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Englewood 'Opry tunes up for new year, new venue



The Gulf Breeze Bluegrass Band plays at a Thursday night Englewood Opry session in this 2018 photo. The Opry is moving this year to 501 W. Dearborn St. It begins at 5:30 p.m. Thursday.

SUN FILE PHOTO BY SANDY MACYS

Just The Facts

The Englewood Opry, featuring The Sidemen and the Gulf Breeze Bluegrass Band, will play classic country and bluegrass from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Thursdays at Life Realized, 501 W. Dearborn St., Englewood. The shows are BYOB and free. Bring a chair. For more information, visit englewood-opry.com.

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ENGLEWOOD — For many years, the musicians with the Englewood Opry have played free Thursday night country and bluegrass concerts during the season for anyone who wanted to stop by Indian Mound Park.

But this year, they are going to try something different. When the Englewood Opry counts off its initial show of the 2020-21 season on Thursday, it will at a new venue — a much more visible place on West Dearborn Street.

The Englewood Opry is forming a new partnership with Life Realized Inc., a local nonprofit, explained Ev Dodge, a guitar player and organizer of the Opry players.

Life Realized uses its facility at 501 W. Dearborn St. for educational classes, for Sunday and Thursday farmers markets, and also for regular open-mic music shows. It's a good fit to bring in the Opry players.

"This is a 2,000-square-foot facility that will allow our show to go on, rain or shine," Dodge says. "We look forward to being with our friends, and we hope to make new friends as we go forward."

The first show is planned for 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Dec. 3, and then each Thursday night through the season. All are welcome.

"Come see our new home, and bring a friend and your favorite chair," Dodge



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says. "This is a BYOB facility, so come with a sandwich and your favorite beverage. We play classic country for the first half, and bluegrass for the second half of the show."

The groups playing are The Sidemen and the Gulf Breeze Bluegrass Band.

Dodge said there is a restroom available at the site, and as the audience grows, food vendors will be present. Parking is available near the facility, but not in front of the building. The performances will follow all CDC safety guidelines.

For more about the Englewood Opry, visit englewood-opry.com. For more about Life Realized and its schedule of programs, visit liferealized.org.

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