Wavelength (June 1982)

Connie Atkinson

University of New Orleans

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Come sound out this fantastic sound system inside a real car at Alterman Audio, Metairie. Unless you hear a car stereo, in a car, you don't know how it sounds. For the best in auto sound, you can’t do better than Sony and Advent.

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"I'm not sure, but I'm almost positive, that all music came from New Orleans."
Ernie K-Doe, 1979

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Cover photo by John Miller

Paramount Pictures presents
Grease

A Robert Stigwood/Allan Carr Production

Starring Maxwell Caulfield - Michelle Pfeiffer

Choreography by Patricia Birch - Executive Producer Bill Oakes

Written by Ken Finkleman - Produced by Robert Stigwood and Allan Carr

Directed by Patricia Birch - Panavision - A Paramount Picture

PG Parental Guidance Suggested

Some material not suitable for children

Grease: Start Friday, June 11

Joy Theatres
Panorama 4
3939 Airline Hwy.
834-4113

Joy Theatres
Cinema City 6
2440 Veterans Boulevard
467-6361

Wrno Theatres
Chalmette Cinema
W. Judge Perez Drive
277-Wrno

Wrno Theatres
Oakridge
1983 Barataria Blvd.
340-Wrno
LETTERS

To The Editor:

In response to J. Fred Riley's letter in the May 1982 issue [WL19] I'd like to bring up a few points. I cannot speak for all soundmen, nor can I respond for the wide cross-section of concert-goers or night clubbers, but soundmen, both locally and nationally, have been caught in the middle ever since the invention of modern P.A. systems, and it's time someone defended their lot.

Most of the soundmen I have worked with, or have met, know of OSHA's S.P.L. regulations and know how to operate analyzers and decibel meters. But, what do you do when a band's manager (you know, the guy who pays you when the gig is over and calls you when he needs a P.A. again) walks up to the board and says "Turn it up!"? You either turn it up or you don't work for that band again.

I am not defending unprofessional soundmen, bands or managers. I am defending serious sound reinforcement companies and the people they employ. These companies work everything from rock 'n' roll bands to beauty pageants. This business is the same as any other business - you have to satisfy the guy who pays you. So, until the entire spectrum of personnel involved in a production are willing to comply with these regulations, I'd suggest Mr. Riley either bring your own earplugs or leave.

Jim Hynel
Partner - Uptown Sound

Dear Homefolk:

On behalf of the members and board of N.A.N.O.M., I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to the Jazz & Heritage Festival Staff for the unbelievably fantastic ten days you put together. In my thirty years in music I can not recall ever having so thoroughly enjoyed a festival.

Having been blessed to experience this event gives me renewed strength in our efforts to perpetuate New Orleans Music and the people who make the music. I know we are right in claiming this unique city to the Heart & Soul of American music.

There are special and personal thanks I must express to several people for the courtesies extended to me as a representative of N.A.N.O.M.: Pat Berry, Larry McKinley, Ellis & Delores Marsalis, Charlie Bering, Tom Dent, Raymond & Shirley Lewis, Joe Segretti, 'Big Time Crip', Curt Jerde, Wavelength, Black Data, Tyler's, Alvin Batiste & Ed 'Kidd' Jordan . . . My sincere apologies to anyone I have missed.

Thanks to all of the very talented Artists, Musicians and Chefs for sharing their gifts with the world. And finally, thanks to the warmest, most hospitable people on the globe . . . the homefolk of New Orleans. I love you all!

Harold Battiste, Jr.

Address letters to Wavelength, P.O. Box 15567, New Orleans, Louisiana 70175. All letters become the property of Wavelength. Back issues may be obtained by sending four dollars to Back Issues, 4020 Magazine St., New Orleans, Louisiana 70175.
CONCERTS

Tuesday, 1
• Wayne Newton, LSU Assembly Center, Baton Rouge.

Friday, 4
• Clash, Warehouse, 8 p.m.
• Johnny Copeland, Old Absinthe Bar, 10 p.m.
• Righteous Brothers, Riverboat President, 10 p.m.

Saturday, 5
• Dave Edmunds, Riverboat President, 10 p.m.

Sunday, 6
• Roy Ayers, Riverboat President, 10 p.m.

Wednesday, 9
• Leon Redbone, Riverboat President, 10 p.m.

Friday, 11
• Jr. Walker and the All-Stars, Richie's 3-D.

Saturday, 12
• Juice Newton, Riverboat President, 10 p.m.

Thursday, 17
• War, Riverboat President, 10 p.m.

Saturday, 19
• Irma Thomas, Riverboat President, 10 p.m.

Thursday, 24
• Johnny Copeland, Tipitina's, 10:30 p.m.

Saturday, 26
• SummerFunk '82, Superdome, 4:00 p.m.

CLUBS

• Beat Exchange, 2300 Chartres, 948-6456. Call for listings.

CONCERT SERIES

• The French Market, 1008 N. Peters Street, 522-2621. Sat. 5: Herman Sherman's Tuxedo Brass Band, Sun. 6: Joe Prejean, Sat. 12: Danny Barker, Sun. 13: Kurt Jerde. Sat. 19: Andrew Hall's Society Jazz Band. All performances 1-3 p.m.
• New Orleans Symphony, Summer Festival 1982, 524-0404. Thurs. 3: Baroque Concert, St. Charles Baptist Church, 8:00 p.m. Sat. 5: Popular Classics, McAllister Auditorium at Tulane, 8:00 p.m. Tues. 8: an open rehearsal of new music, McAllister Auditorium, 7:30 p.m. Thurs. 10: Music for Winds, McAllister Auditorium, 8:00 p.m. Fri. 11: Music for Strings, McAllister Auditorium, 8:00 p.m. Sun. 13: Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, St. Joseph's Church, 1802 Tulane Ave., 4:00.
• Bounty, 1926 West End Park, 282-9144. Wednesdays through Saturdays: Harvey Jesus and Fyre, Sunday, 5-9: Billy Bell and the Dominoes.

NEW ORLEANS SYMPHONY

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SPECIAL ATTRACTION
DAVE EDMUNDS

Sunday, June 6
SPECIAL ATTRACTION
ROY AYERS

Wednesday, June 9
SPECIAL ATTRACTION
LEON REDBONE

Saturday, June 12
SPECIAL ATTRACTION
JUICE NEWTON

Thursday, June 17
SPECIAL ATTRACTION
WAR

Saturday, June 19
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*Hawks, 3027 Jean Lafitte, Chalmette, 277-8245. C&W music, with dance lessons Mondays and Wednesdays 7-9 p.m.

*Hired Hand Saloon, 1100 Clearview Parkway, Harahan, 734-0590. Friday and Saturday, 4 & 5, 11 & 12: River City Band.
*Jimmy's, 8200 Willow St., 861-8200. Fri: The Lost Boys. Sat: 5: The Neville Brothers.

• Luigi's, 6325 Elysian Fields, 283-1592. Music on Wednesdays.

• Luther Kent's 'Till the Rising Sun, 400 Dauphine, 523-8329. Luther Kent and Trick Bag. Thursdays through Sundays 11-4 a.m.


• New Orleans Jazz Hotline, 242-2323. Call for current jazz listings across the city.

• Noah's, 1500 Esplanade, 525-6624. Jazz club.


• Pete Fountain's Club, Hilton Hotel, Poydras at the River, 523-4374. New Orleans' own and world-renowned clarinetist performs one show nightly Tuesday through Saturday at 10 p.m.


• Quarter Note, 721 Hessmer in Fat City. 888-9088. Rock 'n' roll.

JUNE 2—MEMPHIS, 3-5 ST. LOUIS, 6-10—CHICAGO. 16-19—JIMMY'S MUSIC CLUB—23-MR. BOJANGLES. 24-JIMMY'S MUSIC CLUB. 25-27—SHY-ANN'S GULFPORT. 30-RICHIE'S 3-D

JULY 1—JIMMY'S—2-MR. BOJANGLES

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Sir John's, 3232 Edenborn Ave., 887-9858. Rock 'n' roll.

Johnny Copeland at the A Bar June 4 and Tip's 24.


Woody Herman's Club, Poydras Plaza Mall in the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 601 Loyola, 522-8788 or 561-1234. Woody and his Thundering Herd play big band jazz, Monday through Saturday 10 p.m.

Wavelength club and concert listings are available free of charge. Call 895-2342 for information.
Governor’s Conference On Music

On May 15 and 16, the Louisiana Music Commission held its second annual Governor’s Conference on Music. The location of the meeting was Woody Herman’s Club at the Hyatt symbolized the conference’s well intentioned but often misconstrued emphasis. The conference was attended by about 150 assorted songwriters, musicians, media and local music business types. This year’s turnout was low compared to the first one held at Loyola, due probably to dearth of publicity locally and the addition of a $15 dollar attendance fee.

The range of topics and panelists chosen by the commission were, on the surface, impressive. Included were panel discussions on publishing and licensing, music law, mainlly of high-powered attorneys workshop. The panelists consisted of panelists plus executives from record companies plus executives from record companies. Among the best known were Shelby Singleton, president of Sun Records; Rod Buckle, director of Sonet International; Jim Fogelson, president of MCA; and Marshall Sehorn, president of Sea-Start recordings.

Much of the advice given by the panelists was practical, “nothing is standardized in a contract.” Also emphasized was how to get material copyrighted and protected as well as the best way for unknown groups to be heard by major record labels. The conference’s formula “put only two songs on a cassette, clearly label the tunes, enclose a lyric sheet, and address it to a specific executive in the company, otherwise it won’t be opened.”

As useful as a lot of the discussion was, the focus throughout the conference was on the practically impossible task of getting signed up to a major record label such as Polygram or CBS, utilizing top 40 AM radio for promotion. Shelby Singleton injected a voice of realism when he noted that Tennessee Ernie Ford’s “16 Tons” was the singer’s seventeenth song but his first hit. Not only was this the wrong approach for a local audience but the conference ignored avenues that are more likely to bring some success. No mention was made of the growth of the small but aggressive independent labels such as IRS and Slash Records, who have brought such groups as the Go Gos and the Blasters to national attention having utilized the open formats of progressive FM stations.

More on target was the awarding of the Governor’s Award for Outstanding Contribution to Louisiana and World Music to Allen Toussaint. Toussaint, who was in a lighthearted but reflective mood, recounted that the progress of his early years was due to always being called at the last moment to replace somebody. “First for Huey Smith, then Fats Domino, and finallygay for Harold Battiste on Mint Records.”

But it was Sunday night that really saw Allen Toussaint at his best as he played at a benefit for refugees he had never met, given by the friends of the Haitians.

— Shepard Samuels

New Wave Fest In Baton Rouge

An April 18 outdoor festival of Baton Rouge new wave music entitled “Freak At The Greek” provided highly successful despite an afternoon shower.

LSU radio station WPRG presented several local bands including Shitdogs, the Zoomers, The Noise, What-4, and The Times.

The atmospheric reality of all that air, sun, greenery and concrete seats at a LSU Greek Theatre had a diffusing effect on the intensity of some of the afternoon performances. (Punk music begs to be played in your typical dark firetrap.)

The Zoomers’ political bent (“Dute Brown, we challenge you to live our lifestyle!”) matched their sound; pounding, repetitive melodies used as a framework for some inventive, pleasantly reckless guitar acrobatics by front man, George McCutcheon.

The Noise showed up in khaki shorts, bright shirts, and catchy, mod-pop covers (who could forget “I’m Like You,” “I Like It Like That,” Chris Kenner; and “Mother-In-Law,” sung by Ernie K-Doe, which topped the national charts.

— Almost Slim

Golden Moments In New Orleans Rock ’N’ Roll X

June 1961 — Six New Orleans records find their way into Billboard’s Hot 100. “You Always Hurt the One You Love,” Clarence “Frogman” Henry; “But I Do,” also by Frogman; “I’m A Fool To Care,” Joe Barry; “It Keeps Raining,” Fats Domino; “I Like It Like That,” Chris Kenner; and “Mother-In-Law,” sung by Ernie K-Doe, which topped the national charts.

— Margaret Williams

Cajun Dance Contest Airned

The Maple Leaf Bar, which regularly hosts Bourre Cajun Band on Thursday nights, has a very special Cajun program planned for Thursday, June 3. Vickie Cappel, Cox Cable’s producer of the Cajun culture show Rendez-Vous, will be showing her videotape of the Second Annual Cajun Dance Taped at Tipitina’s on March 6, the show ran in April on Cox Cable in Jefferson Parish, and now Orleans residents have a chance to see it. The tape highlights not only the Cajun two-step, but a bit of Cajun lifestyle as well. The twenty-minute program contains contest winners explaining Cajun dance while the video portion shows the contest in progress (the contest preliminaries were held at the Maple Leaf with the final taping at Tipitina’s). Musicians featured on the tape are Zachary Richard, the internationally-known singer and accordion player, and Mike Doucet, one of the top Cajun fiddlers, plus an outstanding backup group.

