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On June 20th, a few hundred people gathered at Bruce Elementary School to discuss strategies for taking down Memphis’ monuments to Confederate war heroes — specifically, the Jefferson Davis statue downtown and the Nathan Bedford Forrest statue near the University of Tennessee Memphis. The Memphis City Council has voted to remove the statues, and they have been stymied by a quickly enacted Tennessee law that forbids the removal of “war memorials” without state permission.

Forrest — the first grand wizard of the Ku Klux Klan — and his wife were disinterred from Elmwood Cemetery and re-buried under an equestrian statue in center-city Memphis in the early 20th century. The Jefferson Davis statue was put up by the United Daughters of the Confederacy in 1964, after an eight-year fund drive which netted $17,483 — the cost of erecting the statue. I learned this information from a 2013 column by former Flyer columnist John Branston, whose report also contained this excerpt from the Memphis Press-Scimitar: “This is a matter of pride for Memphis,” said Mrs. Harry Allen, leader of the fund drive. “Memphis is the only major city in the South that does not have a statue of this great man.”

That’s no longer the case. New Orleans recently took down its Confederate monuments. St. Louis is deconstructing its principal Confederate monument; it will be rebuilt and placed on private land. Arizona is considering removing its Civil War monuments from public land. All of that state’s several monuments were erected between 1943 and 2001.

Why does Arizona — which had a nominal connection to the Civil War — have a bunch of Confederate monuments? You tell me. I suspect it’s for the same reason you see Confederate flags flying in rural Pennsylvania and northern Missouri and central Idaho. Heritage.

Right.

Proponents for keeping the statues often say something along the lines of, “With all the problems the city of Memphis has, why should people obsessed with taking down these statues?” To which I say, “With all of the problems the South has, why are you people so worried about keeping a few statues?”

The fact is, the South needs to rise again. The former states of the Confederacy lead the nation in divorce rates, teen pregnancy, opioid and meth addiction, poverty, sexually transmitted disease, suicide, and illiteracy. We suck up more federal funds than we contribute in taxes. In the face of these daunting problems, our state legislators spend their days obsessing over sex, gender, guns, tax breaks for their corporate benefactors and the wealthy, and instituting their neanderthal version of Christianity as the state religion.

So yes, we all have bigger issues than statues. But as relatively recent history has shown, putting up (and taking down) statues has more to do with the politics of the day than preserving heritage. Statues come and go based on the wishes of the majority and the vicissitudes of contemporary values. If the majority wants a statue taken down or put up, it will happen, eventually.

The biggest divide we’re dealing with in Tennessee is not over the Civil War. It’s rural interests and values versus urban issues and values. Nashville, Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Memphis are pushing for more progressive policies in the areas of labor and wages, immigration, gender and racial discrimination, education, and gun control. The legislature, which is controlled by a rural Republican majority, is pushing back at every turn, taking away powers that should rightfully belong to the cities — including, but not limited to, deciding what kind of statues the majority of its citizens might want in their parks.

That battle will be difficult. In the meantime, we should take a cue from the folks in Cooper-Young who raised money earlier this month to put up a statue of Johnny Cash. The state can’t stop the citizens of Memphis from erecting statues, at least, not yet. So interested groups should do as the United Daughters of the Confederacy did: Start popping up statues congruent with our mostly non-commemorated heritage — Harriet Tubman, Maxine Smith, Benjamin Hooks. Lots of possibilities.

In the meantime, until they come down, I say we should just build walls around the Nathan B. Forrest and Jefferson Davis statues and charge admission, with the funds designated to the National Civil Rights Museum.

Bruce VanWyngarden
brucev@memphisflyer.com
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DREADFUL NEWS

A distinct, penny-dreadful approach to framing the news appears to have taken hold at WREG.

Last week Fly on the Wall highlighted a story by Channel 3’s Luke Jones who introduced his segment about a sword-wielding mugger on Summer by licking open a wicked-looking little knife.

This week, we’d like to advance our theory of WREG’s emerging pulp style by sampling the opening of a report headlined “Man Attacked With Vaporizer at Troubled Downtown Nightclub”: “A dark cloud hovers over some businesses, now casting more shadows than Sunday’s already dreary weather.”

Okay, maybe the story of a man assaulted with smoking paraphernalia at a place called Purple Haze lends itself to some purple prose, especially if you’re getting quotes from some guy in a colorful umbrella hat. But then the meteorologist caps things off with weather-Tweeting, “It was a dark and stormy night.” Or something like that.

NEVERENDING ELVIS

Sun Records may have been denied a second season, but one of the more colorful characters represented on the Memphis-shot series is getting his own biopic. According to a report in Variety, The Colonel puts Elvis’ infamous manager Tom Parker in the spotlight. The film about Parker, who was also an ex-carney, secret immigrant, and serial fabulist, is based on author Alanna Nash’s book The Colonel. It’s slated for production in 2018.

By Chris Davis. Email him at davis@memphisflyer.com.

GREENSWARD WORK TO BEGIN

Design work on a new parking lot for the Memphis Zoo may have officially begun last week as the Memphis City Council quietly accepted funds for the project from the Overton Park Conservancy (OPC).

Design work could have started more than two months ago, but Memphis Zoo officials said OPC did not have the money for construction and threatened to pull out of the entire agreement.

The council refused to take OPC’s money for design work and gave the group two months to raise $1 million. It did and the council accepted its funds Tuesday. The project is promised to end parking on the park’s Greensward.

#TAKEEMDOWN901

Close to 250 people from across the city showed their support for removing Confederate statues in Memphis during a meeting last week. Dozens spoke their minds saying things like “the monuments don’t teach, they humiliate” or the statues are “unfair and symbolize oppression.” One man, speaking directly to non-government officials said, “If you don’t do them down, we will.”

But all of those people are “losers,” according to the Memphis Brigade of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (MBCSV) Facebook page, and the group warned that if they illegally take down any statues, they can spend years in prison with a “swarthy convict.”

ART PLANNED STALLED

Despite calling the UrbanArt Commission (UAC) a “failed organization,” city council chairman Berlin Boyd agreed to hold a plan that would end the city’s involvement with the group. Council members criticized UAC, saying it did not spend enough money with local and minority artists. Boyd hoped to move the public art process into the mayor’s office for closer council oversight.

GANNETT PAYS, WILL SELL BUILDING

Gannett Co. reached a settlement agreement with the Memphis Newspaper Guild last week and eligible, laid-off employees will receive severance pay and short-term health insurance after a months-long standoff on the issue.

Gannett announced, too, that it will sell The Commercial Appeal office building at 495 Union. The move is intended to better match the newspaper’s physical space to its staff, which was about 1,300 when the paper moved into the building in 1975 and is now fewer than 200.

MAYOR “DISRESPECTED” COUNCIL

Council members said Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland disrespected their authority by allowing the Beale Street Bucks program to continue at the $10 level after they had set it to $5. Strickland said holding the higher fee for one weekend after the council vote was a public safety measure. He lowered the fee the following weekend but said he could raise it again if necessary.

Council members wondered how the mayor could “override our approvals,” as council member Jamita Swearengen said, “if so, then, there’s no need for the Memphis City Council.”
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Gateway to Frayser

New development promises economic boost to North Memphis.

Once the site of a department store, a near-20-acre lot on Hollywood has sat vacant and blighted for over two decades. Now, Frayser Gateway, a grocery-anchored shopping center — the area’s first project of its kind in the past 30 years — is in the works to transform the space.

In addition to a proposed 35,000-square-foot grocery store, Frayser Gateway will host other retail establishments, restaurants, and a hotel.

Total investment in the shopping center would equal a little over $16 million, with construction set to begin in 2018 and wrapping up sometime in 2020.

Known for his work on the retail side of the new Crosstown Concourse and the Binghampton Gateway development, Shawn Massey with the Shopping Center Group is working in collaboration with G2 Ventures, the group that currently owns the property, to develop the 97,000-square-foot space.

Massey says one of the goals of the project is to eliminate the huge source of blight that the abandoned lot, now used as a dumping ground and illegal parking lot for 18-wheelers, has created.

“It sets a bad example for what the Frayser community is perceived as and not really what exists in the community today,” Massey said.

Another goal of the development is to address long-term poverty in Frayser by bringing economic development to the area, while providing access to food and jobs to the surrounding residents.

Introducing a grocery store to the area would provide relief to neighborhoods near the proposed project, which are certified USDA food deserts, with transportation-challenged residents lacking access to healthy foods.

Additionally, Frayser Gateway is expected to bring the equivalent of 136 part-time jobs with an average annual wage of $24,294 to South Frayser, which currently has unemployment rates between 15 and 30 percent.

Leaders in the Frayser community welcome the new shopping center, acknowledging the neighborhoods need for more businesses and avenues of revenue.

“The Frayser Gateway project would be a much needed shot in the arm for the community,” said Steve Lockwood, executive director of the Frayser Community Development Corporation. “I believe it could spur other developments in Frayser, particularly in the nearby Watkins gateway area.”

The Frayser Gateway project is made possible by a 15-year Community Builder pay-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) incentive awarded to the group by the Economic Development Growth Engine for Memphis and Shelby County (EDGE) last week.

EDGE board chairman Al Bright Jr. said the shopping center will prove to bring economic growth to Frayser and put money back into the community, as the Frayser Gateway group is expected to produce a little over $100,000 in taxes during the PILOT and over $400,000 post-PILOT.

The incentive gives the group a temporary abatement of taxes in return for spending $3.2 million of construction-related costs with city or county-certified minority or women-owned enterprises (MWBE).

Previously, terms of the PILOT required contracting only with locally owned small businesses, but after the EDGE board voted to amend its local participation policy last week, PILOT recipients must spend 25 percent of spending to contract with MWBE.
The Volunteer Memphis Awards, a community-wide volunteer recognition event, is a celebration of volunteerism and an opportunity to say “thank you” to volunteers that make Memphis a better place. The Volunteer Memphis Awards recognizes individuals, non-profits and companies who represent excellence in volunteerism on June 29, 2017 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm at the Memphis Botanic Gardens. Congratulations to all of the nominees and finalists listed below!

