

Published May 25th, 2011

Finally a Permanent Stage at the Reservoir

By Cathy Tyson



From left: John Coleman, Carol Federighi, Dick Holt, Ann Grodin, Don Jenkins, Geoff Zimmerman Photo Doug Kohen

temporary stage on the west side of the Reservoir - no easy task.

"It was a real pleasure to work with EBMUD," said John Sherry, Chair of Design and Construction on the project. "We got everything we wanted - a location on the east side of the dam and a forty by forty foot stage." The project is expected to cost over \$100,000; Rotary members have already raised \$30,000.

With approvals from the Fire Department, City Planning, and EBMUD, actual construction is just waiting on the final approval from the Building Department. Located in a natural amphitheater on the east side of the dam, the stage will be carefully nestled near the Reservoir's edge, an easy stroll from the parking lot and near the playground and bathrooms. The project is ADA compliant, handicapped users will have a separate path with a gentle incline to reach the stage.

It took an army of Rotary volunteers to make the stage a reality: prime mover Dick Holt to spearhead and nurture the project; John Sherry - noted above; Larry Blodgett, design; Terry Ring, construction; Sandra Bonderud, architect; Jay Lifson, public relations along with Larry Duson and Bob Shusta, committee members.

Scott Hill, Manager of the East Bay Watershed for EMBUD fully supports the stage, "It will be a tremendous asset for the community." He, along with a team from EBMUD, worked with Rotary to develop a design. They had to consider the request and analyze current and projected use, "We didn't want to adversely impact the Reservoir - it's possible that it may bring in more people than we can handle."

Another concern is that although the stage is a gift to the community, it's up to EBMUD to manage its use. "We're being cautious, going slow at this point because at one million visitors a year carrying capacity is maxed out. We plan to process reservations just like any other site with associated fees," explained Hill. Rotary will use the stage just one day per year for the annual Concert at the Res, but it can be rented out for a variety of functions - small weddings, birthday parties, family reunions.

The non-profit Lafayette Community Foundation is helping raise funds for the concert budget and for stage construction. Visit www.lafayetecf.org for more information.

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With plastic yellow hard hats and glasses of champagne, assembled dignitaries and a bevy of Rotary members toasted the ground breaking of a permanent stage at the Reservoir that has been seventeen years in the making. The stage will be used for the annual Rotary fundraiser, Concert at the Res, but for the balance of the year it's a gift to users of the recreation area. Although organizers had to jump through a number of hoops to make this dream a reality, the stage will be a community asset to be enjoyed for years to come.

"Thank you to EBMUD for their cooperation and thanks to Rotary - their vision and tenacity made this happen," said Don Jenkins, President of the Lafayette Community Foundation, at the ground breaking ceremony. "We want to be a catalyst for change in our community.

Partnering with the Rotary has helped make that change a reality."

Former Rotary Club President Dick Holt, founder of the Concert at the Res, always wanted a permanent stage for student band members at this annual event. Half of the funds raised at the open air concert support local school music programs, with the other half going toward Rotary projects. Earlier this month, Rotary members and friends helped, for the very last time, construct and take down a