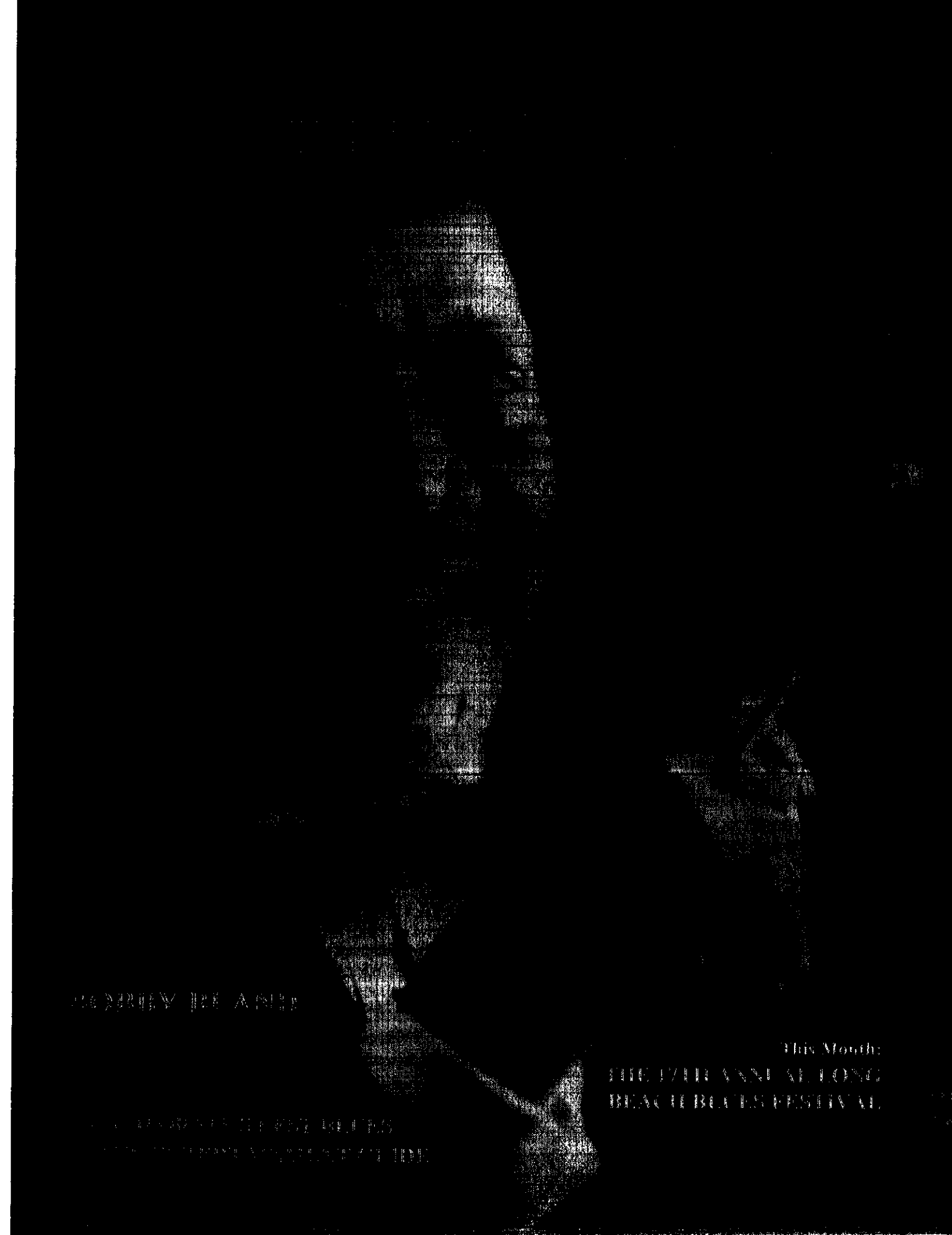




ROBERT W. JEE A. 1911

This Month:
THE 17TH ANNUAL LONG
BEACH BEACH FESTIVAL

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BEACH BEACH FESTIVAL

the BLUES NEWS

AUGUST 1996 VOLUME 2 ISSUE 7

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CONTENTS:

