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Summer Guide

05.26.2009

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# Free to Be You and Me

## This summer, music is easy on your pocketbook

By Cullen Curtiss

My first outdoor summer concert was Peter, Paul and Mary on the Boston Common. I was 14 and recall a patchwork of blankets, wicker baskets, stinky cheeses, wines and muggy heat.

And, of course, singing and dancing.

Even this surly early teen couldn't sulk in the presence of "Puff the Magic Dragon," "This Land is Your Land" and "If I Had a Hammer."

Then there was more family music on Boston's Esplanade, and then with my peeps at Burlington's North Beach for Reggae Fest, San Francisco's Golden Gate Park and Telluride's Bluegrass Festival. Oh, I could go on, but the nostalgia is making me weak.

Good thing there are new memories to be made this summer in Santa Fe, where you can go out several nights a week and create them for free. Yes, free. In economic times like these, I say grab your picnic basket and blanket, and go out to get your gig on.

### Down on the Plaza

Entering its seventh year, Santa Fe Bandstand on the Plaza is produced by Outside In, which also delivers free music and other arts to people in prisons, nursing homes and detention centers. Last year's performers numbered 85, and 2009 is shaping up similarly, despite money woes hitting organizations, foundations and the city alike.

"The McCune Foundation was the green light this year. When they came through with full Outside In programming, I knew this summer was going to happen," David Lescht, Outside In's founder and executive director, says.

The mayor also made it clear the show must go on. While the city used to finance 90 percent of Bandstand costs, it scaled back to approximately 40 percent, but Lescht still considers the show a city-sponsored event.

"The feeling from the city is that it must happen. In times like these, music is more important than ever. There needs to be a feeling of life going on in the heart of Santa Fe. The community needs to enjoy the Plaza, and the tourists need to experience a genuine, unique event."

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Genuine, unique...and generous: The seven-week-long free music festival produces some of the hottest local and national touring performers four nights and two afternoons a week. If my math serves, that's approximately 90 hours of free blues, Latin, country, rock, reggae, R&B, jazz, bluegrass, folk, Americana, alternative, Native and world beat music on your Plaza.

Opening night includes Clan Tinker and the HooDoos—both performing groups are bound to respectively set the tenor of the summer-long Bandstand. No. 1: Children and families are welcomed and encouraged; No. 2: Dancing and a rousing good time are required.

As the Bandstand popularity increases (there were more than 1,000 folks in attendance at the 2008 Buffy Sainte-Marie grand finale event), more acts from outside our hamlet are clamoring to perform for Santa Fe's diverse population.

Guitar Shorty (Jimi Hendrix's brother-in-law and mentor), Del Castillo and Willie Nelson's daughter, Paula, are just a few on the 2009 lineup.

These stellar acts and others contribute to the ever-improving Bandstand, but Lescht also attributes it to the sound, now aptly handled by Santa Fe Audio Visual, which Outside In expanded its budget to obtain.

Oh, and grass helps, too. You can expect that, Lescht says, as well as raffle tickets for \$10 each, cool prizes, local-business-sponsored giveaways and a summer-long music event nonpareil.

#### Up on the Hill

Music on the Hill grew out of St. John's College's desire to do something special for the Santa Fe community. Despite the economic downturn, platinum sponsor Los Alamos National Bank never gave Music on the Hill organizers any doubt about backing the series' fourth year, which includes six shows.

Every Wednesday beginning in June, expect jazz, folk or world beat sounds on the St. John's College athletic field—in other words, that lush, green, cool spot on the hill.

The attendance at last year's grand finale for Wagogo (returning this year), a world beat band from Albuquerque, was a reported at 1,500, so it appears the Santa Fe community has claimed Music on the Hill as a tradition.

Of course, popularity has its challenges—some flattering.

“At this point, artists are coming to us from all over. They want to be a part of this,” Maggie Magalnick, associate director of external relations at the college, says. The artists, mostly local, whom the committee feels will create a special relationship with the diverse crowd, are invited—and invited back (folk singer Eileen Meyers returns, too).

