

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE info: Selby Minner 918.855.0978 5/15/2016**  
**BLUES HALL OF FAME INDUCTIONS SET FOR MAY 28th**

Friends of Rentiesville Blues Inc. announced today that seven music legends have been selected for the Oklahoma Blues Hall of Fame. This year's inductees include James Peterson, Johnny Rawls, Earnest 'Harmonica Slim' Carr, John Seymour, Freddy Lee Rice, Jim Donovan and Norman Stauffer as Blues Educator. Each will be inducted at the Oklahoma Blues Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Concert in Rentiesville Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at the time worn Blues Club / D.C. Minner Museum. Freddy Lee Rice, and Norman Stauffer are scheduled to perform along with other favorite inductees including Miss Blues, Selby Minner, Bucky Young, Wolfman Black, and Leon Rollerson. There will be a barbeque dinner at 7 pm followed by music and the inductions will be spread over the evening.



Keeping the Blues Alive Awards will also go to Larry Shaeffer, owner of the Cains Ballroom in Tulsa and presenter of the Tulsa Blues Festival for several years, and Donald Robey who had Peacock and Duke Records in Houston and who recorded over 100 OK – TX Blues and Gospel Artists.

The inductees are announced by Selby Minner wife of the late Oklahoma Blues Legend D.C. Minner. They founded the OBHOF together in 2004. This year's ceremony will bring the number of OBHOF inductees very close to 100.

**WHERE** The Oklahoma Blues Hall of Fame is at the site of the Rentiesville Blues Festival held annually over Labor Day Weekend and the newly opened D.C. Minner Rentiesville Museum. It is in an historic black township located 5 miles NE of Checotah. Just off US 69, 2 exits N of I-40 and 3 exits S of Muskogee next to the Honey Springs Battlefield Park and Visitor Center.

**WHEN** Saturday at 7 pm May 28<sup>th</sup> ...must be 21, \$10 at the door. There will also be a silent auction.

**WHO:**

**JAMES PETERSON** is a FRIEND OF THE RENTIESVILLE BLUES FESTIVAL INDUCTEE having performed the fest over 10 years straight!

*This is a new induction category created in 2014 with for **Guitar Shorty**. Friends of the Festival Inductees are almost the only inductees who never lived in Oklahoma.*

Alabama-born and Florida-based guitarist, singer, and songwriter James Peterson played a gritty style of Southern-fried blues at times reminiscent of Howlin' Wolf and other times more along the lines of Freddie King. He lived in Buffalo, New York and running the Governor's Inn House of Blues in the 1960s. He and his band would back up the traveling musicians who came through, including blues legends like Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Big Joe Turner, Freddie King, Lowell Fulson, and Koko Taylor.

Peterson was born November 4, 1937 in Alabama. Peterson was strongly influenced by gospel music in the rural area he grew up in, and he began singing in church as a child. Thanks to his father's juke joint, he was exposed to blues at an early age, and later followed in his footsteps in upstate New York. He left home at 14, headed to Gary, Indiana, where he sang with his friend John Scott. While still a teen, he began playing guitar, entirely self-taught. Peterson cited musicians like Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf



(Chester Burnett), Jimmy Reed, and B.B. King as his early role models. He lived in Buffalo NY, Florida and later back to AR. In 1970, Peterson recorded his first album, *The Father, the Son, the Blues* on the Perception/Today label. While he ran his blues club at night, he supplemented his income by running a used-car lot during the day. Peterson's debut album was produced and co-written with Chicago great Willie Dixon, and it featured a then-five-year-old prodigy Lucky Peterson on keyboards. Peterson followed it up with *Tryin' to Keep the Blues Alive* a few years later. Peterson's other albums included *Rough and Ready* and *Too Many Knots* for the Kingsnake and Ichiban labels in 1990 and 1991, respectively.

