

OUR SPONSORS

3 Rivers Co-op Natural Grocery & Deli	15
4D's Bar & Grill	10
4D's Bar & Grill/Wishbone Ash.....	13
After Dark.....	3
all for One Productions/Turtle Soup	21
Allen County Parks Department/Solfest.....	19
Alley Sports Bar.....	6
Beamer's Sports Grill.....	9
Brass Rail.....	6
C2G Music Hall on TV.....	8
Calhoun Street Soups, Salads & Spirits	10, 14
Checkerz Bar & Grill	10
CLASSIFIEDS	27
Club Paradise	11
Columbia Street West.....	9
Deer Park Irish Pub.....	13
Digitracks Recording Studio	22, 27
DINING DIRECTORY	14
Don Ayres Honda	5
Duty's Buckets Sports Pub & Grub	11
Duty's Uptown Bar & Grill.....	11
Fort Wayne Cinema Center	25
Fort Wayne Dance Collective	27
Fort Wayne Museum of Art	3, 21
Fort Wayne Musicians Association.....	27
Fort Wayne Philharmonic.....	17
Gin Mill Lounge.....	10
IPFW Dept. of Theatre/King Lear.....	21
IPFW Omnibus Lecture Series.....	19
Latch String Bar & Grill.....	11
Locl.Net	26
Neat Neat Neat Records & Music.....	27
NIGHTLIFE.....	9-13
Northside Galleries.....	5
Pauly's Catering/Arena Bar & Grill.....	6
Peanuts Food & Spirits.....	28
Piere's Entertainment Center.....	5
Snickerz Comedy Bar.....	9
Sweetwater Sound.....	2, 3
Terry Ratliff Art Show.....	13, 21
Tobacco Stop.....	27
Twenty Past Four and More	27
WBYS 98.9 The Bear.....	13
WEB SIGHTS	26
whatzup Battle of the Bands	16
whatzup Dining Club.....	15
whatzup Musician Finder.....	22
Wooden Nickel Music Stores.....	7
Wrigley Field Bar & Grill.....	9
WXKE Rock 104.....	19

Firing On All Six Strings

By Deborah Kennedy

You'll never catch Carl Weathersby referring to one of his guitars by name. That's too cutesy for him. Guitars are objects, like spoons or chairs. You wouldn't name your spoon, would you? And you'll never hear Weathersby revelling in the fact that he gets to play blues for a living.

"I don't play. I work," he said in a recent interview from his East Chicago, Indiana home. "Playing is what kids do. What I do up there – that's work."

Fort Wayne audiences will have a chance to see this now iconic Chicago bluesman work on Friday, April 29 when he plays The Philmore on Broadway beginning at 8:45 p.m.

Weathersby was born in Jackson, Mississippi in 1955 and moved to East Chicago, Indiana when he was eight years old. Legend and fact both have it that Weathersby, used to his drummer father bringing home lots of musician friends, decided one night to play Albert King's "Crosscut Saw" for his dad and his dad's buddy, Albert, a diesel mechanic. Albert quickly took the guitar from the boy and showed him how it was meant to be played. The mechanic was, of course, King himself.

Weathersby came by his talent the natural way. His grandfather was a bluesman in the South, and he often regaled young Carl with tales of the road musician's life, tales of easy money and good times. His father's first cousin, Leonard "Baby Doo" Caston, taught Willie Dixon to play the bass, and Weathersby's own cousin, G.C. Cameron, fronted the Spinners on their 1970 hit "It's a Shame." Another cousin, Baby Doo's son Leonard Caston Jr., was a member of the Radians.

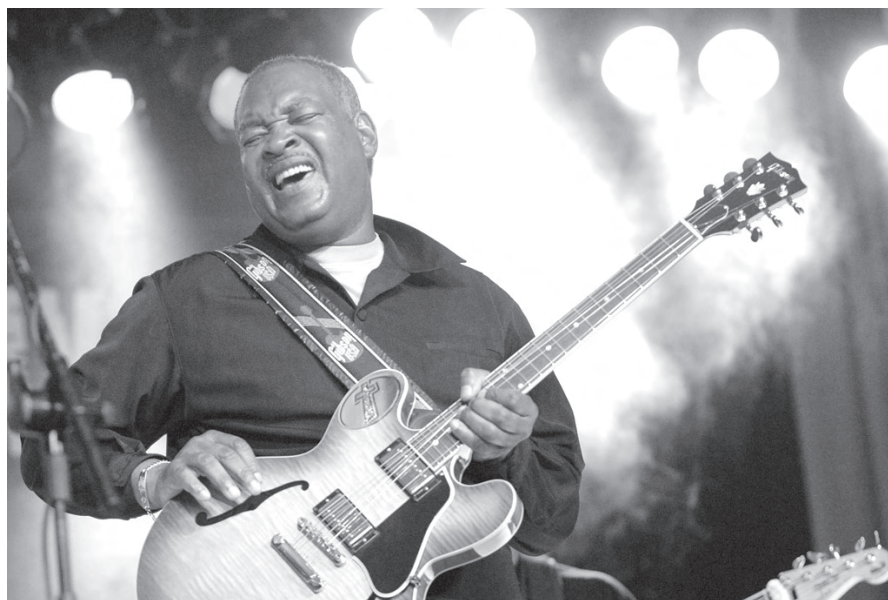
"My brothers and I, we grew up listening to the blues and gospel mostly. There wasn't really much other music around," he said in our recent phone conversation. "Later we got into Motown and stuff like that, but for a long time it was just the blues."

