

Blues News July/August 2018



The 6th Annual Blues Cruise is being held on Monday, July 16th

On the GoodTime III!

Thank you for your support!!

The CBS Blues Cruise is a rain or shine event. CBS rents the GoodTime III and we are required to follow all regulations established by the GoodTime III, the City of Cleveland and the U.S. Coast Guard. The cruise is non-refundable and would only be canceled due to severe weather. In that case, a rain check would be issued by the Good Time III. .

Musician Line-up

Adam Constantine	Alan Greene	Alfredo Guerrieri	Anthony Lovano
Austin Walkin' Cane	Becky Boyd	Billy Coakley	"Blind Boy Bob" Carroll
Bob Frank	Butch Armstrong	Charlie Christopherson	Colin Dussault
"Crazy" Marvin	Donny Baker	Michael Bay	Mike Barrick
Norm Tischler	Raymond DeForest	T.C. Odegard (Odie)	



**Thank you for your support of
the Cleveland Blues Society
and Live Music!**



MEMBERS' BLUES CHOICE AWARDS



Congrats to the following for winning the
CBS Members Blues Choice Awards



Best Blues Lead:
Guitar—Donny Baker



Best Blues Rhythm:
Drums — Anthony Lovano



Best Blues Group:
Anthony Lovano's Supernatural Band
Anthony Lovano, Art Jensen,
Tim Matson & Reggie Redd



Best Blues Vocals:
Laura Lee Hoffmann



Best Up & Coming:
Backstreet Blues Band
Brantt Hamilton, Jimmy Lee,
Adriane Bennett,
Bubba Ruscin



CBS Supports Firefighters

On Sunday, May 27th—CBS had a booth at the 14th Annual Firefighters Memorial Ride in front of First Energy Stadium. Mike Binder & Priscilla Duo provided us with some music for this event. We had a lot of compliments and it was well received. Thank you to our volunteers who helped us man the CBS tent.

Over 1,000 motorcycles started staging at 8 am. The memorial ceremony took place at 10:30am. The bikes took off at 11am and they rode to Rock-N-Roll Harley Davidson.

The Firefighters Memorial Ride is a nonprofit organization. The primary function is to honor Firefighters that made the supreme sacrifice serving their community.





CBS Supports Larchmere Porchfest

On Saturday, June 16th—CBS had a booth at the 10th Annual Larchmere Porchfest. Tim Matson performed on the CBS porch. Everyone had a great time and a great day filled with music with 30 bands on 30 porches. Thank you for coming out to support Live Music and also to our volunteers!



GET YOUR JAM ON



Anthony's All Star Jam Session
Tuesdays at - 7pm
Tradewinds—Euclid



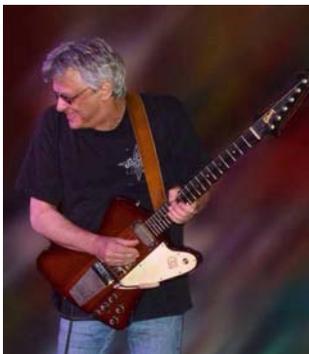
Blue Collar Band
Tuesdays at 9pm
Sand Trap—North Royalton



Michael Bay & the
Bad Boys of Blues
Wednesdays at 9pm
Smedley's—West Park



Michael Bay & the
Bad Boys of Blues
Thursdays at 9pm
Brothers—Lakewood



Alan Greene Jam
Sundays at 8pm
Cebars—Euclid



BACKSTREET BLUES BAND

Brantt Hamilton



On May 14th, BackStreet Blues Band was the host band at the CBS Monthly jam at Grindstone Tap House in Berea.

Brantt Hamilton - (Harmonica/Vocals) is a veteran of the Cleveland Blues Scene, having played Northeast Ohio clubs, festivals and events for 30 years. He started out at the age of 19 with Princess Ladia's Blue Knights from Chicago when they wanted an authentic amplified harmonica. He played every Sunday night in the Cleveland Flats as a featured special guest of Bill Dawg and the Extraordinaires, then fronted several of his own bands for several years.

He co-founded the KingBees, bringing a blues element into a big band sound that has been part of Cleveland culture for 25 years. Now he is returning to his roots playing footstomping, juke joint, party-and-dance-all-night blues, swing, and rockabilly.

