

# Calamity Jean

## Profile

Calamity Jean formed in 2007 with the release of their first CD, “Drinking and Driving”, a mixture of originals and covers that the City Pages called “cleverly thematic”, and earned them a “Picked to Click” nomination later that year. They have performed at the Minnesota Folk Festival and regularly appear at the Northeast Folk Festival. In 2012, they released their second CD, “The Life for Me”, and their third album, “Superior” in 2020.

## Band Members

### Jean Mason

Lead vocalist Jean Mason grew up in southeastern Minnesota and was involved in musical theatre before moving to Minneapolis to become a film student. She received vocal training from Anne Young at MacPhail University and began performing around the Twin Cities. The City Pages has said her voice “has an antique quality, juggling emotional fragility and toughness”.

### John Mason

A guitarist and singer-songwriter, John has been performing around the Twin Cities for over 25 years with groups such as Havatits, 900 Pounds and Musty Velvet. The City Pages has called his songwriting “witty” and recognized his “ace guitar picking”

### “Frankie” John French

Multi-instrumentalist John French is a veteran of the Twin Cities music scene. He has played guitar alongside Bob Stinson in the The Strappin’ Daddy-Os, and Jason Keillor and John Eric Theide in Dog 994. He also lended his songwriting talents to the Strawdogs, and the Hot Head Swing Band. His earthy harmonica playing is a major part of the Calamity Jean sound, and echoes Tony Glover, whom John counts as one of his primary early influences.

### Randy Venaas

Bassist Randy Venaas is another veteran of the Twin Cities music scene playing for The Strawdogs, The Hot Head Swing Band, and Al Sibola (of Vibrochamps fame), just to name a few. His steady, pulsating rhythm is the heartbeat of Calamity Jean, but his modesty and abhorrence to biographical material prevents us from saying too much more. He also currently plays with the Saddle Sores.

### Mo Engel

Drummer and percussionist Mo Engel is also a former member of the Strawdogs and Hot Head Swing Band, as well as the Jaztronauts and many more. Legendary sound man “Mean” Dan has called Mo his favorite drummer, and he is much in demand around the Twin Cities. He also currently plays with the Saddle Sores etal.

### Eric “Buc” Nelson

Formerly of Three Car Garage, the Strawdogs and Hot Head Swing Band, this mandolinist also occasionally lends his trombone chops to the Calamity Jean mix.