— Shepard Samuels

Youth Center Opened by Neville

One hour before the festivities were to begin, thundershowers shook the Thirteenth Ward, but Aaron Neville viewed the rain as a blessing upon the realization of a dream, the opening of the Up­town Youth Cultural and Development Center.

The center, which is open every weekday from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m., offers vocational training, tutoring, counseling, crafts, modern dance, and sports activities. Several softball teams have already been formed. As is befitting a Thirteenth Ward establishment, a youth choir has started under the leadership of Richard James, director of the world famous St. Francis De Sales Choir. In addition, Charles Neville and members of the Dirty Dozen Brass Band have offered to teach aspiring musicians. However, more volunteers are needed. Members of any building trade would be especially welcome to help with the vocational training program. Also, college students or anyone with an educational background are needed to enlarge the center’s tutoring capacity. If you’re interested in helping drop by, call 891-7005 or write P.O. Box 5699, New Orleans, LA 70113.

— Shepard Samuels
Behind the Myths and Outright Lies

In which a hometown boy visits the Lone Star State and returns home with strange tales — and some of them are true...

By Bunny Matthews

Saturday night in Austin. You know the story — two cosmic cowboys with hair down to their navels slip into vintage Jim Franklin armadillo t-shirts, smoke a half dozen joints, drink a six-pack of Tecate each, listen to side one of Willie’s (like Elvis or Rod or Paul, his last name need not be mentioned) Red-Headed Stranger four times in a row, smoke another joint — this one rubbed with homemade hash oil — and step outside to look at the moon.

A flying saucer lands and a green alien with four slithery arms emerges from the craft. The alien approaches the cosmic cowboys, making noises somewhat similar to a Throbbing Gristle record and bearing monitoring equipment of electronic sophistication a thousand times more advanced than anything manufactured in Japan.

Quickly analyzing the cowboys as possible biological specimens, the monitoring equipment sputters and registers the stoned gents as “inorganic
LIES ABOUT

mattered. Too mellow, they are rejected and the alien, scratching his wrinkled head with all four hands, boards the flying saucer and departs for Ohio, where his sensors report abundant normalcy.

The cosmic cowboys, who have seen weirder things, scratch their respective shaggy heads and boarding a red '59 Impala with 275,000 miles on the odometer, they drive to Threadgill's Service Station (which is actually a restaurant specializing in — Madison Avenue, beware — "Meat & Vegetables, Bread & Gravy, Pie & Ice Cream"), where they dine on chicken-fried steaks, Texas' tasty answer to New Orleans' oyster po-boys.

After dessert, the cowboys — overcome by nostalgia — drive up the little road to where the long-lost juke joint known as Soap Creek used to be. Nothing remains of the place and the former site is now occupied by someone's suburban backyard. There are tennis courts and hot tubs in the distance.

They step out of the car and a small creature zips across the road in front of them.

"What was that — a jackalope?"

"Nuh uh — looked like one of them French poodles to me."

A woman in a $3,000 bathrobe from Neiman-Marcus switches on her porch light and yells into the warm Texas night: "Fifi! Fifi! Come home! Mama has a nice fajita for you! Fifi!"

The cowboys get back into the Impala and drive off. Fiddling with the radio, the driver locates XERF, the powerful Mexican radio station and former home of Wolfman Jack. Dr. J. Harold Smith's "Radio Bible Hour" is on the air and Dr. Smith is discussing Genesis, the Ark, and God's promise of "Salvation, Security and Supply."

Dr. Smith's creamy voice declares: "Isn't it a strange thing that the animals had more spiritual knowledge and spiritual understanding and more spiritual insight than these wicked, ungodly antediluvians? One of these days, the animals will rise up and condemn you — your dog, your cat will rise up one of these days and condemn you for not accepting Jesus Christ."

The driver turns the dial to Lady Bird Johnson's WLBJ: "Man! That dude was something else!"


The longhorns and the horned toads and the rattlesnakes have all accepted Jesus Christ into their hearts and are waiting to condemn these sinful Texans and the even more sinful Arabs, who are buying up Texas as fast as they can.

The cosmic cowboys drive to the Continental Club, where Tex Thomas and his Dangin' Wranglers are playing.

In an old high school yearbook, stored in a Ft. Worth attic, there's a photo of Lee Harvey Oswald chuckling in front of a case filled with animal skulls. A girl with glasses is pointing her index finger at Lee's chin.

In Glen Rose, there are houses and buildings constructed from petrified wood. Not far away, there are dinosaur tracks in the bed of a river and two life-sized fiberglass dinosaurs coralled behind barbed-wire.

Most of the way from Ft. Worth to Austin, you can't buy beer but every town has its Dairy Queen (there are 981 in Texas) and there are posters offering cash for armadillo skins in good condition.

Outside of Ft. Worth, more or less in the middle of nowhere, there is an out-
door air museum with "Hound Dog" nuclear warheads, World War II bombers and the sort of helicopters used to fry the gooks in Vietnam. Like most of Texas, the place is very neat, orderly and Protestant. A crew of workers touches up the defunct weaponry with fresh paint and, once in a while, a family of tourists stumbles upon the site, which is positively eerie.

In the basement of the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art in Ft. Worth is an "obscene" painting by Charles Russell, one of the masters of cowboy art. Formerly the property of a saloon, the painting shows an Indian tepee with a group of squaws cooking over a fire. There is a mechanically-controlled flap on the tepee and when the flap is pulled back, a cowboy is revealed — mounted atop an Indian maiden and giving her, in the subtle words of Robert Plant, every inch of his love. A little dog with a pink erection waits in the corner.

The Amon Carter Museum has never exhibited the painting and probably never will. A curator admits that the work is something of an embarrassment and that the museum, for the right amount of money, would be glad to part with the piece. The right amount is approximately $500,000.

At the Blue Bird, a bonafide roadhouse catering to blacks and adventurous young whites in Ft. Worth, one woman shoots another woman six times in front of the bandstand as the Juke Jumpers are playing. When the police arrive, the woman guilty of the shooting is still hanging around the parking lot but no one points her out, preferring to mind their own business.

At a flea market held every Saturday at the Ft. Worth Stockyards, an old man is selling signs for $20 that read "No Dogs, Negroes Or Mexicans." Dogs are abundant in Texas, blacks are kept in their place and Mexicans make up a third of the population.

In Austin, there are almost 50 clubs offering nightly doses of live music — from polkas to hardcore punk. The girls are blondes. You do not see as many cowboy hats as you do in Gretna or Harahan. You do not stare at the boys unless you want to fight. At 2 a.m., everything closes.

The dogs, waiting in the backs of pick-up trucks, howl. Tomorrow morning, Willie Nelson is Phil Donahue's guest. The cosmic cowboys, last seen at Studio 29 trying to pick up a trio of 16-year-old Mohawked punk girls in Cub Scout uniforms, wake up in time to see the show but can't get any volume on their TV set.

"Jesus H. Christ! Willie's on nationwide TV and we can't hear a damn word he's saying! Ain't that a piece of cowshit!"

They will later toss the TV in the Colorado River and eat a horrible breakfast at the International House of Pancakes.

The bluebonnets, which carpet the banks of every Texas highway but are almost impossible to grow in one's home garden, would've driven Cezanne crazy.
SOME VERY IMPROBABLE,
MOST UNSTEREOTYPICAL
TEXANS

By Bunny Matthews and Christina Patoski

STANDING WAVES

"We've wanted to come to New Orleans for a while," says Roland Swenson, manager of Austin's Standing Waves. "But frankly, every band I've ever talked to that went down there got burned. I don't like getting burned — it bothers me."

"The way I look at it, it's one thing to take a chance and drive a couple of hours to do a gig where you might get burned but to drive eight hours to New Orleans and stay overnight — we'd rather tour the East Coast."

Although Standing Waves (imagine the Cold with less formulated pop and more intriguing, wittier lyrics) have yet to play the Birthplace of Jazz, the band has played New York a dozen times and toured the East three times in 1980 before the departure of founding member Dave Cardwell (now in the Lift), who started the group in 1978 with guitarist/vocalist Larry Seaman and his Ukrainian girlfriend, keyboardist Shona Lay.

The present edition of Standing Waves features Seaman, Lay, bassist/vocalist Bruce Henderson and drummer David Dage. The first edition of the band had a brief role in the film 'Roadie' (starring Meatloaf and Blondie; the movie died at the box office) and the latest edition has released a highly notable six-song EP entitled Vertigo on the band's Classified Records label (available nationally through JEM Records or from Classified Records, P.O. Box 49431, Austin, Texas 78765). "The only three decent places to play in Texas are Dallas, Austin and Houston," according to Swenson, "and Dallas and Houston aren't that great."

Despite the Waves' popularity in their hometown, Swenson attempts to avoid overexposure by booking them no more than twice or three times a month in Austin. The band's favorite Austin gig, hands down, is at the excellent Club Foot, owned by millionaire theatre chain impresario John Byrd.

To support themselves financially, the band members and Swenson hold various day gigs: Shona Lay works as a waitress at a restaurant, Larry Seaman does "prep work" (cutting up chickens and breading oysters) at the same place and Swenson is employed as lieutenant to Joe "King" Carrasco. "Joe Nick has been a true inspiration," explains Swenson. "The main thing I've learned from him is how to talk to people on the phone. He knows when to scream and he knows when to sweet-talk. He can talk to anybody — even if he doesn't have anything to say to them."

"One thing I've learned is that contracts are just paper. You can have the greatest contract in the world but unless you've got a lot of money and are ready to spend a long time in court, it's just paper.

"A lot more bands have investors than they used to. There's a lot more interested parties moving in all of a sudden. Most of them are legit businessmen with a lot of taxes to pay. They want a return but at the same time, it's all just money they would pay in taxes if they didn't invest. To me, that's the dangerous thing about investors — since it's not really going to hurt them that much if they lose it. When they lose interest, they'll say, 'Oh well, that didn't work out.' Their lives are not on the line like the musicians' are."
What do Austin blues guitarist Charlie Sexton's eighth grade classmates think of his extracurricular activities?

"They don't know what to think," 13-year-old Charlie confesses. "They don't like the way I wear my hair. They're all wearing Izod and I come in there wearing an Aus-Tex Lounge t-shirt. They flip-out."

Charlie, whose accompanists have included the Fabulous Thunderbirds, the Cobras, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Joe Ely, a belly-dancer and his bass-playing younger brother Will, dedicated himself to the art of Guitar Slim and Jimmy Reed (two of his favorite practitioners) at a very tender age: "I was just around it and picked it up. I've been going to clubs since I was 3 or 4. My mom would take me. Soap Creek or the Armadillo didn't mind. Everything was cool and dandy. I just started playing. People would teach me stuff."

"I was with W.C. Clark — he got me where I am now. He's a black guy who started off playing with Angela Streibli in Southern Feeling. He plays guitar and bass and does Al Green imitations."

"He had known about me for a while. Then I played out at Soap Creek one Sunday with the Cobras and he saw me. W.C. came up to me and said, 'Why don't you come out Tuesday and play with me and make 25 bucks?' I said, 'Golly!' I'd never made any money before. I'd just go out and play — I'd have four strings on my guitar and I'd borrow strings to play."

"W.C. just picked me up and we started playing the Continental every Tuesday. We did that for about a year. I was 11."

At the age of 9, Charlie momentarily strayed from the Path and formed a band called Chains, heavy on the Kiss covers. His godfather, bassist Speedy Sparks, sped to the rescue with Little Richard records. Charlie was overwhelmed: "I said, 'My god — what have I been missing?'"

JOHNNY RENO

Born in Hungry, Arkansas, saxophonist Johnny Reno is the nephew of early rockabilly star Lloyd Marley, a collector of vintage cars (particularly large-finned Cadillacs), and without a doubt, one of the most stylish men on the Texas music circuit.

His threads, primarily of the Eisenhower era, fill a neat closet as large as some folk's apartments and it is a well-known fact that his arrival on the Texas scene caused a new awareness of good grooming.

"You should've seen these people in bands before I started playing in Austin," Johnny says, "They were all a bunch of slob. Thanks to the dapper Mr. Reno, the slob's are now dabbing their hair with pomade, easing their toes into two-toned wing-tipped brogans and encasing their beer bellies in rayon Hawaiian shirts depicting Waikiki Beach at its wackiest.

Johnny, who most often performs with the Juke Jumpers and who has recorded with Kenny Wayne, Ray Sharpe, Anson Funderburgh and the Rockets, the Millionaires and Robert Easley, is scheduled to join Lou Ann Barton's touring ensemble this summer. Several years back, the reedman was part of Double Trouble, which featured the wild Ms. Barton and Stevie Ray Vaughan, who is quite serious about being the reincarnation of Jimi Hendrix.

