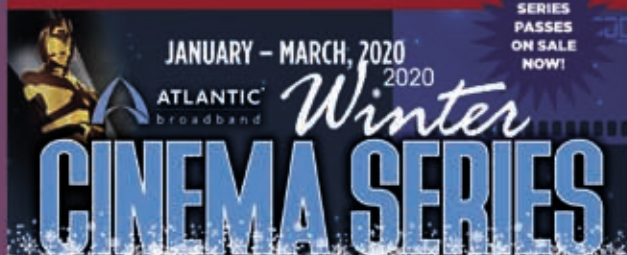


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SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2020 | 7:00 PM

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FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2020 | 8:00 PM

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