

# BLUES LETTER

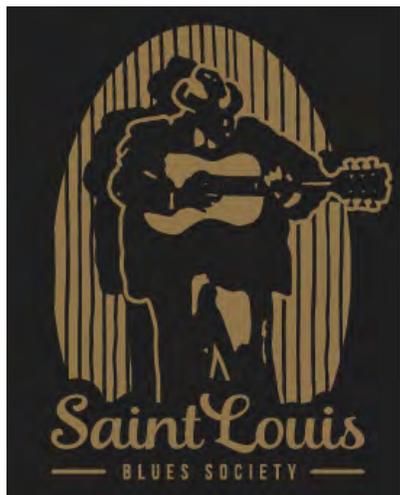


**CELEBRATING ST. LOUIS BLUES MUSIC**

**PLUS:** *Atomic Blues Festival photos -- New Director of the National Blues Museum -- Road to Memphis information  
The Lodge piano room at the Big Muddy -- National Blues Museum Big Muddy Blues Festival Tribute Shows*

# PRESERVING AND PERPETUATING BLUES MUSIC IN AND FROM ST. LOUIS SINCE 1984

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First of all, on behalf of the STLBS Board, I'd like to offer a **HUGE** thank you to all of the people who donated to our online fundraiser for rent. We had over 50 people donate and raised \$1700 to help pay rent for our office in Nebula. Nebula's Coworking space has been very important for meetings, storage and as a hub for all of the STLBS programs. Your support was generous and overwhelming, so thank you all!

Also a big thank you to everyone who helped make the Fourth Annual *Atomic Blues Festival* a successful fundraiser for our Education Fund. Specifically, the committee who produced the show: Cindy and Frank Bauer, Marty D. Spikener, Adam Andrews, Paul Niehaus and all of the volunteers, people who donated raffle items, and the Broadway Oyster Bar for hosting. All in all it was a great day of music, community and FUN!

**MUSICIANS:** Please note that we are now accepting applications for this year's *Road to Memphis/International Blues Challenge*. Over the last few years, we've had a great opportunity to send many groups to Memphis in January and we hope this year will be no different. If you have questions about the event, please reach out to any of the board members or other musicians who have participated in the past. We have limited spots, so get your application in as soon as possible.

Finally, the 23rd Annual *Big Muddy Blues Festival* is right around the corner. This year will feature almost **70 St. Louis acts** on seven stages over three days! A lot of work goes into making this an all St. Louis show and since we went "all-local" the event has been really wonderful. To make the event happen, it takes a lot of hours, organization, and money, **but most of all it takes all of you!** If you're a member of the STLBS then you already know how **good St. Louis has it musically**, but maybe your friends are late to the party. Bring them! Bring your friends, family, invite people from out of town and let the rest of the world know that St. Louis is one of the greatest music cities in the world!

Jeremy Segel-Moss, STLBS Board Chairperson

### E-mail Jeremy I'd love to hear from you!

Please write me at [jsegelmoss@stlouisbluessociety.org](mailto:jsegelmoss@stlouisbluessociety.org) and tell me what you think of the all-STL Big Muddy.

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The St. Louis Blues Society is dedicated to preserving and perpetuating blues music in and from St. Louis, while fostering its growth and appreciation. The St. Louis Blues Society provides blues artists the opportunity for public performance and individual improvement in their field, all for the educational and artistic benefit of the general public.

*The St. Louis Blues Society is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit Missouri corporation. Memberships to the Blues Society are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.*

In the last issue we featured a very well-crafted story on the great Jimmy Hinds by Bob Baugh. We had just enough room in the story for another small photo and we used a cropped version of the photo here on the right to fill the space. We now want to present the photo in its entirety. From left to right: Jimmy, his mother, John Lee Hooker and Jimmy's father. Thank you Jimmy, for sharing this wonderful photo with us.



## A note from Cindy Bauer

co-chairperson, Atomic Blues Festival Committee

Thank you everyone who came to enjoy The Fourth Annual Atomic Blues Festival this year. I am grateful to the Broadway Oyster Bar, Hammerstone's at 9th and Russell, BB's Jazz Blues & Soups, O'Shay's Restaurant, West End Grill & Pub, MoKaBe's Coffeehouse, and Blues City Deli (and all its patrons who donated lottery tickets) for their awesome food, drink and memorabilia donations. Thank you to Carol Boss, Bruce Toulmin and Reed Radcliffe for your beautiful art and photography donations. Everyone was admiring how cool they were. I especially want to thank Jodi Hart, Vicky Stewart, and Frank Bauer for all your enormous help. I couldn't have done this without you!!



photo by Carol Boss

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## 23rd ANNUAL BIG MUDDY BLUES FESTIVAL TRIBUTE SHOWS AT THE NATIONAL BLUES MUSEUM

