

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

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

# bluesnotes



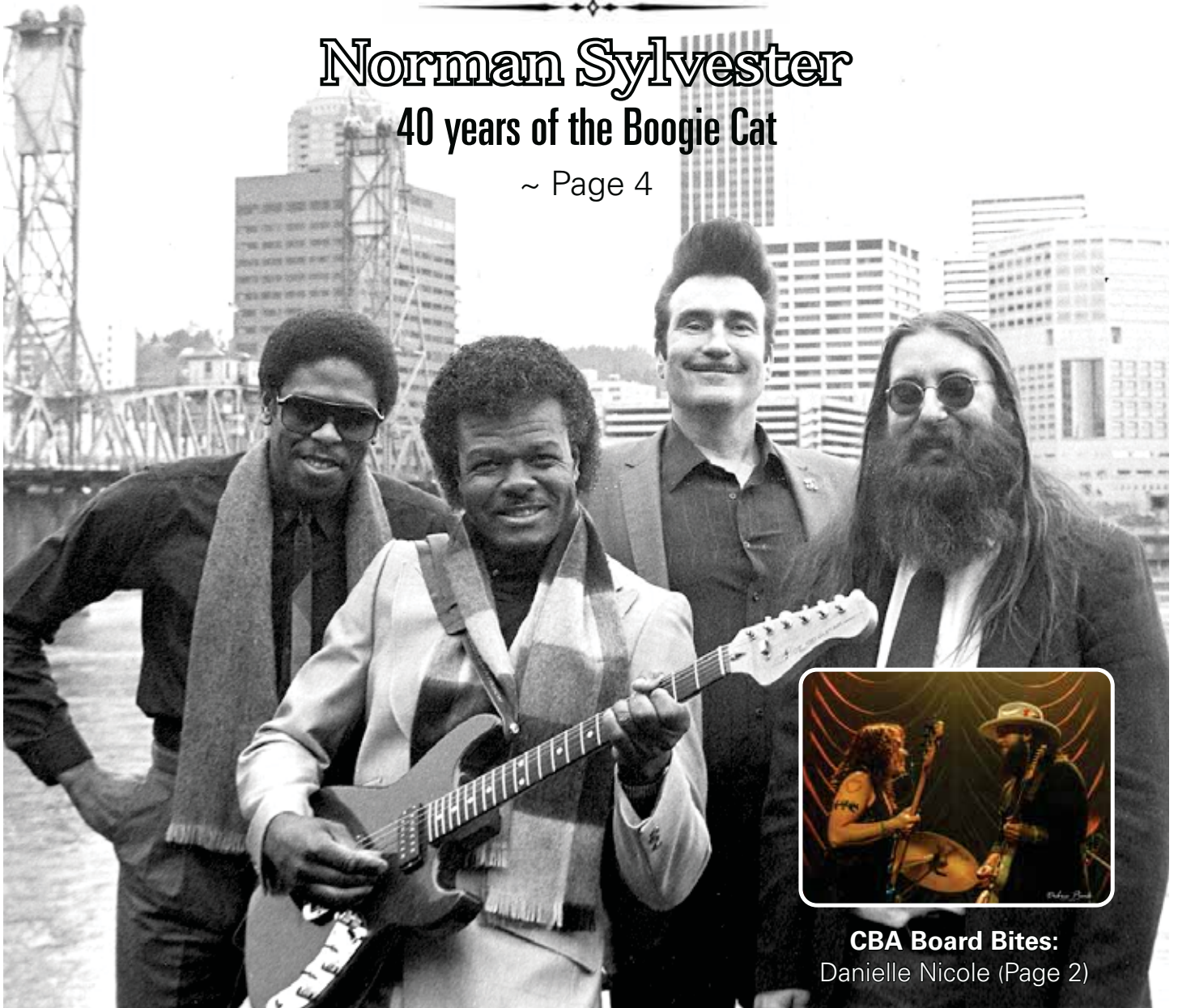
Sept/Oct 2024  
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## Musician Spotlight

### Norman Sylvester

40 years of the Boogie Cat

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**CBA Board Bites:**  
Danielle Nicole (Page 2)

# Multi-Award Winner Brings Energy & Soul to Portland

CBA Board Bites  
By Mike Day,  
CBA Treasurer

We went to the Danielle Nicole show on Tuesday, 8/6/24, at McMenamins Mission Theater. It has been several years since Danielle (from Kansas City, MO) had visited the PNW. I last saw her in San Jose in January 2020, so I was very excited when she announced some PNW shows.

