

NEWS RELEASE

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Longview, TX – January 20, 2017 – It was announced today that the T-Bone Walker Blues Festival has changed its name to the Big Pines Blues Festival and will continue to produce the annual blues music festival in Longview. This year's event will be held at the Maude Cobb Activity Complex on June 2 and 3, 2017.

“This change will allow the Board and other volunteers more flexibility in programming the festival so we can better honor the region's broader blues music heritage, and to meet the needs and musical tastes of this region,” said Board President Marcus Wren. “This change will allow the event to encompass more area businesses and age groups.”

The second change is the move to a primarily outside format with a free performance and welcome reception for Sponsors and artists Friday evening featuring new faces of the blues. The planned line-up is the Riverside Blues Band featuring 2016 Youth Challenge winner Carter Wilkinson (Baton Rouge), the Red House Revival featuring 2016 Youth Challenge Winner Andrew Greear (Hallsville) and professional young blues artists Ally Venable (Kilgore), and The Peterson Brothers (Bastrop).

Saturday will begin with the youth challenge in the morning and live entertainment starting mid-afternoon. The headliner will be Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and 2016 Blues Hall of Fame inductee Elvin Bishop. Other performers will be the Pleasant Hill Quilting Group, local band Johnny and the Night Crawlers, A.J. Casio (Shreveport), Andrew "Jr. Boy" Jones (Dallas), and Darrell Nulisch (Boston), and will conclude with Jimmy Wallace and the Stratoblasters hosting the “Big Pines Jam” featuring all of the evening's performers.

Current plans are to continue the walk/race and the Car Show in conjunction with Saturday's festival.

The T-Bone Walker Blues Festival was started by the Linden, Texas Economic Development Corporation in 2006, and moved its annual blues music festival to Longview in 2014. The City of Longview has generously supported the festival through the Cultural Arts grant program and with staff support for the past four years. ###