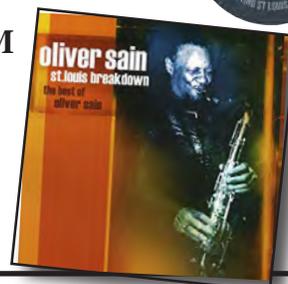


SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 12:30-2:30PM

### Fontella Bass

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 12:30-2:30PM

### Oliver Sain



# Stompin' Them Down to the Bricks at Big Muddy by Bob Baugh

In a piano town like St. Louis where the ripples of our musical history run through ragtime, barrelhouse, Boogie Woogie, and rock and roll using a term like, “tickling the ivories,” just doesn’t cut it. A great local barrelhouse player, Henry Brown, had a better description, “Stompin’ them down to the bricks,” he used to say. All those ripples and stompin’ will be on display at this year’s *Big Muddy Blues Festival* with the introduction of a new festival feature, a piano room at The Lodge.

Ethan Leinwand, who plays piano with Miss Jubilee as well as The Bottlesnakes, is thrilled that the instrument and the players that made this city famous will get the recognition they deserve. As he pointed out in an interview for this article, “New Orleans gets a lot of credit for rolling ragtime into jazz. Jelly Roll Morton did a lot for that. Harlem gets credit for Harlem stride style. Chicago gets credit for the boogie woogie phase started in the late ‘30s. All these other places get this kind of credit but St. Louis doesn’t get it. All these places have done a better job promoting their history.”

From the 1890s up to the pre-WWII era, pianos were the prominent club instrument. Bruce Olson, the author of *That St. Louis Thing*, said it’s the way people were entertained, “In the 1890s gaslight era you had a bar with a room and a piano and a singer. Tom Turpin a black ragtime piano player with his Rosebud Café dominated the music scene. His music led to Henry Brown the first great barrelhouse player in the 20s who led to Johnnie Johnson’s blues influenced rock and roll of the ‘50s.”

Turpin published the first rags that attracted Scott Joplin to move to St. Louis from Sedalia, MO. He was seeking a better platform for his music. Ragtime transitioned easily into blues. As records took over in the ‘20s and ‘30s St. Louis piano men would come to dominate the charts. In 1925, Lonnie Johnson (yes, of

guitar fame) recorded “Low Down Piano Blues,” the earliest example of that style. From 1920-1941, four of the top ten most recorded artists most were St Louis artists, three of them piano men: Lonnie Johnson (#3), Peetie Wheatstraw (#5), Walter Davis (#7) and Roosevelt Sykes (#10).

These were all superstars in their day with Sykes being considered the “father of the modern blues” but they were far from alone. From the late ‘30s Henry Brown and Speckled Red were pounding out the most raucous barrelhouse. James Crutchfield played an obscure Texas barrelhouse that Leinwand says has been overlooked, “Others get the moniker of the last great Texas barrelhouse player but it was actually Crutchfield playing it here.”

Henry Townsend’s piano provided a seventy-year link from the pre-WWII era to the present. Silvercloud came out of the Memphis Slim school and Johnnie Johnson brought the blues piano into rock and roll. It’s that history, connectedness and awareness that players like Leinwand appreciate and why he moved here four years ago.

“I couldn’t believe I found a town that knew and appreciated piano blues but understands the subtle differences. They know what boogie woogie is vs. barrelhouse. They know because they had Johnnie Johnson, Henry Townsend and Roosevelt Sykes. All these guys whose memories are still alive.”

In today’s scene it also takes a community. Leinwand is helping build it by introducing St. Louis to friends and fellow players like Chase Garrett (Sweetie and the Toothaches) and Christopher Parrish both of whom moved here. Jackson Piano is also central to the community. There are pianos in over a dozen venues because of their efforts to put them in places and let the sound play out. Leinwand rarely plays his keyboard

anymore because pianos are available, and his bands are committed to moving his small one.

There is also a big swing dance scene as exemplified by the *Nevermore Dance Ball* in November that Christian Frommelt and Jenny Shirar put together. It draws hundreds of dancers while putting bands in 15 venues on Cherokee St. And, it takes hustlers like Leinwand and his friend Garrett who have organized a series of piano stomps.

The lineup for The Lodge piano room at *Big Muddy* is a two-day stomp with a full menu of blues informed styles. It will provide an opportunity for music fans to see players they have seen for years in bands in a solo environment and in a space designed to feature their instrument and performance. “It’s simple,” said festival organizer, Jeremy Segel-Moss, “it’ll be a piano and a microphone.”

Ptah Williams, a full-bodied player, brings jazz elements while Christopher Parrish offers a mix of ragtime, jazz and classical in an improvisational style. Amy Hawkins, who plays with Robin and the Rockin Fools, will provide traditional and jump blues with some boogie woogie. Jesse Prather brings a touch of gospel with his blues. Brock Walker, Kim Massie’s long-time keyboardist will get to show off his solo work. Bill Murphy has been a mainstay of the blues world playing with The St. Louis Social Club and Pennsylvania Slim and people have seen LaDale Fitzpatrick playing with Joe Metzka for years.