Danielle is a multiple Blues Music Award (BMA) winner for Blues Instrumentalist – Bass in 2014, 2019, 2021, and 2022, plus Contemporary Blues Female Artist in 2019 plus additional BMA nominations in 2012, 2019, and 2022. She was previously in Trampled Under Foot with her two brothers, Nick and Kris Schnebelen. The group won the International Blues Challenge in 2008 plus a BMA for Contemporary Blues Album, titled Badlands, in 2014.



Tuesday's show opened with a half hour solo acoustic set by Brandon Miller, tastefully performing many songs from his latest album. Brandon, who is Danielle's husband, is also the guitarist in Danielle's band.

After a short intermission, the full band came on stage, with Danielle and Brandon being joined by Kelsey Cook on drums (<https://www.kelseycookdrums.com/>). The show opened with the title track from Danielle's Grammy-nominated album, Cry No More. I wasn't thinking about writing a review when I went, so I can't

say much about the specifics of the show. However, one of the things I like about Danielle is that she throws every ounce of energy and soul she has into every performance and this night was no different. Suffice to say, we had a great time!

The final song, "Save Me", opened with Brandon performing an extended guitar solo, at times mellow and other times flat out shredding. It was an incredible performance to build the energy leading into their final song.

After the show, I chatted briefly with Kelsey, the drummer, telling her I appreciated how much fun

she was having. I could tell she hadn't been playing long with the band and she mentioned it was her first gig with them. I was impressed and said I had been thinking it was her second or third gig. I got a big thumbs up from her for the compliment.

There was a good turnout of Cascade Blues Association members that night, with several of us in the front couple of rows, plus others scattered around. Danielle noticed one other person in the audience and apologized for calling him out. However, she noted it was "Curtis F---ing Salgado!" and had to acknowledge him. She later posted a pic of her and Brandon with Curtis, referring to him as the GOAT. ■

Don't miss seeing Danielle if you ever get a chance!

- [DanielleNicoleMusic.com](http://DanielleNicoleMusic.com)
- [BrandonMillerKC.com](http://BrandonMillerKC.com)

Board Bites is a new feature highlighting CBA board members' live music experiences.

## 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!

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bluesnotes

## Support our local Blues

### Weekly Blues Jams

There are blues jams throughout the Portland Metro area and beyond. Whether you are a musician participating or an audience member watching, you will surely have a good time! Please support these venues who open their spaces on a regular basis by enjoying a meal while there and inviting your friends.

#### Monday

- White Eagle, Portland, Sugar Roots Pro Jam w/Chad Rupp

#### Tuesday

- (1st Tue), Tango Berretin, Portland, Queer & POC jam w/Melanie Owen & Adrian Leyva duo at PB&J Tuesday Blues Dance

#### Wednesday

- Dublin Pub, Beaverton w/Toby Worthington
- (2nd Wed) 64 Tap-house, Hood River w/Rod Steward

#### Thursday

- Celebrities Parkway Grill, Fairview w/Eric Rabe, Eric Savage
- The Lair, Milwaukie, 145 Blues Jam Party

w/Chad Rupp

- Tigardville Station, Tigard w/Dan Hess

#### Sundays

- Blue Diamond, Portland w/Kevin Selfe
- Montavilla Station, Portland w/Scott Steele or Kirk Bryant
- 99 Saloon & Grill, Vancouver, Jamily w/Jerry Jacques, Ron Hampton & Edward James
- Trails End Saloon, Oregon City w/HiTS (Henniger, Thomas, Solberg)
- (Last Sun) Mekong Bistro, Portland w/Kathryn Grimm
- Calapooia Brewing, Albany w/William Hyland

While we try to list as many open blues jams as possible, this list may not include all the opportunities to play and watch in the area. If you know of a jam happening in your area not listed or if a jam listed is no longer happening, please be kind to let us know.



