

Bluesfest set to bring out some heavy sounds

► Bluesfest opens today with Iron Maiden as the headlining act. ► There are nearly 30 local bands performing during the 13-day music festival.



► Local group The Reverb Syndicate will be hitting the Claridge Stage at Bluesfest at 2 p.m. on July 17.



TIM WIECLAWSKI
@METRONEWS.CA

When the members of The Reverb Syndicate first got together, it was just to enjoy playing a different brand of surf music.

"We thought maybe a handful of people might get it," said Jeff Welch, of The Reverb Syndicate.

Turns out, the Ottawa-based quartet has managed to attract many fans. In their brief career, they've been able to play concerts in Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, New York City and as far away as London, England.

On July 17, they'll be making their second appearance at Bluesfest after getting "nothing but love" when they played there in

2007, said Welch.

Despite regular multiple shows per week around Ottawa, Jason Fryar, guitarist with the River City Junction, said they've spent more time rehearsing lately to make sure their show has a little more polish to it.

The blues/jazz/rock group formed in 2005 and moved to Ottawa four years ago, but River City

Junction will be playing Bluesfest for the first time on July 10. It's a much bigger stage, said Fryar, and it's more of a performance compared to intimate club shows where they sometimes have people from the audience climbing up on stage to sing and dance with them.

After playing Bluesfest in 2006, hard rockers Big Jeezus Truck are back for

Screen's the theme at fest

This year's theme for Ottawa Bluesfest is Hollywood, said executive director Mark Monahan, pictured above. So in addition to catching local



acts, concertgoers can see such famous faces as Courtney Love,

Kevin Bacon, Kevin Costner and Allan Doyle (who starred in the recent Robin Hood movie) rocking out with their bands.

● TRACEY TONG



"It raises your profile to be sure. Every year (Bluesfest) is becoming a larger and larger festival. It really looks good on your resume."

SLIM REAPER, LEAD SINGER,
BIG JEEZUS TRUCK

another round on July 10. "Anytime you get to play a festival, it's a different kind of vibe," said lead singer Slim Reaper. "They treat people really well." Money from the Bluesfest gig is going towards the band's second tour of Europe.

Heat warning issued for this week

This week may prove to be the hottest week of the summer, an Environment Canada warning preparedness meteorologist said.

Yesterday reached a high of 34 C but felt like 43 C, said Peter Kimbell.

"We're expecting very hot temperatures this week through Thursday inclusive because of a high-pressure system over the eastern United States which is funnelling very hot, very muggy air over Ontario," he said.

The city is asking residents to look out for its most vulnerable citizens after the medical officer of health issued a heat warning yesterday.

The heat warning, which is in effect until further notice, affects the elderly, chronically ill, infants, young children



"Heat is hardest on the elderly and chronically ill. If they have no protection from the heat, such as access to air conditioning and plenty of fluids, they can develop serious health effects and even die."

DR. ISRA LEVY,
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and the homeless the most, the city said.

● TRACEY TONG

60 seconds



► Professional dog walker Jim Roberts is surrounded by his furry clients at the dog park at Sylvia Holden Park.

JIM ROBERTS

"IT'S LIKE HAVING A GROUP OF THREE-YEAR-OLDS, BUT THEY CAN ALL RUN FASTER THAN YOU CAN."

Professional dog walker and certified dog trainer Jim Roberts and his entourage are regulars at Sylvia Holden Park.

What do you like about working with dogs?

It's hard to put my finger on, but they're easy to get along with. You always know what they're going to do. And it doesn't take much to make them happy.

What's the most difficult part of this job?

Finding a place to go. There are so few places you can go to take your dog despite a huge amount of green space. As a group, dog owners have been horrendously

underserved. In a city with so much green space, I think we can come up with a bit more considering that 40 per cent of the population has a dog.

Is hiring a dog walker more popular than in the past?

Especially these days, when people seem to be working longer and longer hours. Some people had to take on extra jobs to make ends meet. They like them to get out and have fun.

You have your own dog, Brooklyn. What does Brooklyn think of your dog walking business?

He doesn't think they're necessary. (Laughs.)

● TRACEY TONG