

**Preserving and Promoting the Blues in the Pacific NW**

A bi-monthly publication of the Cascade Blues Association | [cascadebluesassociation.org](http://cascadebluesassociation.org)

# bluesnotes



May/June 2025  
Volume 40 | Issue 5 (FREE)

## **Gino Matteo**

Gone But Not Forgotten

.....

Page 2

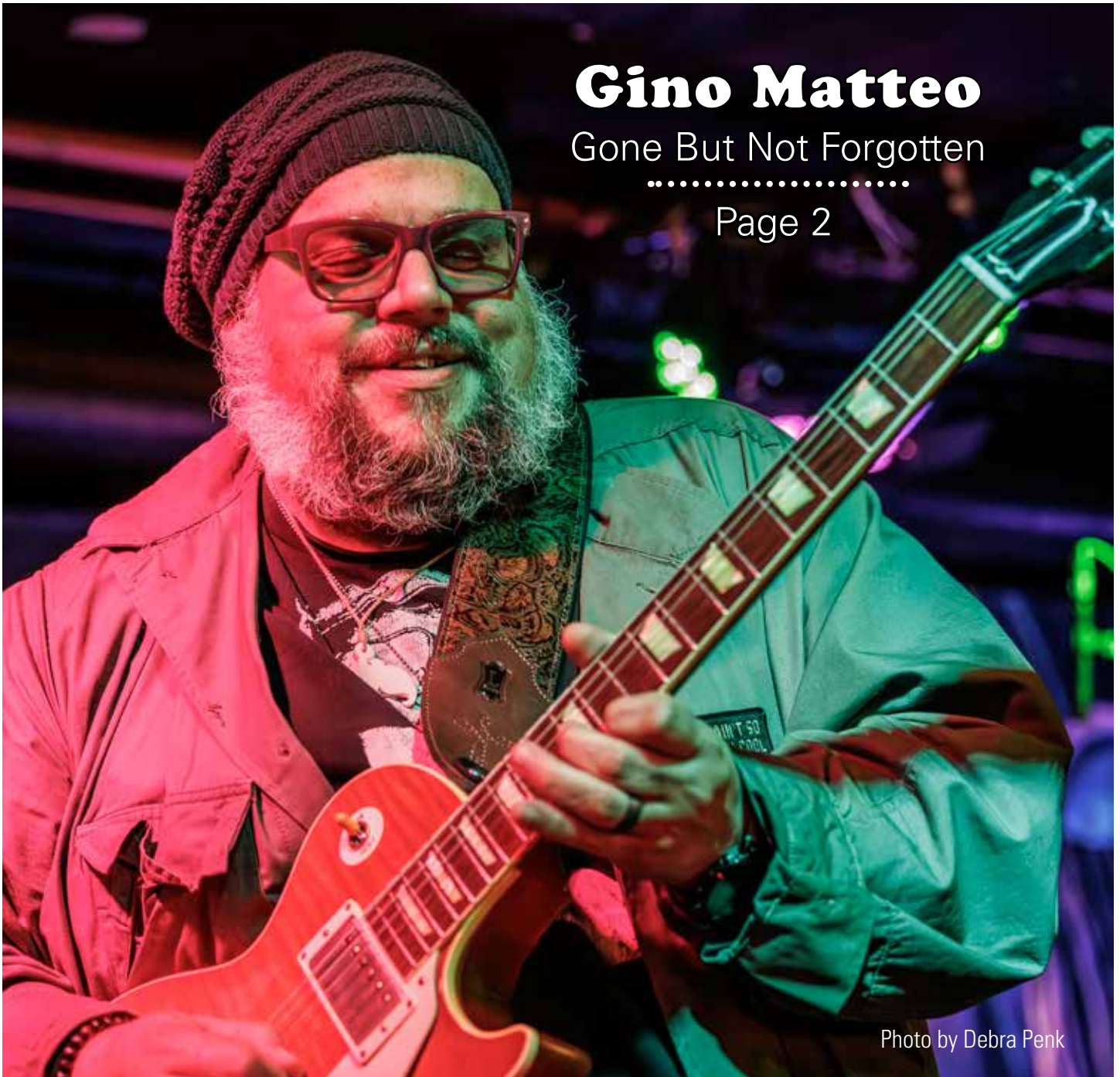


Photo by Debra Penk

## Right Here, Right Now with Gino Matteo

### Message from the President

I don't know how I became his bassist, or exactly when it happened, which is unusual. Almost always I choose and chase my bands or artists in advance and reel them in or develop them. But this time, I just woke up as his bassist one day.

Our relationship started off rocky as a result of a poor reaction on my part to a double booking. The error was my fault and after the explosion, I apologized; but it took a while for him to interact with me again. Eventually time healed the wounds I had caused and Gino began working with me, both in chasing gigs and in creating music. Among the many lessons I learned from Gino, grace was one of the first. Learning valuable lessons from him would be a recurring theme in our relationship.



Gino Matteo & Timmer Blakely  
Photo by Tony Kutter

As my relationship with both Gino and his wife, singer Jade Bennett-Matteo grew, it became clear that they were searching for musical family and community. Their “We, not Me” mentality became evident fairly quickly and they were an excellent fit with the heart and goals of my label, Lightning in a Bottle Records, and they became a part of the label, and the Cascade Blues Association music community. Gino was a giving resource with endless experiences beyond my

own and a heart eager to share his wisdom. His intelligence empowered him to communicate his deep, unique, and valuable thoughts with great articulation, both verbally and musically. His ability to be bluntly direct with love and without offense was amazing and unmatched. I believe part of that ability was derived from his total lack of a mask. He could not conceal who he was, the sensitivity that came with that, and he did not try.

Gino Matteo's musical

