

Walla Walla Blues Society

BLUES NEWS

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Ellen Whyte & Charlie Butts

"What a Beautiful Night"

By John 'Bear' Milner

We are well into the third season of R. L. S. Entertainment's 1999 - 2000 Blues Series at the Wenatchee Convention center and surprisingly, they keep getting better. I say surprisingly" only because the entertainment and production were excellently presented and professional from the very beginning! The December 11th show, featuring Ellen Whyte and Reflex Blue along with Charlie Butts & Filtertips was the latest chapter in this success story.

Charlie Butts & The Filtertips opened the night with an energy packed set that featured a wide variety of Blues; covers, originals, tunes from both their CD's, "Fire in the Hole" and their most recent release "Told You Once" along with some new material. Some of the high points for me during this set were "Walkin' the Dog" with Juel Rowden playin' that rock solid bass and doin' them "growly" vocals. I developed a severe case of goose bumps from Charlie's harp work on "I've Been Watchin' You." Look for a new CD from these guys sometime later this year.



Following a short break, Ellen Whyte's band, Reflex Blue took the stage. I really enjoy the way she starts her shows by letting the band shine on their own for a song or two. I've been to many Ellen Whyte's shows and they also surprise me by continually improving, polishing and diversifying their already stunning performances. Ellen did many of my favorites including "1-800-BLUES-4-U" from the band's first CD, "Different Point of Blue" and "Two to Tango" which will appear on their up and coming release due out in November.

As always, R. L. S. would like to give a big thank you to their sponsors; Ben Wolk of Killer Kolor Big Prints for our graphics and posters work, Dave Keefer at The Rock 106.7, Java Mama & 'D' Fred at KXA and Uncle Dave and Erin at KW3 for radio support in Central Washington as well as Steve Gear for offering special 'Blues Hotel Rates' for out of town travelers during the entire concert series at the beautiful three star full service WestCoast Wenatchee Center Hotel which is attached to the concert hall via a sky bridge. In addition, not only did this show benefit us Blues Lovers but it was also a benefit for Generations and Partnerships, a local nonprofit, 100% volunteer organization that helps senior citizens and disabled adults maintain their independence within the community.

One important final note before I sign off here. For all of you Club owners, event planners and festival directors out there; If you find yourself in need of top quality entertainer, professional sound & lighting or assistance in planning or producing your event, you can do yourself a favor by contacting R. L. S. at (509) 662-MUSC (6872). Robert has an impressive roster of talent and production available that is not only limited to only Blues acts. R. L. S. has access to top drawer acts covering a broad spectrum of musical influences. If you haven't seen one of these concerts come out to the next show with Swamp Mama Johnson along with JunkYard Jane on January 29th of 2000 and see R. L. S. at work.