Last year at Yuletide, Johnny Reno released his first solo effort — a seasonal 45 with "Boogie Woogie Santa Claus" on the A-side and "Blues Before Christmas" on the flip. Roll over, Charles Brown, and tell Giorgio Armani the news! — B.M.

BILLY PROBLEMS

Billy Problems' real name is Billy Pringle but back in 1978, he formed a band called the Boy Problems and he's been stuck with the cheesy stage name ever since. After the Boy Problems came the Inserts and in 1981, Billy formed the Jitters.

Terry Laird is the Jitters' female and ferocious drummer; she appeared in New Orleans in 1981 with Ace's 88 at the "Burn Your Sunglasses" dance held at the Contemporary Art Center.

The Jitters play music for slamming. In New Orleans, slamming often seems the sole province of husky heavyweight males with concentration camp hair-dos. In Austin (most notably at Studio 29, a dance studio rented out to bands and amateur promoters), the slamming are more equally divided sexually and the slamming is good-natured stuff with more sweat shed than blood.

Besides the Jitters, other favorites of the kids with studded wristbands are the Dicks, the Big Boys (who are indeed big), the Buffalo Gals, the Skunks, the Explosives, the superbly-named Rustoleum and Jerryskids, who recently celebrated their first anniversary at Studio 29. Among the festivities, Jerryskids' lead singer, Chris Wing, stepped up to the microphone and announced: "The next one is a song we probably shouldn't play in this place." The song was "Peggy Sue" and Buddy Holly, the closest thing to God in Texas, was surely chuckling in Heaven. — B.M.
Dave Hickey writes with a scalpel. An outspoken critic-at-large in both popular music and high brow art circles, Hickey has had a number of successful careers. "Whatever you can write and get paid for, I've probably written it at one time or another."

He abandoned a Ph.D. scholarship in English at the University of Texas just short of his dissertation, to become a contemporary arts dealer. "I wanted to get away from all the assholes at the university." During the 1960s Hickey's gallery, "a clean, well-lighted place," exhibited the work of young Texas artists who were to become mainstays in the developing art scene. Hickey moved to New York City in the early Seventies and eventually left art dealing to become the executive editor of Art in America magazine. He also started spending time in Nashville. "It was a relief from fashion fads."

All young Texas boys have two choices in which to make their mark: you make the football team or you take up the guitar. Hickey opted for the guitar, years before he got to Nashville. The more time he spent in Nashville, the more he moved in the direction of musical pursuits. He started writing country songs and joined Waylon Jennings and Tompall Glaser as partners in a music publishing company. "If I write anything I have to feel like I like the audience. And that's why I quit writing short stories, because I didn't like the people who read short stories. I'd rather write songs for everyday people. That's harder."

But the sharp, critical wit of Dave Hickey didn't rest idle. Hickey wrote popular music criticism during the next four years for The Village Voice, Creem magazine, Rolling Stone, Penthouse, and Country Music magazine. It was a good way to learn about the music business and get paid for it. In the meantime, Dr. Hook recorded a Hickey song, "Cookie and Lila," which paid for some of the bills. Bobby Bare, as well as Marshall Chapman, laid down Hickey tracks.

In 1977 Dave Hickey came home to Texas to concentrate entirely on songwriting. "Songs are things you write for other people, so you can judge their success by the degree to which they identify with them. If you write a poem, and nobody likes it, it's still a poem. But if you write a popular song and it's not popular, it's not anything."

In his private eight-track recording studio, Hickey churns out rock songs, country songs, funky songs, songs for all occasions. "Combat Dreams" is a long-term project Hickey shares with writing partner Mike Wafer. It's a group of songs about World War II. "We decided that World War II had everything but rock 'n' roll, so we just did rock 'n' roll songs."

"He missed a vein In the passing lane But he hit it in a roadside park But that ain't all it took to chase the devil down Just like a dirty book, He's morocco bound. Tigers in the snow..."

"1982 Factory Girl Music Co.

What's in a good song? Hickey says you have to be able to dance to it, it has to have a good melody and have a title you can say over and over again at the end, and of course, you've got to have a story line; that's what holds it together. The lyrics are the least important element.

For Dave Hickey life in the provinces has its pitfalls. "I just can't orient my life to getting jobs behind The Rhinestone Cowboy and pretend like I'm a big star. The music business is a competitive business; you're supposed to win, you're not supposed to have buddies. It's not a fucking fraternity, which is what it is around here. I think it should be more competitive."

Hickey works hard at his craft. The big payoff has yet to come, but that doesn't keep him from trying to write the best songs he can. "I'm ruthless about it. I just want to be the best, and I didn't realize that was so strange down here. If you try too hard, you aren't cool. Everybody is mainly worried about looking cool to their friends. If you're going to be the best, you ain't gonna look cool to your friends. You get on the elevator and there isn't anyone to talk to. I miss the intensity of people really trying."

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THE LEROI BROTHERS

They call their music "Southern-fried teen trance trashabilly." It's Donnie Ray Leady on lead guitar and vocals, with Steve "Flip" Doerr on rhythm guitar and vocals, rounded out by Mike "Buck" Buck (ex-Fabulous Thunderbird) on drums. These guys can stretch out a joint without the benefit of a bass line, cranking out original tunes like "Baby, Give Me A Toy" and "Tom Cat."

"Boys will be boys, and brothers are no exception," is the saying, and these darlings of the rough-and-tumble set put it to the test, making international music news with a raucous on-stage ruckus between two of the bubbas, leaving one in a leg cast, and the other with a broken nose . . . not to mention some damaged equipment. But the on-stage tension works to their advantage most of the time. I can't wait for a showdown between these guys and the Blue Vipers.

Watch out if they launch into "Tear It Up" — Leroi Brothers fans have been known to take audience participation to the limit on this one, ending in some unforgettable melee. Their E.P. on Amazing Records covers "Rockin' Daddy" and "Moon Twist" as well as their own "Chicken and Honey" and "Check This Action." An album of material with guest artists Keith Ferguson (Fabulous Thunderbirds) on bass and Kris Cummings (Joe King Carrasco) on organ, has been mixed and is waiting to be pressed.

The Leroi Brothers sporadically publish a trash newsletter with great graphics called the "Rag Rap" with "all the news you need to put you on The Rag." Write to: 91 S. 5th Street, Austin, Texas 78704.

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C.P.
LEGENDARY STARDUST COWBOY

Norman Odam was hitchhiking through Fort Worth on his way to New York City in 1967 and through an unlikely series of events, he ended up in the Clifford Herring recording studios where he laid down his still legendary composition “Paralyzed.” Mercury Records picked it up, touting it as “the world’s worst record.” Rolling Stone writer Charles Young, however, listed it as one of the ten best records of all time. “Paralyzed” was an international hit and the Legendary Stardust Cowboy was born.

Odam landed an appearance on the Laugh-In comedy television show. Remember, these were the times of Tiny Tim tip-toeing through the tulips. But the performing career of the Ledge, as novel as it might have been, pretty much came to a grinding halt. It was back to Texas where he worked in a series of night security jobs, made a few public appearances as the Cowboy, but it was a road that led to Las Vegas where he still seeks eventual fame and fortune.

The Legendary Stardust Cowboy considers himself a romanticist, counting Rod McKuen as his favorite poet and Barry Manilow as his favorite singer. The Lubbock native carries the tradition of the Dada concentrating on what he calls “spacecadelic” themes, with song titles like “Radar!” and “I Took A Trip On The Space Shuttle.”

This guy is for those who thought they had heard it all. As a performer, the Ledge can be assaultive; he pelted the audience with autographed paper plates during his last performance. And he doesn’t so much as sing his original lyrics as he yells them, in an almost plaintive monotone, followed by an occasional riff on his bugle. This musical idiot savant doesn’t bother with key signatures and meter, but is rather best approached as a songwriter, although I doubt anyone could do more justice to his songs than he.

"There’s a T.V. dinner all over my boot,
My spurs got caught in a bowl of soup,
I ran out of bologna now,
I have to eat my pony,
I’m standing in a trashcan,
Thinking about you.
Paralyzed!"

- C.P.

THE JUDYS

This New Wave trio walks away with the “Best Props” award. The Judys incorporate pots and pans, walkie-talkies, television sets, an ironing board, blenders and a vacuum cleaner into the traditional rock instrumentation of bass, drums, guitar and piano. The line-up includes Dane Cessac on drums and assorted kitchenware, Jeff Walton on bass, and brain-child David Bean on lead vocals, guitar and keyboards. These boys all still live at home in Pearland, Texas, just outside Houston and court the “surf wimp” look in matching striped mock turtleneck shirts.

The Judys music doesn’t exactly make you want to break out into an uncontrollable Watusi, but it’s got a good, upbeat pop sound, matched by witty stage visuals. The songs are very short, with simple lyrics and melody lines. The subject matter borders on the perverse. “Joey the Mechanical Boy” is the true story of a nine-year-old boy who can’t handle the world and retreats to the mechanical things around him. During this song lead-singer Bean plays on a set of tom-toms which are lined with illuminated household electrical lightbulbs, and accents the end of the song by rhythmically smashing each bulb. On “Guyana Punch” Bean calmly drinks red punch.

When 20-year-old David Bean isn’t attending business classes at the University of Houston, he’s probably writing new Judys material to add to the other sixty tunes on their current song list. Their earliest effort in the studio entitled “The Wonderful World of Appliances” was followed by an album Washarama, both on the Judys own Wasted Talent label. Write: 2111 Cedar, Pearland, Texas 77581. Although the Judys supposedly played their last gig at the end of May, some form of the group will be recording a new album in June.

- C.P.
THE TEXAS KID

Willard Watson, better known as the Texas Kid, lives a short distance from Dallas' Love Field airport in a home guaranteed to cause the slamming of brakes and rampant rubbernecking — a home that is the Texas version of the defunct Four Flags Over Leone's In Marrero (the full name of the West Bank's greatest lost cultural site) or the Ninth Ward's Saturn Bar.

The Texas Kid, a seventh son, is now with his seventh wife and as he explains: "The wife I have encourages me. Of course, when I first fixed my yard up she cried because I used to have a real beautiful green lawn."

What the Kid and his spouse currently have — instead of lush St. Augustine — are gold life-size replicas of the Venus de Milo, stuffed gorillas, robots, rock gardens and a window set in the front door that is shaped like the state of Texas. In the backyard, the Kid plans to construct a tornado-proof recreation of Dodge City.

"I had seven wives," the Kid says, "and as a person I've accumulated more money. The seventh son is always the black sheep of the family. My family very seldom comes over here unless it's to ask for something. I'm proud to be the seventh child because I'm the luckiest one.

"I'm not kidding you, I have needed money and I have laid on the couch and asked God to let me meet my obligations. And before a person could cut my lights or water off, I'd made a piece of money."

"I've been robbed three times and nearly killed. I've had 82 stitches here across my nose. Stabbed in the back and I've been shot at nine different times. I've been cut at and had to leave my coat three or four times. I can truthfully say that by me being the seventh child, it saved me.

The Kid's initial training in parapsychological activities came at the hand of a Spanish man named Mr. Dan and his two associates, Dr. Woods and Mr. Ralph: "Mr. Dan — he throwed himself to the Devil and he wanted me to be one of his followers. He didn't want me to throw myself to the Devil but he wanted me to be a forerunner for him. But I wouldn't do it.

"He explained a great deal of things to me like if a person don't drink, I can walk in the kitchen and get something and I can make you call me if I know which way you're looking down there and left 'em because I was embarrassed of 'em. They were at the Contemporary Arts Center (at Mardi Gras) and Mr. Philip Carter (Mississippi publishing heir) have 'em now.

"I've been drawing but my wives kept me from it. My work is in museums and everywhere else. I've been on TV about eight times."

Willard Watson was born 61 years ago in Pawhatan, 18 miles outside of Shreveport: "Now that's what you call a 'Good Timing Town' — it's only good for Thursday through Saturday. That's where you have balls and everything else — I'm talking about just falling out there. Gambling wide-open."

A descendant of Mississippi Choctaws, the Kid's maternal grandfather was a full-blooded Indian: "I'm the only one in the family that really has the Indian features and that's because I'm the seventh child. Now people don't understand — and I don't understand neither — but I'm the only seventh child that lived. My mother had two that died."

Traditionally, seventh sons are capable of a variety of extrasensory feats and the Texas Kid brandishes hoodoo powers as mighty as any Obeahman's: "I can look at a person and hurt you. I can see ghosts. I can tell you not to go somewhere because if you go somewhere, something's going to happen to you. You might not get killed, but something's going to happen to you."