Other challenges are tactical. The people go on the field, but what about their cars? Working with the city, the college has devised some parking protocol, so obey those directing traffic—they're trying to help! There will be a drop-off spot close to the field. “We want to make being here easy and accessible. And not stressful,” Magalnick says.

Other challenges are more like opportunities, she adds. “We can now take the reputation of being a popular event and do something new with partnerships. It opens the door.”

New this year, the organization locally known as FAM JAM! brings its playful, musical, moveable presence to open for the main acts June 10 and 24. Director Devi Borton has led the internationally known Music Together program for families with newborns and kids up to kindergarten age for years and is always looking for ways to be in the community, supporting family music experiences.

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Child Care in Santa Fe is Growing—Out of Reach

The advertisement is a vertical banner for Kodak Gallery's Mother's Day promotion. It features a yellow background with a sunburst pattern. On the left side, there are three product images with their respective prices: a Sterling Silver Necklace (original \$59.99, sale \$39.99), a Metal Inlay Frame (original \$10.00, sale \$6.00), and a Tote Bag (original \$24.99, sale \$16.99). A red 'Shop now' button is at the bottom of this section. On the right side, the text reads 'Mother's Day Inspiration Guide' in a cursive font, followed by 'Melt her heart with a photo treasure' and a red arrow pointing to 'Get gift ideas'. At the bottom right, there is a photo of a smiling woman and a child. The Kodak Gallery logo is at the bottom of both sides, with a small note '\*Restrictions apply.' on the left.

“It’s a great way to warm up and engage the kids because they do not always have performance orientation. I think it’s in line with Music on the Hill. It’s about bringing music back home and into our communities,” Borton says.

Borton expects to do a half hour of music magic using mostly bodies and voice, though she’ll have her guitar on hand and invites others to bring their own sound makers. She’ll be at kid level on the sumptuous grass.

Also new is the availability of featured artists’ CDs for \$20 at each event and in the St. John’s bookstore, beginning June 1 through mid-August.

Not new, but very welcome is the returning act of Walter Burke Catering with its reasonably priced and nourishing victuals. So if you forget your picnic basket, do not fear...

**Out on the Green**

New to the scene but ever-so welcome is the Railyard Park Performance Green, where Fan Man Productions will put on a free show by the rollicking group Fête de Louisiane, which includes bands Feufollet and Grammy-nominee Cedric Watson’s Bijou Creole, 5-7:30 pm, June 21.

And expect more free music throughout the summer. Sandra Brice, director of events for the Santa Fe Railyard Community Corporation, which manages the park on behalf of the city, says, “We’re looking for other great events. Send us your proposals!”

**Santa Fe Bandstand**

Noon-1:30 pm  
Tuesday and Thursdays  
6-8:30 pm  
Mondays-Thursdays  
July 6-Aug. 20  
The Plaza  
santafebandstand.com  
outsideinproductions.org

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**Music on the Hill**

6-8 pm  
Wednesdays  
June 10-July 22  
St. John’s College  
1160 Camino Cruz Blanca  
stjohnscollege.edu/events/SF/main.shtml  
Call 984-6000 for day-of updates

**FAM JAM! with its Music Together program**

5:15 pm  
Wednesday, June 10 and June 24  
St. John’s College

**Railyard Park Performance Green**

Fête de Louisiane produced by  
Fan Man Productions  
4-7 pm  
Sunday, June 21  
Santa Fe Railyard  
railyardsantafe.com  
fanmanproductions.com

Other free music:

**The UUUUT Experiment**

8 pm  
Sunday, June 21  
Santa Fe Complex  
624 Agua Fria St.  
sfcomplex.org

UUUT stands for Undiscovered/Unidentified/Unclaimed/Unexplored Territory. How's that for Unknown? This monthly performance series involves participatory music making through unstructured improvisation using, well, anything you can get your hands on. You can also observe until you find your groove. And keep an eye on Santa Fe Complex's calendar, as it has other concerts in the offing.

**SFMax**

8 pm  
Friday, June 5  
David Dunn  
Santa Fe Complex

Each SFMax event at Santa Fe Complex features a composer or artist who presents his or her interactive audio and video software work and then answers questions. Email manti@earthlink.net for details.

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