

Okay, okay, okay. I give up. Or, as I said to the priests at St. Irenaeus Church growing up in Park Forest more times than I can remember, "mea culpa." That's Latin for "it's my fault" or "I'm guilty." This year, none of my Grammy wishes came true.

My crystal ball for the blues *Grammy Awards* was cracked. Last month, I predicted that **Kim Wilson**, **Sonny Landreth**, and **Bonnie Raitt** would take home awards in the *Traditional Blues Album*, *Contemporary Blues Album*, and *Female Rock Vocal Performance* categories.

Recording academy members voted for **Buddy Guy's Blues Singer (Live)** over the Fabulous Thunderbird, and **Etta James' Let's Roll (Private Music)** was favored over Sonny Landreth's *The Road We're On* (Sugar Hill). **Pink's Trouble (Arista)** won in the *Female Rock Vocal Category*, but I still think that Bonnie Raitt could teach this young singer how to sing the blues.

I hope that my predictions for the *W.C. Handy Blues Awards* fare better than my attempts at forecasting the Grammys. As I said — "mea culpa, mea culpa!"

"SON" TO RISE IN INDIANA...

Son Seals is a true survivor and a true Chicago blues

legend. He's overcome hard luck and trouble that would sideline mere mortals: his (ex)-wife apparently shot him in the jaw while he was sleeping in 1997, followed two years later by a nasty bout with diabetes that required his left leg amputated at the knee. If these setbacks aren't a recipe for the blues, I don't know what is.

Well, he bounced back from each of these tragedies, touring and recording. This month, he'll be front and center along with two local blues bands at the **Porter County Expo Center** on the Porter County Fairgrounds in Valparaiso on the 27th. Tickets are \$15 for this all-ages show and available from Front Porch Music in Valparaiso at: (219) 464-4700.

Opening the show for Seals will be the promising young Hoosier group, **The Planetary Blues Band**. Regular readers of this *Midwest BEAT* column may recall that the band's *Blues for our Grandfather* CD (indie release) was one of my favorite blues releases of 2002. The P.B.B. features three brothers and a drummer from Valparaiso. **Michael Schaefer-Murray** plays guitar, **Bobby Schaefer-Murray** plays bass guitar, and **Joe Hengstler** on drums, while **Martin Schaefer-Murray** plays guitar and sings. Here's hoping they'll bring their version of "Funky Bitch" to this show with Son Seals!



Regional blues band **Big Blue** will be backing Son Seals at this show, led by **Rocco Calipari** from **Howard and the White Boys**. Joining Rocco on slide guitar will be **Gene Kilty**, who's played with **Bottles of Wine**, **The Steepwater Band** and in an early **Chicago Blues Posse** line-up. The rhythm section features **Ronny Dicola** from **The Arrivals** on drums and the super talented **Mike Boyle** on bass. Mike's bass has fueled Son Seals, the **Chicago King Snakes**, and the **Chicago Blues Posse**.

For my money, the Porter County Expo Center will be

the center of the blues universe on March 27th, courtesy of Son Seals, Big Blue, and the Planetary Blues Band.

LOCAL BLUES MADNESS...

Buddy Guy's Legends features blues harp giant **Cary Bell** on the 6th, and **Keb' Mo'** plays the House of Blues in Chicago on the 11th. Mississippi's Fat Possum Records is the real blues deal, and I've shouted about **Kenny Brown** in these pages before. Join Kenny, along with **Cedric Burnside**, **Paul "Wine" Jones**, **Spam** and the bad man himself, **T-Model Ford**, for a night of original Delta blues with the *Fat Possum Juke Joint Caravan* on the 12th at the House of Blues in Chicago.

Jim Peterik and the **Ides of March** play St. Charles' Chord on Blues on the 13th, and **Deb Seitz and the Chicago Blues Posse** will return to The Quest in Schererville on Route 30 on the 19th. Another local blues player who continues to burn down the house each time he plays, **Little Johnny** will tear it up on the 13th at R-House of Brews on Main Street in Crown Point, and then on the 27th at Widow McCleary's in Thornton.

Mark your calendars: next month, the Star Plaza Theatre hosts a blues bill for the ages with **B.B. King**, **Bobby "Blue" Bland** and **Koko Taylor & Her Blues Machine** on the 9th and the 10th.

In addition to this fine show, don't forget to bring your bell bottoms or drive your AMC Gremlin, Ford Pinto or AMC Matador to *Midwest BEAT's* ultimate '70s show — *The Hegewisch Records/Night Rock Reunion Party* on April 23rd at 2nd Dimension on Route 30 in Schererville.

Come out and salute the legacy of one of the region's premier resources of local music: generations of rock fans relied on the Hegewisch Records chain for the latest music. With events like this, Hegewisch Records and Night Rock's contributions to the local music scene won't be forgotten.

And lastly... Congratulations to **Tom Lounges** of *Midwest BEAT* on successfully relaunching the old *Night Rock* radio show he was part of in the old days! Kudos to **Lisa Sotiros**, for carrying on the vision of her late uncle, **Joe Sotiros, Jr.**, the founder of Hegewisch Records and the Night Rock organization. Lisa is obviously a chip off the ol' block and I'm sure her Uncle Joe would be mighty proud of his niece about this.

Catch one of my favorite blues groups — **The Steepwater Band** — as the special Spotlight band on the March 14 broadcast of *Night Rock* at 6 p.m.

Until next month, let's play the blues.