



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR RELEASE ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15TH, 2020, AFTER 3 P.M. CST

A video stream of the lineup reveal will take place at <https://kingbiscuitfestival.com/unveiling/>

The 35th Annual King Biscuit Invites You to Come on Home *By Don Wilcock*

(HELENA, ARKANSAS) -- Come home to the 35th annual King Biscuit Blues Festival. Join us Wednesday, October 7th through Saturday, October 10th. Never has it been more important for the number one blues festival in the south to “take us there.” Headliners Mavis Staples, the Allman Betts Band and Billy Branch & the Sons of Blues promise to do just that.

“I’ll Take You There,” The Staple Singers’ 1972 number one *Billboard Hot 100* hit, has taken on more poignant meaning for all humanity in this year of the pandemic.

*I know a place
Ain’t nobody cryin’
Ain’t nobody worried
Ain’t no smilin’ faces
Mmm, no no
Lyn’ to the races
Help me, come on, come on
Somebody, help me now I’ll take you there*

This song was inducted into the GRAMMY Hall of Fame in 1999 and remains the most successful and recognizable single of the Staples’ half-century-long career. Forty-eight years later, that inspirational song remains the centerpiece of Friday’s headliner Mavis Staples’ repertoire. And she’s just one of more than 100 storied acts performing during four days at the south’s premiere blues festival in the heart of the Delta on the banks of the Mississippi River.

“You can root her in the church. You can root her in the blues. You can root her in jazz It doesn’t matter. She is ageless and genreless because she brings joy,” says Cheryl Pawelski, co-founder of Ominvore Entertainment Group, who has spent 25 years of reserving, curating and championing some of music’s greatest legacies. “Mavis is, as the continuing voice of the Staple Singers, is just pure, sheer joy, and that cuts through every genre. That cuts through every era.”

Mavis recently told *NPR*: “I’m happiest when I’m singing. I’m just grateful that I have so many fans that still want to hear me, you know, and grateful to the record company for making room for me to continue. It’s my gift — it’s what God put me here for, I do believe.”

Talk about taking us there! The half-century legacy of southern rock's premiere band The Allman Brothers with their treasured classics like "Whipping Post" and "Midnight Rider" lives on in Saturday night's headliner the Allman Betts Band, featuring Gregg Allman's son Devon Allman and Dickey Betts' son Duane Betts.

Both artists earned their musical chops at the feet of their legendary fathers. Their Biscuit appearance comes on the heels of a 60-date world tour in 2019 and the release of their debut album *Down to the River*, the culmination of a 31-year history of playing with each other.

Devon Allman told *Forbes* magazine: "On stage every night we have a certain responsibility to tip the hat to our dads. And what I think balances the legacy, but also moving forward as our own men and as our own musicians, is balancing the two. So, if we have a set that's 17 songs, we're going to play a couple Allman Brothers songs. We're not going to fill our set, but we're also not going to turn our back on it. The balance is everything and I think that we've been lucky to strike that balance."

Thursday night headliner Billy Branch is a true Chicago blues legacy. He was one of the first to develop a blues in the schools program and has made over 70 international tours. A three-time GRAMMY® nominee, he's backed by The Sons of The Blues, a band of veterans that includes bass player Nick Charles, drummer Mose Rutues Jr., and pianist Sumito Ariyoshi, aka Ariyo. This year Billy Branch teams up with a Legend with a capital L. Bobby Rush! Bobby Rush! Bobby Rush! The mantra has been ringing out at the Biscuit from the beginning. Known the world over as the King of the Chitlin Circuit, he is one of the Biscuit's most beloved members of our extended family. He keeps re-inventing himself year in and year out. As fundamental as blues itself, he is a walking history lesson in the form. His 2019 CD *Sitting on Top of The Blues* says it all, coming on the heels of his 2017 Grammy-winning *Porcupine Meat* as Best Traditional Blues Album. But we knew him back when, and we embrace him as the visionary he's always been as we head into a new world order.

Another Thursday night act, The Fabulous Thunderbirds is best known for their 1986 hit "Tuff Enuff." A rallying cry for nearly four decades, the song has never meant more than it does right now. It was written by lead singer and harmonica player Kim Wilson whose history with Biscuit goes way back to when he donated money to the Sonny Boy Blues Society to try and save Sonny Boy Williamson's Helena home. Wilson, who founded The T-Birds in 1976 feels the current lineup is the best yet. It features 12-year band veteran and guitarist Johnny Moeller. "The good thing about Johnny is he's got his own take on things," Wilson explained. "He really has his own style. That's very important to me. I need people who really have their own minds. I don't want to hear somebody [imitating] Johnny Guitar Watson or B.B. King. I'd rather hear people do their own deal."

Come home to the festival that's built legacies before your eyes year after year with favorites you've come to love. See Anson Funderburgh, the Texas guitar firebrand whose played every Biscuit since 1986. Thrill to Reba Russell's "Heaven Came to Helena," the Biscuit's signature song. Wrap yourself around Paul Thorn's southern homilies. Escape to Muddy Waters' Chicago blues heyday with Kenny "Beedy Eyes" Smith and Bob Stroger. Rock out to the Kentucky Headhunters.

Experience Arkansas' homegrown blues masters: Lonnie Shields, The C.W. Gatlin Band, the Phillip Stackhouse Band, and Spoon-fed Blues featuring Mississippi Spoonman. Bring Chicago blues club mojo back to the Delta with The Paul Oscher All Star Band, Wayne Baker Brooks, Nora Jean Bruso, Maurice John Vaughn, and Fruteland Jackson. Acquaint yourself with artists who are expanding the blues definition: Detroit blues shouter Thornetta Davis, Texas powerhouse Diunna Greenleaf, Lucious Spiller, Marcus "Mookie" Cartwright, Gaye Adegbalola, and the Laura Morvan Band.