Jimmy Lee - (Guitar/Vocals) -- Has been fronting his own Jimmy Lee Experiment on the Cleveland scene for the last decade, while also performing solo and performing duo gigs with wife. He loves playing blues, rock, country, rockabilly, classics. His grooves are reminiscent of the great Vaughn brothers and deep blues like Jimmy Reed, with a touch of West Coast Swing and some down-home country.

Adriane Bennett - (Bass/Vocals) Began playing piano at age 5 and studied classical piano until age 18. She was very active in music throughout school, studying music theory for 2 years, playing bassoon in symphonic band (Chardon High School) and the Cleveland Youth Wind Symphony (Cleveland Institute of Music), piano for the lab chorale, keyboards for the musical pit orchestra, bass guitar for the show choir, percussion in marching band, and serving as the drum major for the marching band. As an undergraduate, she earned a music scholarship for bassoon (Adrian College) and played in the intercollegiate honors band. She went on hiatus from all music while pursuing graduate school and post doctorate fellowship training. In 2015 she returned to music, began taking bass lessons from Mike Barrick, and started participating in jam nights around town. At these jam nights she was introduced to other local musicians, which led to her joining Backstreet Blues Band and Thrill Ride. Adriane also won the Blues Choice Award in 2017 for Up & Coming.

Bubba Ruscin - (Drums/Vocals) is the solid backbeat of the Backstreet Blues Band. He cut his teeth in the Travis Haddix band for two years, then on to 12 years with Frankie Starr and for the past six years has been with blues/rock outfit Mojo Honey. His ability to improvise and his bluesy, growly voice make him much more than a drummer, he makes every band better because he is part of it.



The four met at local gigs and jams, particularly Cleveland Blues Society events. They decided to form the Backstreet Blues Band to bring their love of blues, swing, rockabilly, and country into a houserockin', foot-stompin', juke joint-thumpin' BLUES band from the backstreets of Cleveland.

ARMSTRONG BEARCATS

Butch Armstrong



On June 11th, Armstrong Bearcats was the host band for the CBS Jam. Alfredo Guerrieri filled in for Mike Barrick on Bass.

Butch Armstrong, born in Shaker Heights, Ohio, first picked up a guitar at age ten after having been inspired by the Beatles.

He started his professional career at age 12 along with his younger brother Vito at age 10.

With Butch on guitar and Vito, who played bass and sang lead vocals, along with their cousin Frankie on drums, actually formed their first band, the NEATLES, later changed to the KNIGHT RIDERS.

They appeared on the JERRY G. show on WKYC TV, and the nationally syndicated show UPBEAT on WEWS TV. They would beg their mother every weekend to drive them to the Chagrin Falls Armory to hear local guitar gods Glen Schwartz and Joe Walsh.

They would listened to Hendrix, Beck, and Clapton records by the hour. After graduating highschool , Butch travelled the country with local / national act RASTUS, a local jazz-blues fusion band with a full horn section and two albums on the charts and toured with them across the country.

In the mid-seventies, Butch toured and recorded with Sonny Geraci of the "Outsiders" and "Climax" .

He moved to L.A. in the late seventies, where he auditioned for the highly successful band, CHICAGO, after the accidental shooting death of frontman lead guitarist Terry Kath.

in 1981 returning to Ohio, for almost a decade, he played in GOODFOOT, an excellent R & B band that worked the dance circuit steadily through the eighties, following which he founded his own band, the Armstrong Bearcats.

Their searing brand of hard-driving, in-your-face blues and rock and roll soon made them “the band in demand” when a local opening act was needed for concert venues.

Billy Coakley is a Cleveland based drummer who was born in New York City in 1961. He moved to Cleveland in 1969.

It was after moving to Cleveland while in the third grade that he had a life changing encounter with the drums. He shares that he was watching an episode of Batman in which Robin was wearing a wig and playing a drum solo when he found his calling as a drummer.

His early years were spent in private lessons and also playing in the high school band. After high school Billy went to study at Poto- mac State College in Keyser, West Virginia and Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. At these two schools, he majored in music and performed in jazz band, orchestra, and percussion ensembles. Along this journey, Billy has participated in master classes and studied will Billy Hart, Tommy Campbell, Louie Bell- son, Skip Hadden and his long time early teacher Dave Brewer.