Chase Garret and his monster boogie woogie will close out the Saturday night show with Ethan Leinwand finishing up on Sunday with some rollicking ragtime and barrelhouse. Be sure to check out the piano room. It will be two days of St. Louis history for your ears. You will know you have arrived when you hear those players “stompin’ them down to the bricks.” 🎵



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*A big THANK YOU to everyone who came out, donated, and volunteered their time to make our annual Education Fund Fundraiser a great success!*

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Matt "The Rattlesnake" Lesch Blues Band



photos by Reed Radcliffe

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<b>THUR 19</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>Feyza Eren</b> St. Louis, MO
<b>FRI 20</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>THE TRIPLETS OF GRUBVILLE</b> St. Louis, MO
<b>SAT 21</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>MAPLE JAM</b> St. Louis, MO
<b>SUN 22</b>	<b>11:30AM</b>	<b>HOT SWING JAZZ Brunch</b> with <b>Miss Jubilee</b>
<b>TUES 24</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>KASONDRA ROSE</b> Tampa Bay, FL
<b>WED 25</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>JOE METZKA TRIO</b> St. Louis, MO
<b>THUR 26</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>AMANDA RAYE</b> St. Louis, MO
<b>FRI 27</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>ROADHOUSE KINGS</b> St. Louis, MO
<b>SAT 28</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>BOOGIEFOOT</b> St. Louis, MO
<b>SUN 29</b>	<b>11:30AM</b>	<b>HOT SWING JAZZ Brunch</b> with <b>Miss Jubilee</b>
	<b>6:30PM</b>	<b>MIKE LIPEL &amp; LILY</b> St. Louis, MO
<b>TUES 31</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>PAT JOYCE</b> St. Louis, MO
	<b>10:30PM</b>	<b>SOME KIND OF NIGHTMARE</b> San Diego, CA

### AUGUST EVENTS

<b>WED 01</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>TOMMY HALLORAN</b> St. Louis, MO
<b>SUN 05</b>	<b>11:30AM</b>	<b>HOT SWING JAZZ Brunch</b> with <b>Miss Jubilee</b>
<b>SAT 11</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>JOE BOZZI BAND</b> St. Louis, MO
<b>SUN 12</b>	<b>11:30AM</b>	<b>HOT SWING JAZZ Brunch</b> with <b>Miss Jubilee</b>
<b>SAT 18</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>BARAK HILL</b> Springfield, MO
<b>TUES 21</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>BROTHER JEFFERSON ACOUSTIC DUO</b> St. Louis, MO
<b>WED 22</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>WHITHERWARD</b> Nashville, TN
<b>THUR 23</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>AMANDA RAYE</b> ST. Louis, MO
<b>FRI 24</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>THE BIRD &amp; THE BEAR</b> Nashville, TN
	<b>8:15PM</b>	<b>SOUTH FOR WINTER</b> Nashville, TN
<b>SAT 25</b>	<b>8:15PM</b>	<b>MEGAN FLECHAUS</b> Austin, TX
<b>SUN 26</b>	<b>11:30AM</b>	<b>HOT SWING JAZZ Brunch</b> with <b>Miss Jubilee</b>
	<b>6:30PM</b>	<b>STEPHEN CHOPEK</b> Memphis, TN
<b>TUES 28</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>PAT JOYCE</b> St. Louis, MO
<b>FRI 31</b>	<b>7:00PM</b>	<b>JIM MANELY BAND</b> St. Louis, MO

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- July 13 - BB's Jazz, Blues, & Soups (Bro. Jefferson Band) - St. Louis, MO - 10p
- July 14 - Pocahontas FD Picnic (Chapman Bros. Band) - Pocahontas, IL - 8p
- July 19 - BB's Jazz, Blues, & Soups (Duo) - St. Louis, MO - 7p
- July 20 - Ember's Wood-Fired Pizza (Solo) - Vandalia, IL - 6p
- July 21 - Copper Dock (Chapman Bros. Band) - Pocahontas, IL - 7p
- July 27 - Corner Keg Pub (Duo) - Highland, IL 9p
- July 28 - C.J. Muggs (Bros. Jefferson Band) - Webster Groves, MO - 9p
- Aug 3 - Ember's Pizza (Solo) - Vandalia, IL - 6p
- Aug 4 - Corner Keg Pub (Chapman Bros. Band) - Highland, IL - 9p
- Aug 5 - R Bar (Duo) - St. Rose, IL - 2p
- Aug 11 - Lemp Mansion BBQ BoogaLoo (Bro. Jefferson Band) - St. Louis, MO - 5:15p
- Aug 12 - National Blues Museum (Bro. Jefferson Band) - St. Louis, MO - 4p
- Aug 16 - BB's Jazz, Blues, & Soups (Duo) - St. Louis, MO - 9p
- Aug 17 - Ember's Pizza (Solo) - Vandalia, IL - 6p
- Aug 18 - Copper Dock (Chapman Bros. Band) - Pocahontas, IL - 7p
- Aug 21 - Evangelines Bistro (Duo) - St. Louis, MO - 7pm
- Aug 25 - C.J. Muggs (Bro. Jefferson Band) - Webster Groves, MO - 9:30p
- Aug 26 - St. Paul Kirchenfest (Chapman Bros. Band) - Highland, IL - 2p
- Sept 2 - Big Muddy Blues Festival (Bro. Jefferson Band) - The Landing - 6:15p