**LIFETIME SERVICE AWARD**
- Gene Bryan
- Stacie Feldmayer
- Sam Goff

**MILLENNIAL VOLUNTEER AWARD**
- Danielle Chandler
- Andrew Goff
- Corey Smith

**RISING STAR**
- Jose Ayala
- Kennedy Brown
- Xinyi Tan

**VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD**
- John Lewis
- Thurston Smith
- Madison Snipes

**NON-PROFIT SMALL <$1 MILLION**
- Clean Memphis
- Collierville Literacy Council
- Refugee Empowerment Program

**CORPORATE SMALL < 100 EMPLOYEES**
- Allworld Project Management, LLC.
- Hickory Hill Community Redevelopment Corporation
- Vaco Memphis

**NON-PROFIT MEDIUM = $1 MILLION - $5 MILLION**
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Memphis
- Moore Tech
- The Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis

**CORPORATE MEDIUM = 100 – 500 EMPLOYEES**
- Buckman
- Fox 13
- Triumph Bank

**NON-PROFIT LARGE >$5 MILLION**
- Christ Community Health Services
- Christian Brothers University
- University of Memphis

**CORPORATE LARGE > 500 EMPLOYEES**
- BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee
- International Paper
- ServiceMaster

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POLITICS By Jackson Baker

Triple Whammy!

County Mayor Luttrell’s composure wears thin after commission action (and inaction) on a triad of issues.

Give Shelby County Mayor Mark Luttrell points for coming front and center to account for an effort by himself and two other county officials to ask the U.S. Department of Justice to discontinue its oversight of Juvenile Court operations.

Give Luttrell an Excedrin or a flak jacket (pick one) as a remedy for the consequences of that candor. Double his dose or his armament for the triple whammy he incurred during Monday’s regular meeting of the Shelby County Commission, a legislative body that has been carrying on guerrilla warfare against the mayor’s authority for at least two years.

The commission ramped up its assault on Monday with action on three different fronts.

First, after a run-through of a commission agenda that ultimately bypassed the matter of the county’s 2017-18 budget, the commission voted in favor of an add-on resolution, sponsored by Democrat Walter Bailey, that directly opposed the request by Luttrell, Sheriff Bill Oldham, and Juvenile Court Judge Dan Michael (all Republicans) that was expressed in their recently published letter to U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions seeking to end DOJ oversight of the court.

That vote was unanimous after a fashion, with seven members — six Democrats and Republican David Reaves — voting aye and four, all Republicans, abstaining.

Clearly, the abstention by the four non-concurring (but also non-objecting) GOP members — Terry Roland, Steve Basar, George Chism, and Heidi Shafer — was based less on aversion to the action of Luttrell, Oldham, and Michael than on a wish to be discreet on a racially charged matter that numerous audience members, all opposing the officials’ action, had spoken to on the meeting’s front end.

The DOJ’s Memorandum of Understanding with the county, dating from 2012, was based on a department investigation of what it ultimately proclaimed to be administrative problems and racial bias on the court’s part.

Saying, “You may not get what you’re asking for,” Roland, in fact, made the point that a Department of Justice under Sessions undoubtedly had a different attitude toward the Juvenile Court matter than the department, led by Eric Holder, that imposed oversight in the 2012 MOU — a point countered by resolution supporter Van Turner, who insisted that “local monitors” were and would continue to be the actual overseers and that the court’s irregularities had not been sufficiently addressed, as Luttrell suggested they had.

An obviously angry mayor then said the commission majority’s action was “much ado about nothing,” said that it would be ignored in Washington, and that, in any case, he would veto it, so that “it won’t have the county seal.”

The second whammy was presented to the mayor in a resolution, sponsored by Turner, asking the administration to submit any change in county security operations to the commission for its approval.

Luttrell’s CAO, Harvey Kennedy, lambasted that one as yet another incursion on executive prerogatives, and the resolution failed by a 3-4 vote — a result that was probably inevitable, inasmuch as a commission majority had approved the changeover in question — from the security management of Allied Universal, a corporation based outside Shelby County, to that of Clarion Security, a local operation headed by a woman, Kim Heathcott, in conjunction with four local majority-black companies.

An uncharacteristically fuming Luttrell called the delay “frustrating,” and, on that matter, he was echoed by Steve Basar.

The changeover satisfied the commission’s recently adopted guidelines requiring an increase in county contracts with locally owned small businesses (LOSBs) and business enterprises owned by racial minorities or women (MWREs).

And the final provocation to the mayor’s usual calm demeanor — the third whammy, as it were — came from the commission’s decision, by a 6-4 vote, to postpone approval of Luttrell’s proposed 2017-18 operating budget because of unresolved amendment requests, all made relatively recently and including some which, as Luttrell noted, had only been presented to him on Monday. An uncharacteristically fuming Luttrell called the delay “frustrating,” and, on that matter, he was echoed by commission budget chairman Steve Basar, who pronounced himself “disgusted” and by Commissioner David Reaves, who vented his displeasure by voting no on an otherwise unanimous continuing-budget resolution, leaving current expenditure requirements in place pending some forthcoming late agreement on a new budget, technically due to be in place by July 1st.
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EDITORIAL

Making Waves

Changes in national government always cause adjustments on the part of local governments, in the same way that dropping a pebble on the surface of a settled body of water prompts ripples outward.

But the most recent change from the Democratic presidency of Obama to the Republican administration of Trump has generated more than the usual uncertainties in Memphis and Shelby County. The impact is more like that of a boulder being thrown into a bathtub.

One obvious case in point has been the continuing brouhaha over the effort by three local officials — Shelby County Mayor Mark Luttrell, Sheriff Bill Oldham, and Juvenile Court Judge Dan Michael — to get the court out from under the direct supervision of the U.S. Department of Justice, as imposed by a 2012 Memorandum of Understanding between the DOJ and Shelby County government.

Most or all of these officials had a chance three weeks ago to buttonhole the current boss of the DOJ, Trump-appointed Attorney General Jeff Sessions, about ending his department’s hands-on monitoring of Juvenile Court, and a now-famous letter by the three to Sessions followed up on the matter. Predictably, there was great opposition to the request, which has dominated various local proceedings, including last week’s kickoff in Memphis of a statewide listening tour by the legislative Black Caucus.

The essential argument of those opposed to the Justice Department’s potential withdrawal of direct oversight is that sufficient remedies have not been provided to correct the irregularities pinpointed by a prior DOJ investigation of the court, including what the investigators saw as outright racial bias in processing of juvenile offenders.

As indicated in Politics (p. 8), the matter spilled over into this week’s meeting of the Shelby County Commission, which saw all six African-American Democrats and one supportive white Republican formally adopt a resolution opposing the withdrawal request — all this in the county mayor’s presence. Four of the commission’s Republicans demurred, but not by voting no; even they, reading the aroused reaction against the initiative on the part of several audience members, saw abstention from voting to be the better part of valor.

One of them, however, Millington Commissioner Terry Roland, cautioned, in essence, that the political views of Sessions, a conservative Republican, were liable to be significantly different from those of former Obama-era Attorney General Eric Holder, the Democrat under whose tenure the MOU was authorized.

It is hard to imagine Luttrell et al. venturing to petition whatever attorney general might have been appointed by Clinton for a lifting of the MOU.

The root fact is that, in the absence of verifiable concrete data, Sessions is indeed likely to base his decision on subjective — which is to say political — interpretation of the evidence.

Whatever the attorney general does will make waves in the chambers of local government — just as Sessions’ promise of federal help to the understaffed Memphis Police Department has complicated the thinking of both city and county officials about how to remedy the MPD’s problems.

We imagine Sessions sees it all as a welcome break from the turmoil of the ongoing Russia investigations in Washington.
Defending JLL Deal

State official makes the case for outsourcing of public building maintenance jobs.

I was dismayed by the story “Outsourcing Tennessee” in the Flyer’s June 1st issue, for two reasons. The first reason was the number of incorrect statements in the article, which I detailed in an email to the author and to the editor, and which I summarize here:

1) “[T]he state quietly sent out feelers …” This Request for Information (RFI) was posted on the state website, exactly the same way we put out hundreds of RFIs, Requests for Qualifications, and Requests for Proposals each year, and in the same place that our vendors know to look for them. We want maximum response to these requests, so there is no reason we would issue them quietly. We didn’t.

2) “No state has attempted to auction off swaths of campus workers’ jobs.” The contracting process cannot with any accuracy be called an auction, since cost is only one of several elements considered. Also, contracting with external vendors for work formerly done by campus employees is widely practiced in Tennessee and elsewhere. Many universities in Tennessee already contract out their food service and custodial work, and some contract out their groundskeeping — all of which are jobs formerly held by state employees.

The business case for this new procurement, posted on the CFG website for many months now, specifically cites the experience of Texas A&M University in contracting out its facilities management. The National Association of College and University Business Officers even held a conference on outsourcing in 2015. Saying that no state has done this before is not remotely accurate.

3) “JLL … is about to rake in billions in profit.” The estimated maximum cost within this contract is $1.9 billion, and the majority of that amount represents costs that the state would be paying anyway, regardless of who managed the state’s buildings. JLL will simply pass those costs on to the state without markup. Specific details of JLL’s cost proposal are spelled out in Attachment F3 of the contract.

4) A paragraph describing the history of JLL’s contracts with the state contains several errors. The first contract JLL signed was for a facilities assessment, and it was followed by a second competitively awarded contract for facilities management for properties operated by the Department of General Services. An amendment to that contract required JLL to act as a lease broker for the state. That amendment expired in 2016 and was not renewed. The original contract for facilities management was for five years and is still in effect.

The second reason for my dismay is that the article is devoted to attacking outsourcing without providing your readers any context for understanding why outsourcing facilities management might provide significant benefits for Tennessee and the taxpayers who pay the bills.

Maintaining buildings is not — nor should it be — a core competency of the state, which should instead focus on providing education, health care, safety, and other services needed by all our citizens. The idea of having professional facilities management is well established in the private sector, where it is understood that companies do better by focusing on their main business while allowing third parties to handle ancillary tasks.

The right answer for Tennessee and its taxpayers is to outsource services when it makes good business sense.

Tennessee’s own experience with outsourcing facilities management on about 10 percent of state buildings has been excellent: In the first three years, it has saved taxpayers more than $26 million, while customer satisfaction of building occupants is consistently above 95 percent.

No one in state government is claiming that outsourcing of services is a panacea or that it’s always the right answer. The state has experimented with outsourcing some functions, such as capital projects management, and has then decided that the work can be done more efficiently or cost-effectively by state employees, so the operation was brought back in-house.

