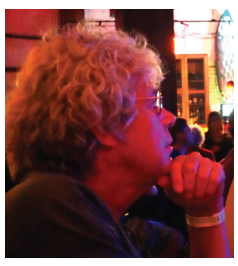

Three Chords and the Truth

By Ronnie Narmour
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The Dirty Uncle Wheeler show…

I went to an amazing show last week at *Brewster Street Ice House* in Corpus. It was a triple bill with two bands I wasn't familiar with; **The Wheeler Brothers** (Austin, TX) and **The Dirty River Boys** (El Paso, TX) and one that I'm a fan of; **Uncle Lucius** (Austin, TX)… billed as the **Dirty Uncle Wheeler** tour. I've seen Uncle Lucius play 4 times at the *Back Porch* in Port A over the last couple of years and am convinced these guys are the real deal. They have a hard driving soulful blend of rock, R&B, blues and country that fuses their own unique sound. The first time I saw them perform, they played the entire *Red Headed Stranger* (**Willie Nelson**) album in sequence without a single word of banter between songs and nailed it. They didn't mimic Willie's sound, but interpreted it with respect. At the end of that set, I was a fan for life. It literally left me speechless. Since then, I've kept up with their travels all over the world. They are bonified road-dogs and stir up quite a lot of attention everywhere they play. I was excited about seeing them on a big stage and getting to see two other bands on the bill was icing on the cake. Little did I realize that my mind was soon to be blown. Did I say blown? I meant vaporized.

The Wheeler Brothers…

Austin's Wheeler Brothers played Brewster Street last Thursday night.

Since it was a school night, the only taker on my "plus one" was my hardcore music-fan compadre, **Roberto Feldino**. We both had early mornings the next day and had agreed to catch the first two bands and a couple of songs of the third, and slip out so we could make it back to the island by eleven or so. When we got there, **The Wheeler Brothers** were on stage. By the time we ordered beers and got to the front of the stage and see what they were all about, these guys had already blown the roof off the joint. OMG! I had done just enough research on this band to know that they had won five *Austin Music Awards* and were being touted as the next big thing. They have two recordings out (*Portraits* and *Long, Hard Road*) on **Ray Benson's** (**Asleep at the Wheel**) label, *Bismeaux Records* and are a five piece band with three brothers: **Nolan Wheeler** (guitar, piano, vocals), **Tyler Wheeler** (bass) and **Patrick Wheeler** (drums) plus **Danny Mathews** (guitar, vocals) and **A.J. Molyneaux** (lap steel, guitar, vocals). Their website boasted that they had never played a hometown gig that wasn't sold out… I could easily see why. The harmonies and high energy on stage was consuming. Roberto and I stood there with our mouths wide open going, "are you believing this?" And this was only the first band. The Wheeler Brothers were clearly a cut above.

Uncle Lucius…

Uncle Lucius played the Brewster Street Ice House last Thursday night.

When **Uncle Lucius** came on, we were a little disappointed to be honest. Uncle Wheeler had really set the bar high. Maybe it was the fact that I was very familiar with Uncle Lucius and knew what to expect and was still reeling from the Wheeler Brother's surprise. But don't get me wrong. Uncle Lucius put on a killer performance and sounded great. They definitely had more of a harder slant to them, but we dug it. I must admit though, when the smoke cleared and their set was done, it was still The Wheeler Brothers that we were talking about. Convinced I had my story, Roberto and I reassured each other that we'd just stay long enough to see what the Dirty River Boys were all about and scurry back to our island. Roberto lies a lot.

The amazing Dirty River Boys from El Paso played Brewster Street last Thursday night.

The Dirty River Boys…

Wrong! From the first note the **The Dirty River Boys** played, I knew I wasn't going anywhere. And, Roberto was glued. First of all, it was going to take a while to wrap my head around this band. They had a total acoustic instrumentation, like a bluegrass or folk band. I saw only acoustic guitars, mandolins, banjos, stand-up bass and no regular drum kit. The drummer, **Travis Stearns**, played only a cajon (box hand drum), snare and tambourine, but he did so with the intensity of a man possessed. This guy was a whiling Dervish on steroids. He also played a little mandolin and harmonica and sang harmony on some of the songs but mainly manned the percussion duties. Stearns kept the beat totally on fire and was the driving force behind this ensemble. They had two guys on lead vocals, **Nino Cooper** and **Marco Gutierrez**. Both of them also played guitar, harmonica and mandolin. Cooper was about four feet tall (I'm not exaggerating) and was incredible. His guitar looked huge on his little torso. He had a gifted voice that was both beautiful and forceful. Gutierrez sang hard and passionately. The stand-up bass player, **Colton James**, looked like a character from an old time cowboy movie. He had his jeans tucked in his boots and a tooth pick in his mouth. At times he played his full size bass like a guitar on his knee. There was a lot going on, on this stage. At times all of the players would switch instruments and play with equal precision and fervor. It was an amazing thing to watch. Did I mention their spot on four part harmonies? And the songs they sang, like "Raise Some Hell Tonight", "Draw" and "Boomtown", would easily give **Doc Watson** or **Del McCoury** a run for their money. When they broke into the old **Townes Van Zandt** ballad, "Lungs" with a stepped up beat, my hair stood straight up. I've never heard a band cover that song. I know I gush about a lot of bands I see, but these guys really moved me. I looked up their upcoming gigs on their website and saw that they're playing *Antone's* on New Years Eve. I'm going! I may start following them around the country. You really have to check these guys out! Roberto… you in?