ARMSTRONG BEARCATS, CONTINUED

Billy Coakley, continued

All these individuals and experiences have been instrumental in helping Billy become one of the most inspiring drummers anywhere. Billy's professional career as a performer and an educator got started in the early 80's playing in a variety of jazz, rock, and reggae bands. His ten years with the reggae band SATTA from 1985 to 1995 were some of the most exciting. During that time he released five records and toured nonstop through the United States, Europe, and Asia. He also appeared in an NBC Movie of the Week, the KEYS which aired in Spring of 1992.

However not one to sit idle, Billy is currently in one of Cleveland's hottest blues and rock power trios, the Armstrong Bearcat Band. Which, along with constant club dates and festivals, has shared the stage with the Allman Brothers, George Thorogood and the Destroyers, Little Feet, Johnny Winter, Blue Oyster Cult, Southside Johnny, Robin Trower, Tower of Power, and others. Billy, who is a committed Christian, is also a member of the music ministry at his home church, Community of Hope.

Billy is also teaching, doing solo performances, drum clinics, "Around the World With Drums" (a performance for young people), and a whole host of other musical projects. Whether playing in front of 3000 people at a concert hall or 20 people in a youth assembly, Billy's powerful and inspirational drumming is a shining example of discipline, hard work, and a desire to share his gift for drumming with others.

Alfredo Guerrieri—Alfredo was convinced to pick up the electric bass at his best friend's insistence. After years of playing bass mostly as a hobby, Alfredo left to pursue music academically at the Musician's Institute in Los Angeles, California in 2003 where he received his degree in Bass Performance. He studied under many great talents such as Christopher Maloney, Brian Allen, Alexis Sklarevski, Mike Mennell, Oneida James, and Putter Smith.

Shortly after finishing his studies, he was awarded the Berklee World Scholarship, awarded by the Berklee College of Music to the most promising young talent around the globe. He then began his studies at Berklee in Boston where he graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Music. He studied at Berklee with greats such as Oscar Stagnaro, Anthony Vitti, and Bruce Gertz. Also while attending Berklee, he was awarded the Berklee Achievement Scholarship and the Henry Grossman Scholarship for Music Business.

Afredo has also gotten involved in music education. He is currently teaching at the following locations: Cleveland State University in Cleveland, OH (adjunct faculty, Electric Bass and Upright Bass); The Music Settlement in Cleveland, OH (Rock and Blues Department Head, J@MS Combo, Private Instructor of guitar and electric bass); Montessori High School University Circle (Rock and Blues Academy, IB Music) and Fine Arts Association in Willoughby, OH (guitar, electric and double bass, piano).

Alfredo also recently graduated from Cleveland State University with a Master's degree in Jazz Performance/Acoustic Bass.

Currently you can find Alfredo playing bass on tour around the U.S. with various groups, freelancing studio and live gigs around the Cleveland area, teaching music, and practicing any minute he has free. Alfredo is also a proud endorsee of SIT Strings.



Blues
You
Should
Know
by
**Bob
Frank**

APPRECIATING THE TIMELESS

Robert Johnson

A short while back I was alerted, through a post in one of the Facebook blues groups, to an upcoming episode of an NBC network sci-fi drama called *Timeless* which was to be purportedly about Robert Johnson, the man many consider to be the greatest of the pre-war blues singers and “King of the Delta Blues”. I’d never seen *Timeless* as I don’t watch much network television, but I’m a sucker for anything having to do with Robert Johnson, he having held such a powerful place in my consciousness since my earliest days as a teenage blues enthusiast.

From what I was able to gather from this one episode, the show concerns a group of time-travelers who journey back into the past to make sure that certain historical events that are supposed to happen actually happen. Essentially, they police the “butterfly effect”, the theory that even the smallest changes in the past would cause drastic changes to the present: i.e. step on a butterfly a million years ago and the Germans win World War II. In a way the show is a live action, violence heavy, high-tech, CGI-filled remake of the old Mr. Peabody and Sherman cartoons, complete with a computerized “Wayback” machine.

The action begins with Robert Johnson in room 414 of the Gunter Hotel in San Antonio, TX on November 23, 1936, preparing to record his first session for Don Law and ARC Records. A murder is committed and Johnson leaves the session vowing not to finish the recording since he’s “cursed”. Muddy Waters, Son House and Bessie Smith make cameo appearances, and the *Timeless* team decide that their mission is to convince Johnson to return to the studio and finish the session.