Also performing are: The Sterling Billingsley Band, Blind Mississippi Morris, Rip Lee Pryor, Wampus Cats, Mike Wheeler Band, Rodney Block, Six String Andrew, Sean McDonald, D.R. Diamond & Birthright Blues Project, The Youngbloods of Hot Springs, Andrea Staten, Charles Wilson Band, Dejeana Burks, Margie Turner, Earnestine Barze, Arthur Adams Band, Butch Mudbone, Austin "Walkin'" Cane, Jessie Cotton Stone, Big T Williams, The Pope of Pimping Fillmore Slim, Andy T & Alabama Mike, Ben Wiley Peyton, Sweet Angel, The Blue Monday Blues Band featuring King Edward, Bigg Robb, Sean Bad Apple, Lady Trucker, Garry Burnside, Jamaiah Rogers, and many more.

The Biscuit also features a Bike Ride, 5K Run, Blues Symposium, Harmonica Workshops, Kansas-city sanctioned BBQ & Blues on the Levee, and more. For tickets, visit kingbiscuitfestival.com.

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KING BISCUIT BLUES FESTIVAL LINEUP 2020 (Gospel and Front Porch Stage to be revealed at a later date)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

Sonny Boy Williamson Main Stage

Michael Burks Memorial Jam - 6:00pm until

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

Sonny Boy Williamson Main Stage

SBBS IBC Bands Winner Fonky Donkey - 11:00am to 11:50am

Wampus Cats - 12:00pm to 12:50pm

Mike Wheeler Band - 1:10pm to 2:15pm

Sterling Billingsley Band - 2:35pm to 3:40pm

Rodney Block - 4:00pm to 5:10pm

Kentucky Head Hunters - 5:30pm to 6:40pm

Fabulous Thunderbirds - 7:00pm to 8:10pm

Billy Branch and the Sons of Blues with Bobby Rush - 8:30 until

Front Porch Stage

TBD

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

Bit-O-Blues Stage

Six String Andrew - 9:00am to 9:30pm

Sean McDonald - 9:45am to 10:15pm

Grace Kuch - 10:30am to 11:00am

D.R. Diamond & Birthright Blues Project - 11:15am to 12:00pm

The Youngbloods of Hot Springs - 12:15pm to 1:00pm

Lockwood Stackhouse Stage

Andrea Staten - 1:00pm to 1:45pm

Rip Lee Pryor - 2:00pm to 2:45pm

Gaye Adegbalola - 3:00pm to 3:45pm

Charles Wilson Band - 4:00pm to 4:45pm

Maurice John Vaughn - 5:00pm to 5:45pm

Dejeana Burks, Margie Turner-Screws, Earnestine Barze -
6:00pm to 7:00pm

Arthur Adams Band - 7:20pm to 8:30pm

CeDell Davis Memorial Stage

Butch Mudbone - 2:00pm to 2:45pm

Austin "Walkin'" Cane - 3:00pm to 3:45pm

CW Gatlin Band - 4:00pm to 4:45pm

Jessie Cotton Stone - 5:00pm to 5:45pm

Lucious Spiller - 6:00pm to 6:45pm

Big T Williams - 7:00pm to 7:45pm

Paul Oscher Allstar Band - 8:00pm to 9:00pm

Sonny Boy Williamson Main Stage

Fillmore Slim - 12:00pm to 12:55pm

Laura Morvan Band - 1:10pm to 2:10pm

Lonnie Shields - 2:30pm to 3:40pm

Reba Russell Band - 4:00pm to 5:10pm

Andy T & Alabama Mike - 5:35pm to 6:45pm

Paul Thorn Band - 7:10pm to 8:20pm

Mavis Staples - 8:45pm

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

Lockwood Stackhouse Stage

Ben Wiley Peyton - 1:00pm to 1:45pm

Fruteland Jackson - 2:00pm to 2:45pm

Mickey Rogers Band - 3:00pm to 3:45pm

Diunna Greenleaf - 4:00pm to 4:45pm

Sweet Angel - 5:00pm to 5:45pm

The Blue Monday Blues Band featuring King Edward -
6:00pm to 7:00pm

Bigg Robb - 7:20pm to 8:30pm

CeDell Davis Memorial Stage

Sean Bad Apple - 1:00pm to 1:45pm

Spoonfed Blues featuring Mississippi Spoonman -
2:00pm to 2:45pm

Lady Trucker - 3:00pm to 3:45pm

Garry Burnside Band - 4:00pm to 4:45pm

Phillip Stackhouse Band - 5:00pm to 5:45pm

Jamaiah Rogers - 6:00pm to 6:45pm

Keith Johnson & The Big Muddy Band - 7:00pm to 7:45pm

Blind Mississippi Morris - 8:00pm to 9:00pm

Sonny Boy Williamson Main Stage

Marcus "Mookie" Cartwright - 12:00pm to 12:55pm

Kenny "Beedy Eyes" Smith & Bob Stroger - 1:10pm to 2:15pm

Nora Jean Bruso - 2:35pm to 3:40pm

Wayne Baker Brooks - 4:00pm to 5:10pm

Anson Funderburg - 5:30pm to 6:35pm

Thornetta Davis - 6:55pm to 8:10pm

Allman Betts - 8:40pm until

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