Email [bluesnotes@cascadeblues.org](mailto:bluesnotes@cascadeblues.org)

## J2M, it's a good time!

### Blues by You!

It's been a steady diet of live music this summer for blues loving folks including myself and we haven't even had dessert yet!

I enjoyed stepping up to the plate as the emcee at the Journey to Memphis competition at the Waterfront Blues Festival on July 4th. This is the local competition that sends a band and a solo/duo act to Memphis for the renowned International Blues Challenge. It takes place January 7th to 11th, 2025 in and around the famed Beale Street area. It's truly an honor for these musicians to represent our northwest area and the upcoming talented acts going next year are Dave Fleschner and the Beacon Street Titans.

My own band made it to 3rd in the finals and it's a joy to support and rally for every new group that goes. Please check the [cascadeblues.org](http://cascadeblues.org) for the upcoming Journey to Memphis Fundraisers. There will be one near you.

It's not just a fundraiser, it's a good time. The



International Blues Challenge experience isn't just for the over 21 crowd! As a blues society recognized by the Blues Foundation, we are able to also send a youth act to Memphis to experience the IBC. While they won't be competing, they will be experiencing performing in front of an international audience, networking, making friends and learning from other musicians their age and older. Submissions for youth acts are being accepted all this month.

Preserving, promoting AND playing the blues is an all ages experience!!

*Your Partner in the Blues,*

*Rae Gordon*  
(CBA President)

# Musician Spotlight: Norman Sylvester

By Rae Gordon

## 40 Years of Portland's Boogie Cat

Norman Sylvester “The Boogie Cat” is a music icon. The Oregon Music Hall of Fame musician is as iconic to Portland as its bridges and skyline. He was born in Bonita, Louisiana and his family moved to Portland in 1957 when he was just 12. Prior to being the “Boogie Cat” we all know and love, he was a teamster for 25 years. It was there that he started writing poems on the graveyard shift. The poems “In the Key of Blues” became the songs for his first CD “On the Right Track”.

His ability to keep audiences dancing and the band steadily grooving for almost 40 years is a testament to his charm and professionalism. Every performance is a celebration, an inclusive party where everyone is a friend and all are welcome. Whether the size of the crowd is a small private gathering or a festival of thousands, he has always had a knack for making everybody feel special.

The Boogie Cat’s talent for crowd pleasing has its roots in the energy that flows from current and past band members and his love of the audience. Norman considers his bandmates as



family and those ties have kept him strong for years. “Their energy has always pushed me forward,” he says. His music family includes long-time bandmates Rob Shoemaker for



40 years, Jeff Otto for 25 years and Pete Moss, along with his dynamic daughter Lenanne Sylvester-Miller, who he calls a blessing. She has been singing with Norman since she was only

20. Jimi Hardin has also joined the family on drums.

Of those who have passed on, he adds “I am still floating on that energy today.” He has experienced great joy in sharing the stage with such players as the incredibly talented Janice Scroggins, along with Nick Christmas II, Rhonda Hill, Frankie Redding and others that continue to be a part of his performance in spirit with every word he sings.

If you have experienced a Norman Sylvester Band show, you know all too well that the band is all in and they are all in for you and for every person in the audience. “We are the messengers delivering music to heal their souls.” Most importantly, “keep the dancers looking at you.”

“Blues is about call and response like in the field hollers, but it’s also in the churches, on the football fields.” he explains. “If you are called out to do

## Upcoming Events: Norman Sylvester Band

**Residency every Third Thursday** w/Rob Shoemaker & Jeff Otto, iLani Casino at Line and Lure, Ridgefield, Washington

**September 7th,** Restaurant Five-O-Three, West Linn

**September 21st,** Boogie Cat Birthday, The Spare Room, Portland

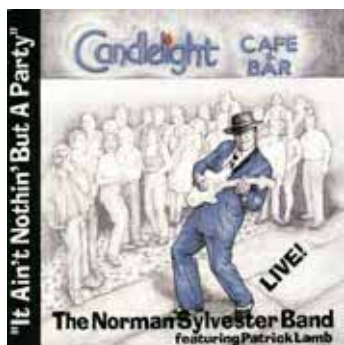
**November 3rd,** Tony DeMicoli Fundraiser, Barrel Room, Portland (old Key Largo location)

