



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 14, 2011

CONTACTS: Patty Donahey Geiger  
PDG Communications  
patty@pdgcommunications.com  
(614) 325-6178

Karen Eylon  
Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau  
director@visitgahanna.com  
(614) 270-3277

**THE 13<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CREEKSIDE BLUES & JAZZ FESTIVAL  
CELEBRATES A TRIBUTE TO AMERICA AND ITS MUSIC IN OLDE GAHANNA, JUNE 17 – 19**

GAHANNA, Ohio – Gahanna’s 13<sup>th</sup> **Annual Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival** will “get back to our roots” when it celebrates America and its blues and jazz music, **June 17-19**. Presented by the Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau (GCVB), the festival will bring blues and jazz musicians from across the nation to Olde Gahanna with more than 90 hours of live music on five stages.

Blues headliners include Blues Music Award winners **Bill “Watermelon Slim” Homans** from Oklahoma, and **James “Super Chikan” Johnson**, from Mississippi. The jazz headliner, famed trumpeter **Pharez Whitted**, comes to the festival from Chicago.

The origin of the blues is part of American history, born in the South of the 1800s when African Americans sang rhythmic “hollers” as they worked in the fields. By the 1900s, jazz had evolved from the blues, then R & B and rock and roll. Today the blues are performed at music festivals around the world. Gahanna’s role in this history began in the 1920s when one of the first African American country clubs in the United States, Big Walnut Country Club, opened, featuring bands, dances and festivals.

“We’re proud of Gahanna’s blues and jazz music history and our ever-growing Festival. We bring in the big names in blues and jazz but we also showcase the tremendous talent we have here in the Columbus area community, said Laurie Jadwin, chair, Festival Planning Committee.

America’s Blues and Jazz music—East to West and North to South:

**Blues:**

- Touring together for the first time **Watermelon Slim and Super Chikan** (Saturday, June 18; 9:15 p.m.)
  - **Watermelon Slim** (Oklahoma)
    - After winning two Blues Music Awards in 2008 for “Best Blues Album of the Year” and “Best Blues Band of the Year.” Slim received four more BMA nominations in 2009 and now in 2011, nominated for Best Blues DVD of the Year. That’s a total of 18 nominations since 2004, and he’s the only blues artist in history with 12 in two consecutive years.

--more--

- With his Okie twang, he delivers the workingman blues he experienced first hand as he:
  - Attended college on a fencing scholarship
  - Left college to serve in Viet Nam and taught himself how to play upside-down left-handed guitar while lying in a Vietnam hospital bed
  - Drove a truck; operated a forklift; worked as a sawmiller (lost part of a finger); and more, including farming watermelons
  - Completed one master's and two undergrad degrees
  - Joined Mensa
  - Survived a massive heart attack in 2002
- **Super Chikan** (Mississippi)
  - At the 2010 Blues Music Awards, he won "Traditional Blues Album of the Year." In 2011 he is nominated for "BB King Entertainer of the Year" and "Traditional Blues Male Artist of the Year." He melds the styles of Blues, Country, Funk, Rock and more. His lyrics come from his own perspective, both humorous and serious views of contemporary life in the Delta. Since the success of his first record, Chikan has been busy performing at festivals and clubs in the United States and Europe.
  - Super Chikan makes his own "chiktars" (guitars) and has become renowned as a visual artist, creating his own fully playable guitars from discarded guitar parts and even cigar boxes. He hand paints each of his instruments with scenes of the Delta. His work is highly prized by collectors as folk art, and in 2005 he received an Artist Fellowship from the Mississippi Arts Commission.
- **Braille Blues Daddy, Bryan Lee** (New Orleans)
  - Lee has been nominated for a 2010 Grammy Best Contemporary Blues Album for the CD "*Kenny Wayne Shepard and Band Live! In Chicago.*" In his early years, he was encouraged by Muddy Waters but then rejected by Chicago promoters who told him that he was really good, but that it was unfortunate because he was white! Years passed, attitudes changed and Lee has become one of the most recognized blues artists from New Orleans. (Friday; 9:30 p.m.)
- **Mikey Junior & the Stone Cold Blues** (New Jersey)
  - Growing up on the tough streets of Trenton, New Jersey, he is a self-taught prodigy. With his impressive collection of vintage tapes, CDs and videos, Mikey spent the better part of his youth immersing himself in the world of blues music. By the time he was twenty-one, he was already a road-tested player. Since that time, he has released an impressive six CDs as well as a documentary DVD. He's been praised by blues societies as well as players for his original take on old-school styles and his latest release, "*Pocket Full of Money,*" an acoustic effort, further demonstrates Mikey's command of the harp.
- **The Sean Carney Band** (Columbus)
  - Named "Best Band in Columbus" by *Columbus Monthly*, and winner of the 2007 International Blues Challenge and the Albert King Award, Sean Carney and his band have been playing at the festival since it was a one-day event with only one stage!
  - Camp Blues—June 13 - 17
    - This is the third year for Carney's Camp Blues, a day-camp, week-long ensemble experience focusing on learning about and playing the blues. Held at the Jazz Academy at the Lincoln Theatre, this is the first year Camp Blues has been in collaboration with the festival. The young students learn the basics and then the camp class "final exam" will be performing on the Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival Community Stage. (Friday; 5 p.m.)

- Blues Guitar Workshop—June 18, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
  - Second year—big hit last year—students of all ages participate in a clinic that is flexible and geared to individual levels of experience.
- **The Lionel Young Band** (Louisville)
  - Winner of 2008 and 2010 International Blues Challenge, Young started playing the violin when he was six years old and later won a music scholarship to the University of Indiana. After being classically trained, he became an accomplished bluesman, winning blues awards and performing with Count Basie, Stevie Wonder and James Taylor, among others. (Sunday, 2:45 – 4 p.m.)
- **No Saints, No Saviors, Allman Brothers Tribute Band** (Cincinnati, Ohio)
  - A tribute band, made up of members from other bands, they recreate what it was like to be in the front row of an Allman Brothers show 20 years ago. (Sunday, 4-6 p.m.)