Also, the specialized nature of some state buildings might mean that they are not good candidates for outsourced facilities management.

The right answer for Tennessee and its taxpayers is to outsource services when it makes good business sense.

David Roberson is director of communications for the Tennessee Department of General Services.
magine being born into the Great Depression, growing up in South Memphis. You're a part of the household of the Reverend Tigner Green. You're not terribly wealthy, but you're better off than many and not without some dignity in the racist order that prevailed in the 1920s South.

Your life is filled with music. Your biological father, Herman Washington — murdered when you were only two — once played in W.C. Handy’s legendary band. You bear his name, and they call you Junior. Your grandmother was a pianist of some talent in St. Louis, and as you mature, you develop skills in piano and guitar.

Under your stepfather’s guidance at the Church of God in Christ, you play guitar alongside a blind pianist, Lindell Woodson, marveling at a dexterity rivaling that of the great Art Tatum, with songs bringing congregations to their feet, clapping and shouting.

Every day hinges on three simple tasks: You kill a chicken; you chop wood; and you practice your music lessons.

“That,” says Herman Green, the man recalling all this, “is one part of the beginning of yours truly.”

Dr. Herman Green, who would come to carry the genius of post-war blues, soul, and jazz into the 21st century, halts this idyllic tale of youth as he confronts a defining moment: high school marching band. “They didn’t have marching band in elementary school,” remembers Green. “So I got in high school, and I told my mom, ‘I gotta get me a horn. I can’t march down the street with a guitar; they won’t even let me!’”

She said, ‘Okay, we’ll get down there and get you a horn. What kind do you wanna play?’

“I jumped on the bandstand on top of — I was taught early. And guess who it was? Dr. Herman Green! I could play some jazz myself then. I mean, blues. Let me get on the bandstand, ‘cause I want to play!”

“Took it a ‘bally’ stage. Pay your money, come inside. I did 22 shows in 8 hours. They didn’t have marching band in high school, with him. Plus, I played gigs with him.”

By the age of 15, Green was in the orchestra backing talent shows that Rufus Thomas and his colleague “Bones” compered on Beale Street. Over the next couple years, the music he played became more worldly, culminating in the arrival of another pivotal figure. “B.B. King came to Memphis from Mississippi, so Rufus said, ‘I got a saxophone player you need. His name is Herman Green!’ So we went to playing like Covington, Dyersburg, West Memphis; we played the Harlem Club, which was a black club. They was over there rolling the dice while we was over in the corner playing.

“So we did that for about a year, and I said, ‘B., you think you ready to move? What you wanna do, you wanna stick around here, or you wanna go further?’ He said, ‘Well, I think we need to move. We goin’ to Kansas City. I heard they love the blues there.’ So we went up there, me and B., to look it over. And there was a lot of jazz musicians there in Kansas City. I said, ‘Okay, B., I don’t hear nobody blowin’ no blues. Let me get on the bandstand;’ cause I could play some jazz myself then. I mean, I was taught early. And guess who it was I jumped on the bandstand on top of — Charlie Parker! Now, you know I had to be a fool to get on the bandstand with Charlie Parker there. But at that time I hadn’t seen Charlie Parker in my life, man! So Charlie said, ‘Hey, you play good for a kid!’

Green and King returned to Memphis as planned, but other temptations awaited. At the Memphis Cotton Carnival, a touring troupe offered work. “They had a show with girls running out there with their shorts and dancing. They called it a ‘bally’ stage. Pay your money, come inside. I did 22 shows in 8 hours. They were paying $5 — that’s what a musician was making in those days. And the bally troupe wanted me to go with them with the show. So I left a note to tell my folks I was going to leave, and I’ll let you know where I’m going and I’ll be in touch, and blah, blah, blah. … I was ready to leave, because they were headed to Canada, all the way up the east coast.

“Man, I’m up there playing my butt off,
and all of a sudden
...Well, my mom was a church mother, and she wasn’t supposed to be seen in those kind of places, you know. But she came through them curtains, man, and she stood there like this with her arms crossed. And she waited till the end of the show. She was a classy lady. Then she said, ‘Junior, I got your note. I didn’t come up here to scold you. I didn’t come up here to hurt you. I came up here to keep you here, because you’ve got a little more schooling to do. You need to know a little more about life. Now come on. Your daddy’s downstairs waiting on ya.’

“Then that was my stepfather. He was in the car. And preachers then, you know, had them big, long limousines. And I just said ‘Well, there’s no use arguing here. I just might as well go.’ So I did, I went home and stayed a whole year. And I lost a brand new pair of suede shoes that I bought at Florsheim. Thirty dollar shoes! I left ‘em on the bus, man. But they really were concerned about me getting an education. They wanted me to go to college.

“So I went one year. Then next time that bally troupe came back, I played a gig with ’em, and I said, ‘What time y’all planning on leaving town?’” With his mother’s blessing, this time, Green left Memphis.

“I went all the way up to Toronto, Canada, man, and come on back down, and when they headed back down to Virginia, I got off in Washington, D.C., and I went back to New York, and that’s when I got in touch with Sonny Stitt and Gene Ammons and John Coltrane. I was like 21; they at that time were 27 or 28 I think.”

It was Stitt who first helped Green navigate the competitive bop scene of New York; after one stern lecture, admonishing him for being presumptuous, Stitt told him, “Now, let’s get back up there and play, ‘cause you can play.”

It so often came down to that simple fact for Herman Green: He had chops. That skill served him well wherever he landed, including the heady New York bop scene of 1950.

Back in Memphis, he played on Rufus Thomas’ first sessions at Sun Studio — “Why Did Ya Dee-Geet?” and “Bearcat” — released on Chess Records and Sun Records. He was drafted into front line service.

continued on page 14
July 1st
July 14th & 15th
July 28th & 29th

FREEWORLD

PRESTON SHANNON
July 7th & 8th
July 21st & 22nd

KEEPING THE BLUES ALIVE
7 DAYS A WEEK FOR 32 YEARS
182 BEALE STREET | MEMPHIS, TN | 901.528.0150
www.rumboogie.com

for the Korean War, only to be reassigned to the Army band when officers heard him practicing his horn. Upon his return to the States, a layover in San Francisco turned into a two-year stint: “I loved that city,” he remembers. There he played Bop City and led the house band at the Blackhawk, a pivotal club where he played with pioneers of the West Coast Sound like Dave Brubeck, as well as his New York cohorts: Miles Davis, Thelonius Monk, Dizzy Gillespie, and John Coltrane. Occasionally, he’d even see his old Memphis friend Phineas Newborn Jr. when he passed through.

Finally, Green moved on, landing a steady gig with Lionel Hampton and His Orchestra, which he stuck with for 10 years. It was Hampton, Green says, who had the biggest impact on his playing, but it was at this time, during a three month residency at the Riviera in Las Vegas, that he had a brush with another demi-god who’d impacted all of jazz itself.

“They had an after-hours breakfast jazz jam place, and I was over there playing on the stand, and I used to play with my eyes closed cause I didn’t wanna get disturbed, especially when I was playing something different. And then I heard this deep voice say ‘Keep on playing, boy!’ And I looked around, and there was Louis Armstrong standing next to me! Ooh, Lord have mercy, I almost put my horn down, man!”

“‘He said, ‘Don’t you dare put that down, the way that you playing.’”

It was Green’s mother, who had given her blessing when he left Memphis, who brought him back. During a session for Atlantic Records in New York, he got a call that his mother wanted him home. She was dying of tuberculosis. He left the session immediately, getting home in time to see her just before she passed. Soon, he was settled again in his hometown. It was 1967, and Stax Records was in full swing. Green, who had played with his younger cousin Al Jackson Jr. on Beale Street, soon fell into recording sessions there. For a while, as the Memphis scene fired on all cylinders, there was plenty of work to be had. In the early 1970s, he married Rose Jackson (who has since passed away), and by mid-decade, he had taken a teaching position at Lemoyne-Owen College. All the while, he played his horn, often with fellow Booker T. Washington alum Calvin Newborn on guitar, mentoring young jazz talents like James Williams along the way.

Even as Beale Street withered after the 1980s, traditional jazz thrived in Memphis for a time. Green and his band, the Green Machine, became a fixture on the scene, and he fondly recalls the rebirth of Beale Street in the 1980s, marked for him personally by the night Stevie Wonder sat in with his band after playing Memphis in May.

In 1986, he befriended a young bass player, Richard Cushing, who saw great possibilities in the jam-based approach of the Grateful Dead. The next year, their friendship bore fruit with FreeWorld, now perhaps the longest-running Memphis band of this generation. The group has consistently brewed an unpredictable blend of funk, New Orleans street music, soul, and jam rock — a gumbo of influences that has led them to carve out a reliable niche on Beale. Even as local audiences for hop-informed, swinging jazz lose the plot, such bands with a backbone of funk keep the spirit of improvisation alive and well. FreeWorld has kept Green spry on the stage, and they were there backing him when he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the Memphis College of Art.

Seeing FreeWorld play Beale Street recently, I was struck by how crucial the simple act of dancing has been to Memphis music, bridging the many disparate paths Green has taken over decades. Dance weaves like a golden thread from the strut of Rufus Thomas, through the years with Lionel Hampton, the Stax years, and into the present. All the while, Green has mined the more complex territory of harmony and melody embodied in his first chance meeting with Charlie Parker.

Seeing him take the microphone last Sunday, singing a blues song resonating with echoes of old Beale Street, all of his 87 years seemed to be summed up in a few elegant lines, dipping and crosscutting to the rhythm, as he sang into the sky, eyes wide open, “She’s waiting for me, she’s waiting for me.”

RECENT RECORD ROUNDUP

Marco Pavé
Welcome to GrC Lnd (Radio Rahim Music)

Marco Pavé’s Welcome To GrC Lnd makes the party political from its opening moment, when Jamey Hatley intones the album’s name, sarcasm dripping from her voice like the devil’s honey.

She’s not the only strong female voice chiming in. Duchess spits fire on “Hood Obit.” Soul singer Big Baby takes it to church on “Let Me Go.” Later, Artistik Approach wraps thoughts on the intersection of capitalism and racism in layers of angelic harmony.