**December 21st,** Elves of Frostland with Three Leg Torso, Alberta Rose Theatre, Portland

**December 22nd,** Stumptown Soul Holiday Spectacular, Alberta Rose Theatre

**December 31st,** New Year’s Eve Party, Skamania Lodge, Stevenson, WA

- Please watch out for the 40 year celebration.
- For a complete list of shows, please visit [NormanSylvester.com](http://NormanSylvester.com)



something, you respond,” he continues. “That whole reciprocal conversation is a part of our lives.” One place that was a good example of that feeling and sense of togetherness was at the renowned Candlelight Bar, a much loved blues and jazz hotspot for years before it was razed for development. His much heralded CD “It’s Nothing But a Party” recorded at the Candlelight in 1994 is still selling and is a good example of the party atmosphere he creates. His band has played many weddings of people who frequented the club and their children and grandchildren have heard the stories. “It’s a very special CD,” the bluesman says. “It includes some special people who performed with me at the Candlelight, who have passed on.”

Before Norman was the Boogie Cat, he grew up in Louisiana and made his way to Oregon at the age of 12, he became a teamster and shop steward and started working long nights bringing and growing the party for live music lovers. His band

also went on to share the stage with BB King, Buddy Guy, James Cotton, Junior Wells, Otis Clay, Tower of Power, the Five Blind Boys of Alabama, Peter Frampton and many more national touring stars. He has been an inspiration for the music community. He has used his platform to advocate for healthcare for all and to provide education in the community. He has mentored many young talents, teaching blues in the schools. The band has also offered their time and talent performing for many benefits, charities and individuals in need many times over.

When asked what he plans for the future, Norman says he wants to record more. Even though his band recently recorded “Live at the Burnt Barn” at Don Campbell’s studio in Mosier, Oregon, he would like to do more. He has original songs that Janice Scroggins played on and knows they would be a blessing to make available. Norman also has a special party planned on September 21st for his birthday (September 16th) that he shares with none other than BB King.

Norman loves Portland, the community, the audience. “We have a special, special city for music here,” he says. “I’m happy to be a part of it.” ■

**We are too!**

## Blues Near Me

From once-a-month to every week

### Beaverton

- Dublin Pub

### Damascus

- Ruzzo’s Retreat

### Fairview

- Celebrities Parkway Bar & Grill

### Forest Grove

- McMenamins Grand Lodge

### Milwaukie

- Arrivederci Wine & Jazz
- The Lair Bar & Grill

### Oregon City

- Falls View Tavern
- Nebbiolo Wine Bar
- Rivershore Bar & Grill at the Best Western Rivershore Hotel
- Trails End Saloon

### Portland

- Artichoke Music
- Blue Diamond Bar & Grill
- The Cider Mill
- Clydes Prime Rib
- Corkscrew Wine Bar
- Jack London Revue
- McMenamins White Eagle Saloon
- Mekong Bistro
- Montavilla Station
- Muddy Rudder & Public House
- The 1905
- Rose City Coffee Company
- The Showdown
- The Spare Room



Norman Sylvester

- Spirits Pub

### Ridgefield

- ilani Casino

### Tigard

- Beach Hut Deli
- Hops on Tap
- Tigardville

### Salem

- Half Penny

### Silverton

- Mac’s Place

### Vancouver

- 99 Saloon & Grill
- Billy Blues Bar & Grill
- Georgies Garage & Grill

### West Linn

- Five-0-Three

### Zigzag

- The Skyway Bar & Grill

### Other Areas

- Calapooia Brewery, Albany
- 64 Tap House, Hood River
- Mac’s at the Vet, Eugene

The above list is subject to change and may not be a complete list of bars, restaurants or venues that include blues in their music programs. If you know of a location that highlights blues and is not listed, please reach out to [bluesnotes@cascadeblues.org](mailto:bluesnotes@cascadeblues.org).