The album that put Peterson back on the road as a national touring act was 1995's *Don't Let the Devil Ride* for the Jackson, Mississippi-based Waldoxy Records. Throughout the '90s and up to the mid-2000s, Peterson was also an active live presence on the Tampa, Florida blues scene, and the 2000s also saw Peterson record another duo album with son Lucky, 2004's *If You Can't Fix It* on the JSP label. Peterson returned to Alabama in the mid-2000s, and died on December 12, 2010. A master showman who learned from the best and knew how to work an audience, James Peterson left a legacy not only as an accomplished blues guitarist, but also as a crafty songwriter endowed with a deep, gospel-drenched singing style.

**JOHNNY RAWLS** is also a FRIEND OF THE RENTIESVILLE BLUES FESTIVAL INDUCTEE having performed the fest many times for over 20 years! Johnny Rawls was born in Mississippi in 1951. He acquired an early interest in music when hearing his grandfather play the blues guitar. He began playing professionally while still in high school with such stars as ZZ Hill, Little Johnny Taylor, Joe Tex and the Sweet Inspirations. In the mid-70's, Johnny was OV Wright's band director, Johnny led Little Johnny Taylor's band until 1985, when he began touring as a solo artist and made his first solo recording under the Rainbow label.

Recording under Touch Records, Rooster Blues, Rock House, Reach and JSP Records, Johnny has done it all from producing, songwriting, horn arranging, Rhythm, Lead and Bass guitar, keyboard, vocals and background vocals. Johnny started his own record company, Deep South Soul, in 2002 and has released his CD's *Lucky Man*, *Live in Montana*, and *The Best of Johnny Rawls*. His CD entitled *Heart and Soul* was nominated for "Best Soul Blues Album of the Year (2007)" by the Blues Foundation. *No Boundaries* was released under the TopCat, Catfood and Deep South Soul labels in 2005.

Johnny has appeared on the cover of the April 2002 *Living Blues Magazine* and has the W.C. Handy Award. He was chosen by the West Coast Blues Hall of Fame for RB Male Vocalist of the Year 2006.

Johnny has performed at the Chicago Blues Festival twice, The Russian River Blues Festival, The King Biscuit Blues Festival, The Portland Waterfront Blues Festival, Poconos, as well as festivals in Sweden and Poland. He tours constantly, playing well over 200 dates a year.

In 2008, Johnny released *Red Cadillac* which charted at #1 on the *Living Blues* radio chart. He was nominated for Best Male Soul Blues Artist and Best Soul Blues Album by the Blues Foundation. He won the Critics Award for Best Album of the Year by *Living Blues Magazine*.

*Ace of Spades* was released in 2009 and charted at #4 and remained in the top 20 for three months. Johnny won Best Soul Blues Album of the Year and was nominated for Best Male Soul Blues Artist of the Year by the Blues Foundation. In addition, Johnny was honored with a Blues Trail Marker located at the original site of the Hi Hat Club in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. He shares the plaque with soul blues legends Tyrone Davis and Little Milton.

## **EARNEST 'HARMONICA SLIM' CARR**

1933 – 1996 Earnest was a drummer singer and harmonica player who had some hits. He was born in Arcadia OK and attended Dunjee HS. He married Deloris Carr from Spencer and together they had 5 children whose names all started with the letter D. His hit was "Jerking with Frankie" – Frankie was his brothers wife. Another

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 celebrate  
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**RENTIESVILLE**  
 2106 inductees:  
**JAMES PETERSON**  
**JOHNNY RAWLS**  
**EARNEST 'Harmonica**  
**Slim' CARR**  
**JOHN SEYMOUR**  
**FREDDY LEE RICE**  
**NORMAN STAUFFER - ED**  
**JIM DONOVAN**  
 KBA Awards:  
**DON ROBEY**  
**LARRY SHAEFFER**

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single he put out was “I’m Gone”. Harmonica Slim was 6 foot 6 inches tall, and he owned 2 or 3 night clubs. One in OKC near 4th st circle off of walnut, and one named Four Corners was in Green Pastures near 36th and Post Road. Earnest was a farmer who grew all the vegetables for the house and also for area grocery stores... he raised pigs, cows, chickens, ducks, ... he “would cook and make the plate and bring it to me, which is very unusual, and to this day I do this for my children and grandchildren. He served in the army, and helped others. He was a strict disciplinarian and a hard worker but a lot of fun and it was always fun when Mama would make him blush. She could really make him blush!” reported his son Bronko.

