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Music series embraces the Summer of Love

By Pippa Fisher



Jay Lifson gets into the spirit of things. Photo Pippa Fisher

As the song goes "Money can't buy me love" and it won't have to this summer in Lafayette, where the free Rock the Plaza series of concerts will be featuring very special tributes to the Summer of Love.

This summer sees the 50th anniversary of the Summer of Love and while San Francisco's Park and Recreation Department has denied a permit for a free concert in Golden Gate Park - a decision that will doubtless be appealed - the Lafayette City Council approved the "Summer of Love Lafayette" concert series Feb. 13 by a unanimous vote.

Many people are making arrangements to come to the Bay Area to celebrate the June 4 anniversary. Lafayette hopes to welcome many of those to the four-concert, Rock the Plaza series this year, which takes place on the first four Friday evenings in June, given the convenience of BART and its proximity to San Francisco.

And what an experience it is turning into. Executive Director of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and longtime "DeadHead," Jay Lifson says, "We are transforming Lafayette Plaza Park to take you all back to 1967. Each concert will include a local artist alley (aka: Shakedown Street) where visitors can shop before and during the concert, a two-hour set from the bands, and a hootenanny after each show around the campfire with special guest musicians including Lafayette's own Stevie Coyle (The Waybacks)."

Lafayette's Rock the Plaza series, now in its 12th season, takes place Friday nights in June at Lafayette's Plaza Park at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Moraga Road. This summer the special Summer of Love artist alley will open at 5:30 p.m., and the bands play from 6:30- 8:30 p.m. followed by the hootenanny.

The lineup this year includes cover bands that feature the music of Jefferson Airplane, The Grateful Dead, Neil Young and many of the sounds from 1967 - a time when free spirit, peace, love and compassion became the principles young people embraced and music was at the heart of the hippie movement.

Although these are "tie-dye optional" events, bell-bottoms and hippie attire is encouraged.

As Lifson says, "Peace, love and Bobby Sherman! If you remember the 60s, you probably were not there..."

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