

**Big Earl and the Cryin' Shame** is a West Coast blues band from Modesto, California. Eli Lester and Jason Finley share guitar duties. The rhythm section is Randall Niemann on bass and Ian Stambaugh on drums. The group is fronted by "Big Earl" Matthews who belts out the blues. The band members come from varied backgrounds and have played just about every musical style from Jazz to Rockabilly to Rap. Big Earl and the Cryin' Shame has built their music on a sturdy foundation of 50's Chicago style blues infused with infectious funk rhythms, this unique blend of classic styles has been filling dance floors since 2007. The boys independently released their first CD, "Low Cash Blues", in October, 2011. In addition to actively promoting their CD throughout the Central Valley these hard working boys can also be found gearing up for their second CD. We have had the pleasure of opening from such well known acts as; B.B. King, Charlie Musselwhite, Chris Cain, Cafe R&B, John Nemeth, MoFo Party Band, Billy TK Junior, Greg "Fingers" Taylor, Mark Hummel.

Modesto native **Eli Lester** was raised by musician parents and began playing professionally with his father's bluegrass band at the age of 13. Eli has won six Modesto Area Music Awards (MAMA's) and recorded an album with Sony's Work group. In addition, he has toured extensively throughout the US and UK and shared the stage with such artists as Robben Ford, Tommy Castro, Eric Gales, Matt Schofield, Huey Lewis and the News, Robert Cray & Chris Cain. In addition to playing with the Cryin' Shame, Eli has been a guitar teacher since 1999.

**Jason Finley** needed a way to pass time while recovering from a skateboarding accident which led him to the guitar. Having been exposed to music through his uncle, Jason knew what it took to become a skilled musician and spent all his free time practicing. Jason cites Chet Atkins and Merle Travis as his Rockabilly influences. With the Rockabilly group "The Haywoods", Jason played numerous San Francisco clubs as

well as toured the US and UK before the band broke up leading to Jason becoming a founding member of Big Earl and the Cryin' Shame.

**Ian Stambaugh** is a multi-stylistic drummer with almost twenty years of experience. He has played jazz, rock, blues, funk and R&B. Ian has shared the stage and/or recorded with artists such as Megan Slankard, Roem Baur, Sapo Sueno, Aaron Durr, Project 59, Stop Motion Poetry, Mark Little & the Blue Monday Band, Dan Mass Quartet, and Strange Brew. In addition to his duties with Big Earl and the Cryin' Shame, Ian is a sought after drum teacher and fills his time doing session work and pick up Jazz gigs.

**Randall Niemann's** funky bass grooves come from the 70's influence of the Motown Sound and artists such as Stevie Wonder and James Brown. Though Randall uses a guitar to write music, the bass is in his blood and was the first instrument he learned almost 30 years ago. A Sacramento native, Randall has played and recorded with many Sacramento bands such as The Men and Blue Train and received a SAMMIE (Sacramento Area Music Award) for his work with the rapper DC Ray. Randall has also put his talent to use managing and producing bands.

**Big Earl Matthews** began his quest to sing professionally at the age of 19 after hearing blues legend Tommy Castro. Six years later the first incarnation of Big Earl and the Cryin' Shame was born in Humboldt County. After five years, Earl returned to his hometown of Modesto, soon met Jason Finley and rebuilt Big Earl and the Cryin' Shame. Earl counts artists such as Junior Wells, Buddy Guy, Magic Slim and Big Mama Thornton as his influences. Earl loves blues music and likes to say: Everybody loves the blues, some people just don't know it yet.