



WOLF'S SOUTHERN MARYLAND BLUES JAMS

"that was three,

right? Okay, you're up. Mitch, did you bring your sax?" Steve "Wolf" Crescenze walks the bar, calling musicians for their next set. Wolf's band, the Idle Americans, hosts blues jams throughout Maryland, Virginia, and DC.

"It's cool to be a regular at 30 different bars," says Americans' guitarist Matt Kelley. The first hour is a standard Idle Americans performance: rockabilly, alternative and old country, jump, swing, and blues. Musicians tune their instruments and sign up; there's never much time to plan. Just plug in to the amplifiers and see what happens.

"Wolf runs them really well," Kelley says. "It's not about showing what a great musician he is. He makes sure everyone has a good night and comes back the next time."

Wolf also gently enforces the cardinal blues-jam rule: The night is all about the blues. Accept that, and explore. The blues-jam experience helps musicians stretch and push each other in front of a lively, critical-but-loving audience; find a last-minute stand-in for a missing band member; or promote their band among people who support live acts.

"Sometimes we play to crickets," says Americans' guitarist Zach Sweeney, "but the blues jams are always fun."

When your three songs are up, have another beer and enjoy the next group of musicians putting their spin on a distinctively American genre.

"It's an otherworldly thing," explains Idle Americans' drummer Scott Rabino, "when you have musicians playing together, and especially when there's no conductor."

Wolf's jams have earned a dedicated following of blues-loving non-musicians who need live music in all its raw, wailing, unpredictable joy. Connie Warner, backbone of the blues jams and go-to person for information, CDs, and band T-shirts, joins Wolf at the jams, even when her days seem long.

"My house is a mess, but we're addicted to the music," Warner says. "I get this second wind and I'm so glad I didn't stay home!"

Go. Listen. Dust off your guitar or your dancing shoes.

"I just can't imagine sitting still to that kind of music," says Gay Reed. She and boyfriend Doug Jones met at the Country Store. "We seek out live music and feel this is as 'live' as it gets!"

Wolf's Southern Maryland Blues Jams take place the first Friday and third Saturday of every month at the Country Store on 41566 Medley's Neck Road in Leonardtown. ☀

find out more →

Call 301-475-6820 or visit www.theidleamericans.com/id3/html. To receive "Wolf's Weekly," an e-newsletter with the latest info on blues jams across the region, send an email to onebadjackband@aol.com.



Jam with the Idle Americans at venues like Glen Echo.

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