



Bandleader **Loretta Lynne James** is a born performer. With over three decades of theater experience and a six-year stint as a touring stand-up comic, she's spent most of her life in front of audiences. "I love the blues," the singer says. "I listen to all kinds of music and I like most all of it. But I *love* blues." Raised on American roots music by her drummer father, Loretta comes by her passion for this music honestly. While her friends were choosing their musical heroes from the glossy pages of teen fan mags, she was listening to the likes of Elmore James, Big Mama Thornton, Bessie Smith, Howlin' Wolf, Sippie Wallace, Muddy Waters, Junior Wells, Ruth Brown, Magic Sam and others. When asked to choose her favorite from among the vast library of singers and players she listens to, Loretta says, "I don't know. I don't think I can pick a favorite. But I adore Etta James and Billie Holiday. And Slim Harpo makes me happy."

Saxophonist **Bill Vinhage** is from Binghamton, New York and he's been bopping around the Tampa Bay music scene for ten years. With 35 years of experience, he has a broad musical range including classical, rock, jazz and, yes, The Blues. Bill believes that music is the language of the soul, and that deep emotional connection to the music emerges in his artful playing. "If you're not moved by his tone and intensity, you're not paying attention," says Ms. James. When the two met at the blues jam the singer started at Ace's in Bradenton, their musical simpatico was both obvious and immediate. It was only a matter of time before they would join musical forces—and that time has come.

Guitarist **Bobby Ray Bishop** comes to the Bradenton, Florida band by way of Poughkeepsie, New York. James says, "BoRay isn't afraid of anything--not even charts!" Bishop brings a unique blend of Texas, Chicago and West Coast guitar styles and a riveting stage presence to the mix. It's his wide range of "voices" that makes him a perfect fit for this band whose material is cherry picked from traditional and contemporary blues, deep soul, jazz and even a little country. Another seasoned bandleader, Bobby Ray is well known for his work with Steve DiGiovanni, Jimmy Eppard and Rich Milite. "His guitar prowess is mesmerizing," says Keith Munro, host of WKZE's Nothing But The Blues.

**John "Dash" Dixon** is a "charter member" of the band. In addition to being one of the most in-demand and hardest working keyboardists in the area, he's a producer and engineer. "Dash is just so *busy* all the time" says Loretta. "He's producing the CD, so we work together a lot. Plus, if he's free and we're gigging, he's there." As a producer, Dixon is well known for his work with Jus' Blues "Legendary Blues & Soul" award winner, Betty Padgett. He plays keys with Lester Freeman's D Band and runs D Music Service in South Tampa.

**Adam Redding**, best known for his work as a rock drummer, also comes to the band by way of the blues jam at Ace's. "When I first heard Adam at the jam, he couldn't shuffle for shit," the bandleader laughs, "and I told him so." She suggested that he listen to a few blues drummers that her father admired. "And he did," she says. "He's worked hard, and now he really gets the blues." With a positive attitude and solid meter, he holds down the groove for the band.