skills were undeniable and impossible to conceal. His own description of great musicians equated them to an “iceberg”, with only the very edges of their abilities visible to any observer at a glance, and the true depth of their skills only revealed over time. He certainly exemplified this depth of ability; I doubt that any of us ever fully witnessed the full range of his gifts. His musical tastes and influences were wildly diverse and he was constantly exposing the musicians around him to new music and approaches. And while his public acclaim was in the blues realm, by his own proclamation he was not a blues guitarist but something much broader and more difficult to box up. His sense of tone and use of tools was magical and rare, and their application was always flawless and song serving.

As a performer, his creativity was endless, even

## Blues Notes is a publication of the Cascade Blues Association

Help us promote and preserve the lyrical emotion and sultry sounds of blues music in Portland, become a member! Visit <http://cascadebluesassociation.org> today!

**Publisher:** Cory Burden

**Managing Editor:** Michael Wong

**Advertising:** Rae Gordon

**Content Deadline:** 1st of each month for editorial/ads, Email: [bluesnotes@cascadeblues.org](mailto:bluesnotes@cascadeblues.org)

**Note:** The entire contents of the BluesNotes is property of the Cascade Blues Association and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without written permission from the CBA.



**Contact:**

PO Box 6566, Portland OR 97228  
[bluesnotes@cascadeblues.org](mailto:bluesnotes@cascadeblues.org)

**Board Members:**

- President: Timmer Blakely
- VP: Rae Gordon
- Secretary: Sandy Gilman
- Treasurer: Mike Day
- Membership: Evelyn Silverman
- At-Large: Mike Todd
- Advisor: Betsy Clayton, Marie Walters, Dave Fleschner

**Published by:** Cory Burden @ Cedar House Media  
10200 SW Allen Blvd, Suite D.  
Beaverton, OR 97005  
503.641.3320  
[www.cedarhousemedia.com](http://www.cedarhousemedia.com)

 CEDAR HOUSE  
MEDIA

**bluesnotes**





Gino Matteo clowns around with Timmer Blakely & Friends



Gino Matteo wows in the crowd in Baja photo by Marilyn Stringer

in the context of a live show. Seldom were the songs performed exactly the same show to show, and Gino was always open to real time adjustments in arrangement and set list. Playing with Gino live was a very interactive and reactive experience. He could direct dynamic variations and unexpected breaks effortlessly while revealing a whole new unseen canvas of musicality in the moment. He taught me many lessons in this context and one of the many losses is the premature termination of these lessons. I was not done learning from him.