"I'm the most fortunate person in my family. I've always accumulated more money. The seventh son is always the black sheep of the family. My family very seldom comes over here unless it's to ask for something. I'm proud to be the seventh child because I'm the luckiest one."

"I'm not kidding you, I have needed money and I have laid on the couch and asked God to let me meet my obligations. And before a person could cut my lights or water off, I'd made a piece of money."

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because your mind will be disturbed. You see, I used to nag a girlfriend to death about it because she wouldn't drink. I'd be in there and be lonesome or something and I'd go in the kitchen and I could say something which doesn't hurt you but it just disturb your mind.

"All of these people talk about witchcraft and stuff like that. So much of it is right because I can do so much of it myself. If anyone comes in my house and I don't want 'em here no more, I can stop that. In other words, they didn't teach me nothing to hurt nobody but they could teach me enough to protect myself."

Before his current renown as the unofficial dean of Texas folk artists, the Kid was employed by Arthur Murray as a dance instructor: "During those times, blacks and whites couldn't mix so they would teach me how to dance and I would teach the blacks how to dance. So I'm a great dancer.

"I can do the Samba, the Old Black Joe — whatever dance you want to do, I can do it right now. I can't do ballet but the waltz and ballroom dance — I can do all of them. A long time ago, they used to have the New Orleans Stomp. A lady came up from New Orleans — it was at least 20 years ago — and she danced with me because I could do the New Orleans Stomp with her. I don't have a specialty — it can be the blues or whatever it is. If it's Belly-Rubbing, I can do it. If it's hand-dancing or the Twist — whatever it is.

"They consider me a celebrity but I don't know because the same money I'm making now I was making a long time ago. The doors are more open for me. The majority of celebrities get macho — they think they're above this and that. Remember: the public makes you. A celebrity is supposed to be humble. A great deal of them wear dark glasses because they don't want to be annoyed but that's the price you pay for being a celebrity.

"My artwork is maybe different but remember if I don't sell none of it, I don't get nothing. I have shows at galleries but I can show it out of my house.

"Folk art started from Africa. What I work with is nothing but a knife and a file. I get blisters in my hands doing my little stuff. I don't pay nothing for what I do — I just go ahead on. If I need some paint, I go out there and get me some enamel paint. It'll hold up just like any other paint. It won't fade away."

— B.M., C.P.
In the five or so years since he migrated to New Orleans from New Jersey, saxophonist Tony Dagradi has made a far-reaching impact on the contemporary jazz scene in the city. The diversity of bands that Dagradi has contributed to in those years has given him a pool of musical ideas that manifest themselves in a playing and compositional style that is continually fresh and positive. On the R&B end of the spectrum, Dagradi was heard in Professor Longhair's band the year preceding Longhair's death, and is on Longhair's *Crawfish Fiesta* album. In the area of collective improvisation and experimentation, Dagradi is heard regularly with Ramsey McLean and the Lifers.

Dagradi appreciates his wide variety of musical experiences and attributes his track record to luck. "I guess I have been really lucky," he says. "A few months after I arrived here, I just started hooking up with all of these people. It's been great. The city has been good to me. I expect to be staying around here for awhile."

Falling somewhere between Fess and Ramsey is Astral Project, a group of musicians who have been playing together for about as long as Dagradi has been in the city. If empathy among musicians means anything at all, it lives and breathes in Astral Project. Just as Dagradi has exposed himself to different musical settings, keyboardist David Torkanowsky, bassist Jim Singleton, drummer John Vidacovich, and percussionist Mark Sanders bring to the Project benefits of association with other currently working groups. With the constant input of fresh ideas and emotions, and the familiarity derived from playing together for several years, Astral Project can only be a winning proposition. Also evident in the band, present on several levels, is subtlety and simplicity.

Besides the album with Longhair, Dagradi has recorded, as group leader with New York musicians, a record called *Oasis*, and is in the horn section on Carla Bley's recent *Social Studies* album.

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*Lunar Eclipse* is the vinyl premiere for Astral Project, and as such, displays an astonishing degree of maturity in the playing and in the mix. It is rare that music with so much feeling and depth can come out of studio recording, with the band not having had the benefit of an audience. The tracks here, though, have basically been recorded straight with overdubs used to great advantage and mostly, as Dagradi says, "...for orchestration. The basic sense of what we did was real live, and that's the way I like to record. When you lay down the rhythm tracks and then go back and lay down the solos, it can get too slick sometimes. I think we got a real nice live thing happening on this record." At no point in the record does the fabric become too thick.

*Lunar Eclipse* has some significant differences from *Oasis*. Immediately evident is the longer length of the tracks, which allow Dagradi, and to a lesser extent, Torkanowsky, space that was not afforded the players on *Oasis*. The actual sound reaching the listener's ears is different, too. *Oasis* was mastered with no detectable reverb, giving it a very dry sound, whereas *Lunar Eclipse* has more presence and cushion. The biggest difference, though, is that Dagradi is involved in a growth process, and *Eclipse* is an all-around more powerful musical statement.

All six tunes on *Eclipse* are Dagradi compositions with melodies that are obvious products of Dagradi's striving for simplicity. "I tend to write things that are easy to play," he says. "I try to get as few notes as possible in the main theme so that the basic idea is there and when you go to improvise, then that's when you can do all of your elaborating. That's where your im-

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Whereas Oasis has African influences, four tunes on Eclipse have distinctive Latin rhythms. While the playing on Eclipse is definitely teamwork, Dagradi is the star, and asserts himself as deserving of that status. His tone is warm and bold, comparable to that of Rollins, but with a more sensitive command of dynamics. There is a positive buoyancy and a lack of frustration in his playing, the musical reflections of a person into awareness, expansion, and growth.

Dagradi's approach to developing his life outside of music and consciousness is in a very positive direction. This feeling is present in Oasis and is more evident in Lunar Eclipse.

One highlight of the LP is the title track, "Lunar Eclipse". It has a slow, meditative introduction, evoking mental images of planetary movement, then moves into an electric, funky body. Dagradi says that the decision as to what to name the album was made for him by fate. This tune was actually written and named eight years ago. When it was discovered that there was to be a lunar eclipse during the period Astral Project was scheduled to record, the session was arranged so that this track, which had already been slated for the album, would be recorded during the eclipse. Since parts of Oasis were also recorded during a lunar eclipse, the name for this LP was a natural.

Fans of Dagradi's soaring lyricism will rejoice in his playing soprano sax over a bass clarinet track on "Eclipse." Hearing Dagradi improvise with himself is a double treat. Torkanowsky, in addition to playing on acoustic, overdubs some stimulating ideas on electric keyboards here.

"Heart to Heart" is the album's only traditional jazz ballad, and is offered with a few tempo changes. Although Jim Singleton has no solos on the album, his big, round notes were well recorded here and are a reminder of his standing as the preeminent jazz bassist in New Orleans.

"Third Whirl" is a fast moving, Brazilian/Caribbean-influenced tune that allows Sanders to shine. Again, the word "subtlety" must be applied here. In spite of several percussion overdubs, "Whirl" is not a percussion extravaganza. It is a showpiece for a percussionist with intellectual understanding of the instruments and their heritage, and a great degree of emotional involvement in the music.

The remaining two tunes can best be described as up-tempo mainstream jazz. For those who have heard and enjoyed Astral Project live, this record is recommended as a statement of just how far the group has come. To those not familiar with the band, I can only add that the ambience in this music is comparable to early Spyro Gyra (circa 1978). But this is not ambient jazz. I was not able to merely have these tracks playing in the background. The music, the playing, the ideas command attention.
Somewhere between rock ‘n’ roll and blues, funk and comedy, ballads and early heavy metal, Bo Diddley is the original rock ‘n’ roll maverick with more influences than Ol’ Man River. As he told Michael Lydon in the book Boogie Lightning, some of his most potent influences came on the day he was born:

“‘I’m what you call a black Frenchman, a Creole. All my people are from New Orleans, the bayou country. Just like Fats. French, African, Indian, all mixed up. I like gumbo, dig? Hot sauces, too. That’s where my music comes from, all the mixture. Some people are known for this, some for that. Mix ‘em and it can get weird, hah!’

In New Orleans recently, Bo Diddley (a/k/a Elias McDaniel) talked about his life.

“Well, I was born in McComb, Mississippi — right up the highway here. My mother’s still here. She’s got two — one’s a rock ‘n’ roller and one’s a minister — which is great, you know. Heh! Heh! Heh!”

At age seven, McDaniel moved with his aunt to Chicago, where he received twelve years of classical violin lessons (he still knows “Hungarian Dance No. 5”).

Raised with a strict Baptist upbringing, Bo watched a different kind of church on the sly:

“I kind of hung around the sanctified church — roly holy or poly church, or somein’-a-ruther. Man, they used to really boogie. They jammed in there, man.”

Bo wised up in a hurry out on the street, where uncensored versions of the insults

WWOZ, 90.7 FM presents a special on Bo Diddley Saturday, June 26 at 3:30 p.m. Tune in!
he exchanged with Jerome Green in the
1959 hit "Say Man" ("The stork who
brought you into the world oughta be
arrested!") could get deadly serious:
"When I was coming up in Chicago we
didn't play those games with one another.
You only did come up with stuff like that
when you kinda had it in for somebody.
Then ya'll might get to cuttin' each other
down and at the end of it somebody might
get a little too heavy with the other one.
And they start bringin' their mothers and
daddies into it — rhymes and stuff like
this. And you get a brick dropped on your
head."
Bo got away from the violin and his
band instrument, the trombone, when he
heard some more worldly sounds. "When
I was a little kid I heard John Lee Hooker
with a tune called 'Boogie Chillun' .. I
said, 'If that dude can play, I know durn
well I can.' My sister bought me a guitar
and here I am."
Playing on the street corner and
eventually in clubs, Bo struggled through
the early Fifties to support his wife and
baby until he discovered Chess Records
was around the corner, whereupon in
1955 he cut one of the all-time classic
R&B records "Bo Diddley," with Jerome
Green's primeval maracas harkening back
to darkest Africa, backed with the
ominous "I'm a Man."
Although Bo insists that there "wasn't
anything meant by
it" and "it was mostly
a comical thing," you can sense the
frustration and barely restrained violence
behind "I'm a Man," with Bo spelling
out the black man's definitive statement
literally and with every beat, like a
hammer hitting the nail on the head.
"I'm a Man" proved so powerful that
Chess made it into a hit again just three
months later under the title "Mannish
Boy" by the man who inspired it, Muddy
Waters, and it has since been recorded by
the Rolling
Stones, the Who, and the
Yardbirds.
Bo Diddley's first concert after making
the record was in the place where he got
his roots - New
Orleans
—at the Dew
Drop Inn for two nights with Howling
Wolf. On the way they got lost, had
blowouts, breakdowns, tickets from Southern
policemen, and got put in jail, but once
here they stayed at the Shalamar Hotel
and had a good time:
"I bought one of those big
travelails - stagecoach, they called it - De
Sotos. It had a rack on the top of it.
Beautiful automobile, six cylinder, but a
gas monster. When we got the job we
drove from Chicago to here, we started to
play, we played, and we paid the band
off ... and we made it back home with
about 15 cents, you know, 'cause we had
a
ball!"
Another song that Bo did that was both
a personal and a social statement was
Willie Dixon's "You Can't Judge a Book
by the Cover," which came out in the
midst of civil rights activism in 1962.
As Bo says, "it's a true thing":
"I had this happen to me. I didn't say
nothin'. I knew what was happenin' when
I didn't get a salesman out there quick
enough to ask me 'Can I help you, sir?'
You know what I did? I walked out of the
doors, walked directly straight across the
street to the DeSoto dealer, me and my dirty pants I had on. And walked out the door and all four of them was standin' up in the window lookin'. So I'm pretty sure somebody got fired at the Dodge dealer. That was in 1957."

Despite his seminal influence on rock 'n' roll, Bo never enjoyed corresponding success, partly because, like the song, he was judged for his image - Big Bad Bo with the square guitar, who named songs with the square guitar, who named songs like doo wop hit "I'm Sorry" backed by the Moonglows; a calypso number like "Crackin' Up," which was featured by the Rolling Stones on their last tour; hilarious streetcorner raps like "Cops and Robbers" and "Say Man" with the great Jerome Green (whose whereabouts are unknown today even to Bo); or Bo's sadomasochistic guitar licks, years before Hendrix's "Third Stone from the Sun." A Fifties classic that almost no one knows, or would even dream, that Bo had anything to do with is the lilting calypso "Love Is Strange" by Mickey & Sylvia:

"I wrote under the name of 'Ethel Smith' - that was my wife's maiden name. During the time I wrote the tune I didn't know whether Chess Records could snatch stuff that I wrote, or was entitled to it. And they did try to get it. If it had been in my name I think they would have got it - but I put it in her name and they couldn't touch it."

