



Kathy Rankin

The Portland-based Norman Sylvester Band, pictured at a prior festival. The Louisiana-born Sylvester, known as “The Boogie Cat,” is known for his distinctive outfits. His music is heavily influenced by gospel.

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A feature both days will be a cigar tent named for Slim Lively, nickname of Portland-based blues player Greg Johnson, who died in March. He served as president of the Cascade Blues Association from 2002 to 2021. “We are dedicating the whole festival to him,” Carter said.

The gate opens Friday at 5 p.m. and activities begin at 6 p.m. with the 25th anniversary incarnation of “swampabilly” band Junkyard Jane, with leader-songwriter Billy Stoops.

Carter’s own band, North Coast Blues, then takes the stage. The lineup includes Carter on guitar and percussion, Don King on bass and vocals, and Fred Jacobs on drums. Joining the lineup is John Orr, lead guitar and vocals.

Sister Mercy plays next. The group has gained some prominence at the International Blues Challenge, held annually in Memphis, Tennessee. “They are very high-energy band from Portland,” Carter said.

Fixture

Saturday’s activities begin at 11 a.m. The Robin Gibson Band, whose members favor both rock and blues, drawing influences from the Allman Brothers and Joe Bonamassa, perform at 1 p.m.

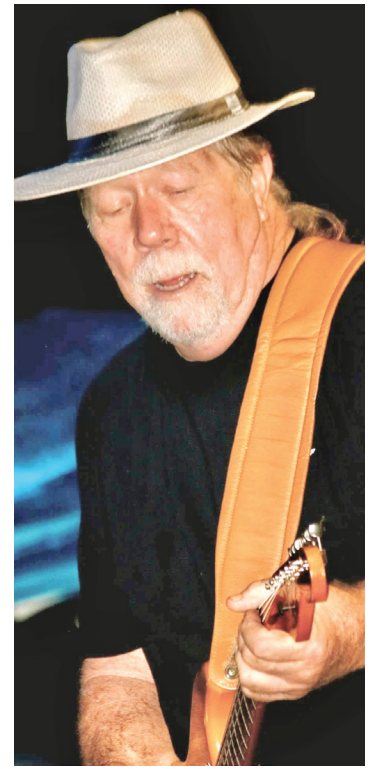
The Ben Rice Band showcases its leader’s versatility on different guitars.

The Strange Tones, also from Portland, played the festival a couple of years ago. “They are a fantastic stage presence. They will put a smile on your face,” Carter said.

The Norman Sylvester Band, a blues band with a gospel influence, is a festival fixture. “I call him the peninsula’s prodigal son. If I didn’t have him, then I would hear about it from my daughter, Terra,” Carter said.

Headliners are Ken Emerson and Michael Osburn. “They will be playing together! It’s going to be such an awesome show,” Carter said.

Emerson is known for his prowess on the Hawaiian slack



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Robin Gibson, of Woodland, Washington, will bring his band to the Peninsula Rhythm & Blues Festival at the Port of Nahcotta.

key and steel guitars. “He is a very, very, very good player — one of the best in the world,” Carter said. Emerson performed on the 2006 Grammy-winning album “Morph the Cat” by Steely Dan’s Donald Fagen.

Osburn spent 13 years playing lead guitar alongside late Blues stalwart John Lee Hooker, who appeared in the 1980 “Blues Brothers” movie and was famous for “Boom, Boom.” A song Osburn wrote, called “Spellbound,” featured on a 1998 Grammy-winning album by Hooker.

Joy

Carter and fellow musicians are excited as the weekend approaches.

“I love the beach,” Robin Gibson, who performed at the long-running Ilwaco Blues and Seafood Festival, said. “The joy is playing — anywhere,” he said. “If I was in it for the money, I would be dead poor. It’s doing what I love and getting people singing and listening and dancing. The fact that some people like my style — I love it.”