On many Sundays I attended “church” with Gino. For him, church was an immersive encounter creating music with a random collection of friends assembled

weekly at the former Disney post production studio which he was guiding back to life. Each occasion presented a different collection of players with no running theme other than that of free creativity, appreciation for the process, and gratitude for the moment. The arranged guest for the final “church service” that never happened was Paul Gilbert, of whom Gino was a big fan. I had mentioned Gino to Paul in a text while the Bennett-Matteo Band was playing at the Walla Walla Guitar Festival. Paul looked Gino up and became an immediate fan, gladly accepting the invitation to attend a Sunday “church service” with Gino. We were all very excited for what was going to come at that service, Gino most especially.

I always joke that if you want to meet the most famous blues musicians, stand next to Ben Rice in the lobby of the Orpheum Theater in Memphis, Tennessee during International Blues Challenge week and they will come to you. With Gino, it didn’t matter where you stood. Every relevant guitarist within 10 miles was aware of his presence and seeking an audience. It was awesome to observe their respect and awe combined with Gino’s humility.

We don’t always consciously realize the depth of relevance someone has in our community until they are suddenly and prematurely removed. The vacuum of Gino’s absence is tangible to me; both in the emotional response I feel and as evidenced in the wake of lives and projects left guideless with his passing.

A modicum of peace is obtained in acknowledging Gino’s wisdom in always actively communicating his love and feelings towards those close to him. He always made his love for you clear to you, leaving no unresolved feelings or questions. I know how he felt about me and he knew how I felt about him, without question or doubt.

I am grateful for the lessons I received from Gino Matteo. I will miss him. I encourage all of you to emulate Gino’s transparency of love. I will try harder as well.

*Timmer*  
(CBA President)

To learn more, visit:

- [BennettMatteoBand.com](http://BennettMatteoBand.com)
- [Blues.org/international-blues-challenge](http://Blues.org/international-blues-challenge)

# CBA Blues Calendar

Treat yourself to a local gig

## BLUES JAMS

### Mondays

- Dave's Lowdown Youth Blues Jam with Backbeat Music Academy & Clackamas Comm. College Rhythm Section (1st Mondays) at Artichoke Music
- Chad Rupp Jam at McMenamins White Eagle, Portland

### Wednesdays

- Toby Worthington & The Fabulous Bad Cats Jam at Dublin Pub, Beaverton

### Thursdays

- Chad Rupp Jam at Lair Bar, Milwaukie

### Sundays

- Kevin Selfe Jam at Blue Diamond, PDX
- Jason Thomas Blues Jam at Trails End Saloon, Oregon City



Blues Jammers at White Eagle by Rae Gordon

- Scott Steele Jam at Montavilla Station, Portland
- Jerry Jacques Jam at 99 Saloon, Vancouver
- Kathryn Grimm Jam at Mekong Bistro, PDX
- Wednesdays Grace London at Trails End Saloon, Oregon City
- Thursdays Ed Newman & Friends at CI Bar, Tualatin
- Fenix Rising Band at Blue Diamond, PDX
- Sundays Bayou Boyz at Spirits Pub, Portland

### Weekly Shows

- Mondays Lloyd Jones at Muddy Rudder, Portland
- Tevis Hodge Jr with Bayou Boyz Band at Mekong Bistro, Portland
- Tuesdays Ben Rice & the PDX Hustle at Billy Blues, Vancouver,