The Wailers will play the House of Rock tomorrow night Friday, Nov. 16th.

DO NOT MISS LIST

The Wailers/ Roger Creager/ Larry Joe Taylor…

Tomorrow night (Friday, November 16) the *House of Rock* in Corpus will host the real deal reggae of **The Wailers** from Kingston, Jamaica. Of course you know that the original Wailers touted **Bob Marley, Bunny Wailer** and **Peter Tosh** and sold 250 million records worldwide. The only original member of this version of The Wailers is bassist, **Ashton "Family Man" Barrett** who played with the band from 1970-'81. I saw this show at the HoR a couple of years ago and it reeked of the Rasta vibe, mon. Definitely a DON'T MISS. On Saturday, November 17, two *Americana* big boys, **Roger Creager** and **Bri Bagwell** will play *Brewster Street*. Expect that to be a sold out show. The following weekend, on November 23 and 24, the man who invented *Island Time*, **Larry Joe Taylor** (Stephenville, TX) will play the *Third Coast Theater* in Port A. Larry Joe is strong enough on the island to cover two nights. Also expect those shows to be sold out.

The Queen of Rockabilly, Wanda Jackson, will play the House of Rock on Nov. 16th.

Wanda Jackson/ Folk Family Revival…

On the near horizon, I want to mention several shows to watch out for… on Friday, November 30, the *Queen of Rockabilly*, **Wanda Jackson** will play the *House of Rock*. **Folk Family Revival** (Houston, TX) will open the show. The 74 year old Jackson is considered to be the *First Lady of Rockabilly* and an early pioneer of rock and roll. She is a member of the *Rockabilly Hall of Fame* and the *Rock and Roll Hall of Fame*. She was discovered in Oklahoma City by **Hank Thompson** in 1954. I saw the opening act, Folk Family Revival in a show with **Milk Drive** a few months ago and was totally impressed. The band consists of three brothers (**Caleb, Lincoln** and **Barrett Langford**) who first started playing music in church where their dad was music director. They have an edgy slant that blends gospel, alt rock, roots and Americana.

Los Lonely Boys will play Brewster Street on Dec. 13th.

Ray Wylie/ Slaid Cleaves/ Jason Boland/ Los Lonely Boys/ Robert Earl Keen…

Down the road… the *Third Coast Theater* has two outstanding shows coming up. Look for **Ray Wylie Hubbard** (Wimberley, TX) on December 1 and **Slaid Cleaves** (Austin, TX) on December 8. **Jason Boland, Cody Canada** and **Chris Knight** will be at *Brewster Street* on December 9th. Also coming up at *Brewster Street* are some some heavy hitters; **Los Lonely Boys** and **Alejandro Escovedo** on December 13th and **Robert Earl Keen** and **Terri Hendrix** on December 20th.

And that's the truth!

LIVE MUSIC TONIGHT

Thursday, November 15
Sean McConnell/ Bleu Edmondson (acoustic) @ Brewster Street
On Blast Standup Showdown @ House of Rock
John Eric @ Island Italian
Antone & the All Stars @ Dr. Rockits
Free Beer Band @ Tarpon Ice House

Friday, November 16
The Wailers @ House of Rock
Ray T & the City Crew @ The Flats Lounge
Gary Moeller @ Coffee Waves
Brian Winfrey @ Island Italian\
Marshall Influence @ The Texan
Matt Hole & Hot Rod Gang @ Dr. Rockits
Mike Williams & Rocky Arnold @ Hemingway's Rockport

Saturday, November 17
Texas Blues Fest @ Dewey's Backyard
Metal Shop @ Brewster Street
Unearth/ Born of Osirls/ Contortionist/ Obey the Brave/ Wolves at the Gate @ House of Rock
Reely Rotnz @ Executive Surf Club
Earl Gard @ Coffee Waves
Ruben Limas@ Island Italian
40 lb. Dog @ The Texan
The Groove @ Dr. Rockits
Mike Williams & Rocky Arnold @ Hemingway's Rockport

Sunday, November 18
Open Mic w/ Billy Snipes & Uel Jackson @ Tarpon Ice House
Acoustic Open Mic @ Neptune's Retreat
John Eric @ South Texas Ice House
Someone Like You @ Dr. Rockits

Monday, November 19
Open Jam w/ Antone Perez @ Doctor Rockits

Tuesday, November 20
Open Mic w/ Rev Matt Martinez @ House of Rock
Steven James & Shakedown @ Dr. Rockits

Wednesday, November 21
Roger Creager/ Bri Bagwell @ Brewster Street
Open Mic w/ Wolfjaw @ Flat's Lounge
Grant Ewing @ Dr. Rockits

Thanksgiving, November 22
Antone & the All Stars @ Dr. Rockits
Free Beer Band @ Tarpon Ice House

Friday, November 23
Larry Joe Taylor @ Third Coast Theater
Rae Ann Reed @ Shorty's Place
Le Freak @ Brewster Street
David & Barbara Brown @ Coffee Waves
Ray T & the City Crew @ The Flats Lounge
Brian Winfrey @ Island Italian
Cathouse @ The Texan
Justin Estes @ Dr. Rockits

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