



For information contact:
(309) 292-8133; rockislandgrandprix@gmail.com

Come for the races, stay for the party!

High-energy Blooze Brothers concert for racers, music fans

ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS — Back in 1978, The Blues Brothers took the world by storm with a skit on Saturday Night Live. A movie followed in 1980, then a sequel and some albums as Dan Aykroyd (Elwood) and John Belushi (Joliet Jake) rose to fame and stardom. The back story is that Jake and Elwood were raised in a Catholic orphanage in Rock Island and learned the blues in the basement from the janitor, Curtis, who wore sunglasses, a thin black tie, and porkpie hat. The brothers went on “a mission from God” to raise money (and create mayhem) so the orphanage could pay its taxes.

Now, after 45 years, those characters are coming home to Rock Island when the Blooze Brothers come to town for a free two-hour show – that is if the Rock Island Police don’t catch them first! The Saturday night, August 30, concert is part of the 30th annual Xstream Rock Island Grand Prix kart races presented by The Hemp Doctor. Besides the Grand Prix, concert sponsors include the Rock Island Parks and Recreation Department, Mississippi Valley Blues Society and The Hemp Doctor’s Southern High Seltzer. The show runs from 7:30-9:30 p.m. (or so) in Schwiebert Riverfront Park. The grills will be fired up and the beer will be cold.

For a taste of what is to come:

[Blooze Brothers Band Chicago - YouTube](#)

For over three decades, the Blooze Brothers have been one of Chicagoland's most in-demand show bands. They play 50-60 shows a year, have played major venues like the United Center and the House of Blues, plus hundreds of music festivals, theaters, weddings and backyard barbecues. They've played for over 60,000 screaming National Hockey League fans at Soldier Field's Winter Classic and over 45,000 race fans at NASCAR's Camping World 400. The band also performed at Barack Obama's Presidential Inauguration in Washington, DC in 2013.

"We not only honor the music made by the original Blues Brothers in movies, TV, and recordings, but the spirit in which they played – from Dan Aykroyd's love of traditional blues and soul to John Belushi's love of classic rock," said Chuck Little (Elwood). "Like Aykroyd and Belushi, we fuse those great musical traditions into a stage show that energizes and delights hundreds of thousands of music fans across the greater Chicago area and beyond every year."

He guessed it's been 10 years or more since the band played in the Quad-Cities and that was a private event. Norm Boucher fills the tough vocal and athletic role of Joliet Jake. Kimberly "Hot Sauce" Johnson adds a powerful female voice to the 11-piece band, drawing inspiration from Koko Taylor, Janis Joplin and Aretha Franklin among others.

While the original band was on a "mission from God," this one only claims to be on a "Mission to Entertain and Party." Besides the music and crazy antics of the original Blues Brothers, they play tunes by Earth Wind & Fire, Chicago, Bruno Mars, Tina Turner, Aretha Franklin, Motown, and many Classic Rock favorites.

"The songs will be so familiar to most people that you will want to sing along," said Roger Ruthhart of the Grand Prix. "Everyone will find the show equally entertaining, won't be able to keep their feet still, and if you don't get up and dance, don't be surprised if the 'brothers' call you out. As we tell our racers, 'Come for the Races and Stay for The Party'. We are excited to offer this free show for the benefit of downtown businesses, our sponsors, our race guests, residents and music fans."

"Rock Island is a historic town and for decades there's been talk of honoring the unique history of the Blues Brothers' connection. The Grand Prix and its partners are excited to finally make that happen," Ruthhart added. "We are excited to bring that to life."

The Blooze Brothers have been recognized as the number one Blues Brothers tribute band in the world and have shared the stage with ZZ Top, The Supremes, Lonestar, Oak Ridge Boys, Doobie Brothers and Weird Al Yankovic, to name a few. They have recorded two live CDs, and a live concert video DVD. All shows open with Jake and Elwood arriving in a 1974 Dodge Monaco Blues Mobile replica.

The Xstream Rock Island Grand Prix presented by The Hemp Doctor, the world's largest and most prestigious karting street race, rolls into its third decade on August 30-31, 2025.

Huge crowds are again expected as in 2024, when despite the downtown construction challenges, the race drew an all-time high of about 20,000 race fans over the two-day event – the majority for the Sunday Feature races.

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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 race has featured competitive teams from 39 states as well as 11 foreign countries and 13 foreign winners.

Sponsors for the event include: Mediacom, The Hemp Doctor, Simpson Motorsports, Bally's Quad-Cities Casino & Hotel, Margay Racing, O'Reilly Auto Parts, Modern Woodmen Financial/ Joe Schurr agent, Group O, Illinois Casualty Co., Neilson Trucking, Shaw Electric, Halligan McCabe DeVries Funeral Home, Hiland Toyota, Lincoln Electric, Speedway Fire & Rescue, RLV Tuned Exhaust, CBS TV4 / Fox 18 and CW, the local iHeart Radio stations: Big 106.5, Fox Sports QC, WOC and WLLR, QC Sports Net, Schurr Power Racing Engines and Tyler Schurr Racing, Sunbelt Rentals, Johannes Bus Service, C&W and Sons Trucking, Holiday Inn Rock Island, eKartingNews.com, Key Auto Mall Moline, Gas & Electric Credit Union, Rogan Scale, Duncalf Racing, Fastenal, Hughes Tire, RIGP Corner Workers and 61 Kartway.