Actor Kamahl Naiqui bears a strong physical resemblance to Robert Johnson, based on the two verified existing photographs, and there are plenty of Wikipedia-page Johnson biographical factoids sprinkled throughout the episode, but unfortunately, the plot draws on the tired, un-provable legend that Johnson sold his soul to the Devil at the crossroads in exchange for the ability to play guitar.

The other, even more irritating premise for the show, is that, as a character puts it, “Robert Johnson was the father of rock & roll”, and that without him we wouldn’t have had the Beatles, the Stones, Elvis and the Civil Rights movement. Even for a show about time-jumping, that’s a bit of a leap

The legend, the curse as it were, that the program references is the often-told and cited story that Robert Johnson traveled to a certain crossroads in Mississippi where he sold his soul to the Devil in exchange for becoming very good on the guitar in less time than it would take to become very good by practicing and working hard.

As it relates to Johnson, the legend has its origins in a single interview/conversation between author Pete Welding and Son House. The interview took place shortly after House’s “rediscovery” in 1964 and was cited in an article Welding wrote for *Downbeat* magazine in 1966. After that the legend was used in nearly all biographical material and marketing concerned with Johnson’s recordings. No subsequent interviews with either House, Johnny Shines, Robert Lockwood or any other of Johnson’s contemporaries who knew him personally include any indication that Johnson told them that he had sold his soul at the crossroads. The likely reality is that Son House, by 1964 already in the advanced stages of alcoholism, made up the story, possibly out of some old folklore he remembered from his past, in order to keep his interviewers interested, and the liquor they brought with them flowing. Prior to the House interview, the soul-legend had been associated with several other blues performers most notably Tommy Johnson (unrelated to Robert Johnson) and, to a lesser extent, Peetie Wheatstraw. The legend itself is so old that it was once associated with Niccolo Paganini, the Italian violin virtuoso and composer who died in 1840 and was refused burial in a church graveyard because of it. A similar version predates even that in the form of the Dr. Faust legend of the 16th century, used as the subject of plays, stories and operas by Marlowe, Goethe, Bizet, Wagner, Mahler and dozens of others.



Blues You Should Know, continued



That anyone can conflate the lyrics to Johnson's greatest song *Cross Road Blues* (the actual title) with selling one's soul to the Devil is totally confounding to me. The song, one of the most brilliant and poignant works of poetry in the English language, isn't about the Devil at all; it's about alienation, loneliness and perhaps most of all, redemption. Johnson isn't offering up his soul to Satan, he's begging God for forgiveness.

Let's take a hard look at the actual lyrics. The message is all in the first verse.

"I went to the crossroad, fell down on my knees
I went to the crossroad, fell down on my knees
Asked the Lord above "have mercy, now save poor Bob, if you please"

Any evidence that Johnson had a flirtation with Satanism is more likely found in his other songs particularly, *Me And The Devil*.

"Me and the Devil
Was walkin' side-by-side
Me and the Devil, ooh
Was walking side-by-side"

Does this prove the legend? I'm more inclined to believe that Johnson was, in his own way, internally struggling with the good/evil dichotomy that lies within all of us. He'd led a difficult life, having been twice widowed, at age 18 and again at 21, and at the time of his second recording session had only one more year to live. Having attempted assuming the role of hard-working husband and father in his late teens and early twenties, and twice finding himself alone with wife and child both dead at childbirth, Johnson became a notorious and cavalier user of women. Johnny Shines once said that following a playing engagement at a club or juke, Johnson would seek out the most homely and unattractive woman in the place, speculating that she would be most likely to provide him with sex and a place to stay. Hardworking husband/rake & manipulator, yin/yang, God/Devil-two sides, one person; Johnson was a man with personal struggles that he was able to channel into lyrical brilliance and the intensity of recorded performance.

Johnson's death at age 27 was indeed a tragedy and we humans always try to make sense of a tragedy. Robert Johnson didn't sell his soul to the Devil. He was a young man with enormous talent trying to make sense of the world and of the misfortunes that had befallen him. To make sense of him we look for legends and as the saying goes, "When legend becomes fact; print the legend"

And finally, scan we, once and for all, put away the condescending (and marginally racist) notion that the primary importance of Robert Johnson's music, and of the blues itself for that matter, is that it influenced future popular music stars and personalities? Robert Johnson's deep, personal, and poetic music stands up perfectly well on its own, it's hardly necessary to associate him with anyone or anything that came after. We don't feel we have to justify Mozart by claiming that he led to Beethoven, and we don't need the endorsement of Eric Clapton or Keith Richard to appreciate Robert Johnson.