Pavé is a charismatic frontman, equally at home flowing about the school-to-prison pipeline or barking his shins while getting out of bed. But his greatest talent may be in choosing collaborators and bringing out great performances. Overall, this is one of the most meticulously constructed, finely paced albums to come out of Memphis in recent memory. — Chris McCoy

★★★★

Various Artists
Fruition (Culture Power 45)

This new vinyl-only hip-hop imprint has an Arizona mailing address, but much of the label’s talent comes from the Mephop scene. Of 19 tracks, eight have local con-
Cory Branan

Adios (Bloodshot Records)

Adios is Memphis-by-way-of-Southaven singer/songwriter Cory Branan’s fifth studio album — his third for the label Bloodshot, and his first since moving back to Memphis from Nashville earlier this year. And though it might not be his sunniest offering to date (Adios is touted as Branan’s “death record” in promotional materials), it definitely shows Branan’s deft touch with a catchy pop hook and clever turn of phrase is undiminished by personal tragedy. From the opening earworm “I Only Know” (which features scorching backing vocals from Against Me!’s Laura Jane Grace) to the 1980s Springsteen synth-pads of “The Vow” to the barroomish closer, “My Father Was an Accordion Player” the journey definitely has its emotional ups and downs. But as with most of his catalog, Branan’s wit and skill with the craft make the journey worthwhile.

— JDR

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Shannon McNally

Black Irish (Compass Records)

What distinguishes Oxford-based Shannon McNally from the pack of Bonnie Raitt-influenced roots rockers is her commitment to the beat. McNally could have gone the rhythmless route on “Prayer in Open D,” the emotional and temporal center of Black Irish, when she is unaccompanied by her band. But even as she sings about “the river of darkness in my blood,” she keeps the beat bouncy. Album opener “You Made Me Feel for You” reworks “Baby Please Don’t Go” to good effect — the first of many times McNally and co-writer Rodney Crowell lean on the traditional hill-country blues structure. On “Banshee Moan,” McNally is clearly having a blast going full “Tusk,” complete with pounding toms and breathy, Stevie Nicks vocal flourishes.

— CM

★ ★ ★ ★

Don Bryant

Don’t Give Up on Love (Fat Possum Records)

Memphis native Don Bryant has been a fixture of the local soul scene since the early 1960s. Though he is primarily known as a songwriter — he has penned cuts for Al Green, Albert King, his wife, Ann Peebles — he’s also a talented singer and performer. His 1969 album for Hi Records, Precious Soul, is regarded by many as an underground soul/R&B classic. And while Don’t Give Up on Love is only the second “secular” offering of Bryant’s career, it radiates confidence and old-school Memphis swagger. This is the real deal. Highlights include “I Got to Know” and a fierce cover of O.V. Wright’s “A Nickel and a Nail.”

— J.D. Reager

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Charles Lloyd

Passin’ Through (Blue Note Records)

This Memphis native is a point of pride for Mannassas High School, which has spawned so many legendary players. It was 50 years ago that Lloyd was first named Jazz Artist of the Year by Downbeat, and he may deserve that moniker still. This album finds him taking a virtual tour of jazz since then. Opening with the Coltrane-esque sonic washes and free florishes of “Dream Weaver,” the quartet reveals its mastery of mood and style in this live setting. The next track ranges from Miles Smiles-type delicacy and out-ness to classic swinging moments with walking bass. “Nu Blues” opens up its titular genre with unique tonal colors and an abrupt, punctuated arrangement. “Tagore on the Delta” is a classic ’60s boogaloo groove that breaks down into a butt-simple half-time section, featuring Lloyd’s flute chops. And it’s all grounded by Lloyd’s glorious tone, epitomized by the finale, which decelerates from more sonic upheaval into the long, moody closing note.

— Alex Greene

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Connections, including Empee’s gritty “Never CMO” two memorable instrumentals from MaxPthah, and Jason Da Hater’s pile-driving wrestling ode “Black Randy,” also produced by Empee.

It’s a stretch to call Chicago-born, Philadelphia-based Patrice local, but he has roots here — and his “Time U Miss” is biographical brilliance. That track and Infinito 2017’s “War Against Commercialism” transcend era and geography, a rare feat in contemporary hip-hop. The latter’s hook (“I’ll never cross over”) rings with the assurance of an artist who is accustomed to DIY — Infinito 2017 is one of the “10 black men” behind the label which, so far, has released six lathe-cut limited-edition 45s in addition to this vinyl-only full-length.

— Andria Lisle

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Wu Way  By Chris Davis

Wu Fei’s not the easiest artist to describe. On one hand, she’s a traditionalist — a master of the guzheng, the plucked Chinese instrument with a history going back thousands of years. But the Beijing-born, San Francisco-educated, and Nashville-based composer isn’t constrained by tradition. If you’ve only heard her work with John Zorn or watched the video where she improvises with a speeding train, you might identify her with edgy jazz. If you’ve caught her jamming with folk singer and banjo picker Abigail Washburn, she sounds like the future of bluegrass. Of course, she’s both and neither and so much more. She’s also performing an intimate concert at Crosstown Arts this week, talking about her instrument and all the nifty things you can do with 21 bendable strings and a big hollow body.

Fei’s trip down I-40 is courtesy of Sonosphere, an eclectic and detail-minded music podcast out of Memphis. The concert has been in the works since the show’s hosts Christopher Williams and Amy Schaftlein were both mesmerized by Fei’s approach to the guzheng while attending Knoxville’s Big Ears music festival.

“Big Ears was kinda our first venture out to collect interviews and build content,” Williams says. “And Wu Fei was so personable. The whole time I was thinking there has to be a way to bring her to Memphis.” Schaftlein was impressed by the show’s interactivity, and when Crosstown Arts approached the podcasters to talk programming, Fei seemed like a perfect fit.

“We thought maybe we can curate a performance,” Schaftlein says.

The guzheng, or Chinese zither, is a versatile instrument that’s plucked, scraped, hammered, and played with any number of tools to create beautiful melodies, pounding rhythms, and wild textures. The infectiously enthusiastic and unconventional Fei has been known to incorporate everything from bottleneck slides to rubber balls.

AN EVENING WITH WU FEI AT CROSSTOWN ARTS FRIDAY, JUNE 30TH, 7:30 P.M. $15

Food for thought. The Last Word, p. 39

Beehives and Bangkok Salad — the Beauty Shop celebrates 15 years. Food, p. 30

THURSDAY June 29

Ladies Night Out
Be Free Revolution
(771 Brookhaven), 6-8 p.m., $40
Supporting causes that empower women. Event includes jewelry-making and a wine pull.

Hired Gun
Malco Paradiso, 7:30 p.m.
Documentary about hired musicians who tour with the biggest acts.

Yo Gotti Birthday Bash
FedExForum, 7 p.m., $57
Rapper celebrates his birthday with the help of Lil Wayne and others.

Patriotic Pops
Levitt Shell, 7:30 p.m.
Favorite patriotic songs from the Memphis Symphony Orchestra and the Chancel Choir. Concert is topped off with fireworks.

Peabody Rooftop Party
Peabody Hotel, 6-10 p.m., $10
Tonight, Snowglobe performs, and on the menu are a jalapeno popper dip (!) and grilled chicken legs. The Flyer will be on site as well with special drinks.

FRIDAY June 30

Booksingning by Earnest E. Lacey
South Main Book Juggler, 6-9 p.m.
Earnest E. Lacey signs his book Hilton Street: From Memphis to Chicago, which traces the history of his family.

Cameo and Morris Day & the Time
Horseshoe Tunica, 8 p.m., $34-$44
An evening filled with funky jams.

Dirty Harry
The Orpheum, 6 p.m., $8
Do you feel lucky? Well, do you? Classic Clint Eastwood film screens tonight.

Clanky’s Nub
Blue Monkey, 10 p.m.
The band’s only performance of the year!
Journey to Boston  By Chris Davis

Wait, wait, hold the phone. So rockin’ Mike Huckabee’s not in Boston anymore and won’t be playing the Botanic Garden this Saturday? Mind blown. It’s so hard to imagine big hits like “More Than a Feeling,” “Open Arms,” and “Don’t Stop Believin'” without the former Arkansas governor and presidential also-ran running his conservative bass.

Just kidding! Huckabee never was in the band Boston. He tried to make “More Than a Feeling” his theme song, and he played it on the campaign trail with some guy who played with Boston for a couple of years, till Tom Scholz, the technology wizard, musical polymath, and Obama supporter behind all things Boston, finally told him to cease and desist. For Scholz, who wrote “More Than a Feeling,” played all the guitar parts, and invented the gear that made his guitars sound unlike anything else on the radio in 1976, it all boiled down to identity. “I think I’ve been ripped off, dude,” he wrote in a sternly worded letter. Scholz’ message was clear. He is Boston. And if Neal Schon’s still running his guitar through Scholz-built Rockman equipment, he’s at least a little piece of the Journey sound too. Both Journey and Boston — certiﬁable monsters of the monsters-of-rock era — are in town this week, to compare and contrast.

Steve Perry was Journey’s face in the ’80s during a run of MTV-era hits like “Open Arms,” “Any Way You Want It,” and “Who’s Cryin’ Now.” He’s the eternally warbling voice of the band’s inescapable megahit, “Don’t Stop Believin’.” But Perry didn’t show up till album number four and when he went solo in the mid-’80s, the prog-pop band soldiered on without him. Schon and company, always tech-forward, found Arnel Pineda, Journey’s current lead singer on YouTube. They’re playing the hits at the BankPlus Amphitheater at Snowden Grove Wednesday, July 5th. Mike Huckabee won’t be there either. Probably. Unless he’s somehow landed a gig in the current lineup of Asia, who open the show.

BOSTON PLAYS LIVE AT THE GARDEN. SATURDAY, JULY 1ST. GATES AT 6:30 P.M., SHOW AT 8:30 P.M. JOURNEY PLAYS THE BANKPLUS AMPHITHEATER AT SNOWDEN GROVE WEDNESDAY, JULY 5TH, 7:30 P.M.

We’re hopeful that night has ﬁnally fallen on Michael Bay’s giant robot franchise in Transformers: The Last Knight.

SATURDAY  July 1

4th Annual Red, White, and Brew Tour
Corner of Second and Beale, 6 p.m.
Tour led by Backbeat of High Cotton and Ghost River, ending at Aldo’s.
Features a sing-along on the bus.

Beer Dinner
Aldo’s Downtown, 6-9 p.m.
Four course dinner with specialty pies and homemade dessert paired with beers from Wiseacre.

