

CONNECTICUT POST

NEW ENGLAND NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

55¢/75¢ in outlying areas

SATURDAY August 2, 2008

www.ConnPost.com

Wedding, perfect weather greet Vibes fans

By **SEAN SPILLANE**
Staff writer

BRIDGEPORT — The organizers of the Gathering of the Vibes at Seaside Park couldn't have hoped for a better setting Friday, as blue skies, bright sunshine and a nice breeze from Long Island Sound welcomed crowds at the first full day of activities Friday.

The festival began Thursday, but that was only open to those who were camping for the weekend. Friday was the first day

Go online for videos, schedules and a photo gallery from the Gathering of the Vibes.



open to holders of single-day passes, so there were thousands more people filling the area in front of the Main and Solar stages and mulling around the food courts and vending areas.

The beach balls were flying again, Hula Hoops were in abundance and there were a few kind souls spritzing water on those in

front of the Main Stage, grooving to the music under a sweltering summer sun.

And, for the second straight year, the Vibes was the site of a marriage, performed by none other than master of ceremonies, Wavy Gravy, as Armand and Kelly Coutore took the plunge in an afternoon ceremony.

There was also a familiar face in an unfamiliar role, as former Bridgeport mayor John M. Fabrizi was working in a

➤ Please see **VIBES** on A7



Marinda Righter, of Cambridge, Mass., grooves to the sounds of Porter Batiste Stoltz during Day 2 of the Gathering of the Vibes on Friday at Seaside Park in Bridgeport.

Jesse Neider/Staff photographer

Vibes in full swing for weekend

Continued from A1

food stand, selling hot dogs and hamburgers. Last year at the Vibes, when still mayor, he had a blast, even taking to the stage to give a rousing introduction to Bridgeport-based funk-rock band Deep Banana Blackout.

"I was part of the group that organized to bring the Gathering of the Vibes here in 1999, and I love that it's here," Fabrizi said. "It's great to see when Bridgeport puts on its best face and 30,000 people get to enjoy this beautiful park that otherwise might never see it. Especially today, which is picture-perfect."

Fabrizi, who was "helping a friend out, flipping a couple of burgers and rolling some hot dogs," planned to make the most of his stay at the Vibes and was looking forward to checking out some of the evening headliners, including the Zappa Plays Zappa tribute show led by Frank Zappa's son, Dweezil.

"Oh, yeah. Absolutely," he said. "The music here is fantastic. I'm going to hear a little Zappa a little Black Crowes and, of course, Deep Banana Blackout. Maybe I'll even get to introduce them again."

Armand and Kelly Coutore, of Saugus, Mass., picked the Vibes as the ideal venue to wed, but you can almost say the Vibes picked them.

"The is our third Vibes together and at the first one, we discovered The Ryan Montbleau Band together, which makes this group kind of special to us," Armand Coutore said.

"And on a Vibes Web site, we saw a picture of us kissing in front of The Ryan Montbleau Band, and that got us to thinking. We heard someone was married here last



Ned Gerard/Staff photographer

Newlyweds Kelly and Armand Coutore, left, of Saugus, Mass., and other revelers enjoy the music Friday at the Gathering of the Vibes in Bridgeport's Seaside Park.

year, so we said, 'Why not?'"

And they were married on what would have been the 66th birthday of Grateful Dead guitarist Jerry Garcia, who this festival was created to honor.

"It will definitely help me remember our anniversary," Armand Coutore said.

Fittingly, they were married by Wavy Gravy in front of the stage where Montbleau and his cohorts were performing.

"What better place to have a honeymoon," Armand Coutore said. "To [people back home], it will seem ridiculous, but those who know what this festival is all about will know it's definitely not ridiculous."

"Where else, after you get married, can you have a bunch of strangers come up and give you a hug. It's a beautiful thing with a lot of kind, peaceful people."

Wavy Gravy, a West Hartford native and an icon of the counterculture in the '60s, is an ordained minister with Universal Life Church and was

"I got in touch with him online and we talked a couple of times on the phone, but we didn't meet him until Thursday," said Kelly Coutore, who admitted that her parents had "no idea" that she was getting married.

"I was honored to have him do it," Armand Coutore added of Wavy Gravy. He represents everything I'm into: The Grateful Dead, the '60s, the peace-and-love thing. And he was friends with Jerry [Garcia]. How cool is that?"

The Gathering of the Vibes runs through Sunday at Seaside Park with \$85 single-day tickets available at the gate. For more information, visit www.gatheringofthevibes.com.

contacted by the new Mrs. Coutore through a Vibes blog.