**Jazz:**

- **Pharez Whitted** (Chicago)
  - A renowned jazz trumpeter, composer, producer and educator, **Pharez Whitted** will headline on the Jazz Stage, with the **Liquid Crystal Project**. Whitted’s jazz heritage is storied—his father was the late singer and bassist Virtue Hampton and his uncle, trombonist Slide Hampton. Although based in Chicago, Whitted has an Ohio connection—he taught at The Ohio State University. The Liquid Crystal Project, comprised of J. Rawls, BJazz, Charles Cooper, and Rob Riley, is a Columbus jazz-hop band that infuses true hip-hop elements with fundamental jazz. (Friday; 9-10:30 p.m.)
- **Urban Jazz Coalition** (Columbus)
  - Praised by the Las Vegas City of Light Jazz Festival as the “best-kept secret in smooth jazz,” this Columbus-based septet of musicians has been wowing U.S. audiences for 15 years. UJC has toured with many jazz artists and groups, including Spyro Gyra, The Rippingtons and Al Jarreau. Their last two CDs climbed high on jazz music charts, with “*Down To Get Up*” in the #3 spot for 2007 on The *JazzWeek* Independent Smooth Jazz Chart. (Saturday; 9-10:30 p.m.)
- **Columbus Jazz Orchestra (CJO)** (Columbus)
  - For more than three decades, the CJO has been regarded by many as a model musical organization, as well as one of the finest jazz orchestras in the world. Hosting nearly 50 subscription concerts each season in Columbus, the CJO teams with internationally-known guest artists to champion the big band jazz format for thousands of fans each year. The CJO is led by former Count Basie Orchestra lead trumpet, Byron Stripling, who has also performed and recorded with the bands of Dizzy Gillespie and Lionel Hampton. In addition, Stripling’s career includes featured solo appearances with the Boston Pops, Pittsburgh Symphony and the National Symphony. (Sunday; 3-5:30 p.m.)
- **The Tim Cummiskey Duo**
  - Central Ohio guitarist Cummiskey travels throughout the Midwest, performing jazz and classical guitar. (Saturday, 1:30-3 p.m.)
- **Anna and the Consequences**
  - An acoustic cabaret quartet—four great singers, acoustic guitar and bass. Their repertoire spans popular music for more than 100 years, including jazz, pop and blues forms or backwoods songs with old-time banjo and harmonica. (Sunday, 3:30-5 p.m.)

Festival attractions and activities will include:

- **Expanded, New Stage, and New Location - Musical Discovery Zone:** The “Zone” will return again this year with an expanded offering that now includes the Musical Discovery Stage located within the Musical Discovery Zone, in its new home, adjacent to the amusement rides, along the south side of Mill Street. Along with the expanded entertainment offering, families will continue to enjoy this free, hands-on blues and jazz musical learning experience - beat the bongos, blow the horns, make your own musical instrument and more. Musicians from the Jazz Arts Group and Columbus Blues Alliance will provide children with a hands-on experience.
- **New Component to the Jog for Jazz:** The Fourth Annual “Jog for Jazz,” a 5K run/walk event, will now feature a Jog for Jazz Kids Fun Run (half mile run through Creekside Park for children ages 4-12)! Both events will be held on Saturday, June 18, in Olde Gahanna.
- **Rising Stars Blues & Jazz Contest:** Gahanna’s version of American Idol for budding blues and jazz musicians.
- **Sunday Jazz Brunch:** Back by popular demand, the Sunday Jazz Brunch will be held on Sunday, June 19 at Mezzo Italian Kitchen and Wine
- **Mini-Midway:** Amusement rides including a fun house, giant slide, ferris wheel, merry-go-round, climbing wall and rides for small children.
- **Paddle Boat Rides:** Boaters can enjoy the music as they take a leisurely paddle along a branch of Big Walnut Creek.
- **Festival food, artisans and crafters**

During the past 13 years, Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival has evolved from a half-day event into a three-day family friendly event, with five stages of entertainment—Creekside Community Stage, Jazz Stage, Blues Stage, Musical Discovery Zone Stage and Acoustic Alley, plus more than 50 musical groups. The festival location spans the area from the eastern banks of Big Walnut Creek with its Creekside Park and Plaza into historic downtown Olde Gahanna. The park and plaza areas feature beautiful views of the creek, boardwalks, a lagoon, two waterfalls, waterside dining, retail shops and more.

Festival hours: Friday, June 17 – 5 p.m.-11 p.m.; Saturday, June 18 – 11 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sunday, June 19 -12-6 p.m. Admission is \$3 for adults (ages 12 and up). Children under 12 are free. Members of the military will also receive free admission, ID required. The Festival is presented by the Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau and is made possible with help from a corps of dedicated local volunteers. Photos are available upon request.

**For more information, visit [www.creeksidebluesandjazz.com](http://www.creeksidebluesandjazz.com) or call the Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau at 614-418-9114 or 1-866-GAHANNA**

*The Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau (GCVB) is a 501(c)(6) non-profit organization funded by a local hotel tax and partner support whose mission is to promote Gahanna as a vibrant destination by connecting the people and places of our community which contributes to economic prosperity. The GCVB annually presents the Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival and Holiday Lights! Festival. We are grateful for the support given to the Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival by the event sponsors listed on our Web site: [www.creeksidebluesandjazz.com](http://www.creeksidebluesandjazz.com)*

---

---