Robert Johnson, with all the legend and mystery associated with him, has been, for some time, a likely subject for fictional speculation. There will probably be more films, television shows, documentaries, plays and novels either written about him or using him as a theme or character. One of these days there may even be a good one. Ry Cooder, who provided the Johnson guitar playing for the 1985 film *Crossroads*, was asked by an interviewer: "Didn't you think the plot was kind of silly"? Yes, replied Cooder, "But they don't make movies about Robert Johnson every day."



Blues You Should Know, continued

A recent exciting development in the world of blues scholarship comes in the form of a book written by former Rock Hall curator Bruce Conforth and long-time blues researcher Gayle Dean Wardlow. Tentatively titled *Up Jumped the Devil: The Real Life of Robert Johnson*, the book is scheduled for publication by Chicago Review Press. Conforth also says that a documentary version of the book will be produced for television by Netflix. The book, says Conforth, is the product of forty years of painstaking research by Conforth and Wardlow, who's research goes back even further, to the late 1950's. Conforth summarizes the book by saying, "Everything you thought you knew about Robert Johnson is wrong". I'll be down for an early copy.

Bob Frank

On Saturday, May 19th, The Cleveland Blues Society board members President Bill Koteles Vice President Anthony Lovano and Treasurer Elaine DeStephano were guests with Mr. Classic on Saturday Night Live House Party on WNCX - 98.5. The Cleveland Blues Society discussed the upcoming Blues Cruise on July 16th and information about upcoming events and some of the history of CBS.



Upcoming Jams

7/9/18	South East	Northeast Experience
	Gears & Cheers	
8/13/18	Merwin's Wharf	Blues DeVille
9/10/18	Rock Creek (Middleburg Hts)	Mojo Honey



CBS MUSICIANS!

MAKE YOUR MEMBERSHIP
WORK FOR YOUR BAND

SPECIAL OFFER!! ONLY \$50.00!

Current CBS member/musicians will receive a discount off the \$50.00 price based on current membership level.

I.e., Single members' credit = \$20.00, Family member credit = \$30.00.

- **FREE** subscription feed to list your band's gigs on the **Cleveland Gig Calendar**. (Non-Member price is \$60/year just for the calendar listing)
- Band Leader becomes a CBS member, a \$20.00 value
- Band profile and link to band's website posted on www.ClevelandBlues.org "Musician Members" page
- Listing in the bi-monthly CBS Newsletter under "Musician Members"
- **FREE** admission for each band member to the CBS Spring and Fall Picnics. Must come to the event with the band leader. \$20.00 value for each band member.

Contact Kris Diehl, KD@ClevelandBlues.org

Get your band on the CBS website NOW!!!!



CBS at the Cuyahoga County Fair



Come join us at the Cuyahoga County Fair from Tuesday, August 7th through Sunday, August 12th. We will be in the beer garden tent again which has worked out very well. We still have some daytime and a few evening slots opened for bands. This is an all-volunteer event which we greatly appreciate the support of the bands and our CBS volunteers.

2018 fair performers

Tuesday, Aug. 07th

- 5-6 pm Joe Rollin Porter - Solo performance and Originals
6:-8 pm Gypsy Lite Orchestra - Fleetwood Mac, Classic Rock
8-10:30 pm Skip Werke Band - Classic Rock and Blues

Wednesday, Aug. 08th

- 4-5 pm Joe Sasina Solo - Blues and Classic Rock
5-6 pm Ace Molar Featuring Todd Meany, 50's-70's Class Rock
6-8 PM Back Street Blues Band - House Rockin' Blues, Originals
8-10:30pm Blue Collar Band - Blues and Blues Rock

Thursday, Aug. 09th

- 3-4:30pm Tyrone Blue Sinsation - Blues/rock/southern rock
4:30-6pm Hare of the Dog, Rock and Blues
6-8pm The Project - The Blues, Classic Rock and some originals
8-10:30pm Thrill Ride Rock n Roll, loosen your neck up!

