



Alton Main Street and Riverbender.com Announce Bands for 2014 BIG GIG

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(18 July 2014 - Alton, IL) Alton Main Street and Riverbender.com are hosting the sixth annual BIG GIG Local Music Show in Downtown Alton. The event will take place on Saturday, July 26th from 5:00 p.m. to midnight on two outdoor stages located on 3rd Street. The concert and additional festivities are free and open to the public.

The show's headliner will be Aaron Kamm and the One Drops (Reggae/Blues/Jam) from 10:00-Midnight, and the following St. Louis / Metro East bands have been selected to perform a 45-minute set of their original music at the concert:

River City Sound (Punk Rock) - 9:15-10:00
Jay Love (R&B / Hip Hop) - 8:30-9:15
Blackwater '64 (Modern Rock) - 7:45-8:30
C.C. Wilson & The Owlz (Blues) - 7:00-7:45
Mars Needs Guitars (Classic Rock) - 6:15-7:00
The Big River Band (Jam Band) - 5:30-6:15

"Our selection committee has built a tradition of showcasing a diverse, multi-genre lineup of talented local musicians," said Sara McGibany, Executive Director of Alton Main Street, "We encourage the community to come out and show their support for Alton's thriving music scene, chances are you'll discover your new favorite band." Two original songs by each band can be heard on the "Events" page of www.DowntownAlton.com.

Concert-goers will enjoy many additional features of the event, such as artist booths, food and beverages on the street, and an opportunity to meet members of the "Confluence Crush", a female roller derby squad who will be skating around the festival grounds. To add to the street fest feel, colorful textile décor will adorn the urban landscaping (such as light poles and trash cans) as part of the 2nd Annual Alton Area Yarn Bomb. A yarn bomb is a public art installation that uses knitted or crocheted yarn

to create street art rather than paint. Visual artists will also have the opportunity to create an on-site masterpiece out of chalk with an activity coordinated by Dark Horse Art Works.

Music lovers will vote for their favorite act on-site, and the group that generates the most crowd support will have the opportunity to return on Sat, September 20th and perform at Riverfront Amphitheater during the Mississippi Earthtones Festival.

For more information, please visit www.facebook.com/biggigmusic or contact Sara McGibany at: sara@altonmainstreet.org or 618-463-1016.



Aaron Kamm & the One Drops

Aaron Kamm & the One Drops, chosen as St. Louis's best jam band of 2011 by the Riverfront Times, will headline this year's BIG GIG with their intoxicating concoction of Roots Reggae and Mississippi River Blues. Improv-laced jams, dubbed out grooves and effervescent vocals make this band a must see. After the release of their second studio album "Grow" in 2010, the trio began to forge their way across the country. Their wide range of influences include: Toots and the Maytals, the Allman Brothers, Bob Marley, Burning Spear, Jimmy Cliff, Beck, Pink Floyd, Muddy Waters, James Brown, Phish, The Meters, Sublime, Eric Clapton, Ray Charles, Led Zeppelin, Peter Tosh and the Grateful Dead.

River City Sound

Relying on punk rock, metal, and classic rock influences, the music of River City Sound



includes

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powerful and catchy hooks, a classically progressive punk rock approach to songwriting, and an irresistible placement of gang vocals. The trio composed of Corey Johnson on Vocals/Guitar, Derek Spencer on Bass/vocals, and Sean Costin on Drums sound bigger and better than ever.

The band released their first 6-song EP, "Young Forever" in June of 2012, a series of live in-studio recordings with accompanying videos, entitled "Redwood Studio Sessions /Dance My Dark" in November 2012, and "Mississippi Knights" in April of 2013. The band hit the road for a cross-country tour before working on their newest material "Stand Your Ground", a more serious album that was released to an excited audience in June of 2014. Currently the band is working on a music video for the first single "Gallows" and continues to play in and around the St. Louis and Chicago areas.

River City Sound's major accomplishments to date include winning a Battle of the Bands hosted by a major radio station in Saint Louis, MO, and performing at 105.7 The Point's Point Fest.



Jay Love

Up-and-coming singer/songwriter, Bryant “Jay Love” Lovett, is bringing new exposure to Alton’s talented pool of singers and musicians. His combination of Hip Hop, R&B and Pop genres is a first for the Big Gig stage, and is a nice addition to our area’s eclectic entertainment environment.