# Third Annual Harmonica Northwest Workshop

October 24-27

Menucha Retreat and Conference Center, Corbett, Oregon



Join them for a long weekend of all things harmonica—world-class instructors, classes, jam sessions, fellowship, and a concert, too—in a gorgeous retreat in the stunning Columbia Gorge. World-class instructors include Kim Field, Joe Filisko, Eric Noden, Hank Shreve, and Ross Garren, who will help you take your harmonica playing to

the next level, or get you off on the right foot if you're a beginner. You'll return home even more in love with the world's most popular instrument.

For more information, go to: [Menucha.org/programs/harmonica-northwest](http://Menucha.org/programs/harmonica-northwest)

Do you have a music workshop or education opportunity coming up? Let us know! Send information to [bluesnotes@cascade-blues.org](mailto:bluesnotes@cascade-blues.org).



Make a difference in the blues community & have fun doing it!

## JOIN A COMMITTEE

### Journey to Memphis

Help fundraise for the acts going to Memphis for the International Blues Challenge.

### Blues in the Schools

Be at the forefront of bringing blues in the schools and work with musicians who perform and teach.

### Musicians Relief

Offer support and partner-building help to provide relief to musicians who are in financial need.

### Member Picnic

Be a part of this annual fun summer event! Participate organizing bands, food and activities.

### Holiday Party

Bring cheer to fellow CBA members by joining this festive committee.

### Muddy Awards

Honor the talented blues musicians, venues and events by helping to put on the awards show.

### Food & Instrument Drives

Feed our community and give instruments to youth.

If you are not a member, go to [CascadeBluesAssociation.org](http://CascadeBluesAssociation.org) to join and help.

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## Artichoke Bandstand

### Featured blues & more

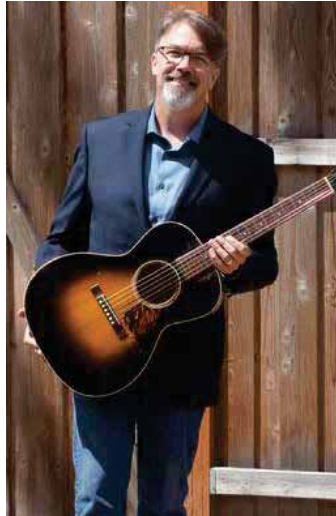
Some tasty blues and roots shows coming to The Artichoke, “Portland’s Premier Listening Room” located at 2007 SE Powell Blvd, Portland.

### Lloyd Jones “First Fridays” are back!

- 9/6, Friday, Adam Scramstad
- 10/4 Julie Yanko

### Shows not to miss

- 9/7, Saturday, Louisa Awbrey, indie and fingerpicking blues
- 9/18, Wednesday “Get Out The Vote” fundraiser for the League of Women Voters
- 9/20, Friday, Al Perez Duo
- 10/3, Thursday, Johnny Burgin, a rare solo show. Johnny was just nominated for two Blues Blast Awards, and Rae Gordon is a guest on his new record!
- 10/11, Friday, Record Release Celebration for Terry Robb and David Vest!



Adam Scramstad

- And of interest to music lovers of all genres, Oregon Music News Celebrates 10 years with a special free show at The Artichoke.

### Other recurring shows include

- 1st Wednesdays “Teen Open Mic”.
- 2nd Wednesday, “Hip Hop Showcase”
- 4th Wednesday, “Queer Open Mic”
- 7pm start for all.

Check the website [artichokemusic.org](http://artichokemusic.org) for details and tickets.

Remember they are all-ages all the time, and do not add any fees when you buy show tickets online.

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**The Blues Bash I**

**FREE:** All Ages OK - Public Welcome  
**When:** 2nd Tuesday, 7:00 - 9:30pm  
**Where:** Aurora Borealis, (16708 Aurora Ave. N. Shoreline)



**The Blues Bash II**

**No Cover:** 21+  
**When:** 4th Tues, 7:00 - 9:30pm  
**Where:** CCR Sport & Entertainment, (215 Cypress Ave. Snohomish)

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