## SHOWS IN MAY

- 5/1 - 1st Thursday at the Studios w/Youth Music Project at Wilamette Falls Studios, Oregon City
- 5/1 - Blues Jam w/ Eric Savage, Bobby Ferrante, Eric Rabe at Celebrities Parkway Bar, Fairview
- 5/2 - First Fridays w/ Lloyd Jones at Artichoke Music, Portland
- 5/2 - Big Plans Blues Band at Tigardville Station, Tigard
- 5/2 - One Way Out (Allman Brothers tribute) at Alberta Abbey, Portland
- 5/2 - Pocket Funk at Blue Diamond Bar, Portland
- 5/3 - Bottleneck Blues Band at High Water Grill, Silverton
- 5/3 - Kode Bluuz & Klever Aphair at Celebrities Parkway Bar, Fairview
- 5/4 - 1st Sunday Gospel w/Rae Gordon, Special Guest at Trails End Saloon, Oregon City
- 5/4 - Myrtle Brown & Executive Groove at Canary, Portland
- 5/4 - Suburban Slim at Slims, Portland



by Rae Gordon



- 5/7 - CBA Monthly Showcase w/Stacy Jones Band at Mekong Bistro, Portland
- 5/7 - Soul Cookin' w/ Brian Foxworth & Lloyd Jones at Blue Diamond, Portland
- 5/8 - Big Plans Blues Band at Landmark Saloon, Portland
- 5/9 - Bottleneck Blues Band at Wild Hare Saloon, Oregon City
- 5/10 - Big Plans Band at Montavilla Station, Portland
- 5/10 - Johnny Wheels & the Swamp Donkeys at Ponderosa Lounge,
- 5/11 - Wooten Brothers at Revolution Hall, PDX
- 5/16 - Bottleneck Blues Band at McMenamins Grand Lodge/Garage Door Bar, Forest Grove
- 5/16 - 5 Guys Named Moe at The Headliners Club, Lake Oswego
- 5/16 - Nikki Jones Band at Blue Diamond, Portland
- 5/20 - Shemekia Copeland at Dimitriou's Jazz Alley, Seattle, WA
- 5/21 - Shemekia Copeland at Dimitriou's Jazz Alley, Seattle, WA
- 5/21 - War & Treaty at Revolution Hall, Portland
- 5/23 - James Taylor at Cascade Amphitheatre, Ridgefield WA
- 5/23 - Lightning in a Bottle Records Showcase w/Johnny Wheels & the Swamp Donkeys, Brady Goss & Timothy James at Headliners, Lake Oswego
- 5/24 - Bottleneck Blues Band at Skyway Bar, Zigzag
- 5/25 - Chance Hayden's Desert Room All Stars at McMenamins Al'sDen, Portland
- 5/28 - Soul Cookin' w/Brian Foxworth & Lloyd Jones at Blue Diamond, Portland
- 5/29 - AC Porter & the Livewires at Holman's Bar, Portland
- 5/30 - Bottleneck Blues Band at Celebrities Parkway Grill, Fairview
- 5/31 - Ants In The Kitchen at Ponderosa Lounge, Portland

### SHOWS IN JUNE

- 6/1 - 1st Sunday Gospel w/Rae Gordon & Special Guest at Trails End Saloon, Oregon City
- 6/4 - CBA Monthly Showcase at Mekong Bistro, Portland
- 6/8 - CBA 3rd Annual Back What You Believe In Concert at Alberta Rose Theatre, Portland
- 6/13 - Bottleneck Blues Band at Oregon Brews & BBQ, McMinnville
- 6/16 - Tevis Hodge Jr with Bayou Boyz Band at Mekong Bistro, PDX
- 6/18 - Soul Cookin' w/Brian Foxworth & Lloyd Jones at Blue Diamond, Portland
- 6/20 - Gorge Blues and Brews Festival, Stevenson, WA
- 6/26 - AC Porter & the Livewires at Holman's Bar, Portland
- 6/29 - Bottleneck Blues Band at Waltz Brewing, Forest Grove
- 6/29 - Chance Hayden's Desert Room All Stars at Al's Den, Portland
- 6/30 - Tevis Hodge Jr w/Bayou Boyz Band at Mekong Bistro, PDX