A Night of Legends
Minglewood Hall, 8 p.m.
Featuring Too Short, Playa Fly, and Gansta Black.

Star-Spangled Celebration
Shelby Farms, noon-10 p.m., $10
Huge event with water games, a laser show, and loads of music.

TUESDAY  July 4

Extremely Low-budget Fireworks Display and Maybe Live Music
Hi-Tone, 8 p.m.
At least they’re honest.

4th of July on the Island
Mud Island, 3 p.m.
Family-friendly fun with live music, kidde rides and games, food, and more.

Fireworks Viewing
Peabody Rooftop, 10 p.m.
One of the best sites in town for catching downtown ﬁreworks.
WHAT is Pezz fighting for? In the liner notes of their new album *More Than You Can Give Us*, they tell you: “Honor, dignity, justice, fair play, equal treatment, the benefit of the doubt, a leg up.”

Since their first all-ages gig at the Antenna Club on June 19, 1990, Pezz have been the quintessential Memphis hardcore band. In a few short years, they were touring incessantly and packing the New Daisy Theatre with scruffy kids. Last month, they returned to the renovated New Daisy for Memphis Punk Fest. “It sounded awesome. It looks like somebody cares,” says Pezz founding member Ceylon Mooney.

Unlike the English variety, the first wave of American punk was apolitical. Birthed in the Reagan ’80s, hardcore changed that. The music inspired the members of Pezz not only to write political songs, but also to live lives of social consciousness and political activism. Mooney acknowledges the similarities between today and the Reagan era, but from his point of view, Trump is just a symptom of a diseased system. “You have a cartoonish villain, but these institutions of power operate by design, regardless of whose face is in front of them.”

The cover of Pezz’ *More Than You Can Give Us* pairs images of striking Memphis sanitation workers from 1968 and last year’s I-40 bridge protest. The band started tracking for the album in 2012, says Pezz singer/guitarist Marvin Stockwell. “We’re purists in the sense that we like to record to tape, but ProTools has been a helpful thing. It’s a help and a hindrance. The good news is, you can mess with it forever. The bad news is, you can mess with it forever.”

Originally, the band wanted to use an image of the Ferguson Black Lives Matter protest for the cover, until they were inspired by the bridge shutdown. “I’m glad it didn’t work out with the Ferguson photos,” says Stockwell. “It allowed us to have, as bookends, two Memphis events. The reason we juxta-posed them is because they represent different moments in our city’s history where regular Memphians stood up and said, ‘The status quo will not stand. We’re going to take radical action!’”

Pezz’ music has always been fast and hard, with a melodic streak that endeared them to pop-punk fans. For this album, the band sounds heavier than ever. Mooney stepped out from behind the drums, where he was replaced by
Recoil drummer Graham Burks, and returned to the front line with a guitar, joining Stockwell, guitarist Shawn Apple, and bassist Christian Walker. "This is a three-guitar record with a lot going on," says Stockwell.

The lineup is uncommon for punk; Stockwell says they were inspired more by classic Chicago hardcore band Articles of Faith than Lynyrd Skynyrd. "When we first started to do it, it seemed like it was too much. But your mind spreads out and hears differently. We had been in a two-guitar dynamic for so long."

Mooney compares the complex new arrangements to a conversation, as on the album closer “Guilty,” where Walker’s bass takes the lead while Mooney fills in a bass line before all four guitars join in unison for the album’s finale. “You can’t have everybody yelling all at the same time.”

But there’s still plenty of yelling on More Than You Can Give Us. On “Welcome to Palestine,” a song Mooney originally recorded in 2006 with his solo project Akasha, the singer delivers a full-throated tirade against “Occupation, subjugation of the land and its oppressed nation.”

Pezz’ music has always been fast and hard with a melodic streak. For this album, the band sounds heavier than ever.

“Unfortunately, that one is still relevant,” he says. "Sometimes I think, ‘We’re still talking about this shit? It’s like ‘Live Another Day.’ When people we love stop offing themselves, I guess we’ll stop talking about it.”

Pezz will play their record release show on June 30th at Growlers. Stockwell says he hopes the group’s fifth album (or tenth, if you count split LPs and cassette-only releases) inspires in others the same sense of urgency old school hardcore inspired in him. The vinyl insert contains both a list of local organizations working for change and the record’s mission statement, a call for people to “demand … their birthright as members of the human family.”

“I wrote that before Trump won the election, but if you read that with Trump in mind, it’s not hard to make it fit,” says Stockwell. "We are very fortunate in this band to be able to do the things we’ve done and to use our collective voice to demand change and to express ourselves. We realize not everyone has that opportunity."

Pezz’ More Than You Can Give Us record release show is June 30th at Growlers.
After Dark: Live Music Schedule June 29 - July 5

**BEALE STREET**

Alfred’s
197 BEALE 525-3711
Gary Hardy & Memphis 2
Thursdays-Saturdays, 6-9 p.m.
Karaoke Thursdays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Saturdays, 9 p.m.-1 a.m., and Sundays-Mondays, 10 p.m.-2 a.m.; Mendi Thomas Fridays, Saturdays, 6-9 p.m.; The 901 Heavy Hitters Fridays, Saturdays, 10 p.m.-2 a.m.; Flyin’ Ryan Fridays, Saturdays, 2:30 a.m.; Memphis Jazz Orchestra Saturdays, 6-9 p.m.

B.B. King’s Blues Club
143 BEALE 524-KING
The King Bong Thursdays, 5:30 p.m.; B.B. King’s All Stars Thursdays, Fridays, 8 p.m.; Will Tucker Band Fridays, Saturdays, 5 p.m.; Lisa G and Fluc’s Pic’s Band Saturdays, Sundays, 12:30 p.m.; Blind Mississippi Morris Tuesdays, Sundays, 5 p.m.; Memphis Jones Mondays, Saturdays, 6:30 p.m.; Doc Fingers and the Remedy Tuesdays, 5:30 p.m.

Blue Note Bar & Grill
241-245 BEALE 577-1089
Queen Ann and the Memphis Blues Masters Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m.-midnight.

Blues City Cafe
138 BEALE 526-2637
Blind Mississippi Morris Fridays, 5 p.m., and Saturdays, 5:30 p.m.; Brad Birkedarth Band Thursdays, Wednesdays, 8 p.m.; Earl “The Pearl” Banks Sundays, 12:30 p.m., and Mondays, 7 p.m.; Brandon Cunning Trio Sundays, 6 p.m., and Mondays, 7 p.m.; Free-World Sundays, 9:30 p.m.

Club 152
152 BEALE 544-7011
Live Music Wednesdays, Thursdays-Sundays, 7-11 p.m.; Live DJ Wednesdays-Sundays, 11 p.m.; Third Floor: DJ Tubbie Fridays, Saturdays, 10 p.m.

FedExForum
191 BEALE STREET
Yo Gotti and Friends Thursday, June 29, 7 p.m.

Handy Bar
200 BEALE 527-2687
The Amazing Rhythms Thursdays-Tuesdays, Sundays, 7 p.m.-1 a.m.

Hard Rock Cafe
128 BEALE 529-0007
The Rusty Pieces—Saturday, July 1, 8-11 p.m.; The Skitch Sunday, July 2, 8-11 p.m.

Itta Beau
145 BEALE 578-3031
Na’King “Kerry” Fridays, Saturdays, 9-10 p.m.; Susan Marshall Thursdays, 6-9 p.m.; Gerald Stephens Friday, 6-9 p.m.; David Carson Saturday, 10 p.m.; Keila Walker Wednesday, 6-8 p.m.

King Jerry Lawler’s Hall of Fame Bar & Grille
159 BEALE
Chris Gales Solo Acoustic Show Mondays-Saturdays, noon-4 p.m.; Eric Hughes Thursdays, 5-8 p.m.; Karaoke Mondays-Thursdays, Sundays, 8 p.m.; Live Bands Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m.

King’s Palace Cafe
162 BEALE 521-1851
David Bowen Thursdays, 5:30-9:30 p.m.; Fridays, Saturdays, 6:30-10:30 p.m.; Sundays, 5:30-9:30 p.m.

King’s Palace Cafe Patio
162 BEALE 521-1851
Sonny Mack Mondays-Fridays, 2-6 p.m.; Cowboy Neil Mondays, Thursdays, 7-11 p.m., and Saturdays, Sundays, 2-6 p.m.; Sensation Band Tuesdays-Fridays, 7-11 p.m.; Puzzy and the Kings of Memphis Saturdays, 7-11 p.m.; Chic Jones and the Blues Express Sundays, 7-11 p.m.; North and South Band Tuesdays-Thursdays, 7-11 p.m.

King’s Palace Tap Room
168 BEALE 578-2220
Big Don Valentine’s Three Piece Chicken and a Biscuit Band Thursdays, Tuesdays-Saturdays, 8 p.m. - midnight; Juke Joint Allstars Saturday, July 1, 9 p.m.-1 a.m.

Rum Boogie Cafe
182 BEALE 528-0150
Young Petey Thieves Thursdays, 8 p.m.; Mice Mayes Mondays, 8 p.m.; Travesty Wednesdays, 5 p.m.-10 p.m.; Eric Hughes Band Mondays, 8 p.m.-midnight; Plantation Allstars Wednesdays, 8 p.m.-midnight; Sunday, 4 p.m.-8 p.m. - midnight; Gracie Carroll Tuesdays, 8 p.m.-midnight.

Flying Saucer Draught Emporium
130 PEABODY 272-0830
Live Music on the Patio Thursdays, 8 p.m.-midnight. 

**DOWNTOWN**

Belle Tavern
117 BARBORO ALLEY
249-6580
The Rusty Pieces Sunday, July 2, 6-9 p.m.

Dirty Crow Inn
855 KENTUCKY
Nancy Apple Thursday, 8 p.m.; Savannah Long Friday, June 30, Bobbie & Tasha Wednesdays, 8-11 p.m.

Earmenstine & Hazel’s
531 S. MAIN 523-9754
Amber Rae Dunn Host; Earmenstine & Hazel’s Open Mic Wednesdays, 8-11 p.m.

Evo’s BBQ
300 E. MEMPHIS 728-1640
Live Music on the Patio

**SOUTHPAW**

Flying Saucer Draught Emporium
130 PEABODY 272-0830
Live Music on the Patio Thursdays, 8 p.m.-midnight.

South Main Sounds
550 S. MAIN 494-6543
Mandy and Sturgis Nikides, Danny Green, Claire Radel and Levi Smith Friday, June 30, 7-9 p.m.

