



The band Deep Banana Blackout plays at this summer's Gathering of the Vibes in Bridgeport.

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Festival Vibes were good at this year's Gathering

The 2010 version of the Gathering of the Vibes music, arts and camping festival provided concert-goers with a good trip all around. I attended each day of the annual four-day event which took place over the last weekend in July at Bridgeport's Seaside Park. This year featured Grateful Dead originals Phil Lesh and Bob Weir as Friday night's closers playing from the Dead's catalogue as the band Furthur. Original Grateful Dead drummers Bill Kreutzmann and Mickey Hart also joined forces for a headlining show that included a surprise appearance by fire dancers with burning, twirling hoop skirts that added to the festive Saturday night scene.

Besides offering musical favorites for the Vibe Tribe's tie-dye tee shirt crowd, the Gathering provided a finely diverse mix of styles and sound choices that kept the all-ages crowd happy all weekend long. The weather was excellent, too, and instead of twin main stages with bands alternating back and forth as in years past, the festival had one main stage and continuous, remarkably punctual headlining sets, plus simultaneous live music on the Green Vibes Stage. It was easy to roam back and forth between stages and catch some satisfying sets at both locations. I also listened to parts of the festival broadcast live over WPKN (89.5 FM) radio, where I volunteer and host a radio show.

Musical highlights for me over the weekend, and there were many, included a lengthy Sunday afternoon set from rock stalwarts Little Feat, who proved why this veteran outfit can still move a crowd. They combined their classics "Dixie Chicken" and "Willin'" with "Tennessee Jed," played in honor of Jerry Garcia's birthday, and a surprise sing-along version of "Don't Bogart that Joint," closing their set out with a jam-filled version of "Fat Man in the Bathtub." Reggae superstar Jimmy Cliff galvanized the crowd with hits like "You Can Get It, If You Really Want It," "Sitting in Limbo," and "The Harder They Come". And on the Green Vibes Stage, bands like The McLovins and area favorites King for a Day rocked hard and, especially in The McLovins case, rocked very fast, with both bands playing mainly original material.

Following Saturday night's crowd pleasing main stage closing set with a reunited Primus led by Les Claypool and his bass-heavy, kinetic originals that often defied a hummable melody line, Deep Banana Blackout led an early Sunday morning jam session

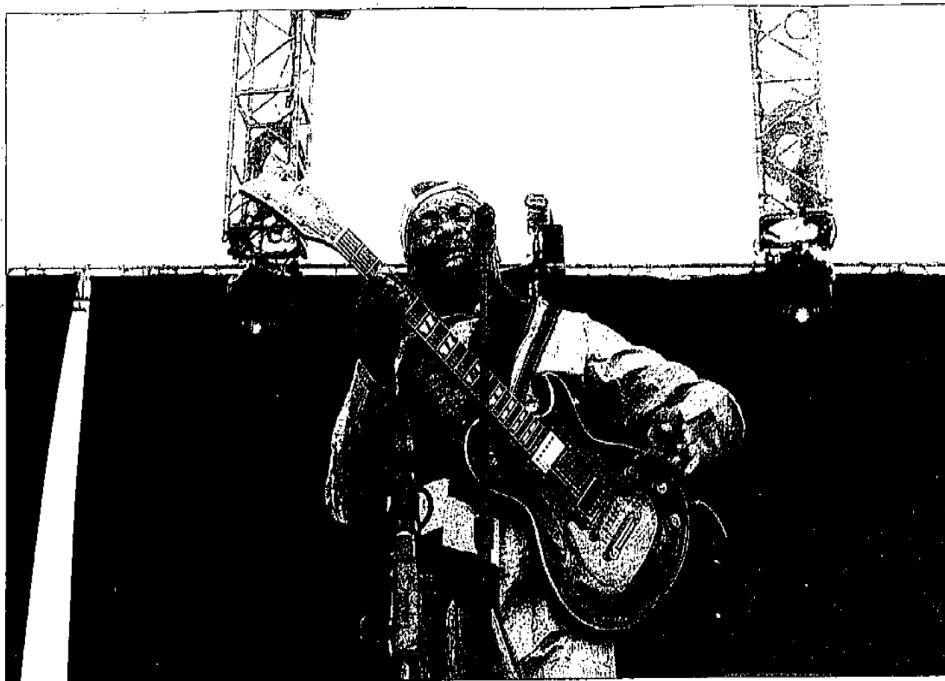


MIKE HORYCZUN
Sound Surfing

that didn't even get started until 1:15 a.m. on the Green Vibes Stage. Another surprise during the weekend came by way of the high energy original funk sounds of Sharon Jones and the Dap Kings. I heard their entire Friday main stage set from the WPKN studios as I monitored the station's Radio Vibes live broadcast. The more I listened, the more I got hooked on the band's tight sound, and after the band's intro set, I was bowled over by the amazing vocalist Sharon Jones and her "James Brown" stage persona.

The Gathering of the Vibes, which turned 15 this year, has been held annually at Bridgeport's Seaside Park since 2007. They were also here, without camping, in 1999 and 2000, and the plan is to return to Bridgeport in 2011 and 2012. This year's attendance was 20,000 per day, according to concert officials, who also noted that local causes greatly benefited from crowd donations. With the vast array of national and regional headliners this festival

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Artist Jimmy Cliff performs at this summer's Gathering of the Vibes festival.

The vibes were good this year

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annually brings to local audiences, over 40 bands and more than 90 hours of music, the Gathering of the Vibes continues its rein as the musical highlight of the summer.

Several area concert series close for the summer this week: Norwalk's free weekly First-County Bank Summer Concert Series at Calf Pasture Beach features The Bookend Band at 7 p.m. preceded by a classic car show at 6 p.m. on Wednesday. Call (203) 854-7807. For cancellations, call (203) 854-7938. Calf Pasture Beach is located on Calf Pasture Beach Road in East Norwalk.

The Levitt Pavilion for the Performing Arts closes its free series with Harmony on the Sound Chorus at 8 p.m. tonight, Emil Stucchio & the Classics at 8 p.m. on Friday, the nationally touring folk trio Red Molly at 8 p.m. on Saturday, and The Fairfield Counts at 7 p.m. on Sunday. And don't for-



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The band Little Feat salutes the crowd at this summer's Gathering of the Vibes festival held in Bridgeport during the month of July.

get the Sept. 24 ticketed event with Blues Traveler at 8 p.m. The Pavilion is located at 40 Jesup Road in Westport. Call (203) 221-2153. Also visit www.levittpavilion.com.

Ridgefield's free CHIRP concert series closes with blues stars The Holmes Brothers at 7 p.m. tonight and the Dana Fuchs Band at 7 p.m. on Tuesday at Ballard Park, located on Main Street in Ridgefield.

Call (203) 431-2760, for rain locations. For more information, visit www.chirpct.org.

Jazz drummer John Cutrone joins Maris Riscia on vocals, Steve Ash on piano, and Bill Moring on bass at Sono Seaport Seafood Restaurant on Sunday from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. And it's free. The restaurant is located at 100 Water Street in South Norwalk. Call (203) 854-