

# BIG CITY SOCIETIES

## River City Blues Society

By ELLEN FOSTER

Sunday, July 20, 2008-Lil Dave Thompson's cool demeanor and fine guitar work pleased the crowd; his band, Big Love, filled in the depth. Two opening local bands, Pure and Sinful and Back Alley Hoodoo, built up the energy for Lil Dave at Richmond's Capital Ale House.

The River City Blues Society of Virginia is blessed to have many member bands that give their time to help with our events. The society tries to give back opportunities to spread the variety of musical styles that is 'The Blues'. Our socials/ jams/ potluck afternoons every few months give the musicians a chance to reach beyond the normal club routine. The artists love mixing it up with different musicians. Our spring social this year at the Grayhaven Vineyards brought out about 300 blues friends and wine lovers. It created some new band opportunities.

The RCBS of VA is about bring-

ing blues friends together. Our monthly meetings at the Bleu Bistro feature an hour of acoustic, followed by a local/ regional electric blues act—all for free. And our coup, Capital Ale House and River City Blues Society Present Brews and Blues," happens every Friday night, also free to our audience. This event brings in locals and out-of-towners looking for good music while in Richmond. Our relationship with Capital Ale has blossomed. Watermelon Slim, last fall, was our first national act at Cap. Ale and was profitable! Our audience supported Lil Dave there. Next up is Debbie Davies on Sunday, Aug. 10, for only \$10! Followed by the Main Street Blues Festival.

Main Street Blues will be a three-day event at the Capital Ale House Sept. 19-21, 2008. This is our biggest venture in over two years. Previous Bobby Olive Memorial Blues festivals featured excellent artists, but we weren't quite able to get the support we

needed, so we took a few years off. Now we are excited that Main Street Blues Festival will give us the opportunity to raise funds for a Bobby Olive scholarship directed to our Blues in the Schools programs. Main Street will start with Forrest McDonald at Friday's Brews and Blues. Saturday will be an afternoon gig with Eddy "the Chief" Clearwater supported by the Michael Clark Band featuring Tracy Clark. The Michael Clark Band will be representing RCBS at the 2009 IBC. Sunday brings a fabulous combination; Seth Walker will open for Ana Popovich! Pretty cool! All for only \$35!

Speaking of Blues in the Schools, our committee is on a roll in setting up a new program. Cy Taggart, Richmond's busiest music

man leads this program. He taught four programs this past semester and we're ready to move forward with more volunteers in fall 2008! We

received a grant from the Blues Music Association in spring 2006 and a matching donation from the Richmond Forum; a first for the society and the forum.

Moving into the future takes a great board and generous volunteers; Careful spending of funds and much thought goes into every decision. Our support from the community grows every month. Since John Morgan founded the River City Blues Society of Virginia seven years ago, we are hanging in there and moving forward. Thanks to all our Blues Friends!

You can find us on the web at [www.wegotblues.com](http://www.wegotblues.com), email us at [rivercityblues@hotmail.com](mailto:rivercityblues@hotmail.com).

Photo: Ellen Foster



"Making new friends at a day at the vineyard with the blues."