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# It's Big Muddy Time!



by Bob Baugh  
photos from Big Muddy 2017 by Reed Radcliffe

Gene Jackson, Renee Smith and Roland Johnson

Labor Day is just around the corner. That means it's *Big Muddy* time in St. Louis where, like the crosscurrents of the Mississippi, the ripples of Delta roots music swirl through street. Our 20th century bookends of musical history Scott Joplin and Chuck Berry used those roots to create ragtime and rock and roll. Oliver Sain helped define our soul while Henry Townsend and other Delta legends kept our blues true. And, in a city with a longstanding piano tradition, ragtime, jazz, Dixieland, barrelhouse, boogie woogie and blues always played well with one another.

All of that will be on display when the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual *Big Muddy Blues Festival* pulls into Laclede's Landing August 31-September 2. This year will be bigger and better than ever with 69 bands appearing on seven stages. Daily tickets will cost \$15 or you can get a weekend pass for \$25. Think of it this way: a two-day pass means you're paying just 36 cents per band. What a deal! And, there's even free stuff like the opening night concert at 7:00 pm Friday at the Landing and the 12:30-2:30 pm Saturday and Sunday tribute shows at the National Blues Museum prior to the festival gates opening.

This will be the third year of the Big Muddy's evolution to a new format that puts the emphasis on the wide pool of local talent in our community. St. Louis is a city where local blues bands like Marquise Knox and Jeremiah Johnson are national acts. And, Europe is calling them along with Al Holliday, Ethan Leinwand, Chase Garret and Tonina Saputo. We are struttin' our stuff in this town and *Big Muddy* is the showcase.

## A New Footprint

Of course, no *Big Muddy* comes without a lot of work, challenges and changes. The festival footprint has changed over the years along with the Landing. Once upon a time there was Mississippi Nights that hosted the St. Louis Blues Society precursors to *Big*

*Muddy Blues Festival*. The Lumiere Casino changed that landscape. The great recession and later Gateway Arch park construction hurt business on the Landing. Now with its own construction underway it is posed for a revival. Unfortunately, the *Big Muddy* mainstage area on First Street by Eads Bridge has become part of that construction.

Festival organizer and St. Louis Blues Society Chairperson Jeremy Segel-Moss remain focused and pragmatic about the challenges, "You roll with the punches. *Big Muddy* has always moved around the Landing. The question is how we adapt to the situation." Part of the adaption has been to move some locations and to add another stage. The result is an additional indoor stage which opened the opportunity for additional acts to be added to the schedule.

The big change for 2018 is no music on First Street. Everything moves uphill. The outdoor Morgan and Lucas Stage off Second Street remain in place. A third outdoor stage, a main stage, which will hold each evening's closing performance, will be sited on Third Street. The Big Daddy's and Morgan Street's indoor stages remain in place. Last year's addition of an acoustic stage at The Lou will be joined by a new stage, a piano room, at The Lodge on Morgan between Second and Third. Having four indoor stages will also help provide relief should any rain challenges arise.

Programs and maps will be available at the three entrance gates: Second Street by the metro, Third Street and Morgan, and Morgan between First and Second. All the food and beverage vendors will be found in locations near their restaurants on Second and Third Streets. Locations are still being worked out for other vendors and organizations in those areas. The St. Louis Blues Society booth will be located in an indoor festival headquarters on Morgan Street at the former Old Hair of the Dog site. A kids' center will be located nearby. With all the details in place it's time to talk about the music.

## On with the Show

The robust Big Muddy schedule Segel-Moss has put together assures that every blues lover will have whatever shade of blue they want to hear. The Friday night opening concert portends what is to come with the Edwards, Case and Erblich Trio providing a mix of classic urban and country blues, Barbara Carr's southern soul, and our own Delta legend, Big George Brock.

The tribute shows at the National Blues Museum go to the heart of St. Louis soul. The Saturday show will recognize Fontella Bass with a show organized by her daughter Neuka and son-in-law Tracey Mitchell who was a member of her band. On Sunday Marsha Evans and Jimmy Hinds will recognize their friend and lifelong collaborator Oliver Sain.