This list may not include all the blues events in and around the area. For more detailed information, please find our calendar at [cascadebluesassociation.org/calendar](http://cascadebluesassociation.org/calendar)

To be included in the next printing of BluesNotes (May/June), email your show information to us by April 1st: [BluesNotes@cascadeblues.org](mailto:BluesNotes@cascadeblues.org)



## RUBY MOTORS LLC

Family Owned. Quality Used Cars.

Where the Blues Community Gets their Ride!

(971) 777-0844

RUBYMOTORS.PDX.COM

845 NW Dunbar Ave  
Troutdale, OR 97060

NEW INVENTORY DAILY. ALL CREDIT SITUATIONS. \$100 REFERRAL.

# Blues in the Schools with The Norman Sylvester Band

## Celebrating Black History Month

By Mike Todd, Photos by Paula Sylvester

I had the privilege last month of witnessing Norman Sylvester's musical artistry and educational genius at Maplewood Elementary. It was done in honor of Black History Month and sponsored by the Musicians Union Local 99. Norman and his dedicated and talented band of cohorts have been supportive of the Blues in the Schools educational initiatives in partnership with the Cascade Blues Association for many years. The PTA is heavily engaged at Maplewood and actively works to bring all types of cultural presentations to the school. They contacted the Musicians Union and they donated the band's fee in honor of Black History Month.

The band teaches about beats of Africa, "call & response", Gospel, Delta Blues, Ragtime, Rock-n-Roll, Soul, R&B, and Hip Hop to name a few. The amount and depth of the history of the music taught during the show is dependent on the age of



the students. The idea is to keep them engaged while learning and having fun.

Norman and his band have played for students from the Head Start program up through college level. Some of his "talking and playing" solo engagements have been in a history curriculum for high school & universities. The band has played in assemblies, evening events, multi-cultural celebrations, and so on.

Norman Sylvester spearheaded an "Artist in Residency" class for 10 years in middle schools called "Music and Social Change". The teacher arranged for him to focus

on the healing powers of songwriting and how music came alongside social justice in America over the years. The English teacher would help them do writing projects about anything they were passionate about. Then they would meet with Norman and produce a song (e.g. Spoken Word, Rap, etc.). After weeks of developing the students' pieces, the band practicing with them, and singer LaRhonda Steele finding some harmony chorus help. They produced an album! The entire band would set up a recording studio and record their songs -- making a class CD. Another piece of the project was

a live performance at an evening event. They even had one student perform at the Waterfront Blues Festival and quite a few more opportunities at their all-age gigs. Here are a few verses from two of the songs written by the students from Irvington -- one heavy about shootings & one lighter about the love of cupcakes!

### "Drop the Gun" by Alex

*Hands up  
Drop the gun  
Bullets in bodies from  
love'n oh~oh~oh  
Too many innocent lovers  
shot dead and gone  
We stand  
We fall*



May 7th



Stacy Jones Band



June 4th



Cody Alan & the Crossroads

Christi Michelle



MONTHLY SHOWCASE

Raffles  
Drawings  
Announcements



Kevin Sutton

MEKONG, 8200 NE SISKIYOU, PORTLAND • 6:30PM • FREE • \$5 NON-MEMBERS

CASCADEBLUES.ORG

*You shoot us down  
When we go tall, oh~ oh  
drop the gun*

**"The Cupcake Song"**  
by Khaliya and Ella

*It's fun cake it's ton cake  
It's lum, lum, lum, lum,  
love cake (x4)*

*When you eat cupcakes  
It tastes sooo good  
Makes you feel like you're  
understood  
You can smash it in your  
face*

*You can eat them all day  
Chocolate, vanilla & red  
velvet, ooo  
Hey, don't forget about  
strawberry,  
Lemon & blueberry too!*