FROM THE EDITOR.....	3
HISTORY OF THE BLUES: CLARENCE "GATEMOUTH" BROWN.....	4
COVER STORY BOBBY BLAND.....	5
BAND LISTINGS.....	6
LIVE REVIEW: By Greg Serrato.....	7
CD REVIEWS.....	7

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Thank you!

FROM THE EDITOR

Howdy! This month's issue is sort of a primer for the upcoming 17th Annual Long Beach Blues Festival. This seems to be the biggest event for blues around here and this year's festival will be three days long! Don't miss us there as well!

This year's line-up is fantastic (see "17th Annual... Blues Festival" page ?)

Don't forget the BLUES NEWS' photo contest is still under way. Provide us with a photo of your favorite way to read or enjoy or transport or pickup the BLUES NEWS magazine and you could win an autographed Lee Oskar Harmonica. Entries must be received by our office by September 2nd, 1996. (the BLUES NEWS must be easily seen in photograph.)

LETTERS

Hi, I just read your magazine and wondered if you might be able to help in my search for a place to play or actually jam. I'm a ex-player and now a full time school teacher. I was before that a player, for about 25 years and about eight years ago decided to change careers. My problem is that due to the fact that I have no more connections in the club field, I have no idea of where there are clubs that do have jam sessions. And being a teacher, the notion of being out til all hours of the morning isn't really something I can do. So what I am looking for is a Sunday afternoon jam somewhere. I live in Claremont and as I mentioned before have played for years. Also I have considered putting a jam together with some other players I have worked with but I wouldn't know the first thing about approaching a club owner about it. (I always worked with booking agents when I was a pro). Anyway, its the summer, and I have alot of time on my hands, which means that I can make the late hours until school starts again. I have been subbing for Mike Halby's band recently and before that I worked for two years with Don Preston and Jim McGrew before I became a teacher. I'm a pretty good player and want to play with people, not

just practice at home. Any suggestions would be gladly accepted!

Thanks, Mike Pecanic

Dear Mike,

Lake Alice in Riverside has a Sunday afternoon blues jam. You could sit in with The Blue Falcons and "Doc" Ryan!

Sincerely, Editor

CLASSIFIEDS

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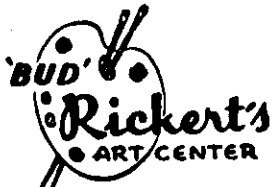
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History of the Blues

Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown

By Cindy Dumas

While sitting at my desk leafing through information on various blues artists one day not long ago, my phone rang and a familiar voice on the other end excitedly said, "Guess who I saw last night down at The Dinosaur Barbecue?" "Who, I replied." "Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, that's who. I'm telling you they don't make 'em like this guy anymore, he was electrifying and made sparks fly off the stage!"

Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown spends a great amount of time on the road throughout the year, traveling in his tour bus from town to town. You can be sure though that when passing through Syracuse, New York, he always makes time to fit in a performance or two at The Dinosaur Barbecue. Well known to Syracuse locals, the club is small, unpretentious and very real. The Dinosaur is owned and operated by John Stage who by chance met "Gatemouth" one year while they both happened to be in the South. Impressed by Stage's sincerity, "Gatemouth" kept in touch and now considers The Dinosaur a home away from home of sorts when he's on the road. It is one of a few small and select venues he will play - definitely an exception to the rule. Unfortunately, during this particular run his tour bus suffered a mechanical breakdown, prompting a gracious fan to the rescue. Gatemouth and his band members were driven to Syracuse in Cadillac style.

