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BLUES, R&B AND GOSPEL LEGENDS FILL THE BILL AT THE 4TH ANNUAL RENO-TAHOE BLUES FEST *Rancho San Rafael Park, Aug. 16 – 17, 2008*

RENO, Nev. (Summer 2008)—Ten artists sing the blues at the 2008 Reno-Tahoe Blues Fest, Aug. 16 – 17, 2008. Filling two days with sounds of the blues as well as R&B, soul and gospel, the 4th annual festival at Rancho San Rafael Park in Reno, Nev., starts at noon each day and continues with five back-to-back performances.

Concluding each night, the Reno-Tahoe Blues Fest features three headliners with The Whispers and Jonny Lang rocking the venue Aug. 16 and Gladys Knight closing the festival Aug. 17. Hosted by nationally-recognized comedian M.C. Larry La La, additional artists and the performance schedule follows.

Saturday, Aug. 16

- 1 p.m.** **E.C. Scott:** As a fixture on the Bay Area blues scene in San Francisco and Oakland, Scott honed her chops singing her blend of classic soul and gospel mixed with a dose of 90s funkiness. She began singing in clubs at just 16, released her debut "Come Get Your Love" in 1995 after building a strong following and touring for several years on the festival circuit. Since then she's continued on to release three more albums including 2003's "The Other Side of Me."
- 2:45 p.m.** **Mel Waiters:** Schooled in music through his regular attendance to San Antonio churches, Waiters began performing in the mid-70s singing in area teen clubs. After completing a tour performing for military in the South, Waiters focused his smooth Southern voice on his recording career. Waiters captured a loyal following of female fans that clamor for his sensuous, soulful songs and blues lyrics that in a unique twist are about anything but the blues. Waiters debuted with 1997's "Suki-Suki Man" followed by four additional albums including 2000's "I Want the Best."
- 4:30 p.m.** **Mavis Staples:** Soul and gospel legend Mavis Staples possesses one of the most recognizable and treasured voices in contemporary music. From her early days sharing lead vocals with her groundbreaking family group, The Staples Singers, to her powerful solo recordings, Mavis Staples is an inspirational force in modern popular culture and music. Staples has spent more than 40 years on the music scene earning induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and blazing a rhythm and blues trail while never relinquishing her gospel roots. Expressing a deep-seated sensuality with her voice, Staples released her eponymous debut album in 1969 and has wooed audiences ever since, most recently with 2004's "Have a Little Faith" and 2007's "We'll Never Turn Back."

Sunday, Aug. 17

- 1 p.m. Ernie Johnson:** Continuing along the soul-blues path forged by greats like Bobby "Blue" Bland and Z.Z. Hill, Ernie Johnson is among the best of the remaining soul blues artists. A Louisiana native, Johnson relocated to Texas where he took an opportunity to open for Lavelle White and stole the show. Shortly thereafter, Johnson formed his band The Soul Blenders and recorded his first single, "Lovin' You," in 1968. Johnson has five albums under his belt including 2001's release "Squeeze It."
- 2:45 p.m. Latimore:** Blending soul and blues with his signature rich vocals, Latimore has been churning out blues hits since the early 60s. Latimore, who dropped Benny from his name in the early 70s, doubled as a house pianist for his record label before stardom found him in 1973 with his cover of T-Bone Walker's "Stormy Monday." Since then he's released 16 albums including 2007's "Back Atcha," a collection of soulful rhythm and blues grooves highlighted by the laid-back soul-blues single "My Give A Damn Gave Out."
- 4:30 p.m. Bobby Rush:** The creator of "folk-funk," Bobby Rush began his career fronting bands on Chicago's West Side blues circuit before striking out on his own with a fusion of blues, soul and funk. Rush's bawdy lyrics and revue-style shows became well-known along the "chitlin' circuit" throughout the 70s and 80s, with some music so funky he refused to re-create it during live shows. However, he returned to his blues roots in the 90s with albums like "Lovin' A Big Fat Woman" and "Hoochie Man." His most recent release, "Raw," has been heralded by critics for its sparse and intimate glimpse at Rush's pure blues talent.
- 6:15 p.m. Betty Wright:** Wright released her debut album, 1968's "My First Time Around," at just 15. Schooled in the gospel sounds of her family's singing group, Wright broke into rhythm and blues for her solo work which took off in the early 70s with the hit "Clean Up Woman." She earned a Grammy Award in 1975 for the song "Where is the Love?" and has continued to release albums since. Younger generations are familiar with Wright's music from remixes and sampling by major recording artists including Beyoncé and Mary J. Blige and duets with artists including Gloria Estefan, Alice Cooper and Stevie Wonder. Still recording music, Wright also mentors many young musicians including rising blues star Joss Stone.

Tickets for the Reno-Tahoe Blues Fest are on sale now, with one-day tickets starting at just \$58 and two-day value tickets from \$106. VIP passes, valid for both days of the Festival, are just \$210 and offer premium seating for the entire event. Tickets are available through Ticketmaster online at www.Ticketmaster.com or by phone at 775-787-8497. For more information, visit the Reno-Tahoe Blues Fest online at www.RenoTahoeBluesFest.com or call 775-857-3378.

The Reno-Tahoe Blues Fest, founded in 2005, was created to bring world-class blues to the Reno-Tahoe region and to celebrate the history, culture and spirit of the blues. Staged annually at Reno's Rancho San Rafael Park, the two-day festival attracts audiences from around the country to hear some of the biggest names in blues including Etta James, Clarence Carter, Buddy Guy, Bobby Rush, Keb Mo, Bobby Blue Band and others. Established as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, the Reno-Tahoe Blues Fest supports music education for youth in the Reno-Tahoe area through a scholarship program and ongoing assistance for school music equipment purchases and jazz band programs. Funds for the festival are raised through corporate sponsorships and ticket sales.