

Press Release: Uptown Music Collective to present the 9th Annual Blues-A-Thon

Who: The Uptown Music Collective w/ Special Guest Bob Margolin

What: 9th Annual Blues-A-Thon

When: June 2nd at 6pm through June 3rd at 8pm, 2017

Where: June First Friday (420 Pine St.), Uptown Music Collective, Mid-Town Landing, Michael Ross Event Center (144 West Third St.), & Pine Square (343 Pine Street)

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Events that combine fundraising, educational activities, exciting musical performances, staying up all night, and the opportunity to meet, play music with, and learn from a living piece of musical history don't come along very often. Unless you are a student or a friend of the Uptown Music Collective, then they happen at least once a year at the school's yearly Blues-A-Thon.

The Uptown Music Collective's 9th Annual Blues-A-Thon, sponsored by the Billtown Blues Association and the Brickyard Restaurant and Ale House, will start on June 2nd at 6pm on Pine Street in Williamsport and end at 8pm on June 3rd. The over 24-hour event will feature Bluesman and former Muddy Waters sideman "Steady Rollin" Bob Margolin, UMC Students and Staff, as well as local Blues musicians, and friends performing a variety of Blues styles. Ending with a special ticketed concert featuring Margolin talking about his life experiences and performing alongside Uptown Music Collective students and staff in the Michael Ross Event Center on the third floor of the Trade and Transit 2 Building. The 24-hour Blues Jam works like a musical version relay for life with participants asking friends and family to sponsor them for a certain number of hours during the event. The Uptown Music Collective's goal is to raise \$5,000 through the event, which will support the school's Free Classes and Workshop Initiative.

This is the first Blues -A-Thon event to take place at the Collective's new home in Downtown Williamsport. In celebration of this fresh start, the Collective staff is revamping the traditional event by adding performances at the Pine Square Stage in front of the Brickyard Restaurant and Ale House, and adding the special concert in the Michael Ross Event Center on the 3rd floor of the school's new facility in the Trade and Transit II building. The event will begin at 6pm on Friday, June 2nd on Pine Street as part of Williamsport's First Friday festivities, then move to the Pine Square Stage until 10pm, finishing off day one with overnight jams inside the Uptown Music Collective. On Saturday, June 3rd the festivities will bounce between the Mid-Town Landing stage (behind the Collective) and Pine Square starting at noon. The event will wrap up with a ticketed concert on the Michael Ross Event Center stage starting at 6pm.

"We have had the idea of revamping the Blues-A-Thon for a while," says Jared Mondell, Assistant Director of the Uptown Music Collective. "Since our move to downtown, the pieces have started to fall into place. Being able to add the Mid-Town Landing and the Michael Ross Event Center to the event will afford the Collective new opportunities like the concert which will now close out the event. Plus, partnering with our new neighbors at The Brickyard in Pine Square adds another dynamic to bring a really great Blues driven event to Downtown Williamsport."

Throughout the course of the Blues-A-Thon event, participants explore different styles of blues, from Chicago blues to the rocking blues of Hendrix and Led Zeppelin, with many of the hour or two hour overnight slots acting as workshops on individual playing styles of artists like Stevie Ray Vaughan, Albert King, Muddy Waters, and Howlin' Wolf along the way.

This year's Blues-A-Thon will also kick off the official 1st Annual "Bright Lights, Big City Blues Week." in the great City of Williamsport. Mayor Campana has officially proclaimed June 2th through June 10th as "Blues Week" which will feature live blues performances in many downtown venues, visual arts exhibits, and four blues music films/documentaries, all leading up to the 28th Billtown Blues Festival, presented by the Billtown Blues Association, which will feature 10 hours of music from nationally known blues artists on two stages, and also featured local and regional blues artists.

Over the years a key ingredient to the Blues - A - Thon has become the guest artist, sponsored each year by the Billtown Blues Association, to open and close the event. Previous guest performers have included celebrated blues musicians like Kelly Richey (2016), Shawn Holt (2014), Taylor Scott (2013), Dave Keyes (2012), Bob Margolin (2011), and Tas Cru (2010 & 2015). "I am blown away and totally inspired by the energy and talent of the young blues people of the future that I have met here [at the Uptown Music Collective]," said 2012 Blues-A-Thon guest artist, Dave Keyes. "This is the future of blues, right here! The Blues - A - Thon is a concept that belongs in every blues society and community throughout the country."

This year the Collective is excited to welcome back very special guest, Bob Margolin. Margolin will be kicking off the event on Pine St on Friday, as well being featured during the closing event on Saturday. Margolin started playing guitar at the age of 15 and immediately started performing in local rock and blues bands. He was hired by Muddy Waters in 1973. In '76, Muddy brought Margolin with him to San Francisco to perform at The Band's "Last Waltz" concert. Martin Scorsese filmed the concert for the classic film. "As it happened, only one camera was operating during our performance, zooming in or out, and since I was standing right next to Muddy, I was in every shot while he sang a powerful 'Mannish Boy,'" says Margolin. He left Muddy's band in 1980 and formed his own band. Since then Margolin forged his own path though the blues world, playing with greats like Stevie Ray Vaughan, George Thorogood, Johnny Winter, B.B. King, Dr. John, and more. Recently he won two Blues Blast Magazine Awards, one as Best Male Blues Artist, and one for Best Traditional Blues Album for his new album, "My Road."

In addition to Bob Margolin, the event will feature some special guest musicians from the area including Gabe Stillman & The Billtown Giants, Doug McMinn, Sean Farley, The Collective's 3rd Street Blues Band, Miz Ida and The All Nightas, The Collective's River City Blues Band, Sweeny Blues Revue, Shawn Strickland, and special reunion sets from previous Collective blues bands The Young Blood Blues Band & The Black Strat Blues Company.

The Uptown Music Collective is committed to providing comprehensive music education to dedicated music students in the Williamsport community and surrounding areas. The school feels strongly about the role of music in creating well-rounded, thoughtful young people, and works to establish characteristics such as self-discipline and personal responsibility in each of its students through healthy habits such

as practice and self- control. Uptown Music Collective students consistently perform at high levels not only musically, but also in their respective schools and as valuable members of other community organizations. In the weeks leading up to the Blues-A-Thon, Uptown Music Collective teachers will be working to prepare their students and instill in them a healthy respect and appreciation for this essential American music form. "The Blues is so important to the evolution of modern music, it is one of the seminal styles from which so much of what is played today comes from," said Dave Brumbaugh, Executive Director of the Uptown Music Collective.

This year's Blues-A-Thon is sponsored by the Billtown Blues Association and the Brickyard Restaurant and Ale House. Media sponsors include Lamar Advertising, NorthcentralPA.com, as well as WZXR and all of Backyard Broadcasting. The Blues-A-Thon is open to the public until 10pm Friday night, and will be open to the public again starting at 12pm on Saturday. Donations in support of the school from the public will be accepted during the event and on the school's web page via PayPal. For more information on Bob Margolin, visit www.bobmargolin.com. For more information, including how to get tickets for the closing concert, and the full schedule and locations of Blues-A-Thon events, visit www.uptownmusic.org/blues. Also, check out Collective's official Facebook page, as well as other Collective social media outlets for teasers, previews, behind the scenes info and more from the event.