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Get ready to Rock The Blues at Xtream Rock Island Grand Prix

ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS — Once again, the Xtream Rock Island Grand Prix Presented by The Hemp Doctor, the world's largest and most prestigious karting street race, will provide exciting racing action Saturday and Sunday, August 31-September 1.

But don't leave early. This year an exciting element of the race weekend returns with the **Rock The Blues** party on the Mississippi Riverfront in downtown Rock Island, sponsored by Southern High Seltzer with music from the Mississippi Valley Blues Society. Admission is free. Bring a blanket, lawn chair or just plan to dance the night away.

Come for the Historic Downtown Street Race, Stay for the Unforgettable Party!

The fun starts with the high energy Sean McKee Band from Chicago on stage at the Schwiebert Riverfront Park from 4 to 6:30 p.m. They are followed by headlining Kilborn Alley Blues Band from 7-10 p.m. The Rock Island Parks & Recreation Dept. will have the grill flaming with burgers, brats, pork and hot dogs for sale. Bent River Brewing Company will have the beer wagon cold and The Hemp Doctor will have its popular Southern High Seltzer and other products on sale.

The Rock Island Parks & Recreation Department hosts great concerts all summer long. Those coming to town for race weekend should plan to include Thursday night when the rockers Fair Warning will be on the Schwiebert Park stage as part of the Thursday Night Groove concert series.

Concessions open at 6 p.m. with the Fair Warning on stage 7 to 9 pm. presented by Rock Island Happy Joes's Pizza. Fair Warning is a Quad-Cities' band that brings an authentic rock 'n' roll experience. They draw inspiration from Van Halen, Led Zeppelin, Guns 'n' Roses, and other legendary acts.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NheME07VV24>

Saturday night, Southern High Seltzer is the night's sponsor. Are you tired of the unpleasant feeling hangovers give you? Do you want to enjoy a refreshing drink with your friends without any negative side effects? Then you should try Southern High, The Hemp Doctor's Delta 9 THC and CBG Seltzer. It comes in four delicious flavors – Berry Blast, Blood Orange, Mango Peach, and Strawberry Lemonade. Every 12 oz. can of Southern High contains a perfectly balanced blend of 5mg Delta 9 THC and 10 mg CBG, providing a gentle yet powerful, balanced, refreshing, and guilt-free experience. It is vegan-friendly, gluten-free, has zero sugar, and is alcohol-free. You'll be impressed by The Hemp Doctor's knowledge of the health aspects of THC and CBD, their community service commitment, and their line of quality hemp/CBD products – all available online.

Don't miss the **Rock The Blues** music. There is no better place to spend a beautiful summer evening.

While the concert is free, the Grand Prix is happy to be partnering with the Mississippi Valley Blues Society for this event. Its popular Mississippi Valley Blues Fest was hampered by weather the past two years, causing them to cancel this year's show. Organizers are encouraging concert-goers to make a donation to the Blues Society for this great event, and help them fund the 40th annual Blues Fest in 2025.

The Blues Society has been honored as the Best Blues Society in the country three times. Its goal is to ensure the future of a uniquely American art form by fostering greater public appreciation through performance, education and preservation of Blues Heritage.

The Sean McKee band, Saturday night's opening act, is a powerhouse in blues rock music. Begun in 2000, their electrifying fusion of blues, rock, jazz, funk and jam influences creates a dynamic sound that defines their identity. Led by the soulful vocals and masterful guitar work of Sean McKee, with Drew D'Astice on guitar, Chris Pecoraro on bass and Danny Lorenzo on drums, the band delivers unforgettable performances, captivating audiences with a mix of grit, energy and improvisational prowess.

The Sean McKee Band is a high energy rock band, mixing the styles of the Allman Brothers, BB King, Led Zeppelin, and more into a medley that spans the sounds of low-down blues to blistering rock. They will be playing everything from classic and deep-cut covers to original material.



Concert night at Rock Island's Schwiebert Riverfront Park.



The Sean McKee Band, left, and Kilborn Alley Blues Band.

“With a goal of being the best melting pot of the sounds that inspire them, they perform a majority of original music on stage and only play covers that they connect with, leaving no room for inauthenticity. It’s hard to believe a group of musicians younger than the age of 30 could emit the sounds of a lifetime of heartache, but doing so makes them an act you won’t want to miss,” says the Windy City Blues Society.

In addition, the Sean McKee Band won the Chicago Division of the 2024 International Blues Challenge and will be representing the city in Memphis in January. The Sean McKee Band has never played a public show in the Quad-Cities.