Born on April 18, 1924 in Vinton, Louisiana, Clarence Brown's family moved shortly after his birth to Orange, Texas. He literally grew up surrounded by music and learned to play the guitar, drums, harmonica, mandolin, and bass. His father performed at weekend house parties and fish fries playing a variety of stringed instruments, including the fiddle and guitar. So, it's no wonder Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown was to make music his life's work. It's been said that his contribution to the fundamental development of Texas blues is

surpassed only by the likes of a few other artists, namely Blind Lemon Jefferson, Lightnin' Hopkins and T-Bone Walker. He blends jazz, country and Cajun music into his blues via the fiddle and seems to emulate the same passages out of his guitar that a trumpet player can draw out of his horn. As a young guitar player Clarence Brown was influenced heavily by his mentor T-Bone Walker. However, instead of copying Walker's style he created a guitar sound that would grasp listeners one minute and zap them the next.

Before departing for the army during World War II, Clarence Brown played in a few bands such as, The Brown Skin Models, but it was after his discharge and upon his return to Texas that his musical career began to take an upward swing. One lucky night in 1945, he was asked to fill in for Walker at The Bronze Peacock (a Houston nightclub) owned by Don Robey. Clarence Brown all but brought the house down that night and Robey immediately offered him additional dates and asked him to be club manager. He accepted, fronting big bands in Texas while Robey landed him a recording contract with Aladdin in 1947. Though he recorded four sides for Aladdin, the records were given little promotion and sold poorly. Feeling at odds with what had taken place, Robey was spurred to form his own record company which he named Peacock (after his club). Obviously, Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown became the company's first recording artist.

Under contract to Peacock from 1947 to 1960 and with more than fifty singles on the label, Gatemouth only had one real hit, "Mary Is Fine," which hit number 8 on the R & B charts in 1949. He did have a few regional hits in the South - "Okie Dokie Stomp," "Dirty Work at the Crossroads," and "Just Got Lucky." Sadly, he made little money and shared authorship on many songs.

In spite of his lack of commercial success in the 40's and 50's, Gatemouth influenced a whole generation of Texas blues guitarists. Once he parted company with Peacock he surprisingly left Texas for Nashville, where he fronted the house band on the syndicated show "The Beat" which featured nationally known rhythm and blues artists. While in Nashville, he also joined forces with country singer Roy Clark to record some country tunes, but his career was at a standstill.

(Continued on page 6)

the BLUES NEWS

The Bobby Bland Story

Bobby Bland is considered by many critics and experts as America's greatest blues singer. He is not only a great blues singer, but he is one of the world's greatest blues ballad interpreter.

Born, Robert Calvin Bland, in the West Tennessee town of Rosemont, where he grew up listening to and imitating the style of the great Blind Lemon Jefferson who shaped the style of most modern blues singers. Bobby also has a whim for jazz. He mixed the two together, thereby, producing the original Bobby Bland style. He is also a lover of Gospel music. His favorite Gospel singer and preacher was the late C. S. Franklin, father of Areatha Franklin. From Reverend Franklin, he learned the famous Bobby Bland growl.

Bobby came out of the crop of blues singers known as the Beale Streeters, which consisted of B. B. King, Little Junior, Roscoe Gordon, Howling Wolf, Gatemouth Moore, Ike Turner and others. From Beale Street he got the name Bobby "Blue" Bland. His first recordings were on the Modern label in California. After a stint in the Army, upon his release he then signed a contract with Don Robey on the Duke label where he was placed under the direction of the late Joe Scott who's Blues Ballad arrangements sky rocketed Bland's career to the top. Dave Clark who was head of the national promotion for Duke Records was partly responsible for Bland's rise to fame.

As a top blues singer upon hearing Bland's recordings of "I'll Take Care of You", Don Robey decided to remove the title "Blues" from Bland's name. Because he knew that Bland was more than just a blues singer. He was a singer of songs. Dave Clark promoted Bland into becoming one of America's top hit makers. For years Clark promoted hit after hit on Bland.