He is part of the extremely musical family which includes Big Dave Carr – sax – and his don Big Dave Carr Jr. – also on sax, currently living in Texas and bassist/drummer/vocalist Bronko Carr, his son who lives in Checotah OK.

## **NORMAN STAUFFER**

*Keeping the Blues Alive KBA in Education*

Mr. Norman Stauffer is a keyboard player...facile, gifted, diverse. Also a piano tuner.

He was the music educator at Connors State College from 1985 until 2002. He played in the Connors State College Band and directed the school band there.

His career began in Illinois. He ran the music programs at Auburn IL HS for 25 years. He was in a band in the region which was called The Express for 17 years. Later he was in a band of “20 guys ..the Jimmy Reed Big Band, out of Springfield Illinois. We had a big bus and he only played really big affairs. The band really rocked” Norman said.

He also has been seen playing piano in OBHOF Inductee Jim Davis' Route 66 Big Band, out of Checotah. Norman plays in church in Eufaula.

**JOHN SEYMOUR** was a rock bassist with a great respect for the blues. He was from Sacramento CA, but also lived several years in Krebs Oklahoma. During that time he was the bassist for D.C. Minner and Blues on the Move for three years, including a six week tour with the band to AZ, NM and California. He passed away from cancer two years ago.

**FREDDY LEE RICE** is a guitarist/vocalist who was born in Ohio in 1954. His family loved roots music and took him to concerts. Soon he was playing guitar and playing along with B.B. King and Muddy Waters albums. He learned to love the blues and grew quickly because, as his friends complained, “The only problem with playing music with Freddy is getting him to quit playing.”

He has worked across America including extensive stays in Ohio, Phoenix AZ, Hawaii, and for the past 18 years, OK.

Groups have included Bluesology, Why Not, Night Train and now his own group. He has opened for or performed with Jimmy Johnson, Muddy Waters, Johnny Winter, John Mayhall, Pinetop Perkins, Sista Sarah, Miss Blues and many more. Freddy performs with 'heart, grease and soul'!

**JIM DONOVAN** was born June 7th, 1951. He played keyboard accordion in school and won many ribbons. His younger sister and brother were Pat and Jerry, twins. Jim ran away from home in Chicago at age 16. He survived on the streets in Berkeley California until he was picked up on the corner of Shattuck and University selling the Berkekey Barb two weeks before his 18th birthday. The officer put him on a plane to return home to Chicago, but no one in Chicago was notified that he was coming until the time the plane actually touched down. He realized this and immediately ran away to New York City. There he learned a trade – construction – and worked also as the bicycle delivery boy for a Record Store on the Lower East Side. Jim married and had a daughter Sherrie Donovan. The marriage lasted until the baby was two... In 1971 Jim hitch hiked out of New York and landed up at the Carr Haus Coffee House in Providence at the Rhode Island School of Design. Selby Guenther (Minner) was in her fourth year of studying at RISD, and worked at the Coffee House each afternoon. She heard Jim sitting in the front window there over Angel Street playing his harmonica. He had a great sound! Jim also played a mahogany topped Guild Guitar. Soon they visited and became friends, started making music together and eventually leaving town together in the Summer of 71 and going to Washington DC where a mutual friend Neil Downey – a banjo player – teamed up with them. The group played Sea Chanteys,