**SPIRAL STAIRS**

831 Cooper
831 COOPER
329-0719
CD Release Party for Tony Lee Bains and the Concrete and Gold Tour

394 N. WATKINS 443-0502
Blitz Blackwater Trio Saturday, July 1, 9 p.m.-1:30 a.m.; Don and Wayde Mcallen; Fair City Fire Thursday, June 29, 8 p.m.; Day of the Dead Friday, June 30, 6:30 p.m.; Ragged Rabbit Sunday, July 2, 8 p.m.

**MIDTOWN**

813 Cooper
831 COOPER
CD Release Party for Tony Manard’s “Know Why” Album Friday, June 30, 8-11 p.m.

Bar DKDC
964 S. COOPER 272-0830
The Subtractions Friday, June 30, NOTIX Saturday, July 1, Some Sons of Mud Boy Wednesday, July 5.

Blue Monkey
2012 MADISON 272-BLUE
Karaoke Thursdays, 9 p.m.-midnight; Clancy’s Nub Friday, June 30, 10 p.m.-3 a.m.

Boscos
2120 MADISON 423-2222
Sunday brunch with Fort Wayne’s own Tatum Jones! Sunday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Canvas
1737 MADISON 443-5232
Karaoke Thursdays, 9:30 p.m.; Kyle Puzina Live Mondays, 10 p.m.-midnight.

YO GOTTI & FRIENDS
THURSDAY, JUNE 29
Memphis born rap and hip-hop artist will host his Birthday Bash at FedExForum for the first time. Tickets available!

ELVIS, THE WONDER OF YOU
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16
The critically-acclaimed concert event celebrating the life and music of Elvis Presley during the 45th anniversary. Tickets available!

R. KELLY
SUNDAY, AUGUST 27
R. Kelly with special guest Tyrese and Monica return to FedExForum for a night of R&B. Tickets on sale Friday, June 30 at 10am!

FOO FIGHTERS
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24
Eleven-time Grammy Award winning rock band is bringing the Concrete and Gold Tour to FedExForum. Tickets on sale Thursday, June 29 at 10AM!
Celtic Crossing 901 S. COOPER 274-5151
Celtic Crossing Patios Sessions: Jeffery Jordan of the Band Camino Friday, June 30, 6-9 p.m.; Jeremy Stannfill and Joshua Cosby Sundays, 6-9 p.m.; Candy Company Mondays.

The Cove
2559 BROAD 730-0719
Ed Finney and the U of M Jazz Quartet Thursdays, 8 p.m.; Mo-bias Pieces Friday, June 30, 9 p.m.; Blackwater Trio Saturday, July 1, 9 p.m.; Don and Wayne Tuesdays, 7-10 p.m.

Growlers
1911 POPULAR 244-7904
Dr. Brown Thursday, June 29, Peza EP Release with Hardaway & Banned Anthem Friday, June 30, Spiral Stairs with Boink Saturday, July 1, Lee Bains and the Glory Fires Album Release Sunday, July 2, Crockett Hall Tuesdays with the Midtown Rhythm Section Tuesdays, 9 p.m., Open Mic with DJ Cashmere & Moth Wednesday, July 5

Hi-Tone
412-414 N. CLEVELAND 278-TOKE
Morbid Saint, Dawn Patrol, Reserving Dirtmaps, Act of Impalement Thursday, June 29, 7 p.m.; Tender Cavalry, Felix Martin Thursday, June 29, 8 p.m.; Fair City Fire Friday, June 30, 9 p.m.; The Candy Company Friday, June 30, 9 p.m.; Smith & Seven Pants Tour Saturday, July 1, 9 p.m.; Tom Skema/Knight Birthday Bash Saturday, July 1, 8:30 p.m.; These Streets, Bruise, Carnivora, Fuss;uates Autodutch Monday, July 3, 8 p.m.; Extremely low budget fireworks display and maybe live music Tuesday, July 4, 4 p.m.

Huey’s Midtown
1927 MADISON 726-4372
The Chaulkies Sunday, July 2, 4-7 p.m.; Jared Goldweber and the Frank Buss Sunday, July 2, 8:30 p.m.-midnight.

Lafayette’s Music Room
2119 MADISON 267-5057
Jeremy Stanfill & Joshua Cosby Thursday, June 29, 6 p.m.; No More Drama Thursday, June 29, 9 p.m.; Brennan Villines Trio Friday, June 30, 6:30 p.m.; Jason Miller Band Friday, June 30, 10 p.m.; Susan Marshall & Friends Saturday, July 1, 11:30 a.m.; Brandon McCovern Saturday, July 1, 1 p.m.; Ryan Peel Saturday, July 1, 6:30 p.m.; Aquateq Saturday, July 1, 10 p.m.; Joe Restivo 4 Sunday, July 2, 11 a.m.; Jeffrey & The Pascemakers Sunday, July 2, 4 p.m.; Loveland Daren Sunday, July 2, 8 p.m.; Spank! Tuesday, July 4, 8 p.m.; River Bluff Clam Sunday, July 3, 8 p.m.; Chris Johnson Tuesday, July 4, 5:30 p.m.; McKenna Bray Wednesday, July 5, 8 p.m.

Levitt Shell
OVERT PARK 272-2722
Don Bryant Friday, June 30, 7:30-9 p.m.; Ultimate Family Reunion Saturday, July 1, 10 p.m.; Kelsey Woldyn Sunday, July 2, 7-9 p.m.

Midtown Crossing Grill
394 N. WATKINS 726-0502
“The Happening” Open Songwriter Showcase Tuesdays, 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Minglewood Hall
1555 MADISON 866-609-3744
Perpetual Groove Thursday, June 29, 8 p.m.; A Night of Legends; Too Short, Playa Fly, Gangsta Blac Saturday, July 1, 8 p.m.

P&H Cafe
1532 MADISON 726-0096
Rock Staraoke Friday, Bad Iids, Hardaway Saturday, July 1, 9 p.m.; BBQ with Tiffany Harmon Monday, 9 p.m.-midnight; Bop Nite Tuesday, July 4.

Wild Bill’s
1580 VOLUNTINE 207-3975
Thelma’s Wild Bill’s Band Fridays, Saturdays, 11 p.m.-3 a.m.

University of Memphis
The Bluff
535 S. HIGHLAND
DJ Ben Murray Thursday, June 30, 10 p.m.; DJ DJ Wilton Friday, June 30, 10 p.m.; Dude Called Rob Saturday, July 1, 10 p.m.; The River Bluff Clam Band Sunday, 11 a.m.

Huey’s Poplar
4872 POPULAR 682-7729
Bluff City Soul Collective Sunday, July 2, 8:30 p.m.-midnight.

Memphis Botanic Garden
720 CHERRY 636-4100
Boston Saturday, July 1, 6 p.m.

Memphis Nites Club
3297 KIRBY 797-8599
Cheffie’s Café
483 HIGH POINT TERRACE
Cheffie’s Café
202-4157
Songwriter Night hosted by Leigh Ann Wilmot and Dave “The Rave” Saturday, 5-8 p.m.

Memphis Nites Club
3297 KIRBY 797-8599
Van Duren Solo Thursdays, 8-10 p.m.

P&H Cafe
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Rock Staraoke Friday, Bad Iids, Hardaway Saturday, July 1, 9 p.m.; BBQ with Tiffany Harmon Monday, 9 p.m.-midnight; Bop Nite Tuesday, July 4.

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Summer/Berclair
Cheffie’s Café
483 HIGH POINT TERRACE
Cheffie’s Café
202-4157
Songwriter Night hosted by Leigh Ann Wilmot and Dave “The Rave” Saturday, 5-8 p.m.

Memphis Nites Club
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS: JUNE 29 - JULY 5

THEATER
The Evergreen Theatre Uptight Position, two women, one a senior and homeless, the other middle-aged and impoverished, engage in a conversation at the airport that leads to each taking a trip, but not necessarily on a plane. By Natalie Parker-Lawrence. (930-7737). www.womensteatheatreforults.org. $18 Fri., June 30, 7:30-9:45 p.m., Sat., July 1, 7:30-9:45 p.m., and Sun., July 2, 1-4:45 p.m. 1705 POPULAR (274-7139).

Germantown Community Theatre All Children’s Theatre You Can’t Take It With You. www.gctcomeplay.org. $13 Sun., 2:30 p.m., and Fri., Sat., 8 p.m. Through July 2. 3037 FOREST HILLIARD (453-7447).

Hatillo Theatre Aida. www.hatillo.org. $30 Sun., 3 p.m., Sat., 2 & 7:30 p.m., and Thurs., 8 p.m. Through July 2. 37 S. COOPER (602-2466).


OTHER ART HAPPENINGS
Art Trolley Tour Tour the local galleries and shops on South Main. Last Fri- day of every month, 6-9 p.m. SOUTH MAIN HISTORIC ARTS DIS- TRICT, DOWNTOWN.


continued on page 24
SEE IT AT THE PINK PALACE!
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Thursday Nights • April 13—August 17
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5-10-15 • LADIES FREE 'TIL 7PM

7.6 Thump Daddy
7.13 Waker
7.20 The Unlikely Candidates
7.27 Southern Avenue
8.3 Walrus
8.10 Hillbilly Casino
8.17 Graceland Ninjaz

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peabodymemphis.com
Southern Avenue Charter School’s mission is to educate the whole child. All students are challenged academically on their level, whether it’s regular academics, gifted, or special education. The famous “Hyde Library” is technology based with more than 99,000 volumes of books and computers for student use. Computer labs and computers in the classrooms are available. At Southern Avenue Charter School all elementary students take Spanish. All students are required to participate in one of the following Creative Arts Programs (Kaleidoscope): STEM, Chorus, Dramatic Arts, Digital Music, Group Piano, Photography, Ballet, Dance, Taekwondo, or a variety of sports, such as, Soccer, Basketball, and Track. Many support programs are available for parents and students. Before and after school care free breakfast, lunch, fresh fruit/vegetables, snack and supper; free uniforms for new students; etc.
WE’RE BACK FOR ANOTHER BITE!

MEMPHIS FLYER BURGER WEEK IS BACK FOR A SECOND ROUND. ALL WEEK LONG JULY 12-18TH YOU CAN SAMPLE THE TASTIEST BURGERS AROUND TOWN FOR JUST $5!

PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS INCLUDE: THE DIRTY CROW, FLYING SAUCER, FOUR WAY GRILL, GROWLERS, HUEY’S, JACK PIRTLE’S, LBOE, LOCAL, MEMPHIS MOJO CAFE, RAWK’N GRUB FOOD TRUCK, STANLEY BBQ, TIN ROOF, TOPS BBQ, WIMPY’S … AND MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED!

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JOIN US FOR
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ONE OF THE
MOST FUN
AND TALENTED
BANDS AROUND!

SNOWGLOBE

PHOTO BY COLLINS DILLARD

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Welcome to the Neighborhood: Old Dominick Distillery

Featuring live music, special offerings, and prizes. Thurs., June 29, 6-8 p.m.
Old Dominick Distillery, 395 S. Front.

FILM

The 15 Film Series
Films in the series will engage with three themes: Memphis history, art, and spatial justice. Free.

 princípio evening . Thursday , June 29, 6-9 p.m.

Aircraft Carrier Guardians of the Sea
Find yourself aboard a carrier alongside 6,000 highly skilled sea and air personnel, in the midst of a giant war simulation. See website for more information including show times. Through Nov. 17.
Ctigiant theater, in the Memphis pink palace museum, 1010 central (636-2362), WWW.MEMPHISMUSEUMS.ORG.

Carriage Crossing Movie Mania: The Jungle Book
Free. Fri., June 30, 6:30-10 p.m.
Central park in carriage crossing, 4674 merchant's park circle, suite 422 (904-4240), WWW.SHOPCARRIAGECROSSING.COM.

Dirty Harry
When a madman calling himself “the Scorpio Killer” menaces the city, Harry Callahan is assigned to track down and ferret out the crazed psychopath. $8. Fri., June 30, 6 p.m.

Flag City Freedom Celebration
Mon., July 3, 4 p.m.
USA stadium complex. 4551 babe hodgdon blvd. in millington (932-3238).

Germantown Fireworks Extravaganza
Featuring moon bounces, games, crafts, and food for sale, with the fireworks starting later. Tues., July 4, 3 p.m.
Germantown municipal park, 1900 s. germantown.

Independence Celebration at Overton Square
Patriotic concert and fun. For more information, visit website. Sun., July 2, 7-9 p.m.
Overton square, midtown.
WWW.OVERTONSEQUARE.COM.

Memphis Redbirds’ Independence Day Celebration
Featuring fireworks, food, and baseball. Mon., July 3, 5 p.m.
Autozone park, third and union (721-6000), WWW.MEMPHISREDBIRDS.COM.

Olive Branch Independence Day Celebration
Picnic-friendly party with fireworks at 9 p.m., plus food, vendors, and a Kids Zone. Tues., July 4, 6-6 p.m.
Olive branch city park, 8267 goodman.

Patriotic Pops
Include favorite patriotic tunes performed by members of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra and the 2PC Chancel Choir. Concludes with fireworks display. Free. Thurs., June 29, 7-10 p.m.
Lexi Scott, Overton park (464-0124).

Peabody Rooftop Fireworks Viewing
Watch the downtown Memphis 4th of July fireworks from the rooftop of the historic Peabody Hotel. Snacks and drinks available for purchase. Family-friendly. Tues., July 4, 5-10 p.m.
The peabody hotel, 149 union (529-4000).

Southaven July 4th Celebration
Featuring entertainment (picnics and coolers are welcome) and fireworks starting about 9 p.m. Tues., July 4, 6:30 p.m.
Bankplus amphitheater at Snowden Grove, 6285 snowden, southaven, MS (662-892-2840).

Star-Spangled Celebration
Fun-filled day of music, food, and fun, ending with a laser light spectacular at Hyde Lake benefiting Shelby Farms Park Conservancy. $10 members, $12 nonmembers. Sat., July 1, noon-10 p.m.
Shelby Farms, 500 n. pine lake (97-PARK), WWW.SHELBYFARMS.PARK.ORG.

Stars and Stripes 5K
Live music and food benefiting the American Red Cross. 5:30 Mon., July 3, 7 p.m.
Memphis Botanic Garden, 750 cherry (636-4100), WWW.MEMPHISBOTANICGARDEN.COM.

Carriage Crossing Movie Mania: The Jungle Book
Free. Fri., June 30, 6:30-10 p.m.
Central Park in Carriage Crossing, 4674 Merchant’s Park Circle, Suite 422 (904-4240), WWW.ShopCarriageCrossing.com.

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**THEATER** By Chris Davis

**True Colors**

Playhouse scores with a light, loving *Priscilla*.

Director Dave Landis doesn’t think Pride Month had anything to do with dropping *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* into this season’s summer musical slot at Playhouse on the Square. June may have found Big River Crossing lit up like the bridge from Oz, but, as Landis noted, “Memphis always has its parade [later].” Still, for those who fancy a light comedy with swell design, infectious songs, and choreography that makes you want to join in on the fun, there’s a lot of pride-worthy stuff going down at the corner of Cooper and Union.

Though seldom deeper than a Hallmark card, *Priscilla’s* a big, heart-shaped box of brightly colored jukebox candy. With an unavoidable dependence on sequins and spectacle, a top-40 sing-along soundtrack, and a script lifting plot and costumes, fashioning elaborate headgear and out of chicken wire and fancy frocks from cheap flip-flop sandals purchased at a discount from Target. By most accounts, the movie’s actors wearing these outfits suffered and sometimes even bled for their art. Taking its profile cues from the movie, then taking everything up a notch, Playhouse’s designers Kathleen Kvarik (costumes), Ryan Howell (sets), and John Horan (lights), have all outdone themselves, filling an essentially empty space with white fur, gold lamé, mirrored surfaces, and millions of sequins, then flooding the stage with enough saturated color to make the proudest rainbow blush.

In many regards, *Priscilla* aims low. None of its creators ever fretted that audiences might not leave the theater humming, “Girls Just Want to Have Fun” or “MacArthur Park” or John Denver’s “Thank God I’m a Country Boy.” The music’s already embedded in our pop consciousness, some of it (maybe most of it) nearly ruined by aggressive commercial use. To that end, what might have offered and sometimes even bled for their art. Taking its profile cues from the movie, then taking everything up a notch, Playhouse’s designers Kathleen Kvarik (costumes), Ryan Howell (sets), and John Horan (lights), have all outdone themselves, filling an essentially empty space with white fur, gold lamé, mirrored surfaces, and millions of sequins, then flooding the stage with enough saturated color to make the proudest rainbow blush.

Though they share a similar sparkly aesthetic, *Priscilla* is ultimately a working class and real as Playhouse’s season opener, *Mamma Mia!*, was a fantasy of free spirited privilege. Common themes of children reuniting with lost parents make these populist sing-alongs uncommonly complementary bookends.

*Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* at Playhouse on the Square through July 9th.
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(901) 761-8100 • www.midsouthwellnessclinicformen.com
Looking Good

The Beauty Shop at 15.

Some folks still think Beauty Shop restaurant is a beauty salon.

“People call and ask if they can get an appointment,” says owner/chef Karen Carrier. “I say, ‘Do you want a reservation?’ And they go, ‘No. An appointment?’ And I go, ‘No, this isn’t a beauty shop. We should start calling our reservations appointments.’”

Beauty Shop (with its slogan “Look Good/Eat Good”) at 966 Cooper will celebrate its 15th anniversary July 14th and 15th. For those two days, the dinner menu will be the same as the one when the restaurant opened in 2002. The Wild Magnolias from New Orleans will perform at 9:45 p.m. July 15th, following a second line from Beauty Shop down Cooper and back.

Carrier, who also owns Mollie Fontaine Lounge, Bar DKDC, and Another Roadside Attraction caterers, didn’t have a beauty shop theme in mind when she began looking for a space for a new restaurant. At the time, she owned Automatic Slim’s (which she sold in 2008) downtown and Cielo (which later became Mollie Fontaine) in Victorian Village. “I wanted to be in a neighborhood,” she says. “I wanted to get out of the touristy part of downtown. I’d done it for so long.”

And she says, “I get bored every six to seven years and re-invent myself.”

While looking at another spot in Cooper-Young, Carrier discovered a “For Rent” sign on the space that once was the old Atkins Beauty and Barber Shop.

She “flipped out” when she walked inside and saw the big cone-shaped hair dryers, the mirrors, and the avocado green sinks in the old hair-styling areas that were separated from each other by glass bricks. “Everything was here,” she says. “And I was like, ‘Oh, my God!’

Carrier went back to her phone and called the owner. “Her father had started Atkins Beauty and Barber Shop.

Carrier put down $1,000 as earnest money. “And that was it.”

She knew she could make a restaurant out of a beauty shop. “I can just walk into a place and have this weird feel if it will work or not.”

She visualized how it would look. Booths would be installed in the hair-styling areas. The green sinks would be moved behind the bar. “I saw the hair dryers becoming chairs where you can sit.”

Carrier removed the old drop ceiling to add more height. She had a double kitchen built. “Up front, we took that wall out and opened the whole bar up. I hung the curtains.”

Sculptor Wayne Edge made the bar and the wormwood tables. “He built a banquette, and I covered it with an old Turkish rug.”

She also rented the space next to the old beauty salon. “We had the Beauty Shop General Store. We sold old Vespas. We sold refurbished bikes. We sold Dinstuhl’s chocolates. All continued on page 32
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kinds of cheeses. We sold prepared foods to-go from Roadside. We sold men’s and women’s Giraudon shoes from Italy, my favorite shoe shop in New York.”

Food at Beauty Shop was Americana Caribbean. “I love that spice, but not that heat. I like that flavor. The big, bold flavors. It’s very much influenced by that sun-drenched cuisine: Mexico, Jamaica, Israel, Louisiana.”

In keeping with the 1960s theme, Beauty Shop servers wore beehive wigs. “My friend, who was doing hair in the ’60s, had a place down on Perkins. So, she created 10 beehives in 10 different colors. The servers got to pick them and put them on their heads. It was hilarious.”

Beauty Shop’s opening night was a hit. “This place went nuts. It was just mobbed from the time we opened at lunch through the end of the night.”

Servers in beehives prepared guacamole tableside, Carrier says. “Everybody wanted to sit in the booths. They wanted to sit under the dryers. I said, ‘Don’t pull it down!’ ‘Cause we had rigged lights in them so they would light up pink.”