Today Bo tours here and in Europe, but has finally moved back down South to Florida, where he is building a home movie and recording studio. He is working with a group of musicians (including his two daughters) on a movie appropriately titled "I Put the Rock in Roll.

Bo Diddley did put his own potent brew of gumbo in rock 'n' roll - a big beat, with honesty, humor, a little gospel, a little blues, a little streetcorner, and a little old-fashioned voodoo, best displayed in the eerie "Who Do You Love":

"I was in Kansas City when I wrote that. There was a buncha little kids signifyin' with each other - chasin' each other, throwin' rocks at each other, talkin' about each other's parents. Little bitty dudes! And the language they were using! I looked out the window and I was watching these cats. One would run out the alley and he'd stand and holler something back to the other and throw a rock. I grabbed the melody that they had to it, and wrote lyrics that went with it:

I walked 47 miles of barbed wire,
Use a cobra snake for a necklace,
I got a tombstone hand
And a graveyard mind,
Just 22 and I don't mind dyin'.

Part of that tune is from a lyric that came out of a song of Muddy Water's: 'I have a tombstone hand and a ball and chain'...

"And I'm tellin' this chick, 'Who do you love, me or him?' That's what I'm saying. And I'm tellin' her how bad I am so she can go and tell the cat that she's hangin' with. 'This dude is something else!' That's what it kinda meant. Heh! Heh! Cat ridin' rattlesnakes and stuff like that! And kissin' boa constrictors! Heh! Heh! Heh!"

"I'm Sorry"

That's what it kinda meant. Heh!

---

**After Inventory Clearance Sale**

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JUNE 1982

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Monday
ENJOY SHEILA'S FRESH COOKIES & PASTRIES

Tuesday
1
THE ECHOES

Wednesday
2
JIMMY BALLERO AND RENEGADE (upnorth premier formerly with Neville Bros.)

Thursday
3
KUSH (up & coming local reggae)

Friday
4
ZACHARY RICHARD (zydeco-rock)

Saturday
5
GATEMOUTH BROWN (blues with a twang)
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By Almost Slim

Mason Ruffner and the Blues Rockers

Hard-driving Texas blues guitar can be found as close as the French Quarter.

The gaudiness of Bourbon Street and the 544 Club is quite a contrast to the downhome atmosphere of Fort Worth's Bluebird Night Club. But every weekend the blues sound that was developed in roadhouses like the Bluebird brings people in droves to the 544 to hear the amazing Mason Ruffner and The Blues Rockers.

No Johnny-Come-Lately, or ordinary shit kickin' southern boogie band guitarist, Mason and his guitar can sting with the same intensity of a blistering T-Bone Walker or Freddie King solo.

A native of Fort Worth, Ruffner apprenticed with a number of Texas R&B combos including the legendary Robert Ealey. Ruffner moved to New Orleans "by accident" four years ago.

As a teen, Ruffner was drawn to the blues after hearing Jimmy Reed on the radio, and hearing him as a 14-year-old (from the street) at The Skyliner Club. Playing guitar "just like Jimmy Reed" soon became an obsession for Ruffner but his parents proved to be an obstacle. "My folks were Baptist," he explains in his light Texas drawl. "They were always tellin' me, 'No son, you can't have a guitar for Christmas.'"

"I had an uncle who had a band that played weekends. He sounded just like Elvis. He co-signed for me so I could buy a new Strat, and a Super Reverb amp that I still have, but he never let me sit in with him!" exclaims Ruffner making a fist for emphasis. "That's what drove me to play better and better. I was always tryin' to prove myself to him. I was always tellin' him 'Look, I can play, man.' But he'd never pay me no mind, so I'd keep goin' back to the woodshed to try and get better."

Eventually Ruffner joined a series of garage bands that played various parties and dances around Fort Worth. But with the musical climate differing in Texas from other parts of the country, blues became one of Ruffner's driving forces. "Blues has always been popular in Texas," affirms Ruffner. "Just about everybody played blues and shuffles, even the rock bands, and they all sounded good."

Only 29, Ruffner vividly recalls the atmosphere of the Texas music scene of the 1960s. "There used to be this place in Fort Worth called The Cellar where everybody played. I remember seeing Joe Ely back up Jimmy Reed lots of times. Johnny Winter used to come through regularly and Bugs Henderson.

"Now Bugs was really good. The Cellar was kind of a biker joint, and he'd get the chicks in there taking their tops off. Sometimes we'd go see Ray Sharpe and this guy that used to play guitar with his toes (Curly Mays)"

Ruffner reluctantly admits that he had designs on being a rock 'n' roll star until he heard and met Robert Ealey, in the Cellar in 1971. "I used to go out and buy Led Zeppelin and Eric Clapton records," but Ruffner quickly adds, "I bought B.B. King records, too."
"I started getting more and more into playing and the music took over. I still like Dylan, but I guess when I quit taking acid I threw all those other records away," he laughs.

When the blues bug bit Ruffner, he began backing up Robert Ealey around Ft. Worth along with Johnny Reno, now sax player with the Juke Jumpers, and Little Junior One Hand, a guitarist with The Cold Cuts. Although Ruffner recalls playing for the door and getting paid as little as $2 a night, he still has fond memories of those days with Robert Ealey. "I tell you, that was some fun. We used to get that real blues feeling."

Ruffner continued to play with Robert Ealey after he opened the Bluebird again, and regularly sat in with Jimmy Vaughan and the Fabulous Thunderbirds, and Anson Funderburgh and the Rockets, two guitarists Mason still sights as the best around Texas.

Eventually Ruffner caught itchy feet and decided to seek greener pastures. Ruffner explains, "I had this idea I wanted to be a wandering hobo musician, so I put all my electric stuff in storage and just took my acoustic and some clothes and left Fort Worth. I was on my way to New York, but I stopped in New Orleans and started playing out in the streets. I started doing pretty good, and decided I'd try to stick it out. I met some people who got me some connections in clubs, so I sent for my stuff in Texas and started backing up a lot of singers down in the Quarter.

"I was playing just about everything. Then I was playing with a country band and got tired of that and eventually did go to New York." Ruffner found New York wasn't the promised land, since he could only find work once a week. "I came back to New Orleans cause I could get a gig any night if I wanted to."

About a year ago Ruffner was becoming weary of continually playing as a sideman, and missed the music he really loved - the blues.

Ruffner's first job as a bandleader caught him quite by surprise — especially since he didn't have a band! "I got to talkin' with the owner of the 544, and told him I had a hot band. I didn't, though — I was just bullshittin', but I thought if I could get a gig lined up I could get one together with a little rehearsal. He told me he didn't have any openings, but called me back the next day and told me one of his bands had quit, and if I wanted the job to show up with my band the next night! I guess I spent the next 24 hours on the phone lining up musicians.

"It took about six months to really get it together. I went through a lot of musicians, but I was determined not to lose that gig. I even went out and hired fiddle players just to keep the job."

Getting it together for Ruffner meant forming the nucleus of the Blues Rockers, which now consists of Kenny Felix, drums; Gene Markways, bass; and Bobby Rico, second guitar — all solid musicians that pull the best out of Ruffner.

Ruffner scoffs at the idea that the
music on Bourbon Street is superficial. "Look" explains Ruffner, "you really got to work hard down there, 'cause there's so much competition. They got bands on every corner, so it's a pride thing not to pull in a crowd.

"We could have sold out and got a chick with big tits to sing country and western, but we're one of the only non-commercial things down there.

"And there's nothing else to bring the people in but the music. Hell, there's no posters on the wall and the price of a draught beer is $2.50!"

And the Blues Rockers do bring 'em in. On any given set, most of the tables in the 544 are crowded with tourists, regulars from the Quarter, and a good sprinkling of middle-aged blacks who otherwise have no other outlet of live blues music in town.

Along with featuring classic material by Otis Rush, Magic Sam, and Slim Harpo, Ruffner blends in a good portion of original material including the popular (at least around the 544) instrumental "Lazy Bones."

"A lot of the younger people ask me for stuff by George Thorogood and the Rolling Stones, and that gets me mad. But most of the people go for shuffles and slow blues."

Recently Ruffner has begun working with Cosimo Matassa on a recording session for an upcoming release. In fact, Cosimo paid Mason the biggest compliment of all, when he commented that Mason's playing reminded him of the late Guitar Slim. Ruffner is visibly excited about working with the legendary record producer, and hopes to have a release in the not-too-distant future.

Many guitarists approach Ruffner and ask him how he gets such a superb blues tone. Ruffner explains, "I'm strictly a Fender man. I have two Fender Stratocasters — a 1958 one and one that's made up of a bunch of different parts from the Fifties and Sixties. I just like the looks and the tone of Fenders."

Ruffner also uses a Fender Super Reverb amp, of early Sixties vintage, with the volume set halfway and tone controls set at maximum and controlled with the guitar's settings, a tip he learned from Anson Funderburgh.

His guitar is strung with medium-gauge GHS strings, which Ruffner feels sound best after a week, and prefers a higher action on his instrument than most guitarists. Ruffner feels you can get a bluesier tone because you can "really pull the strings and there's still something there when the playin' really gets hot."

Ruffner uses no other foot switches, or electronic "gimmicks" to achieve his unique sound. "A lot of guitarists make the mistake of trying to sound just like somebody they heard on a record. But you've got to put a little of yourself into it, or you're not going anywhere."

And which way is Mason and the Blues Rockers going? "Blues, man, blues! Nothin's come out better, and never will."

---

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The Aubry Twins are identical. They were born July 5, 1949. Tyrone is twenty-one minutes older than "little brother" Jerome, a fact that Tyrone does not let slip by unannounced. They have lived together all their lives and have sung together for the past twenty-four years. Early publicity shots show the twins so similar in appearance that it's eerie. Tyrone is now confined to a wheelchair. They still perform, recently won third place. We started entering other talent shows and we won them. So, we learned it quite fast. He entered us in talent shows and we won them. Tyrone recalls, "We were about seven when my daddy told us to learn a song called 'Lonely Teardrops' by Jackie Wilson, and he said if we didn't learn the song, we wouldn't get nothing for Christmas." Jerome remembers, "My daddy knew this girl friends. You know, you're just finding out what it's all about. We couldn't even get involved. I had a girl that I used to like a lot and he refused me to be with her. I had to sneak and, when I got caught, it was like a verbal whipping. He told me to stop. That's when I wrote my first song called 'I Want to Cry.'"

The Aubry Twins are close-knit. "We have been apart. It was not all fun on the road; it took discipline and hard work. Tyrone recalls, "Having a manager and being young is like having another parent. At the age fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, you want to have fun. But now it's time to grow. There were frequent jobs on the coast and around the city. They began to tour. Their unique appearance and vocal talent landed them on the Johnny Carson Show in 1962 when they were twelve and sharing a dressing room with Groucho Marx, also on the show."

In 1964 Tyrone and Jerome toured the country with Stevie Wonder, the Temptations and Chuck Jackson. It was a ten-act package doing thirty-two different cities. It was not all fun on the road; it took discipline and hard work. Tyrone recalls, "Having a manager and being young is like having another parent. At the age fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, you want to have fun."

As a manager for the twins, there was school and acting twenty-one in a night club. We couldn't sit at the bar or visit with the customers. We did our show and had to go back to the dressing room. Aside from performances, there was school and the twins kept up with their work at Joseph S. Clark. The Aubrys joined the army in 1969 and were sent to Vietnam together at their insistence. "We told them either put us in a company together or put us in jail together." They worked in a personnel unit out of combat, but did a special service tour that took them to the heart of the fighting. Jerome: "We went from the Mekong Delta to the D.M.Z. — too close, one mile from the North Vietnamese." They returned after eleven months and Jerome was mustered out. Tyrone had another year because he had volunteered another year because he had volunteered for three, convincing "Little Brother" to sign up for "only two." It was the first and only time the devoted brothers have been apart.

The Soul Sensation was a band already formed when the Aubrys joined them in 1971. They remained together when the twins started at the LaStrada in the French Quarter in 1973. Soon after they formed their own band and remained together.

The Aubry Twins played the Ward, the Creole ward, with its legacy of musical families. There were seven siblings, the Aubry Twins, joined by their two sisters, form a close-knit family unit — and a talented band. The Aubry Twins played the French Quarter in 1973. Jerome recalls, "What a blast!"

The Aubrys were raised in the Seventh Ward, the Creole ward, with its legacy of musical families. There were seven children in the family of Alvin and Shirley Aubert. They began early. Tyrone remembers, "We were about seven when my daddy told us to learn a song called 'Lonely Teardrops' by Jackie Wilson, and he said if we didn't learn the song, we wouldn't get nothing for Christmas."