Unlike a lot of blues prodigies, Weathersby wasn't transported magically from his wonderful moment with Albert King directly to the stage. His musical story is much more complicated, in part because of the times he was living through. Before he could truly take up his calling as a bluesman, he had to first finish up his tour in Vietnam and his stints as a steel mill worker, prison guard and policeman.

Such grueling gigs prepared him for his first real blues post, that of Albert King's rhythm guitarist.

"Albert was a taskmaster," he said. "He was harder on us than any Army officer but, lucky for me, I was ready for that kind of stuff. The other guys who'd just been musicians all their lives, well, they weren't as prepared."

Weathersby was with King for three



CARL WEATHERSBY

Friday, April 29 • 8:45 p.m.

The Philmore on Broadway
2441 Broadway, Fort Wayne

Tix: \$ 25 thru

<http://philmoreonbroadway.com>
260-745-1000

years – one year for every time he quit the band – eventually leaving for good to join up with harmonica player Billy Branch and his band, Sons of Blues.

It was with the Sons of Blues that Weathersby really made a name for himself in the scene. Soon he was recognized, respected, even beloved, but he wasn't really content. Branch and the other sons played the blues too close to the chest in Weathersby's opinion. He has very little use for so-called blues purists who believe the blues stopped with Muddy Waters.

"My thing is that if you listen to the blues before Muddy Waters and then you listen to it during and then after, you see that Muddy Waters changed the blues. He changed them. Why do people think he wanted the blues to stay the same after him?" he said. "It's like people got in a rut. They didn't know how to play their instruments and started settling for three chords. When I was with Billy Branch – and there is no better harmonica player, seriously – I only needed to play four strings. Now I get to play all six."

Now he gets to play the blues exactly how he wants to because he's on his own, freed from any constraints "purists" might put on him, and Weathersby has, since breaking with Branch in 1997, gained the reputation as an innovator, a gutsy powerhouse who's not afraid to throw elements of jazz, R&B and Motown into the mix. His

experimental side can be heard particularly loud and clear on the three solo albums he recorded and produced himself under the label Crosscut Records – 2004's *In the House: Live at Lucerne Vol. 5*; 2005's *Hold On*; and 2009's *I'm Still Standing Here*.

Weathersby's openness to other music forms – he often incorporates a Temptations medley into his sets – doesn't mean that he's gotten anywhere close to abandoning the Chicago blues, a sub-genre he loves because of its gritty, true-to-life aesthetic.

"Chicago blues is real. There's no fantasy in Chicago blues. You don't hear us singing 'I'm dreaming about this or that.' We deal with real stuff," he said. "It's changed over time, of course. Nobody's picking cotton anymore, so the songs are more about the police giving you a hard time just for walking down the street. But it's electrified, it's real, it's alive."

He's not a huge fan of what he considers less hard, less in-your-face music that masquerades as the blues. For instance, he's met plenty of guys from the East Coast who claim to play the blues, but Weathersby's not hearing it.

"You got a drummer playing with drinking straws and a bass player standing there like he's only got two fingers," he said. "It's like B.B. King said, 'You've got to make them believe in what you're talking about.' In a lot of parts of the country that just doesn't translate."

What does translate, however, are the timeless and universal feelings brought out in a crowd by an old-fashioned bluesman up on stage with just his guitar – numbered but not named – and an amp.

"I've played in China before, and I'll tell you – they didn't know any English and I didn't know any Chinese, but I started playing and they started dancing and we understood each other. Perfectly."

whatzup
Published weekly and distributed on Wednesdays and Thursdays by AD Media, Incorporated.
Fort Wayne Office:
1747 St. Marys Ave., Fort Wayne, IN 46808
Phone: (260) 424-4200 • Fax: (260) 424-6600
E-Mail: info.whatzup@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.whatzup.com>
MySpace: <http://www.myspace.com/whatzupfw>

Publisher: Doug Driscoll
Office Manager: Bonnie Woolums
Advertising Sales: Chris Hupe
Managing Editor: Deborah Kennedy

BACK ISSUES
Back issues are \$3 for first copy, 75¢ per additional copy. Send payment with date and quantity of issues desired, name and mailing address to AD Media, Incorporated to the above address.

SUBSCRIPTIONS
In-Home postal delivery available at the rate of \$25 per 13-week period (\$100/year). Send payment with name and mailing address to AD Media, Incorporated to the above address.

DEADLINES
Calendar Information: Must be received by noon Monday the week of publication for inclusion in that week's issue and, space permitting, will run until the week of the event. Calendar information is published as far in advance as space permits and should be submitted as early as possible.
Advertising: Space reservations and ads requiring proofs due by no later than 5 p.m. the Thursday prior to publication. Camera-ready or digital ad copy required by 9 a.m. Monday the week of publication. Classified line ads may be submitted up to noon on Monday the week of publication.

ADVERTISING
Call 260-424-4200 for rates or e-mail info.whatzup@gmail.com.