Friday, Aug. 10th

- 6-8pm Joe Sasina Band - Classic Rock and Blues
8-10:30pm The Bob Laeng Blues Gang - Classic Rock and Blues

Saturday, Aug. 11th

- 1pm-2pm Erika Starcher and John Kerver Blues, Classic Rock and originals
2-4pm Second Hand Dogs Folk and originals
4pm Kevin Richter Band - Rock, Ted Nugent
6pm Deano and the Trouble Makers - Classic Rock and Blues
8pm Idol Frets Blues and your favorites, Classic Rock

Sunday, Aug. 12th

- 2:30-4pm Grady Miller - Americana and Blues
4pm-6pm BluesDeville BRING YOUR DANCE SHOES
6pm-8pm DD & the Knockers - Surf Rock, Blues

CBS Guests on Madcat Blue Radio Show



On Tuesday June 12, CBS President Bill Koteles and Secretary Kris Diehl appeared as guests of Marty “Madcat” Puljic on WJCU Radio FM 88.7.

Bill and Kris discussed the various projects CBS is working on, including the sold out 6th Annual Blues Cruise on the Goodtime III, The CBS Hall of Fame, and the ongoing development of the new CBS website,

www.clevelandblues.org.

They highlighted the monthly jams held throughout the greater Cleveland area as one of the ways CBS continues to preserve the Blues in Cleveland. The jams are open to the public and showcase talented local host blues bands. Once the host band plays their set, the open jam begins. Check the jam schedule on the CBS website for location and host band updates. Kris Diehl



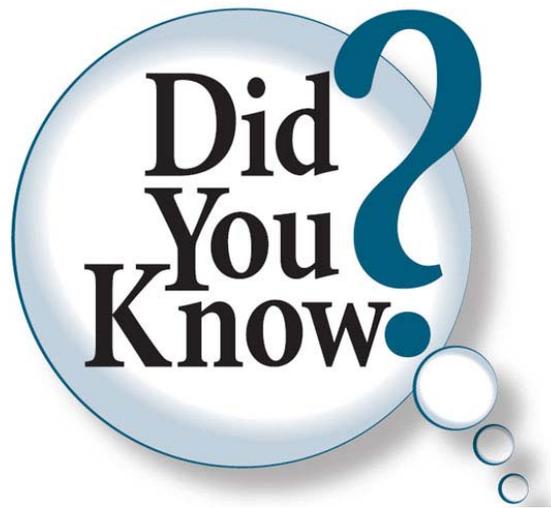
the President's Message

Hello Everyone, The CBS board and its committees have been very busy the past two months preparing for our many events coming up the second half of 2018, our 10th anniversary year.

The Sixth Annual Blues Cruise will feature some new artists along with those you're looking forward to hearing again. The Blues Cruise is our major fundraiser and we've appreciated your support every year. The majority of the funds generated from the Cruise will be going to support our Scholarship and Educational Fund, which is in the final process of filing and will be implemented by year end.

In August, we have our Sixth Annual week at the Cuyahoga County Fair. All the musicians who perform in our tent volunteer their time to support CBS in its effort to promote awareness and appreciation of the Blues. The schedule will be on our website and Facebook (also page 13 of this issue of Blues Notes). Please check out the acts and pick a day to come out and support us. We're also looking for volunteers to help during the band play times.

Please check out the events schedule for all CBS activities through the end of 2018. Everyone on the board is devoting much of their free time to produce these events. We always appreciate your support and volunteers are always welcome. Bill Koteles



CBS has a phone number! It's (216) 533-6298

Another way to contact us is via email:

blues@clevelandblues.org



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You can advertise in our bi-monthly newsletter. Listed below are the rates. Please email Elaine at elainecbs145@gmail.com for more information.

(20% discount if paid annually)

Business Card	\$30/annually
¼ page ad	\$100/annually
½ page ad	\$150/annually
Full page ad	\$175/annually

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YOU ROCK!



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Secretary:	Kris Diehl	Treasurer:	Elaine DeStephano
Board Member:	Susanne Mayer	Board Member:	Bob Dickow
Board Member:	Penny Holycross	Board Member:	Cynthia Seman
Board Member:	Pat Murphy		

Welcome New Board Members



**Cynthia Seman
&
Pat Murphy**



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