

Mark Pucci Media

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Contact: Mark Pucci (770) 804-9555 / mpmedia@bellsouth.net



**THE NIGHTHAWKS WIN THEIR FIRST-EVER
BLUES MUSIC AWARD FROM THE BLUES
FOUNDATION IN MEMPHIS**

**D.C.-BASED BAND WINS “ACOUSTIC ALBUM
OF THE YEAR” HONORS AT 2011 BLUES MUSIC
AWARDS SHOW**

**BAND FOUNDER MARK WENNER TO
PERFORM AT THE CHESAPEAKE BAY BLUES
FESTIVAL ON MAY 21 AND 22**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In the 32 years since the inception of the Blues Music Awards (formerly known as the W.C. Handy Awards), legendary Washington, D.C., band The Nighthawks had never even been nominated before in any category. That all changed when the 2011 nominations were announced late last year, as the group’s *Last Train to Bluesville* album, released in February 2010, was nominated for “Acoustic Album of the Year.” And on May 5 in Memphis at the annual Blues Foundation awards presentation, The Nighthawks heard their name read as the winner. Amid whoops and hollers from the packed audience at the Cook Convention Center, Mark Wenner, Paul Bell, Johnny Castle and Mark Stutso proudly bounded to the stage to accept their first-ever Blues Music Award. Later that night, The Nighthawks performed two songs from the album to the Convention Center audience and to listeners of the live broadcast on Sirius XM’s B.B. King’s Bluesville channel.

Local fans will get a chance to see the band and its members showcasing at a number of area shows in the next few weeks. Nighthawks’ founder and lead singer/harmonica player Mark Wenner will perform on two days of the upcoming Chesapeake Bay Blues Festival on May 21st and 22nd. Of special note is the Festival schedule on May 22, which will feature Wenner sitting in with legendary band Little Feat for a few songs. The Nighthawks are playing two high-profile gigs on Memorial Day weekend: the ZepFest at National Harbor on the Potomac on May 29, and the Stars & Stripes & Spokes Motorcycle Rally at RFK Stadium on the 30th. To view the band’s entire upcoming schedule, which also contains links to the individual events, follow this link: http://thenighthawks.info/wordpress/?page_id=37.

Recorded live at the Washington studios of Sirius XM Satellite Radio, *Last Train to Bluesville* was a departure of sorts from the band’s previous efforts. Stripped down and

acoustic, ***Last Train to Bluesville*** resonated with music fans and the media alike with its honesty, passion and soul. The album features down-home versions of 10 blues classics from such artists as Muddy Waters, Bo Diddley, Slim Harpo, Chuck Berry, Sonny Boy Williamson and James Brown, among others. Recorded with the intimate feeling of a back-porch setting, ***Last Train to Bluesville*** bristles with all the energy of a live gig and the world-class performances Nighthawks fans from around the world have come to expect.

In its review of the CD, ***The Washington Post*** declared, “If there were ever a question about how the Nighthawks keep their blues-rock sound fresh after nearly 40 years together, ***Last Train to Bluesville*** gives the answer...the new acoustic setting really suits the group. The crisp recording draws the group’s instrumentation into the spotlight...a recording that stands out in the band’s lengthy discography.”

International blues magazine ***Blues Revue*** said, “While these songs have been staples of The Nighthawks set list for decades, the sparkling acoustic arrangements provide them, and the band, with a new lease on life...accurately captures the dynamics of one of roots music’s long lasting, dependable and often unsung outfits. Long may they fly.”

Blues Blast Magazine called it “Ten tracks of incredible acoustic blues, all the more impressive given that it was recorded as a live session in the studio rather than pieced together of tracks and parts. The crystal clear recording would showcase any flaws – instead what comes through is a tight, professional acoustic set that truly showcases The Nighthawks’ musicianship.”

And the ***Blog Critics*** website summed up its review by stating, “...this is a superb document of the intuitive interplay between seasoned veterans who still find sheer, unbridled joy in making music together. It simply doesn’t get much better than this!”

For more information, visit www.thenighthawks.com.