

### David Horwitz, Workshop at 2:30 p.m. Sunday



Photographer and educator David Horwitz of Tucson, Arizona, has been traveling to clubs and festivals for decades in search of great blues music for his ears and visual images to capture on film. Winner of the 1999 Blues Foundation's Keeping the Blues Alive Award for Photography, David has spent more than 25 years capturing moments of the blues masters. His works have appeared in countless publications. -- *Ann Ring*

### David Berntson, BlueSKool 2:30 p.m. Saturday and 5 p.m. Sunday

[CrossroadsLearning.org](http://CrossroadsLearning.org)

What would the IH Mississippi Valley Blues Festival be without blues educator and harpist David Berntson? Three words: David *brings it*. Originally hailing from Galesburg, Illinois, this Tulsa, Oklahoma, blues-club founder, prevention educator, and drug/alcohol counselor continually shares his enthusiasm and passion for the blues with young people and adults. David presents Blues in the Schools at a number of schools, including alternative schools for at-risk students. Look out when he digs out his gigantic harmonica. His passion and love for kids is unstoppable, and he leaves kids of all ages with something more than what they came with.



David is an endorsee for Hohner harmonicas and has taught harmonica classes through adult continuing education at Tulsa Community College for more than 10 years. He also teaches children's harmonica classes for the Tulsa parks-and-recreation department.

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Written by Administrator  
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The Mississippi Valley Blues Society thanks its educational sponsors for their continuing support: the Riverboat Development Authority, The Lodge, KALA-FM, Illinois Arts Council, Alcoa, and the River Music Experience. -- *Ann Ring*

### Hal Reed & Ellis Kell, BlueSKool 3:45 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

[EllisKell.com](http://EllisKell.com)



Blues harpist, guitarist, singer, bandleader, and educator Hal Reed was born in Mississippi just a few miles from the Delta, where he grew up influenced by his grandfather, a talented Southern-folk-blues artist who, in addition to inspiring young Hal's love for the blues, taught Hal the need to pass it on from generation to generation.

In 2009 and also in 2007, Hal Reed was MVBS Blues in the Schools artist-in-residence along with guitar player Donald Kinsey. Their "Generations of Blues" program was popular in the schools and all the public venues they played.

Hal Reed is also a veteran musician on the Quad Cities scene. He's fronted various bands, and took one of them to the International Blues Challenge in Memphis. This is Hal's third year moderating the Winter Blues Kids performance at BlueSKool along with Ellis Kell. For a third year, Hal was one of the instructors at the River Music Experience's Winter Blues program this past December.



Ellis Kell is a guitarist and vocalist as well as a songwriter. His Ellis Kell Band has been going strong for 20 years. The Ellis Kell Band won the 1994, '96 and '97 *Quad-City Times* reader-poll

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award for favorite musician/band, the 1995

*Oil*

music magazine people's choice award for blues band, and the 2000

*Dispatch*

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*Argus*

reader-poll award for favorite local CD release. That's not all. They also won the 2003, '04, '05, and '06 blues-band titles in the

*River Cities' Reader*

's Best of the Quad Cities poll. And they're not just local favorites. The Ellis Kell Band has been featured on the nationally syndicated radio programs

*The House of Blues Radio Hour*

and

*The Red Rooster Lounge.*

Ellis is also the director of programming and education at the River Music Experience, where he was one of the major architects of the Winter Blues program for kids, as well as organizer and instructor for the program's third year. -- *Karen McFarland*

### Charles "Wsir" Johnson, BlueSKool 5 p.m. Saturday and 2:30 p.m. Sunday

[WsirArts.com](http://WsirArts.com)



Charles "Wsir" Johnson has an infectious excitement about the blues and education. As a storyteller, musician, and cultural historian, he shows the roots of the blues in a way that kids leave wanting more.

For part of the Blues in the Schools program in Durham, North Carolina, Johnson guided youth in making more than 60 diddley bows. The same with a blues summer camp in Mississippi. In 2008, he was invited to make more than 80 diddley bows at the Chicago Blues Festival. That's where Nate Lawrence of the MVBS Education Committee first saw Johnson. Nate was so impressed with Johnson's artistry and teaching abilities that we contacted Johnson to see if he could do a mini blues-education residency in the days before the Fest.

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Johnson will be spending three days at the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center in Rock Island, helping the kids to each make a diddley bow and learn how to play it. A didley bow is a one-stringed instrument made out of common materials; it mimics the instruments made in the South by virtually all bluesmen starting out in the 20th Century, with a piece of baling wire nailed to the side of a house or porch and then tightened so that it can be plucked for music.

The Education Committee is excited to welcome this educator and instrument-maker to BlueSKool! -- *Karen McFarland*