The twins kept up with their work at Joseph S. Clark. The Aubrys joined the army in 1969 and were sent to Vietnam together at their insistence. "We told them either put us in a company together or put us in jail together." They worked in a personnel unit out of combat, but did a special service tour that took them to the heart of the fighting. Jerome: "We went from the Mekong Delta to the D.M.Z. — too close, one mile from the North Vietnamese." They returned after eleven months and Jerome was mustered out. Tyrone had another year because he had volunteered for three, convincing "Little Brother" to sign up for "only two." It was the first and only time the devoted brothers have been apart.

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<td>New Jazz Quintet</td>
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<td>Lpl Queenie &amp; The Percolators</td>
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<td>Friday, June 25</td>
<td>The Hottest Rockabilly Band in Texas - The Teddy Boys</td>
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<td>The Singles</td>
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**SPECIAL ATTRACTION**

- Saturday, July 17: Cabaret Futura featuring Richard Strange
- New Wave Dancers & Mimes
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**Tupelo's is normally open Tuesday thru Saturday for any dates not listed above call for information.**

There until 1976. Things were looking bright for the twins that year. They were enjoying a good following and were to do their first New Orleans Jazz Festival. Fate intervened.

One night during a performance, a jealous young man mistakenly thought that Tyrone was coming on with his girl. Tyrone remembers, "I was sitting in my car and he just came up and shot me in the neck with a .45. The bullet went in my neck, severed my spinal cord, broke three ribs and chipped off a piece of my lung. I was in the hospital for fifteen months and eight operations."

Tyrone's partial paralysis left him confined to a wheelchair, and he could no longer play the keyboard. The man that shot him was confined to Angola. It has been a torturous road back from that night for Tyrone Aubry. "It's so hard to accept and adjust to being in a wheelchair. It's still rough, but I'm glad I'm here. After I got shot, I learned that people take life for granted. They say, 'I can do this tomorrow,' but tomorrow might not even be and, if it is, you don't know if it's gonna be like yesterday."

Tyrone had strong encouragement from his family, particularly his twin, Jerome. Old friend Stevie Wonder lent a hand by visiting Tyrone in the hospital and giving him a lift for his van, "like Ironsides," for Christmas. Stevie bought exercise equipment to aid in Tyrone's rehabilitation. He also gave him advice — "Just believe in God!"

The Aubrys have been performing again for the past year. In the best twin-style, Jerome stopped playing drums and began the keyboard when Tyrone had to stop the keyboard and began playing drums. Aubry Inc. is a seven-piece band with the twins and sister Shirleen singing. They stick to a more universal sound, doing top-forty material which probably explains the fact that they have not been typecast as a "New Orleans band." The band is made up of substantial musicians including Fats Domino's talented son Anatole on piano, Malcolm Roberts on trombone (he toured with the Brothers Johnson), and Renard Poche from the original Neville Brothers Band plays guitar. There are two more horns, bass and drums. These are twenty-four veterans that know their stuff, coupled with their beautiful sister who is coming on strong. Tyrone speaks of Shirleen, "She fits in like she's been doing it as long as we have. She's so pretty. When I'm on stage and I look at her, I just smile cause I know when she gets the experience, she's gonna be dynamite."

It is an inspiration to see the Aubrys perform. They radiate a love that can only come from a family that has been tested by tragedy. Tyrone: "When I'm on stage, I feel the energy. I can feel it flowing and, if I can't dance, I'll send my vibes to my little brother. I can see me up there with those two dancing. That hurts sometimes, but I try not to let the hurt show. I just give them energy and it flows. I can feel it. I can really feel it."
By Almost Slim

Mathilda Jones

She's one of New Orleans' 'undiscovered' talents — who's played the Apollo Theatre and recorded two excellent records.

For Mathilda Jones, the distance between the Cozy Lounge in Kenner and the Apollo Theatre in New York was only a short hop. Both places have been launching pads for the 31-year-old soul songstress. Since then, there's been two great records and a lot of sweat. But Mathilda Jones is still paying dues. Even though she's received standing ovations everywhere between New York City and the Bahamas, the woman who David Lastie says "sends chills up and down my back" is sadly ignored in New Orleans.

One of a family of 13, Mathilda still calls Kenner her home. "I've been singing since I learned to talk," she says softly. "Everybody always said I had a beautiful voice. Mama said one day before I had even learned to talk I was sitting under the table singing along with Ruth Brown's 'Mama He Treats Your Daughter Mean.'"

Music was always in Mathilda's family, as her father played trumpet and her mother sang. Being Baptist meant long Sunday mornings singing at Kenner's Greater Mt. Cavalry Church, something that still influences Mathilda's style to this day.

Even though she loves gospel music, as she so aptly puts it, "blues had went to my head." Although somewhat shy as a teenager, Mathilda was finally coaxed into singing in public by a teacher, when she went to Junior High in Bunch Village.

"On rainy days the teachers would get us together and say, 'Let's see how much talent we have.' One day they planned a super duper talent show, and I won the trophy for singin' 'Jingle Bell Rock.'"

She won another talent show at John H. Martin Senior High for her version of "The Scoop Scoop Song." She admits that these successes boosted her confidence, and she began considering music as a career.

As a young R&B singer, Mathilda had the usual influences, Aretha Franklin, Etta James and Gladys Knight. But amazingly she also had other influences. "I liked a lot of country and western. I love the way Brenda Lee sings," she paused "Patsy Cline and Loretta Lynn, too."

After graduating from high school, Mathilda began sitting in on weekends singing with some local soul combos in Jefferson Parish. It was on one of these nights that a break came her way when she was spotted by Cleon Floyd who was managing his nephew, King Floyd (just beginning to enjoy success with "Groove Me"). "I was singing at The Cozy Lounge, which was right across the street from Perkins Lounge where King was playing. He really liked my singing and asked me what I was doing. Well, I wasn't..."
doing nothin', so he asked me if he could manage me. My mother signed a contract 'cause I was just 17. I really got my big break with King."

With "Groove Me" a big hit, Mathilda became part of the "King Floyd Show" as a supporting act touring the U.S. Response for Mathilda at times almost outstripped King himself. As Cleon Floyd chimed in, "Anywhere we went with King, we could come back with Mathilda headlining."

While working one night on a package show at Alcorn University in Mississippi, Mathilda came to the attention of Clarence Carter, who approached her about recording for his Future Star label. Not long after, Mathilda found herself in Sheffield, Alabama, cutting "Wrong Too Long," a song Clarence originally wrote for his then-wife Candi Staton.

The record turned out to be a surprise hit in some parts of the country and Mathilda even found herself headlining the King Floyd show briefly in Texas. But, as Cleon Floyd explained, Candi Staton got jealous when the record started to take off and Clarence was forced to stop pushing it.

In 1975 Mathilda began her own show on weekends while she tended to a growing family (that now numbers five) the rest of the time. Percy Stovall and Cleon handled the bookings that included most of the towns between Texas and Florida.

As Mathilda explains, "Work slowed up in the Seventies. I didn't have a regular band, and I was trying to raise a family, so I just started singing close to home."

Still convinced of her powerful singing style, Cleon Floyd decided to take matters into his own hands. He and Tommy Riddle produced Mathilda's second single, "I'll Take You There," for the tiny Justice label.

"It did real well where we could get it played," explains Mathilda, "but the New Orleans stations just won't play the local artists. I did get a few plays on WBOK, but it was real late at night. People would say, "That's a real good record, why isn't it on the radio?"

Luckily the street jocks played the record and a few more jobs came her way.

Mathilda is still miffed by her inability to break into the New Orleans circuit.

"It's really hard to break into those New Orleans clubs. It seems like they've got their own cycle of Lil' Queenie, Neville Brothers, and Irma Thomas. To get heard, and exposed, in these clubs is kinda hard."

Hopefully this situation will soon be corrected. For the first time ever, Mathilda had her own 45-minute slot at the 1982 Jazz Festival. She's also keeping her fingers crossed that her first album might soon become a reality, with her brothers' financial backing.

"Maybe something will break out of all this." Let's hope so. Mathilda Jones has a lot of singing to do and a lot of hit records to be made. Hopefully she has finally started in that direction.
UNPOPULAR MUSIC

CRESCENT CITY BLUEGRASS

It's one musical form that New Orleans has never taken credit for birthing, but like almost any kind of music, you can find it here.

Bluegrass music is probably one of the best kept musical secrets of New Orleans. One of the least heard and most misunderstood forms of music being played in the city, the music is rarely heard in well-known clubs, but it is regularly played to a small, dedicated audience.

About 1975, country rock music from Austin, Texas, was a fad in New Orleans, and the word “bluegrass” was being thrown around quite a bit. Most of the bands that achieved popularity with this style, featuring amplified electric guitars and drums, did not conform to the classic definition of bluegrass music. Bluegrass is essentially a modern distillation of acoustic, old-time string band music. It is ultimately the personal creation of the genius of one man, mandolinist and songwriter Bill Monroe. Monroe reached deeply into both white and black folk music tradition to find elements he needed to form what he has always called “his music.” In fact, bluegrass music's name is derived from the name of Monroe’s band, the “Blue Grass Boys,” although he is not himself directly responsible for the widespread use of this term to describe his music.

As a young boy, shortly after World War I, he was greatly influenced by both his fiddle-playing uncle and a black blues guitarist. The three of them often played at square dances around Monroe's hometown of Rosine, Kentucky. Monroe’s music ultimately included ancient fiddle tunes and ballads of English, Scottish and Irish origins but his own singing and instrumental work on the mandolin strongly demonstrated a great debt to black music. He repeatedly indicated the remarkable structural similarity of the flatted third “blues” scale to the old “modal” scales so often heard in the traditional music of the Irish, the Scots, and other related cultures. Monroe also leaned heavily on the blues repertoire for his material, although sometimes his songs came to him indirectly through such performers as Jimmie Rodgers. It seems strange that, despite all of these black influences, bluegrass is considered to be purely “white” music, and that so few black musicians have an interest in it.

Why has bluegrass, popular in virtually all other areas of the nation, never been able to achieve widespread local recognition? New Orleans' peculiar geographic and cultural isolation from the rest of the south may have contributed. Geographically the city is isolated almost completely by water from the surrounding regions, resulting in a cultural isolation from the surrounding rural culture. The particularly large influence of the Roman Catholic Church, in comparison with the predominantly Protestant religious affiliations of the rural white southern culture, may have also prevented a merging of the city's culture with the rural South. At any rate, the local cultural gumbo has had much less input from rural society than the average southern city, and it has exhibited some degree of urban prejudice against rural culture.

The existence of this local tradition has preempted what is normally a large part of bluegrass music's audience elsewhere — the younger, raised-on-rock 'n' roll generation. Bluegrass music is practically never featured in the popular music
LUTHER KENT'S 'TILL THE RISING SUN

Luther Kent and his 10 piece band, Trick Bag performing Thursday-Sunday three shows nightly—11 pm, 1 am & 3 am

400 DAUPHINE
at Conti in the French Quarter 523-8329
Heritage Festival always schedules bluegrass bands, most fans consider the best festivals to be those exclusively devoted to bluegrass music and related old-time country styles. The regularly scheduled bluegrass festivals easily accessible to New Orleans include the Five Lakes Festival at Bush, Louisiana, staged every Memorial Day weekend, and the biannual Cajun Country Outdoor Opry near Houma, Louisiana. The first Outdoor Opry this year was held on the weekend of April 30th through May 2nd. There are also several other bluegrass festivals staged each summer in North Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

The best regularly occurring local event is the Danneel Street Opry at the Penny Post, a monthly event scheduled on every third Thursday. This mini-festival features bluegrass music, traditional Appalachian groups, old-time country music, and occasional traditional Cajun music.

Despite its seeming lack of local support, bluegrass music has been regularly played in New Orleans for many years. The first musicians interested in bluegrass most likely appeared on local college campuses during the folk-music boom of the Sixties. A series of bluegrass bands, most notably Bill Malone's Hill Country Ramblers, played at the Maple Leaf Bar on Oak Street during the early 1970s. But the main focus of local bluegrass music, before the Penny Post assumed this function, was Gurley's Restaurant in Gretna. Nearly every bluegrass musician presently in the city played at Gurley's. The Hill Country Ramblers played regularly there from early 1976 to mid-1977. After that, Gurley's hosted a weekly bluegrass jam session that continued until mid-1979. At that time, bluegrass music activities shifted to the Penny Post, where they remain, for the most part, today. Presently, the Penny Post features the monthly mini-festival mentioned earlier, a bluegrass sing-along on Sunday nights, and semi-regular appearances by groups such as the Sunbelt Bluegrass Band.

New Orleans does not have any full-time bluegrass musicians. Local bluegrass musicians play because the music best expresses their values and personal philosophies. The city never has had more than two or three bluegrass bands at once, though there has consistently been at least one good local band active for the last ten years or so.