When Bobby Bland signed with Malaco Records it brought together again three people who were responsible for spot-lighting the blues from coast to coast. Bobby Bland was the first blues singer to appear on the original Dick Clark Show. (Courtesy of Associated Booking Corp., Agency)

Bland can be seen Saturday, August 31 at the 17th Annual Long Beach Blues Festival.
the BLUES NEWS

The 17th Annual Long Beach Blues Festival

What do you get when you have 26 blues acts, thirty thousand people, wonderful atmosphere, beer and great food spread out over a three day weekend? You guessed it, The 17th Annual Long Beach Blues Festival!

For 17 years (Wow!) KILON, 88.1 FM has been bringing us the best in blues for a weekend of great entertainment. The Long Beach radio station famous for its excellent jazz and blues format has for the first time decided to give us three days instead of two. KILON is a member supported radio station which means they have no commercials and survive a lot on listeners contributing funds to the station and becoming members. It's easy to join! Just call (310) 985-5566 and pledge your support!

When will this momentous occasion take place? Labor Day weekend from Saturday, August 31 - Monday, September 2. Tickets can be bought in advance for \$22.50 per day or all three days for \$60.00. If you wait you'll pay \$28.00 per day at the gate. This year's show will take place at Cal State Long Beach on the athletic field.

Here's the weekend's line-up: Saturday -- BOBBY "BLUE" BLAND, JOHNNY COPELAND, CHARLES BROWN, LONG JOHN HUNTER, TEXAS JOHNNY BROWN, CAROL FRAN AND CLARENCE HOLIMAN, SMOKIN' JOE KUBEK and SONNY RHODES; Sunday -- TEXAS TORNADOS, GATEMOUTH BROWN, MARCIA BALL, LOU ANN BARTON, ANGELA STREHLI, JOE "GUITAR" HUGHES, TEXAS PETE HAYES and W.C. CLARK; Monday -- LITTLE RICHARD WITH GRADY GAINES AND THE TEXAS UPSETTERS, ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL, ANSON FUNDERBURGH AND THE ROCKETS WITH SAMMY MYERS, CAL GREEN, GUITAR SHORTY, ROY GAINES, LOWELL FULSON, AN ALL-STAR TRIBUTE TO T-BONE WALKER, FLOYD DIXON and JIMMY T-99 NELSON. Tickets can be gotten by calling (310) 985-5566.

"Gatemouth" (Continued from page 4)

In the early 70's Gatemouth began to see a path for resurgence with his eclectic blues sound. European audiences were hungry for the sound and ate every bit of it up allowing him the opportunity to tour Europe regularly. He began recording again for overseas labels like Black and Blue and in the late 70's he recorded albums for Real Records and MCA Records in the U.S. The latter recording deals led to a contract with Rounder Records and the 1982 Grammy winning album 'Alright Again!' In 1986, he once again changed labels switching to Alligator Records. In that same year Alligator released the Grammy nominated 'Pressure Cooker', a collection of Gatemouth's best songs recorded on European labels in the 70's. In 1989 Alligator released 'Standing My Ground' which featured a collection of brand new songs recorded in a collage of styles including big band, hard blues, swing and Texas funk.

We are now in the 1990's and though his age is advancing, Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, for a man of 72 years of age, is a true showman giving all, including a bit of his soul to his audience. Watching him play the hollowbody is literally the equivalent to watching a hot knife cut through butter -- he is drained to the point of exhaustion by show's end. You might call him a wise man who believes in the education of life, but makes a direct point of telling kids during his shows to "Stay in school and get a good education".

Note: "Gatemouth" Brown performs for the 17th Annual Long Beach Blues Festival at Cal-State Long Beach on September 1st.

Special thanks to my longtime friend and East Coast connection, Steve Dochia, for his contributions to this article....