Here are a few quick glimpses of their work. The first, **Old Stingray**, shows better than anything their love of racing and fast cars that will connect them to Grand Prix race fans.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-34VkmVSvw>

“So Long My Queen” another Sean McKee original.

[Sean McKee Band - "So Long My Queen" Official Music Video \(youtube.com\)](#)

“Whipping Post” is an old Allmen Brothers favorite they brought to life at the Paramount Blues Festival last year.

[Sean McKee Band - Whipping Post live at the Paramount Blues Festival 4/23/2023 \(youtube.com\)](#)

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Rounding out what is sure to be an entertaining evening is the Kilborn Alley Blues Band. Formed in 2000, Kilborn Alley has more than earned their headliner status with tours of both the United States and Europe.

It all started back in high school when Andrew Duncanson discovered and embraced the blues and they’ve been off and running since. The band features Duncanson on vocals and guitar, Kenny Odom on sax, Jim Pryor on keyboards, Chris Breen on bass and Aaron A-Train Wilson on drums and vocals.

“Vintage Guitar” has called them “authentic, soulful expertly skilled. This band is madly exciting.”

Craig Ruskey of Blindman Blues Forum said, “Just when you think you’ve heard close to everything blues has to offer, something rears its head and slaps you senseless making you realize you’ll never get your ears around it all.”

The band has released 7 albums, starting with the self-titled “Kilborn Alley Blues Band” album in 2003 up to “Takin Time” in 2022. They have been nominated or won awards 10 times from the Blues Blast. Here is a variety of what you can expect at the **Rock The Blues** party

Going back to Illinois, off their 2022 album “Takin Time”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uviziwL3LQ4>

Champaign Street Fest 2019

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6iZGPHmKsM>

Train To Memphis

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9wcW8soFDE>

"Real Blues" in Canada said, "Charisma, talent, joy and music that grabs you by the ears and doesn't let go. I can count on two hands the bands that have what Kilborn Alley Blues Band has and I'm talking about 40 years of listening to the blues. Yes, THIS BAND is that special."

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Early in the 20th Century when blues and jazz started finding new homes up river in places like St. Louis and Chicago, they also found a willing home in the Quad-Cities. Over the years the blues genre has grown and diversified with ragtime, rhythm and blues, delta blues, boogie-woogie, Chicago, Memphis, New Orleans, even Texas blues and southern rock.

Your experience in Rock Island and the Quad-Cities isn't complete without enjoying the music many of our residents enjoy in its many diverse forms. It brings towns, races and ages together to just relax and enjoy. Those at the Xtream Rock Island Grand Prix presented by The Hemp Doctor, the Rock Island Parks & Recreation Dept., and the Mississippi Valley Blues Society hope you come, bring your friends and enjoy the party. **Rock The Blues** is not just a high energy party name but the way we embrace life.

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Rock Island is located in an area known as the Quad-Cities, equally divided between Illinois and Iowa, with a metropolitan population of 400,000. It is home to the Rock Island Arsenal military base and corporate headquarters for John Deere in Moline, Ill. It is served by the Quad-City International Airport and is at the intersection of Interstate highways 80, 74, 88 and 280.

The Grand Prix typically attracts race teams from coast to coast. There have been drivers from 10 foreign countries and 16 foreign winners. Last year saw more than 17,000 spectators over the 2-day event.

Sponsors for the event include: Mediacom, Simpson Motorsports, Briggs & Stratton Racing, Bally's Quad-Cities Casino & Hotel, Hoosier Kartsport, MG Tires, National Karting Alliance, O'Reilly Auto Parts, Lincoln Electric, Modern Woodmen Financial/ Joe Schurr agent, C&W and Sons Trucking, Shaw Electric, Halligan, McCabe, DeVries Funeral Home, CBS TV4 / Fox 18 and CW, the local iHeart radio stations: Big106.5, Fox Sports QC, WOC and WLLR, QCSportsnet.com, Group O, Eagle Concrete Construction, Moon Printing, Illinois Casualty Company, Hiland Toyota, Courtesy Car City, Schurr Power Racing Engines, Sunbelt Rentals, Johannes Bus Service, Holiday Inn Rock Island, eKartingNews.com, Gas & Electric Credit Union, Rogan Scale, Triple E Sales, RLV Tuned Exhaust, Speedway Fire & Rescue, Fastenal, 61 Kartway, Duncalf Karting, Skellington Manor, Quad-Cities YWCA, Quality Control Restoration, Hughes Tire, RIGP Corner Workers and Transmissions Plus.

For more information on the race, please visit racerockisland.info