New Haven Register

Entertainment

Somewhere, Jerry's smiling over lineup for 15th annual Gathering of the Vibes

Published: Friday, July 30, 2010
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BRIDGEPORT — They've been rolling into Seaside Park since Thursday — from all over the country.

Thousands of Deadheads, jam band fans, hippie types of both the aging and retro variety, with and without body jewelry and/or hula hoops...

That can only mean one thing: Gathering of the Vibes!

The 15th Gathering of the Vibes, perhaps the nation's leading celebration of the culture spawned by the **Grateful Dead**, is ready to simmer and rage through Sunday evening.

You don't even have to actually go to enjoy it. You can listen all weekend on WPKN, 89.5 FM, aka "Radio Vibes."

But if you're curious, know this: For this one weekend of the year, for a huge group of people, the 370-acre Seaside Park is the center of everything.

The Vibes began in 1996 as a celebration of life of the late Grateful Dead guitarist and leader Jerry Garcia, who had died the previous summer.

Vibes, which opened Thursday, is expected to bring about 15,000 campers and 21,000 total daily attendees.

"We're rockin' hard here," said Ken Hays, the Vibes' founder and promoter. "Yeah, it came together beautiful. We're looking at beautiful weather."

One asset Vibes has this year is one of its best lineups ever — with two bands that each feature two original members of the Grateful Dead.

The band called **Further**, which includes Dead bassist Phil Lesh and guitar player Bob Weir, will play tonight from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. **The Rhythm Devils**, featuring Dead drummers Bill Kreutzmann and Mickey Hart with Keller Williams, will play Saturday from 9:10 to 10:55 p.m.

That gives the Vibes all four remaining original members of the Dead. But the lineup goes well beyond the Dead. Other highlights include:

- **Today**: Robert Randolph and The Family Band, Sharon Jones and the Dap Kings, Steve Kimock Crazy Engine, Jackie Greene and The Radiators.

- **Saturday**: Primus, Umphrey's McGee, Galactic, Assembly of Dust, Max Creek and Zach Deputy, and

- **Sunday**: Damian Marley & NAS, along with Jimmie Cliff, Martin Sexton with the Ryan Montbleau Band, Little Feat and the Harlem Gospel Choir.

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Great gathering:
Lineup poster for 15th annual Gathering of the Vibes.