On the festival schedule the acoustic and piano rooms offer a different listening experience with guitar and harmonica blues holding forth in one and ragtime,



Gus Thornton

barrelhouse, boogie woogie and more in the other. The other stages offer all kinds of blues: traditional, electric, folk, jazzy, swing and jump, soul, R&B, and Southern soul. Take your pick. The acts are nicely spaced so that there are many styles to choose from every hour.

There will be many familiar names and faces from past festivals like Kim Massie, Skeet Rodgers and the Inner City Band, and Renee Smith. There will be second timers like Torey Casey and the South Side Hustle and Annie and the Fur Trappers who both blew their crowds away in their first appearance. And, there will be our rising younger players like Matt Lesch and first timers Tonina Saputo and Little Dylan Triplett.



Ron Edwards with emcee Alonzo Townsend

Other first timers include Tonina and Greg Silsby and some that may be a surprise like the soulful Uvee Hayes and Gene Dobbs Bradford (CEO of Jazz St. Louis) who only plays blues. And, there's Uncle Albert whose been absent for a few years. The closing acts will offer a real party with Marquise Knox, Big Mike and the The Blu City All Stars and Al Holliday and the East Side Rhythm Band showing off some of the best music this town has to offer.

It's impossible to do justice to all the great acts that will appear in this brief article but let's hear from a few of them in order of appearance. Just consider this as appetizers for the big meal.

### Edwards, Case and Erblich

The Edwards, Case, Erblich Trio will open Big Muddy at the free Friday night concert with a bottleneck guitar, harmonica and bass. Case said their set list will touch on his and Edwards trips in the late '60s down to the Delta "to meet and learn from old bluesmen like Bukka White, Furry Lewis, and Fred McDowell." The trio also

reprises the therapy program Edwards and Keith Doder put together for Case following a terrible 1980 car accident that left him housebound. To get him up and moving Edwards told him, "we are forming a trio and need you to play." According to Edwards, "It changed everything for all of us." Case got back to work and Edwards became a working musician for the first time. He would go on to play with Henry Townsend for 20 years and Silvercloud for 25. Erblich who learned harmonica from Doder is the right guy to complete the trio. Case will also appear solo in The Lou. Listen for his new song "The Devil's in the White House."

### Barbara Carr

It has been a few years since Barbara Carr has been onstage at Big Muddy but she's ready for her Friday night appearance. "I'm feeling great and glad to be asked to be a part of the lineup," she said. Carr worked with Chess Records and Oliver Sain in the '60s and early '70s until she created her own label with her husband. She began recording in Muscle Shoals and making a name for herself on the southern soul circuit. For her show, Carr plans to do songs from Chess as well as numbers like "My Momma Told Me," "Juke Joint Jumpin'," and "Partying at the Hole in the Wall." She looks "forward to seeing all the beautiful faces smiling and cheering me on."

### Oliver Sain Tribute

With a lifetime of friendship and musical collaboration with Oliver Sain, Marsha Evans and Jimmy Hinds are thrilled to organize and perform this tribute show. Their band, The Coalition will anchor the set with Amos Brewer joining in on sax. Hinds said Brewer is just what they needed because, "He genuinely sounds like Sain when he blows" and that, "Oliver had already approved him years back by allowing him to sit in with his band." You can expect to hear him perform "Soul Serenade." Evans and Hinds also said to "expect some surprises" from the deep pool of talent Sain developed over the years.

### Fontella Bass Tribute

Tracy Mitchell, who has played with Love Jones the Band for the past decade, is working with his wife, Neuka, to organize the tribute show for her mother, Fontella Bass. Mitchell, a singer/guitarist, who

toured with Bass for ten years, has taken the lead role in pulling this tribute show together. He said, "We plan to tap local singers for specific songs," as well as Bass' grandchildren—his son Gibran (piano and guitar) and daughter Jahi Mitchell (vocals)—who continue the family's musical tradition. Don't be surprised if Anita Jackson and the Bosman Twins show up. Mitchell will also be appearing Saturday evening with Skeet Rodgers and the Inner City Blues band.

### Gene Dobbs Bradford

Gene Dobbs Bradford may be best known as the President & CEO at Jazz St. Louis, but he only plays professionally as a blues musician. After attending Big Muddy for years, he said, "It feels fantastic to be asked to play for the first time because it is such a celebration of the talent we have here." His band, The Gene Dobbs Bradford Blues Experience, with his hard-driving harmonica and soulful vocals in the lead, generally takes a blues/rock/funk approach. "But for this festival," he said, "we want to get back down to a set of soulful blues."

### Uvee Hayes

With her brand of blues and southern soul, Uvee Hays has been a name in St. Louis music circles for decades. She said, "I am so excited for my first appearance at Big Muddy," and she promises, "We're gonna have some fun." The band for the show will include James McKay (bass), Eric McSpadden (harmonica), Dennis Brock (guitar), and Al Burns (drums). Expect to hear cuts from her latest CDs, *From a Woman's Point of View* and *In the Mood*. Hayes applauds the loyal blues fans in St. Louis and promises to "give the crowd a show because they deserve it."

