

Viewpoints

Outdoor concerts are a cure for the summertime blues

Top of Utah Voices



Michael Vaughan

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Commentary

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provides hundreds of Adirondack chairs scattered on the grass. Regardless of your seating preference, every seat in these small venues provides a great view of the performers.

Each of these venues benefit from being situated at the base of the Wasatch mountains. Whether Mt. Ogden, Ben Lomond or Farmington

Peak, the mountains provide a perfect vista for a summer concert.

It is interesting that this summer, which is the 40th anniversary of what has come to be known as the Summer of Love, a fair number of musicians who established their reputations in the late 1960s are performing in these Northern Utah venues.

A couple of weeks ago, John McEuen gave a great solo concert in the Ogden Amphitheater. McEuen is one of the founding members of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band,

which released its first album in 1967.

In June, Greg Allman, along with several members of the original Allman Brothers Band, played at the Kenley Amphitheater. Allman played both old and new songs, including "Melissa," which was written in 1967, and is the first song he ever wrote.

It is probably just a coincidence that performers who were starting their careers in the 1960s are visiting Northern Utah on the 40th anniversary of the Summer of Love. Nonetheless, for an aging baby boomer, these vintage performers make the summer concert season even more enjoyable. Even though these performers have been making music for four decades or longer, I get the sense that they still love to play music and are especially happy to perform for any appreciative audience.

But, I don't want to leave you with the impression that the concert venues I have mentioned specialize in 1960s music. The Northern Utah

concert series has scheduled a variety of jazz, Latin, folk, blues and country performers. Concert goers of any age should be able to find at least a few performances which match their musical tastes.

The fact that tickets are inexpensive (some concerts are even free) encourages people to experiment with music which may be new to them. It is not uncommon to see families at these concerts with one generation enjoying the music of another.

I have enjoyed many outdoor performances in Northern Utah, and I appreciate the time and effort

that goes into these events. Northern Utah outdoor venues rely heavily on a staff of volunteers to organize summer concerts. These volunteers do everything from stage setup, to ticket taking, to lighting, to attending to the whims of the performers. They do a great job and deserve the thanks of the audience.

If you haven't enjoyed a concert this season, the remaining weeks of summer are a perfect time to do so. Even though it seems there is no end in sight for temperatures close to 100 degrees, summer will be gone before you know it.

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