Over the years, customers from Atkins Beauty and Barber Shop dined at Beauty Shop restaurant. “Do you know how many people have come in here and said, ‘I used to have my hair done here back in the ’50s?”

Priscilla Presley was one of them. “She’d come here to get her beehive, her big hairdos, done at Atkins in the first booth. She came in one day, and she goes, ‘You know, that’s the booth where I used to get my hair done’.”

Changes have taken place over the years. Beauty Shop General Store closed and became Do Sushi. It’s now Bar DKDC (Don’t Know Don’t Care), a restaurant/bar/music venue featuring street food from around the world.

Menu items changed at Beauty Shop, but customers celebrating the restaurant’s anniversary can dine on original menu items, including Ying/Yang Carpaccio of Red and White Tuna, Tuna Pizzette, Bangkok Salad, and Crispy Salt and Szechuan Pepper Scrimps.

Servers stopped wearing beehives years ago. “The waitresses started bitching, ‘This is hot.’”

But they’ll wear beehives during the anniversary weekend, Carrier says. “And maybe longer. ‘I don’t know. That might stick. We might not let that go again.’”

Beauty Shop 15th Anniversary, July 14th-15th
Spirits

Writer’s Bock

From tangy to mango: four summer beers worth a taste.

Suffering from writer’s block, I went over to see David Smith at Hammer & Ale in Cooper Young, because the guy knows an awful lot about local beer. Standing before the constellation of 24 revolving local and regional (if you include Iceland) beers, he pointed out the very popular Yazoo Summer Seasonal Gose.

“It’s a light ale, citrusy sour with coriander and sea salt,” he said.

He wasn’t talking about a new salad on the menu, but one of those continental sour beers that started showing up about two summers ago, claiming to be the next IPA.

“That sounds dreadful,” I said.

David has spent a lot of his adult life in the art world — operating on taste rather than utility — and was kind enough not to call me a Neanderthal. “Well,” he said, “we are going through a lot of it.” Knowing what I know about the good people at Yazoo Brewing, this was probably one of the better examples of a traditional Gose. It may not be to your tastes, but they don’t get it wrong very often.

I’m a professional, so I ordered a flight of four, including the offending sour. It wasn’t as powerful as those Lambics that make you want to suck your tongue, but four ounces was enough for me to know I’d had enough.

My dominant thought while drinking it was, “Can we just leave IPAs alone?” These waves of innovation are teetering on the edge of what the Brits would call “Too clever by half,” and they invented the stuff. It’s like trying to put your grandmother’s fried chicken on your grandmothers’ fried chicken when you ought to admit the old gal got it right the first time. And I say your grandmother because neither of mine could boil an egg.

The great thing about Hammer & Ale, though, is its mix of new and traditional beers. Experiments, even failed ones, can be fun. So even if I was offended by mango in my IPA (this is a pretty popular selection, so try it yourself), I could contemplate the ordeal with a pint of one of my go-tos, like Founders All Day IPA — which lives up to its name with enough hops to know it’s there, but not so overpowering to get bitter in the heat.

It’s the sort of beer your grandfather might have had. Again, not my grandfathers, they were from Clarksdale. Mrs. M’s grandfather, on the other hand, was a Brit. I don’t think he could boil an egg either.

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- $7,200 Triple Strike
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- $6,767 Reel ‘Em In
- $12,890 Lock it Link Night Life
- $6,645 Reel ‘Em In

Tina D. — $10,000

Walter E. — $1,200

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FILM REVIEW By Chris McCoy

Are You Okay, Michael Bay?

Transformers: The Last Knight is a $200 million cry for help.

Ah yes, we meet again, Michael Bay, my old nemesis. My Nemesis Prime, you might say. That's what hero truck-bot Optimus Prime changes his name to when he turns evil in Bay's latest bit of deviltry; The Last Knight. …

“sigh”

Okay look, y'all. I gotta be honest. My heart's not really in this. I know, I love writing a good Michael Bay takedown as much as you like reading them — probably more, if I'm being honest. I've been doing them for years. Back in the day, Chris Herrington, the Flyer's former film editor, would assign me to do the Michael Bay movies, because he knew I hated them. I've had a Michael Bay-sized chip on my shoulder since 1998's Armageddon. How do you mess up a movie about heroic astronauts trying to save the earth from an asteroid? There were so many ways. Then there was Pearl Harbor. How do you mess that up? This is the film where Ben Affleck gets on a train to go from New York to London, neither of which is anywhere NEAR Pearl Harbor.

I include that tidbit in every Michael Bay review, because I still haven't gotten over it.

And now, another Transformers movie. The fifth one. Giant Robots Go to England. At least they don't take a train.

I don't think Michael Bay's heart is in it any more, either. Back when he had Will Smith and Martin Lawrence demolishing Haitian neighborhoods in Bad Boys 2, at least he seemed like he was having fun with it. In the nonsensical opening scene — in which it is revealed that the secret to King Arthur's success turns out to be, you guessed it, transformers — Merlin (Stanley Tucci) takes a big swig of whiskey before staggering into a crashed alien spaceship to forge an alliance with a giant robot. It had the feeling of a confessional moment for Bay: Oh boy.

Heavy metal — as in considerably cumbersome CGI depictions of giant robots turning into other things.

Here we go again. …

Bay's been watching Game of Thrones and obviously missing the point. You like flawed characters caught in impossible situations making hard choices? How about a bored looking Marky Mark just kind of floating through the frame while animated piles of scrap metal scrape together in the background? To say Mark Wahlberg is phoning it in oversstates his engagement. Wahlberg is leaving a voicemail for the audience. He was hoping you wouldn't pick up.

As a longtime Bay watcher, he's always been indifferent to the audience's suffering, but in last year's 13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi, I detected something new: a seething resentment of the audience. The Transformers Reaction Force, a special forces group led by Santos (Santiago Cabrera), who can't seem to decide what side he's on, seems imported from that movie. It's like Bay's sneering

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misogyny, evident in his treatment of Vivian Wembley (Laura Haddock), the Oxford English Lit professor who can’t seem to speak in complete sentences, has been extended to the entire world. Our alleged hero Cade speaks in Trumpian word salad, insulting any and everyone he comes into contact with. For Bay, there’s only one use for words: busting chops. Expressing dominance.

There’s a general shoddiness to the whole endeavor. A Goonies-like group of kids is introduced early, only to just wander off without explanation. Bay has always had a knack for explaining things that didn’t need explaining and not explaining big things like, “Where did those five kids go? Did they die in the robot apocalypse along with the tens of millions others alluded to but never seen?” The same stock footage of fighter planes peeling off to attack is used over and over again in the final battle, which itself is inexplicably ripped off from last year’s epic flop Independence Day: Resurgence. “It’s just big, dumb fun!” might be a valid defense against my half-hearted critical barbs, except for one thing: No one is having any fun, least of all Michael Bay. It’s not even fun to hate-watch Transformers: The Last Knight. At this point, even writing this review feels like enabling bad behavior. As a three-headed robot dragon swoops in, breathing fire, King Arthur screams, “This is what the end looks like!” And I can only say I hope so.

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I had one of those Very Memphis Moments last week. First of all, it was hot, and it was raining. It was that kind of wet, hot mess we get here this time of year. It’s like when you take a towel out of the dryer, only it really needs about 10 more minutes.

That’s what it felt like we were walking into. We were going with some friends to a relatively famous barbecue place that’s known more for its really good food than for being famous.

We settled in to do some people watching. One of the things I dearly love about Memphis is people watching, especially in a good restaurant. I think the better the restaurant, the better the people watching, because good food will generally bring in a diverse group of people.

The family next to us was young and hip. Hip in that way of being hip that would look homeless if one’s jeans weren’t a brand that can only be bought in boutiques that swath one’s purchases in tissue paper and matte black shopping bags. The child was, I believe, named either Carol or Chlamydia. I couldn’t tell. Either is a possibility, as one is ironic and one is just stupid. Anyway, I held out a soft spot for them because they were sucking back pork ribs like their name was Flintstone, and had I seen them on the street, I’d have pegged them as the parents of the kid who doesn’t get invited to birthday parties anymore because there is literally nothing she can eat but kale and lentil non-dairy ice cream.

They were discussing the best place to get a hamburger. The consensus was they liked old-school diner burgers rather than anything containing the words “Angus” or “jam” in the description. I get it. I recently chose a hotel specifically because there was a Whataburger across the street. I’ve also been known to suck back a Tennessee Grass Fed farms burger with Bonnie Blue Farm goat cheese and pickled green Ripley tomato jam on a brioche bun. The point was that when you want a burger, you want a burger. Not an experience. They named several places in town they liked, talked about some that weren’t what they used to be, and all agreed that stuffed burgers always promise and never deliver.

There was a party of about 10 on the other side. The table was multi-generational, with the youngest not yet walking and the oldest not still walking. It was hard to catch up with what was being said because there were several conversations going on. I kept my eye on the lady who I’d put money down was called Nona. She didn’t talk. I don’t think she was hard of hearing or disinterested. I think she was just amazingly focused on her ribs. Although, now I think on it, maybe she was deaf because there was some discussion about tomato gravy in which she did not participate, and I’ve not known any grandmother not to put her two cents in about a tomato gravy.

As we were served our food, a middle-aged couple came in. They were clearly tourists. The first clue was they wore those matching sandals I think are like German comfort shoes. The second was the lady wanted white wine, but was good natured when told such a beast did not exist. The waitress walked them through the menu, pointing out the difference between pulled and chopped meat and the pros and cons of dry vs. wet rub. I watched the couple excitedly tuck into their meals, request boxes for leftovers, and have another discussion about how they’d found out about the place from a Food Network show. They were in and gone before we’d ordered our third round of drafts.

That was when I realized that every conversation in that room was about food — including ours. Not just what we were eating that night or what we almost ordered. It was about how a waitress told us the other day she loved that my husband and I shared our plates with each other. It was about charcoal or hickory. It was about the best gas station meal in town. It was about a certain restaurant we love that recently redecorated and painted over Guy Fieri’s signature on its wall from when he’d done a segment there. We had a very involved conversation with our waitress about the best ways to season cast iron skillets and if you should bake biscuits close together or two inches apart. It was one of those Memphis nights that made me remember why after 16 years here, I still choose it every day.

I hope when people ask that couple how Memphis was, they say they loved it, but geez! All they do is talk about food.