### Marcell Strong

Recently recognized by the National Blues Museum for his lifetime contribution, Marcell Strong has been a bluesman for nearly 60 years. It all began on a bet about singing at a bar with Piano Slim. That turned into a job and his vocals led to shows with Albert King, Little Milton, Oliver Sain, and Ike and Tina Turner. He still belts it out with his band, The Apostles. When asked about Big Muddy he tells you, "Love it. Love it all the time. It brings back so many memories of all the groups there have been here [St. Louis] over the years."

continued on page 10

continued from page 9

Strong said he remains hopeful about the music scene, “with so many new bands coming up.” He is preparing a set of R&B and blues for the festival while working on a new CD, *Looking for My Love*.

### Little Dylan Triplett

It has been some kinda year for Little Dylan Triplett. Singing soulful blues at the National Blues Museum, the Baby Blues Showcase, the Red Door, and sitting in with Marquise Knox, Carolyn Mason and Skeet Rogers has put the 18-year-old on the St. Louis musical map. Oh, and then there’s the church choir, the Edwardsville Chamber Choir and solos with Edwardsville High School Drama Club that won awards on the Fox stage in June. Whew! He said he finds his Big Muddy opportunity “so amazing and unexpected to be able to be part of something so special.” Once he hits you with some R&B you will feel the same way.

### Greg Silsby

Greg Silsby is really looking forward to hitting The Lou acoustic stage in his first Big Muddy appearance. For two decades he was singer/guitarist in a variety of bands. When a long stint with Cumberland Gap came to an end five years ago, Silsby said, “I knew it was time to go solo and to take the time to dig into the blues I love.” His hard work has resulted in a finger style blues act. Don’t look for a set list because as he explained, “I just let the songs roll as they come into my head.” But, he did say to expect “some original music combined with stylings featuring Mississippi John Hurt, the Reverend Gary Davis and Big Bill Broonzy.”

### Tonina Saputo

Tonina Saputo was named after her uncle Tony Saputo, a well-known local musician, who died in a tragic 1991 airplane crash with the rest of Reba McEntire’s band. She has been making a name for herself since returning to St. Louis in 2017 with a degree from the Berklee College of Music and an album, *Black Angel*, that she recorded in Spain. Most often you will find her playing standup bass using her nontraditional voice style as an instrument to sing in three languages. She said she realizes her approach “may appear to be jazzy but I feel it is R&B and soul.” Her tight band with David Gomez on sax, Joseph Ferber on guitar and Keith Bowman



Alice Monroe

on drums plays regularly at the Dark Room. Saputo is excited about her first ever Big Muddy. She said she is planning to work up a blues-oriented show reaching back to her “father’s southern culture and Texas blues roots.”

### Chris “Iron Jaw” Taylor

“Iron Jaw” is not a newcomer to Big Muddy having appeared previously as the harp player with Skeet Rogers and the Inner City Blues Band. Facebook made the connection with an old friend, guitarist Nathan Byrd, that he had played with years ago in the Interstate Connection Band. Byrd recruited him to The Alley Tones and their Music House Studio. Chris said he was “stunned when they welcomed me with a gift, a Hohner Chromonica 64 harmonica.” Chris said he is “blowing his ass off and looking forward to September.” For Big Muddy they will have new CD in hand and be playing a combination of original and cover songs.

### HyC (Jacinta Branch Griffin)

HyC first played Big Muddy as a vocalist with the Skeet Rodgers and Inner City Blues Band. This time the “Princess of Soul and Blues” said she is “excited and rarin’ to go” with the band she formed two years ago, The Fresh Start Show Band. It is a band of pros with Frank Dunbar on bass and Tommy Johnson on guitar providing the foundation for HyC’s take on Koko Taylor, Gladys Knight, Etta James, and Denise LaSalle. She will draw from a newly released album and said she “is working on her first original material and may have a few surprises up her sleeve.”



Tee'ca Easby

### Uncle Albert

After five CDs and nearly 20 years on the road Uncle Albert took a long break when their drummer passed away a decade ago. Tim Albert had his job as a technical director at the Sheldon and Lisa Campbell had plenty of work as a vocal coach. They would occasionally play as a duo in Europe along with a few Uncle Albert gigs. Now they are ready to play more. Albert is excited because “it has been a few years since we last played Big Muddy,” and he said, “it is a safe environment to show off material from what our next CD will be.” Be prepared for everything from great keyboard and vocals from Campbell to, “kick you in the head electric blues.”