Bluegrass music continues its tenuous existence as a step-child of the New Orleans music scene. It doesn't appear to be in any danger of local extinction, because there are always a number of musicians playing to a receptive audience. The problem is that bluegrass is very hard to find in its hiding places. Hopefully, it will find itself emerging from its isolation and be discovered by an entirely new audience who will, as others before, be thrilled by the timeless excitement of this supercharged folk music.

— Patrick A. Flory
A SPECIAL PLACE

The classy, speakeasy atmosphere of Noah’s on Esplanade encourages a relaxed enjoyment of the good jazz you hear there... but there’s more.

Like many people, my first impression of Noah’s was of a jazz club for middle and upper class blacks, where white folks were welcome. After spending some time in the club (one of the fringe benefits of this job), it occurs to me that perpetuation of this view is shortchanging Noah Hopkins’ efforts and keeping people who may not feel so encouraged by this outlook from checking the place out.

First of all, Noah’s is a total black music club. Given the ties between jazz and the black experience and the fact that most of the important innovators in jazz have been black, I feel comfortable in considering jazz a black music. But more than what can comfortably be called jazz is offered at Noah’s. For instance, one evening in March, Noah’s patrons were treated to the traditional blues/jazz belting of Germaine Bazzle, followed by the contemporary soul of Lady BJ, with accompaniment from Linda Aubert on piano, Chris Severin on bass, and Julian Garcia, drums. BJ’s version of the Chaka Khan tribute to bebop heritage, “The Melody Still Lingers On/Night In Tunisia,” almost knocked me out of my second row seat. Also in the band, adding his fiery musical commentary, was saxophonist Earl Turbinton. Vocalist Lavern Butler had the unenviable task of following BJ, and closed the evening with a quiet and stirring “God Bless the Child.” These performances were interspersed with R&B/pop stylings for vocalist Phillip Manuel and selections from the Aubert-Severin-Garcia trio. Appearances of the Ellis Marsalis Quartet and Willie Tee have brought more contemporary jazz sounds to Noah’s stage.

This blending of different musical styles on the same stage is not accidental. What more can we say?

— Brad Palmer
Reading a 1955 copy of Jesuit High School’s *The Blue Jay* and a copy of Tulane’s *Hullabaloo* of the same year gives us quite an insight into the views of New Orleans teenagers on the subject of rock ’n’ roll.

History leaves us no better account of the impact of rock ’n’ roll on teenagers, their attitudes and thoughts, than the periodicals written by and for the teen audience during rock ’n’ roll’s formative years.

In the mid-Fifties, as rock ’n’ roll attracted wider attention from the media, high school and college newspapers across the country began publishing reviews of rock ’n’ roll records, with polls of the top ten and commentary on the new music. *The Blue Jay*, published by New Orleans’ Jesuit High School, featured “Reine on Records,” a column by rock ’n’ roll enthusiast Marion Reine. The column, one teen’s comments on the state of rock ’n’ roll, contained views often shared by his fellow classmates. Concerning this new music, he wrote, “... with the advent of rock ’n’ roll, melody and harmony rapidly went to pot and rhythm was stressed to the point of partial, if not absolute supression of the other two elements. Rock ’n’ roll, then, can be historically termed a throwback, musically excessive rhythm and practically (by some) a waste of time.”

*The Blue Jay* encouraged letters from readers, expressing the view of other students. Regarding the article on rock ’n’ roll, one student wrote, “Reine’s article on the origins of rock ’n’ roll was very good. Now that rock ’n’ roll has been discovered (or stumbled upon), analyzed, criticized, praised, and swooned over, the big question is what to do with it. The mad beat is here to stay. For even now, in this atomic age when man is supposed to have overcome his primitive features, a rock ’n’ roll band is all it takes to arouse the cannibal in him.”

Other readers wrote in defense of their favorite artist. “I’m a fan of Little Richard’s and I don’t agree with what ‘Reine on Records’ said about him,” wrote one outraged schoolmate, “The lyrics contain more than ten words. They contain sixteen words, which are very understandable.”

The paper’s columns featured news on the hottest records by Jerry Lee Lewis, Elvis and Fats; and star gossip, who was in and who was out. Polls were taken, and records were rated — “Short Shorts” and “Get a Job” were big hits among the students.

While *The Blue Jay* and other school papers talked of rock ’n’ roll, school administrations, in the wake of films like *Blackboard Jungle*, often frowned on those students who performed the music. “In retrospect it was a very natural thing,” recalled Al Farrell, a vocalist-pianist who played in the rock ’n’ roll group, the Counts. “They never did say don’t listen to rock ’n’ roll or burn records in the schoolyard... but they could make you feel uncomfortable to a degree. I’ll never forget, for instance, walking down the hallway after school hours with a friend of mine, and we were singing some silly rock ’n’ roll tune... a priest came running up and grabbed me by the neck... He said, ‘Ah, Farrell, save that stuff for your band. We’re running an academic school here, OK?’ ”

In contrast to high school periodicals'
RARE RECORDS

MS. THOMAS AT HER BEST

Wish Someone Would Care
Irma Thomas
Imperial 9266

As far as I'm concerned, this is the creme de la creme of all of Irma's albums. Recorded in California in 1964, the song selection and production by Eddie Ray is superb. This album contains the perfect variety of material.

Besides the title track that was her big hit, the album also contains the chilling "Time Is On My Side," and the New Orleans favorite "Break-A-Way." Irma also gets into the blues with Percy Mayfield's "Please Send Me Someone To Love," and the compelling "I Need Your Love So Bad," which is really down home.

Irma herself had to spend $40 to pick up a copy a few years back. Luckily it has appeared on a Japanese import since then, much to the relief of our pocket book. This one will go down in the New Orleans hall of fame.

— Almost Slim

(Continued from page 37) active participation in rock 'n' roll, college papers generally reflected an often condescending attitude toward the music. At Tulane University, the weekly Hullabaloo spoke to a variety of social issues, ranging from the morality of segregation to the need for better security against pranksters. A look at issues of the paper between 1955-1958 reveals a tone of elitism regarding rock 'n' roll as a product nurtured by a high school consciousness. The paper devoted only marginal space to the music and when it did, its remarks were often far from flattering: "... see where a local dance studio has invented a new dance course... You'll never guess what this one is... Rock 'n' roll. This is all we need now is for them to start teaching the elders that descendant of the devilish war dances... check some of today's rock 'n' rollers... many of our modern dervish types are known to wield a small type switchblade."

This attitude is not surprising. After all, rock 'n' roll was a music listened to by younger teenagers, and therefore not considered sophisticated enough for the mature college student. The general consensus was that rock 'n' roll just wasn't "cool" enough. Jazz, specifically "cool jazz" as played by such greats as Miles Davis, Dave Brubeck, Gerry Mulligan and others, was seen as a real alternative for the serious listener, who saw rock 'n' roll as a clog in the airwaves. The Hullabaloo reported on the cool jazz scene with reviews of records, club performances and radio stations who played the kind of music students wanted to hear. At the time there were few cool stations in New Orleans. According to one writer, "We once thought that radio in New Orleans was bad when it came to playing rhythm and blues. Don't jump. We haven't revised our opinion, but we now know it's not the worst. In mid-November we spent four days in auto capital U.S.A.: Detroit. It had been a fond delusion of ours to think that in Yankee land the d.j.'s had the freedom and inclination to spin something cool occasionally. But alas, such is not the case. The radio picture there turned out to be 'rhythm and blues' hour after hour with only brief relief even from the pop field.''

If rock 'n' roll was not cool enough for college, it follows that rock 'n' roll bands found few jobs at campus dances. At the Lakeshore Union Hall one Saturday night, 200 couples jammed the club for a Jesus senior dance. Featured was Bobby Mitchell, who shouted his hits, "I'm Gonna Be A Wheel Someday," and "Try Rock 'n' Roll."

Rock 'n' roll has got a beat
Clap your hands, stomp your feet
Woo Wee What a thrill
You know you can't keep still.

According to The Blue Jay, "... The band arrived at nine and began to play. The walls shook with rhythm, and everybody danced like crazy. People were kicked, stomped, kneed, hipped, elbowed, and bounced out the windows."

In contrast, Tulane seemed sedate in comparison. In 1955, the nationally-known Buddy Morrow orchestra, and a host of local dance bands were booked for University-sponsored dances. Concerts at the school featured Dave Brubeck, the Four Freshmen and others. These events somehow lacked the spark and excitement of the new rock 'n' roll.

As the years progressed, those high school rock 'n' rollers entered college and brought a new attitude toward the music with them. Now Tulane began booking rock 'n' roll acts, and the rock 'n' rollers were gaining ground. As early as 1958, blues singer Guitar Slim was entertaining at the frat houses. An era had begun.
Spicy and hot, the Beans' new album gives you what you hear from the band in person — good old dancing music with a touch of Cajun and a dollop of the blues.

Wanna Dance?
Red Beans And Rice Revue
Blue Unlimited 5016

Louisiana is blessed with a strong sense of its musical heritage. Back country music fairs allow young musicians opportunities to perform, and even younger ones to listen. Premiere talents like Clifton Chenier and Rockin' Dopsie keep Cajun/zydeco music alive and exciting, preserving a tradition whose roots are as tangled and obscure as the paths of the bayous through the silted delta.

Like the bayous, a musical form must continue to move, to grow, or it will become clogged and stifled. Any music that is performed solely for the sake of the tradition it represents is already dying. Fortunately for those with an attachment to the music of rural Louisiana, there is a band of young musicians out of Lafayette named the Red Beans and Rice Revue, and their sound is as spicy and indigenous as the name demands.

It has taken six years of simmering and stewing to get the "Beans" to where they are now. Starting off as a country swing band, complete with steel guitar, they crossed over to rhythm and blues, went through the usual personnel changes (only bassist Steve LaCroix is an original member), and finally pared their numbers down to the current quartet: LaCroix, drummer Danny Kimball, guitarist Tommy Shreve, and Pat Breaux on saxophone and accordion.

It was the addition of Breaux, in 1978, that set the band firmly on its current path; although there has been some trimming down since then, it has been "only to reach the essence of what has been the band since 1978 anyway" according to Tommy Shreve.

While there is a conscious effort to infuse regionality into the songs that the "Beans" (mostly Shreve) write, their influences include Van Morrison and the Stones as well as Clifton Chenier and Allen Toussaint. As demonstrated on the "Beans" first album, Wanna Dance?, the songs are eminently danceable, the result of a conscious effort on the band's part. "Who ever heard of people just sitting and listening to this stuff?" asks Shreve.

"We made it a dance-oriented album. It's our first, and I'm not cutting back-flips over it — it's tough to get enough money and time off to do a complete job on a record when you're a working band — but I'm pleased overall. It sounds good, and we learned from doing it."

It does sound good. A well-balanced blend of six originals and three covers, it offers a bit more accordion than is usually heard at the "Beans" live shows, and one listening tells why: Pat Breaux plays an accordion hot as Tobasco. Not quite all the excitement of the live show is captured on the disc — constraints of time and budget the villain here — but the band struts its stuff in style. Tommy Shreve's "Baton Rouge," a fine country blues number, stands out on the first side; the second, which overall I liked a little better, is highlighted by a spunky cover of "Honky Tonk" and culminates in another Shreve composition, "The Fool."

The backwoods flavor is present throughout, but the "Beans" have successfully made the tunes sound and feel contemporary. The rhythms are upbeat and modern, and the use of electric instruments adds amplified vigor without detracting from the oldtime sound. The vocals are pleasantly gritty, reminiscent occasionally of the Dead or (more locally) the Radiators. For a follower of pure Cajun style, the record will sound a little bluesy, but Breaux's accordion and sax lead the band through several two-step timings that I dare anyone to sit still to.

A sincere, distinguished first effort from a band with talent and a good sense of tradition.

— Keith Twitchell
Ruben Gonzalez and his band, playing that traditional Cuban style known as salsa, demonstrate the variety of sounds and rhythms that are encompassed in Caribbean music.

Caribbean music lovers are beginning to spread a vicious rumor around town that Jamaica isn't the only island with rhythm. To hear them talk, you'd think that they were hard-pressed at the Jazz Fest just trying to catch all the Caribbean acts. They're claiming that Latin music is also Caribbean music and that they can lock into Cuban and Puerto Rican rhythms as much as reggae. They're breaking out in a fever over Banda Fiebre, sweating about Caliente, and putting on their desert boots for Pedro Valladares y su Sonora Latina. But most of all, they're cancelling all appointments to make certain that they get down to the Crescent City Cafe on Friday and Saturday nights to hear the man they've dubbed "Mr. Salsa," Ruben Gonzalez.