The band members include Norman "Boogie Cat" Sylvester (band-leader, guitar, vocals), Rob Shoemaker (bass), Jeff Otto (keys), Jimi Hardin (drums), Lenanne Sylvester-Miller (back-up vocals), and the tap-dancing sax player



– Shoehorn. One thing is for sure... The Norman Sylvester Band has a proven history of supporting our communities with purposeful and dedicated intent in support of music and its history. The band is full of talented, kind, and loving

people who deeply care about what they do and the world in which we all share. ■

Want to help Blues in the Schools? Email [BITS@cascadeblues.org](mailto:BITS@cascadeblues.org). For more info about the Norman Sylvester visit [NormanSylvester.com](http://NormanSylvester.com).



## Blues Review: Joe Louis Walker

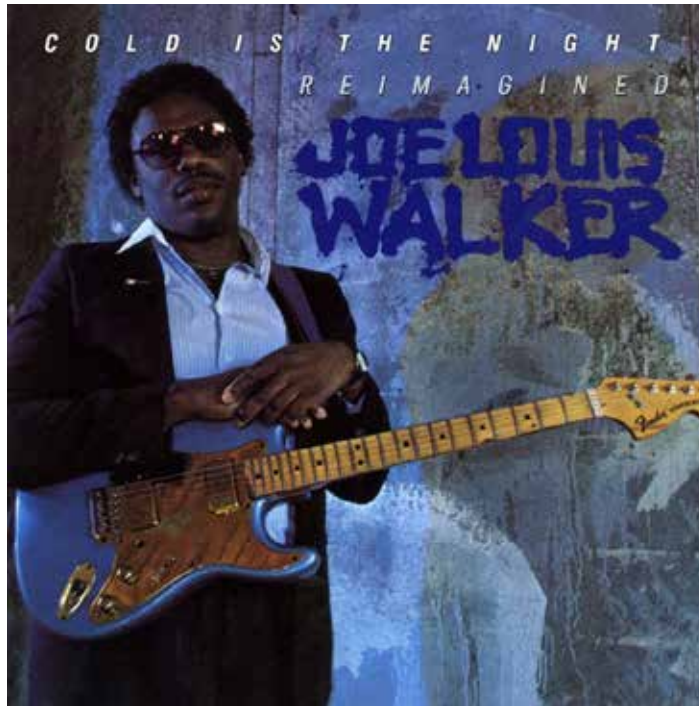
By Hugo Obori, Valley Entertainment

### Cold is The Night: Reimagined



Blues Hall of Famer Joe Louis Walker is back with a bold look to the past and future. His new album “Cold Is The Night: Reimagined”, released on Bluesifyin Productions/sledgehammer blues (a label of Valley Entertainment), is a fresh take on the classic 1986 debut (produced by Bruce Bromberg and Dennis Walker) that launched his career. The modern blues legend has re-recorded and re-energized original tracks, imbuing them with nearly four decades of additional soul, fire, and artistry.

Reflecting on the project, Walker shares, “This was my first album... years worth of music and songs in my head and I finally got a chance to record. The music is the blues but you can hear the influence of gospel and rock... my upbringing and the influence of the San Francisco



rock scene. I’d always hoped that these songs would get another chance to be heard by a wider audience.”

A native of San Francisco, Joe Louis Walker first shook the blues world with *Cold Is The Night* in 1986, announcing the arrival of a major talent. In the years since, he’s become “a legendary

boundary-pushing icon of modern blues” (NPR) – a four-time Blues Music Award winner, Blues Hall of Fame inductee, and performed on BB King’s Grammy winning Blues Summit, James Cotton’s Grammy winning *Deep in the Blues* and had his own *Everyone Wants a Piece* as a Grammy finalist in 2015. He has



released more than 30 albums over his career.