### Johnny Fox

Johnny Fox is a singer/songwriter/guitarist who appears solo and with The Roadkill Orchestra a self-described group of “Midwestern river-billies.” His Big Muddy appearance will be solo act as a part of the acoustic room. Fox, said, “It’s an honor to be playing with so many musicians who have taught me so much.” He also gave a shout out to Jeremy Segel-Moss for “all his hard work in putting the festival together.” His thing is the blues and he plans to use his steel guitar to “try and make as much racket as I can.” He also plans to have his Jukin and Jivin CD available. 🎵

*The Big Muddy Blues Festival on the Landing begins with a free show on Friday, August 31 and continues through Sunday, September 2.*

*For more information visit:  
[www.bigmuddybluesfestival.com](http://www.bigmuddybluesfestival.com)*

# LABOR DAY WEEKEND

Laclede's Landing

23RD ANNUAL

AUG 31-  
SEPT 2



## SCHEDULE 2018

### SATURDAY

#### MORGAN STAGE

3-3:45pm Fab Foehners  
4:15-5:30pm Eugene & Company  
6-7:15pm Gene Jackson  
7:45-9pm Papa Ray & The Soul Selectors  
9:30-10:45pm John McVey Band

#### LUCAS STAGE

3:15-4:30pm Rich McDonough & the Rhythm Renegades  
5-6:15pm Paul Bonn & The Bluesmen  
6:45-8pm Torrey Casey & The Southside Hustle  
8:30-9:45pm Skeet Rodgers & The Inner City Blues Band

#### 3rd ST STAGE

3-4pm Gene Dobbs Bradford Blues Experience  
4:30-5:45pm Uvee Hayes  
6:15-7:30pm Roland Johnson  
8-9:15pm Marcell Strong  
9:45-11pm Al Holiday & The East Side Rhythm Band

#### BIG DADDY'S

3:15-4:15pm Billy Barnett  
4:45-6pm Melissa Neels Band  
6:30-7:45pm Eastsiders Review Band  
8:15-9:30pm Matt 'Rattlesnake' Lesch

#### MORGAN STREET BREWERY

3:15-4pm Riverside Wanderers  
4:30-5:45pm Jason David Cooper Band  
6:15-7:30pm Little Dylan  
8-9:15pm NGK Band  
9:45-11pm Aaron Griffin

#### THE LODGE

3:30-4:30pm Phillip 'Dr. Philgood' Graves  
5-6pm Ptah Williams  
6:30-7:30pm Christopher Parish  
8-9pm Ladale Fitzpatrick  
9:30-10:30pm Chase Garrett

#### THE LOU

4-5pm Bob Case  
5:30-6:30pm Jim McClaren  
7-8pm Larry Griffin  
8:30-9:30pm Greg Silsby  
8:30-9:30pm Brian Curran

### SUNDAY

#### MORGAN STAGE

3-3:45pm Larry Griffin & Eric McSpadden  
4:15-5:30pm Devil's Elbow  
6-7:15pm Eric McSpadden Band  
7:45-9pm Soulard Blues Band  
9:30-10:45pm Kim Massie

#### LUCAS STAGE

3:15-4:30pm Tonina  
5-6:15pm Ground Floor Band  
6:45-8pm Kingdom Brothers  
8:30-9:45pm Big Mike & The Blu City Allstars

#### 3rd ST STAGE

3-4pm Miss Jubilee & The Humdingers  
4:30-5:45pm Boo Boo Davis  
6:15-7:30pm Love Jones  
8-9:15pm Renee Smith  
9:45-11pm Marquise Knox

#### BIG DADDY'S

3:15-4:15pm Ivas John  
4:45-6pm Alley Tones  
6:30-7:45pm Marty Spikener's On Call Band  
8:15-9:30pm Joe Metzka Band

#### MORGAN STREET BREWERY

3:15-4pm Nick Pence  
4:30-5:45pm Annie & The Furtrappers  
6:15-7:30pm Brother Jefferson Band  
8-9:15pm HY-C & The Fresh Start Show Band  
9:45-11pm Uncle Albert

#### THE LODGE

3:30-4:30pm Amy Hawkins  
5-6pm Bill Murphy  
6:30-7:30pm Brock Walker  
8-9pm Jesse Prather  
9:30-10:30pm Ethan Leinwand

#### THE LOU

4-5pm Johnny Fox  
5:30-6:30pm Tom Hall  
7-8pm Bob Kamoske  
8:30-9:30pm Brian Curran

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# Jeff Hardin: Ambassador for the Blues



by Bob Baugh  
photo courtesy of the  
National Blues Museum

With the April 2018 appointment of Jeffrey Hardin as executive director of the National Blues Museum the board felt they had found a person with a set of skills that would complement the foundation established by the departing executive director, Dion Brown. There will be challenges ahead for Hardin that will require all the business acumen and not-for-profit expertise he brings to the job. The music part comes naturally. It's something he grew up with.