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CD Reviews By Greg Serrato

Buddy Guy
The Real Deal-Live
(Silvertone)

Anyone who has ever seen Buddy Guy live will tell you he is a world class blues performer. The long awaited Live performance recording, since the days with Junior Wells, has arrived and promises to give you Buddy's best.

Along with G.E. & The Saturday Night Live Band, Buddy rips through nine energy packed tunes which was recorded at his own *Legends* in Chicago.

When you can hear the Amps buzzin' in the background, you know your listening to raw Buddy who renders a superlative performance on Elmore James' (I Can't Hold Out) but, titles it *Talk To My Baby*. Also included is the archetypal *My Time After Awhile*, and Buddy plays cluster upon cluster of note drenched licks on the following cut, *I've Got News For You*.

Other notable tracks are *Let Me Love You Baby*, *Damn Right I've Got The Blues*, and the opener *I've Got My Eyes On You*.

Appearing on the recording is the great Johnnie Johnson; softly beckoned to burn a few keys and does so as he has for years.

I guess the way to best describe a Buddy Guy live performance in one word is, "Energy!"

Allie & The Delta Disciples
Delta Swamp Stomp
(Jimmyland)

The new arrival, via Mississippi, *Allie Tolliver* & her talented *Delta Disciples* are an up & coming band bringing the Delta mingled with a dash of Westside Chicago to blues drenched Southern California.

Tolliver's vocals & singing style is reminiscent of Etta James & Tina Turner. Most noticeable on Big Jay McNeely's *Something On Your Mind and Shake It On Down*. This four piece band has a great deal of promise but, It would benefit them to record more songs of an original capacity. Their talent and sound could dictate greater success using original material. Although, they do a hand clapping performance with the covers.

the BLUES NEWS

Live Review By Greg Serrato

Memorial Day Weekend is a time for barbecues and get togethers. The Inland Empire was in the spirit of things with a Blues Barbecue hosted by Blue Highway On May 26th at the *British Bulldog Pub in Upland*. Nine local bands exhibited their talent throughout the all day event as *Russell* of B.B. Kings M.C.'d.

The newest band in the Inland Empire blues scene is *The Kool Blues Sisters*. This all female group got the ball rolling with a solid set of down home blues. *Irene Vasquez* (Harp) put her mark on the set with some fine soloing.

Next up was Traditional Blues Sensation, *Donnie V* and his band, *A Little Steel*. As usual, Donnie treated the crowd to a fine (Too-Short) set of back porch blues. His bassist did some fancy work which captured the crowd's attention.

By the time *Robert Metean & Smokehouse* began their set, the house was packed. With a good mix of Otis Rush, Freddie King and Buddy Guy covers, the Bulldog was howlin' with the Blues. This talented trio is one to keep an ear out for.

Next was my band, *The 4th Street Blues Band*. We performed songs off our two CDs and received a very energetic response from the crowd. Thanks everyone!

The Slide Master *Stan West* kept the burner on high with a heated set of some of the best slide playing around these parts. Harp Man *Jay Loeffel* blew like there was no tomorrow. Great Blues from a great band.

Next up was the ever improving *Go-Cart Rides*. Here is a band that sounds better everytime I see them. *Larry Jackson & Candice A.* carried the set with a performance everyone enjoyed.

Tobacco Road is one band I had never seen. I must tell you, The Inland Empire is the home of some of the best Blues acts in Southern Cal. *Jeff Masters* and his band-mates played some damn good blues. Check these guys out when they're in your neck of the woods.

The evening closed with our gracious hosts, *Blue Highway* doing the crowd with their usual smokin' set and afterwards backed up 2/3 of the *909 Review* featuring *Reggie Chavez* on guitar.

The camaraderie between these bands is some what special. It makes our Blues community a strong one. Like one big happy family! We'll do it again Labor Day weekend! Don't miss it!

Page 7



**“Hear The Blues With Russell”
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