Old Timey, folk tunes and blues. They worked the parks and Dupont Circle and played a summer arts in the park gig where they opened for finger picking legend (her hit was Freight Train) Elizabeth ‘Libby’ Cotton. It was not long until Jim told Selby – as he handed her his guitar – “You like to sing too much..you need to learn to play this guitar! Then you can sing what you want when you want.” He proceeded to buy her a \$100 guitar and started teaching her to play. Jim and Selby wanted to specialize in blues, however, so they left Neil Downey in DC and headed out to Chicago in late summer. The pair played every hootenany and every open mic in the North Town area for many weeks. Winter was coming in, however, and Jim said “No more winters in Chicago for me! We need to go to New Orleans. We can work on the street there playing for tips. I will get us a ride..they have a Ride Board here on the campus in Hyde Park.” Soon they broke up the apartment, and had a ride with a young family in a VW bus straight to the big easy! The new place they found was on the third floor on lower Decatur in the French Quarter over the Farmer’s Market and 1/2 block from the US Mint. Jim was in the habit of practicing three or four hours every day. So they built a repertoire of R & B and some light early jazz and Delta Blues. He took up slide guitar. Studying MS Fred McDowell and MS John Hurt, Son House and others and eventually started singing himself, with Selby’s encouragement. They named the duo Home Cookin’. They played in Jackson Square Park all summer befriending Blues Legend Babes Stovall. He took them to his home place up in Mississippi. Jim loved his blues style on the national steel guitar he had. Six months later the couple had gigged on Bourbon street after hours at Andy’s and played the Wrong Place several times. They moved back to Providence playing both the Black Pearl in Newport and a hotel in Tanglewood Western Massachusetts out there in the mountains each week. When October arrived and weather was changing Jim secured a ride all the way – finally and at last – to Berkeley, the couple’s original destination. Shortly after arriving they met D.C. Minner – who was using the stage name Checotah – and he befriended the pair and told them of all the gigs they could play in the east bay. Soon they were appearing regularly at the Freight and Salvage, the Odyssey Bar, La Salamandra on Telegraph...and over to San Francisco in the Haight at the Living Room. Jim gave lessons as well. He played Mandolin, Guitar, Slide Guitar, Harmonica, Piano, Dulcimer and almost anything he picked up.

After four years together the couple drifted apart in 1974. Jim eventually settled north in Port Townsend Washington where he wrote many songs and played the folk circuit. His life was cut short when he contracted brain cancer. His family came and took him home to Chicago. He passed away at the young age of 35.

Jim never stopped encouraging Selby and was also most likely the first to realize that she and D.C. were a great match. They got together in 1976. One time when Selby’s sister Jean arrived from the east coast to meet D.C. in Berkeley she asked what he thought of this racially mixed partnership, and he promptly replied “I think it’s a match made in heaven!”

### **LARRY SHAEFFER Cains**

Larry has booked the Cains in Tulsa which we owns for many years. He also put together a Blues Festival in Tulsa which had BB King as a headliner one year.

### **DON ROBEY Peacock Records Houston**

#### ***This is a project we are working on:***

...check the map...from Houston to Wichita...out Route 66, I-10 and I-20... to the WEST COAST name after name after name... we will be documenting this more and more as time goes on!!

Blues Walk of Fame West Oakland

MAP of OK ROOT OF West Coast Blues

Check out the WEST COAST BLUES SOCIETY'S Triumphant opening of the 8 million dollar West Oakland 7th Street Walk of Fame!! Lots of Oklahoma and Texas names on it!

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## OBHOF Requirements for induction include

We prefer to induct artists who are alive if possible.

A person must be a performing artist in the Blues genre.

They must be from or have lived in Oklahoma.

The exception to this is the '*Friend of the Rentiesville Dusk til Dawn Blues Festival Award*' which is for nationally known artists who have consistently over a period of years helped the Festival by coming in at a significantly reduced rate. Or artists who have had a strong direct influence on the Oklahoma contribution to Blues.

They must be 60 years of age unless they are seriously ill.

They have to be a 'good guy' – treat people with respect and carry the music with pride.

They must have a track record in the sense that they are not just playing area bars where they live. Either they work(ed) with people of note and/or have traveled and toured.

### PROCESS

Artists can be nominated by any non profit blues related organization or, in fact, by any blues lover.

Nominations need to supply documentation, a photo which will print well in either black and white or color – 300 dpi minimum, and a sample of the music played by the nominee.

This should be sent in by March of any given year.



<http://dcminnerblues.com>



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