All the Hardin kids sang in the church choir. That's the way it was in North St. Louis when you're a preacher's kid. Jeffrey Hardin didn't mind. He liked to sing, and he was good at it. Then, he discovered a world beyond gospel that included the blues, Elvis, country, and Nat King Cole. "A fifth-grade performance of "Everything Must Change" off a Quincy Jones album," he said, "did it for me."

Mentored by local artists Mae Wheeler and Gene Lynn in the early '90s, he learned important musical and life lessons. "I needed to find out how to become part of a group. With a band the dynamics change. It's much more complex. You're solely reliant on those supportive roles to put out one product." He said. Today Hardin's long-time group is Silhouette with Jeremiah Allen/bass, Jesse Praether/keyboards, Darryl Basset/guitarist who has played with Skeet Rodgers, and vocalist Demarius Hicks whose wife is the mayor of East St. Louis.

Hardin also discovered that those musical life lessons also had some real-life parallels as he put his Harris Stowe State University business/marketing degree to work for community organizations and not-for-profits. In that world, getting all the parts—strategic planning, fundraising, collaboration, networking and relationship building—to work in harmony are critical to organizational success. Those are the skills the NBM board found most attractive in Hardin's resume as they looked towards the next phase of the museum's development.

Hardin knows his skills are only part of the picture and that it takes a good staff and community. "We have a great team, a great crew. They are dedicated to the roles they play. It's up to me to keep them inspired and to let them know their hard work and ideas are not falling on deaf ears or falling off the agenda." Hardin said. He sees volunteers as a backbone because they sell the museum and music to the public with their passion. "Our volunteers have helped put us on the map," he said, "I take my hat off to Jesse Lopez for the amazing weekly jam sessions. Congress could learn something from what happens on that stage."

As Hardin works with the board to develop a longer term strategic plan he has more immediate objectives:

1. My main goal is to get a better positive fiscal position for organization by utilizing our in-house resources and cultivating a couple of partnerships that will assist in doing that while networking with the businesses around us.
2. Strengthen our existing partnerships and develop new ones to strengthen our brand and position in St. Louis.
3. Engage broader outreach outside of Missouri and create stronger alliances with our own and other blues societies around the country. Expanding our collaborative components is part of this."

One area the board has expressed interest in are collaborative efforts with universities, The Scott Joplin House, Jazz St. Louis, gospel music and more. The talk about collaborative initiatives surfaced last February during



the KDHX/STLBS sponsored Race and Blues dialogues. Hardin is already engaged in conversations about how to better market our music community on a regional basis as well as ways to explore the common roots of blues, jazz and gospel through musical exchanges.

Hardin understands the symbiotic relationship between gospel and blues because he and so many others first cut their musical teeth in church. He told the NBM board he sees opportunities to attract new fans, talent and volunteers. Hardin also sees using these higher education linkages as an opportunity to engage more young people as volunteers.

One of the big things churches do is use music to broaden the ministry but more importantly to attract young people as a direct opportunity of engagement. Gene Dobbs Bradford sees similar possibilities from the jazz side. As blues musician who has helped build Jazz St. Louis, he said he believes in the idea that 'a rising tide lifts all boats.' Outreach is underway with corporate donors and potential collaborators like Harris Stowe University and UMSL. Harris Stowe has agreed to make their Emerson Theater facilities available to the NBM at no cost. And conversations with UMSL are underway about a curator component though their master's program.

The donor and curator/university discussions are also related to a desire to expand the museums ability to store artifacts and have sites that will meet the curatorial atmospheric conditions required for traveling exhibits. "Civic engagement is also part of the mission," Hardin said, "we have to expand those opportunities to underserved communities (K-12) as well as using university partnerships to encourage students interested in the arts to participate with us."

There's plenty more under discussion but for now he is focused on outreach and tapping his networks. Hardin said he is, "lucky to wake up every day to go to a job I love." He knows from his decades in the community sector that getting people involved is the key to breeding civic involvement, community, collaboration and outreach. "That's how you do it," he said, "The footprint is here; we just have to broaden the steps." 🎵

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- Thursday 8/9 Doug Deming and The Jewel Tones
- Thursday 8/16 Ivas John Band
- Saturday 8/18 Brian Curran Solo
- Thursday 8/23 Lauren Mitchell Band [FL]
- Thursday 8/30 Shake Em Up Jazz Band
- Saturday 9/1 Charlie Halloran Band
- Thursday 9/6 Patrick Recob Perpetual Luau Tour wsg/ R J Mischo [KC]
- Thursday 9/13 Aaron Griffin, Elliot Sowell, Sal Ruelas and Keith Robinson
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- Saturday 9/21 TBA
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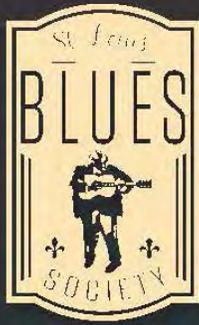
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