If Wavelength had been publishing in the 1950s, a feature article would surely have been devoted to Gonzalez's emigration from Cuba to New Orleans. At that time, he was riding a wave of popularity as both a film star and as the lead singer of the Anselmo Sacassas Orchestra, a 20-piece Cuban ensemble of world renown. Over the years, Gonzalez has maintained his reputation, but has chosen to limit his performances mainly to the New Orleans Latin community. He is currently the only Cuban musician in New Orleans who is playing traditional Cuban style, the merengues, boleros, etc., that have come to be known as salsa. "Traditional Cuban" means clean, fast rhythms on bongos, congas, cowbell and timbales, rounded out with electric bass, piano, horns, and an unusual Puerto Rican guitar called a cuatro. An interesting variation on what otherwise would be considered strictly traditional Cuban style is the addition of a vibes player who basically just plays rhythm until it's solo time. At this point he fills the room with beautiful ringing harmonies that seem to float over the background percussion.

In front of the band, Gonzalez directs, sings and communicates with his audience in a way that creates a flow of warmth between the audience and band. The music goes straight to the hearts of the audience, many of whom I'm willing to bet have danced to these same tunes for twenty or thirty years. The atmosphere in the club on the nights I've been there has been overwhelmingly joyful and nostalgic, the audience dancing right up to Gonzalez to shake his hand.

The Crescent City Cafe (formerly the Ground Pati at the corner of Toulouse and Chartres) is featuring Ruben Gonzalez every Friday and Saturday from 10:30 p.m. to approximately 3:00 a.m., and there is no cover charge. The management of the Cafe is the same group of people who used to bring us those great, late night salsa jams at the Toulouse Theatre, and they should be congratulated for bringing this music back to the French Quarter once again, giving us a golden opportunity to discover the exciting variety of sounds and rhythms that Caribbean music encompasses.

— Gene Scaramuzzo
So when was the last time you saw a lead singer (onstage) wearing green surgical gloves? Or a guitarist who does a back flip without missing a note? Or an ersatz Ku Klux Klansman in the middle of a black reggae band? In London, yet?

The Movie Urgh! A Music War, has all that and more — more slam dancing, more black leather, more orange hair and more pale faces — more of everything frequently associated with punk rock.

The film is a smorgasbord of new wave sound, boasting 28 groups and 30 songs. I lost count somewhere after Echo and the Bunnymen, who were singing about “the salt of the earth” over shots of new wave citizens with Mohawks.

(WRITER'S NOTE: Why is it that none of these people ever have a tan?)

Non-experts needn't worry. The groups' names alone are entertaining — Exene, John Doe, Astro, Sting. My favorites: Jello Biafra and Ray Ban.

An Urgh! spokesman admits that the film didn't do very well when it opened in Los Angeles in May. It's expected to show up in the South as a midnight movie sometime this summer.

So get yourself some Jujubes or a frozen Snickers and give it a look. It's not Gone With the Wind, but it's cheaper than an album.

— Bambi Dawn

(a.k.a. Nancy Weldon)

Restless Spirit
Blue Riddim Band
Flying Fish Records

Anytime a group of white musicians undertakes the challenge to enter a non-white musical idiom such as Jamaican music, they're leaving themselves wide open for criticism from all sides. Or at least they may be subject to indifference from record buyers. It's been a full year now that, while flipping through the reggae sections of local record stores, I've passed over a distinctly non-Jamaican looking album by the Blue Riddim Band, thinking that it must be another poor copy band. My mistake.

Originality is a funny word to be tossing around in reference to the BRB. Is it original for a group of American musicians...
cians to be writing music infected with the Jamaican sounds of the Soul Syndicate, the Wailers, contemporary rub-a-dub style, and countless ska bands of the 1960s? This can get especially confusing when one considers the fact that the Jamaican sounds of the past twenty years were directly influenced by New Orleans backbeat R&B and other American soul music. It's a classic case of "What goes 'round, comes 'round." More than a decade after Jamaicans tuned into New Orleans radio station WWL, turned the beat backwards to create ska, rock steady and reggae, the music came back to America and to the receptive ears of future members of the BRB.

The first thing one notices about the BRB is their love of soul music. It takes no more than to listen to the album's opening cut, a cover of the Supremes' hit "Come See About Me" to realize that they've got Motown vocal harmonies down. These are the same vocal styles that were successfully copied by such Jamaican vocal groups as the Mighty Diamonds, Abyssinians, Heptones, etc. Herein lies the BRB's main strength. The fact that the BRB has its roots partially in the same musical soil as most Jamaican vocal groups enables the band to transcend one of the stickier problems of playing Jamaican music ... the Jamaican patois. One can't totally ignore it, yet nothing sounds sillier to me than white boys trying to sound like Rastas.

The album's five original songs show that the band is capable of reproducing the sounds of some of Jamaica's top bands while at the same time keeping an identity of its own. Assistance by Jamaican engineer Prince Jammy (famous for his dub battles with the Scientist and others) lends an authentic dub style to "One Love, One Heart," "Rock It Sister" and their cover of "Cuss-Cuss." With the exception of their cover of "Twistin' the Night Away" (the weakest cut on the album), the covers are the most fun. Reggae and ska treatments of soul hits of the 1960s are perfect dance songs. Which leads me to speculate that the BRB is the kind of band that would be plenty of fun to see live. They obviously want the people to dance, and they know just how to help them do it.

Grasshopper
J.J. Cale
Mercury SRM-1-4038

Musical preferences aside, you've got to admire J.J. Cale for yawning at success and doing things his way. Cale records absolutely at leisure, using varying players and studios; when he and partner Audie Ashworth amass enough material, they think of a title and release an album. Accordingly, Cale's laidback little ditties are subtle, understated, and short on trendy influences. They also constitute a unique achievement: the distillation of a highly
effective, deeply personal style from the divergent fields of jazz, blues and country.

This synthesis was brilliantly successful on Cale's 1971 debut Naturally, but no effort since has been so eloquently cohesive. Moreover, Cale's subsequent albums are all virtually identical, apart from some diversified instrumentation. If you enjoy Cale's simplicity, though, his minimal development is a continuing pleasure. Grasshopper, for the most part, finds him in predictably fine form.

From the wistful, melodic City Girls to the whispered mystery of A Thing Goin' On and urgent funk of Nobody But You, Cale's succinct songwriting and uncluttered production continue to flourish. His haunting, single-string guitar work, which has made disciples of Eric Clapton and Dire Straits' Mark Knopfler, also remains vital. Such consistent quality makes Cale's redundancy dependably satisfying.

— Ben Sandmel

D.E. 7th
Dave Edmunds
Columbia 37930

My interest in Dave Edmunds was first aroused when my little sister brought home his version of "I Hear You Knockin’" way back in 1971. His playing and singing struck me as refreshingly authentic (even for an Englishman) and he's only improved over the years.

Always one to mix strikingly original material with bygone obscure classics, Edmunds continues to strike everyone's fancy on this his seventh effort (probably even dozen if his Love Sculpture, Rockpile and his Nick Lowe efforts are counted). This time around Edmunds gives the treatment to Kershaw's "Louisiana Man," complete with an accordion, no less; Springsteen's "From Small Things (Big Things One Day Come)" and Chuck Berry's "Dear Dad."

In fact, Edmund's songwriting reminds me of some of Chuck Berry's efforts from the Fifties. Listen to "Bail You Out," "Generation Rumble," and "Paula Meet Jeanne" and you'll know exactly what I mean.

Edmunds even takes a stab at Seventies English rock with "Me and The Boys," complete with feedback guitar; country with "Warmed Over Kisses"; and even a cocktail lounge ballad with "One More Night.

For pure 1982 rockabilly, put the needle to "Deep In The Heart Of Texas," an ass-shakin' ditty about a Tennessee daydreamer.

Even though Edmunds covers a wide variety of material, he never spreads himself too thin and always makes sure he keeps your feet tappin' and your fingers poppin' all the while.

Give this one a whirl and don't forget Dave Edmunds will be on the Riverboat President June 5.

— Almost Slim
Ya Yo Me Curé
Jerry Gonzalez
American Clave 1001

This golden coconut, Ya Yo Me Curé, belongs in any Latin music lover's record collection and certainly most jazzers will discover a milky delight. Curé is a conceptual album using Latin and jazz idioms to give one of the most creative releases to date.

"Agüeybana Zemi" is an Afro-Caribbean piece written by lead singer Frankie Rodriguez, who pays homage to an Indian chief from Berinquen (Indian name given to Puerto Rico). In "Nefertiti" the musicians offer a variety of percussive highs and lows by playing the "checkerets" (African percussion instrument). The rendition of T. Monk's "Evidence" is remarkably exciting and on "Caravan" we are transported by moving solos.

Both "Baba Fieden Orisha" and the theme song "Ya Yo Me Curé" are traditional Afro-Caribbean pieces that feature Jerry Gonzalez on lead conga (quinto). "The Lucy Theme" leaves us with memories of that popular television series.

"Curé" is "a collection of realized dreams" that should be opened and shared by all — Gracias, Jerry.

— Eduardo Young
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THE REEL STUDIO
Barbara Menandez, the blond energy machine of the Cold, will be leaving the band soon. Babs is leaving music for family life. Bruce Spizer, the Cold's manager, assures us that the Cold, sans Barbara, will continue. June 12 will be the Cold's last gig together as the old band...

Gerald Tillman has left the Neville Brothers Band for the third time, breaking the record previously held by Reynard Poche. Bruce McDonald, "The Weasel," ex-Joyride, has recently joined Zachary Richard on guitar. The Radiators are going into the studio June 21 to record their third album. Former Still Little Fingers drummer, Jim Reilly, has replaced Patrick Jones as Red Rocker skinman.

Imagine yourself sitting back in the comfort of your own home, an ice cold Dixie as near as the Sears Coldspot, rockin' to the zydeco sounds of Rocking Dopsie. Mid-South Studio in Lafayette has made available a videotape of Dopsie and his Cajun Twisters, in VHS format only. Interested persons should write P.O. Box 31433, Lafayette, LA. 70503.

While catching rays in Pensacola this summer, be sure to stop in at Fluanders Ale House at the traffic light on Pensacola Beach. The club features progressive jazz by the Island Authority most nights. Also worth checking: The Phonz, a rock group playing around Louisiana this month. Other travel news: Kidd Jordan and his Improvisational Art Ensemble appeared at the Jazz Marathon in Amsterdam and the New Music Festival in West Germany last month. Yeh, they jam over there, too!

The Dream Palace is to open under management, rumored to be Percolor's manager Frank Quintini, in June. Ford's had their farewell crawfish boil on May 23 last month. June 20 is BB Recording Studio's grand opening. Live bands, free beer, furnished.

King Floyd is to score a PBS documentary on cocaine this summer... Speaking of King, he recently returned from a four-night engagement in Miami... Eddie Floyd of "Knock On Wood" fame was in town recently to lay down tracks for his new album at Sea-Saint... The National Association of Broadcasters will hold its annual conference at the Hyatt Regency Aug. 29-Sept. 1...

Island Records recently announced two major signings to the label: James Brown and Joe Cocker. Both have albums scheduled to be released in the near future. Cocker's being produced by Chris Blackwell and Brown producing his own. Who else could do him justice?

The fourth annual Black Music Association (BMA) conference is to be held June 3-6 at the New Orleans Hilton... According to the spring Arbitron book, WEZB-FM is the top-rated station in the New Orleans area with a mark of 15.3 on the first quarter sweeps. ZZ TOP's show April 17 at the Warehouse was a complete sellout.

A country version of Eddie Bo's "Slippin' and Slidin'" by Stephanie Winslow is currently in the Billboard Hot Country Singles chart. Speaking of Bo, we saw him watching Jessie Hill's routine at the Jazz Fest but Eddie wasn't invited to perform. What a shame... While we're on the subject, other notable non-performers were Jean Knight, Robert "Barefootin'" Parker, Frankie Ford and Guitar Slim Jr. Where were they????

Chris Strachwitz, of Arhoolie Records, was in town for the Jazz Fest. On his trip back to California he hopes to stop in Opelousas and record a second John Delafose LP, and in Eunice to record Marc Savoy... Scott Billington was also in town, with intentions of recording James Booker and Gatemouth Brown... Dick Clark is scheduled to do the liner notes on Frankie Ford's upcoming album... Baton Rouge bluesman Rufal Neal (see WL 18) recently returned from a one-week stint in Ottawa, Canada, with Buddy Guy.

The Baton Rouge Blues Festival, held at Southern University, was a well-attended success. The surprise of the one-day affair was undoubtedly Hezekiah and The House Rockers, a three-man unit from Ferraduy that features a guitarist, a drummer harp player, and an 83-year-old trombonist who once played with Louis Armstrong! Nick Spitzer, from the Louisiana Folklife Center, hopes to record the trio for his Louisiana Folklife Recording Series.

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