Jay Love taught himself to sing at a young age and was involved in his church choir and other groups since the early 2000’s. In 2013, Love released his first solo debut mixtape “Heartbreak Hotel,” and the release of his first EP “Finally” the following year pushed him to the top - peaking at over 5,000 downloads on popular mixtape site DatPiff.com.

The release of “Finally” has gained the attention of some of the industry’s top songwriters and producers. A single from the album entitled “Fresh Air” gained the attention of Hot 104.1FM in St. Louis. You can watch a music video for the single “Ready or Not” off the Finally album on YouTube. His newly released single, “Homies” racked up nearly 1,000 plays in its first 24 hours, peaking atop the Soundcloud “Most Played” charts. It sounds like Jay Love is industry ready!



Blackwater '64

Blackwater '64 is a St. Louis Rock 'n' Roll band that is on a mission to keep American blue collar guitar rock alive. The sounds of modern rock radio get filtered through the polite yearnings of modest young men on Blackwater '64's debut EP "Whiskey and Wine", released in April of 2013. Absent is the overblown bravado or dude-rock

posturing that clouds so much guitar-driven rock music -- singer and guitarist Ben Martsolf's full-throated delivery evinces a palpable ache, and the range and raspy grit in his voice warrant attention. The sounds of Aaron Peipert on Bass Guitar and Matt Effinger on Drums employ moody dynamics without sacrificing the beat, and lead guitarist Aaron Bickel favors clean melodic lead lines.



C.C. Wilson & The Owlz

Charlie “C.C.” Wilson is a singer/songwriter who specializes in blues and country songs. A life-long musician, he grew up in a musical family singing acapella versions of old American standards. Charlie has played in many popular area groups including Serra Leigh, Bullzye, and the Jay Barry Group based out of St. Louis. More recently, Charlie played bass with Phins, a Jimmy Buffett tribute band, which disbanded in 2012. Wilson has now teamed up with popular local band The Owlz, to perform original songs from his CD entitled, *Blues as a Second Language*. While it is a Blues album, not all of the songs are typical. There are some surprises, including incorporating horns, for which The Owlz are perfect accompaniment.

Mars Needs Guitars



Mars Needs Guitars is a rock band that formed in the summer of 2012, made up of four local musicians that have been playing in the area for quite some time. MNG Band's song list includes an eclectic mixture of originals written by Lyndon Sickmeier, as well

as a wide array of covers that display their influences of psychedelic and progressive rock of the 60s and 70s, electric blues, hard rock, and a touch of jazz.

Lyndon is a well-known guitarist in the area, having played in many local bands for over 40 years. He has opened for and/or played with multiple national acts including Chuck Berry, George Thorogood, and Robin Trower. The current lineup includes his son, Nathan Sickmeier, a multi-instrumentalist who is proficient in keyboards, electric violin, guitar, trumpet, and vocals. Nathan stays busy playing with many local cover bands including Come Closer, County Line, and The Wherehouse Project. The remaining members of the rhythm section (Larry Vandiver on drums, percussion, and vocals and John Scanlon on bass guitar and backing vocals) grew up playing music with Lyndon and have reunited to bring you top notch rock. The group also looks forward to performing at the Alton Amphitheater on Sat, September 13th, where they will be opening for Elvin Bishop, Wishbone Ash, Savoy Brown, and Point Blank at RIVER JAM 2014.

The Big River Band

The Big River Band was formed in 2012 when three Alton High students decided to



pursue a life

of music. Brennan Haug is a guitar player and singer/songwriter who has auditioned and enrolled in the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University to pursue a degree in Recording Arts. Chris Jarden is a keyboardist, trumpet player, and singer/songwriter enrolled in the music school at SIUE in pursuit of a degree in music education. The group is rounded out by Jared Bensman, a drummer, guitar, and fiddle player who got his start at a young age playing for local country band The Glendale Riders. The three

have been writing and recording music for the past few years and enjoy performing live for their fans. Their influences vary from Chicago to Dave Matthews to Eric Clapton.

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Alton Main Street – A community-based, not-for-profit, volunteer organization dedicated to

securing the economic vitality and aesthetic quality of the district.