

Tucson Blues Festival

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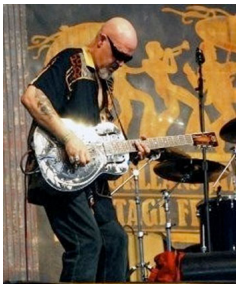
For those who may not be privy to the blues news, the Southern Arizona Blues Heritage Foundation (SABHF), located in Tucson, is gearing up for its annual blues festival. Each year, this local nonprofit and its group of volunteers put together an all-day concert in Reid Park.



At the festival, Tucsonans and Southern Arizona visitors spend hours enjoying the soothing sounds of many great blues bands and solo jazz artists. The goal of SABHF is to showcase a more active blues and heritage scene through live performances and education, while also raising awareness for it in Southern Arizona.

The blues genre has been celebrated in mid-October in the heart of downtown Tucson since 1984. However, an irresolvable quarrel between members of the Tucson Blues Society (TBS) left some members to form the now SABHF. Their goal was to allow the public to enjoy great blues without paying a high cost for it. With that, the SABHF is one of the final few no-admission nonprofits around.

Since their inception, the SABHF has come to oversee the year-long blues festivals \$25,000-\$30,000 event budget, with almost half allocated for performances; the other half is divvied between tent rentals, security, insurance and the initial payout for beer—which receives a full return. Further funds for the day's event come from the 20-plus co-sponsors who donate money to the music festival.



This year, the lineup is over the top with performances by John Mooney and Bluesiana; Boogination; the Dennis Jones Band; Heather "Lil' Mama" Hardy with Ed Delucia; 4 Christ; and Blues Challenge (a contest where Tucsonans and the Southern Arizona area compete for a spot at the International Blues Challenge (IBC) in Memphis, Tennessee) winner solo/duelists Tom Walbank and Arthur Migliazza and winning band, The Sweet Willie D. Blues Band. "The blues scene in Tucson is alive and healthy, and I think that's reflected in this year's festival," says SABHF president Gary Bagnoche. "To be sure, this year's show is packed with talent representing many different shades of the blues."

Taking the event one step further, the SABHF is doing its part in reducing its carbon footprint. By designating October as its annual renewal month, members can conveniently re-sign—reducing paper, postage and manpower. And, for a lucky few that means a month or two of free membership this year. So go ahead, grab your family, friends, blankets and chairs for an entire day of music in the park.

For more information about SABHF, please visit, www.azblues.org.