Widely respected by his peers, Walker has featured an impressive lineup of guest musicians on his albums, including Robert Jr Lockwood, Gatmouth Brown, Otis Rush, Buddy Guy, Taj Mahal, Matt Murphey and Steve Cropper.

Beyond his own projects, Walker has contributed to works by notable artists such as Branford Marsalis and Duke Robillard. He has also shared the stage with legends like Steve Miller, Charlie Musselwhite, Nick Lowe, John Mayall, John Lee Hooker, Buddy Miles, Willie Dixon, Muddy Waters, Jimi Hendrix and Thelonius Monk. ■

For more information and tour dates, go to [JoeLouisWalker.com](http://JoeLouisWalker.com).



# Festival Season is Coming!

By Timmer Blakely

See many great acts all in the Pacific NW

The coming and passing of the Winter Blues Festival signals the imminent approach of the Pacific Northwest's Blues Festival season. While you probably already know that these events are full of fun, friends, and music, you may not also be aware that these events open our region and our audiences



by Rae Gordon

Waterfront Blues Festival

up to many "new to us" national bands, bring commerce benefits into

our communities, and strengthen community relationships.

Blues festivals are a favorite performance environment because you get to see so many great acts in one place, artists get to perform in front of large audiences, and really be a part of the community physically. Get your folding chair, blanket, get your SPF 2000 sunscreen ready and hit some festivals. ■

To find more festivals and shows, go to [CascadeBluesAssociation.org/calendar](http://CascadeBluesAssociation.org/calendar).

## Upcoming festivals

### Waterfront Blues Festival

- July 4-5
- Portland, Oregon
- [WaterfrontBluesFest.com](http://WaterfrontBluesFest.com)

### Winthrop Rhythm and Blues Festival

- July 18-20
- Winthrop, Washington
- [WinthropBluesFestival.com](http://WinthropBluesFestival.com)

### Gorge Blues & Brews

- June 20-6/21
- Stevenson, Washington
- [Facebook.com/GorgeBluesandBrews-Festival](http://Facebook.com/GorgeBluesandBrews-Festival)



by Rae Gordon

Duffy Bishop Enjoying Festival Sun

### Peninsula Blues Festival

- August 15-16
- Long Beach, Washington
- [PeninsulaBluesFest.org](http://PeninsulaBluesFest.org)

### Sunbanks Blues, Americana, Country Festival

- May 16-18
- Electric City, WA
- [SunbanksFestival.com/blues-fest.html](http://SunbanksFestival.com/blues-fest.html)

### Sunbanks Blues Festival

- September 4-7
- Electric City, Washington
- [SunbanksFestival.com/blues-fest.html](http://SunbanksFestival.com/blues-fest.html)

### Wilsonville Festival of Music

- "Blues for Schools"
- August 2-3
- Charbonneau, Oregon
- [Charbonneauarts.org/festival-of-music-2025](http://Charbonneauarts.org/festival-of-music-2025)



# Artichoke Bandstand: Building Community Through Music

## Blues & Roots



### First Mondays

**May 5 & June 2:** Dave Fleschner is hosting Dave's Lowdown Youth Blues Jam w/ Backbeat Music Academy Rhythm Section. This learning-focused jam is for student-age musicians of all levels who are serious about developing musicianship. The Jam is live-streamed and posted on the Artichoke Music YouTube channel allowing students to improve every month. Dave posts the subject



Building community through music, one heart at a time, since 1973.

and helpful videos before the event. This is a free event with an early start at 6:30pm!

### First Fridays with Lloyd Jones

**May 2:** Guest is Lex Browning, who recently moved back to Portland. Lex was Raised in Kentucky, playing banjo/guitar at age 10. He played with Queen Ida,

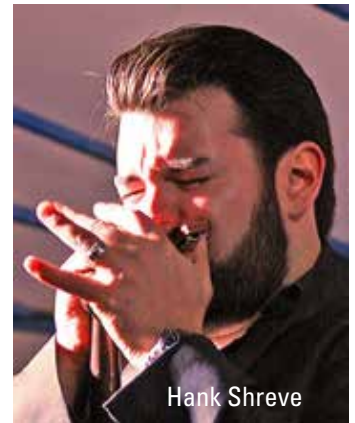


Poco, Trace Adkins, and Austin Lounge Lizards

**May 19:** A rare Monday night show with Jon Koonce, Mark Spangler, Denny Bixby & John Bunzow. Songwriters (and stories) in the Round.

**June 6:** Guest is Mark Dufresne. Mark is one of the most sought after Blues talents in the Northwest. The Washington Blues Society has awarded him for best vocalist, songwriter and harmonica, more than any other artist. In 2002 Mark joined the coveted band "Roomful of Blues" as lead vocalist.

**June 26:** Rich Layton hosts a Songwriters in



the Round, "Writers Without Bands" with Steve Wilkinson & Jodi Stevens. Hear the stories behind the songs!

### Workshops on Saturday Afternoons

- May 31: Mary Flower
- June 14: Hank Shreve

Get tickets at [artichokemusic.org](http://artichokemusic.org). Remember they are all-ages all the time, and do not add any fees when you buy show tickets online.

**Jazz Journey to Bluesville**  
 \* Sunday Nights \*  
 10 pm Pacific

**KISN**  
 95.1 FM  
[goodguyradio.com](http://goodguyradio.com)

## Join us in supporting Blues in Portland



**Become a member today!**

Visit:  
[cascadebluesassociation.org](http://cascadebluesassociation.org)



**BOOGIE CAT PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS  
THE NORMAN SYLVESTER BAND**



**PORTLAND'S BEST LOVED BLUES MAN**



**FIRST PROFESSIONAL GIG 1963  
FIRST RECORD RELEASE 1969  
FORMED CURRENT BAND 1984  
MULTIPLE CBA MUDDY AWARDS  
MEMBER OREGON MUSIC HALL OF FAME  
FULL ALBUM CATALOG AVAILABLE AT MUSIC MILLENNIUM  
3158 E BURNSIDE, PORTLAND OR, ALSO ONLINE  
NO JOB IS TOO BIG OR TOO SMALL  
HAVE BLUES WILL TRAVEL  
(503) 419-7093 [BLUBOOG@MSN.COM](mailto:BLUBOOG@MSN.COM)  
SEE CALENDAR [WWW.NORMANSYLVESTER.COM](http://WWW.NORMANSYLVESTER.COM)**

# Cascade Blues Association **All-Star Members!**

## **5 STAR MEMBER** (\$3000)

Cory Burden (Cedar House Media 503-641-3320)

## **4 STAR MEMBERS** (\$1000)

Terry Currier (Music Millennium, 503-231-8926)

## **3 STAR MEMBERS** (\$500)

Mercedez Cruz Mike Todd (A+ Carpentry, 503-754-2857), Bob & Lorinda Pope

## **2 STAR MEMBERS** (\$250)

Mike Day, Mike Pollock & Linda Alvarez



## **1 STAR MEMBERS** (\$150)

Michael Allen & Anne J. Schagen, Robert Kraft & Sandra Johnson, Bruce Powell, Jane Roberts

## **Become a Member!**

- **Online:** [cascadebluesassociation.org](http://cascadebluesassociation.org)
- **Email:** [membership@cascadeblues.org](mailto:membership@cascadeblues.org)
- **Mail** Cascade Blues Assoc., PO Box 6566, Portland, OR 97228



**Advertise**  
in the

  
**bluesnotes**

and support the blues in Portland!

**Email**

[VP@cascadeblues.org](mailto:VP@cascadeblues.org)



**A+**  
**CARPENTRY**

For Residential Remodeling & Handyman Repairs  
**Call Mike at 503-754-2857**

VINYL and CDs

Where the Music and People Still Matter

**MUSIC**



**MILLENNIUM**

(503) 231-8926

32<sup>nd</sup> & East Burnside

Since 1969