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GATHERING OF THE VIBES: DAY 2



Master of ceremonies Wavy Gravy pronounces Sean Davis and his bride, Lauren Behre, both of Yarmouth, Mass., husband and wife during their wedding ceremony Friday during Day 2 of the Gathering of the Vibes at Seaside Park in Bridgeport. Red Gerard/Connecticut Post

WET AND WILD VIBES

Storybook wedding just perfect for couple

By SEAN SPILLANE
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Little girls often dream of their wedding day as taking place in a beautiful church, with all of their families and friends there to wish them well.

■ Vibes notes. A6

For Lauren Bahre, 21, of Yarmouth, Mass., her ideal wedding was conducted Friday in a tent hundreds of miles from home and presided over by a 71-year-old counterculture icon.

And Bahre couldn't be happier, she said after exchanging vows with Sean Davis, also 21 and from Yarmouth, in a ceremony at the Gathering of the Vibes led by the inimitable Wavy Gravy, who was the master of ceremonies at the original Woodstock festival in August 1968. "This was planned since he proposed in February," Bahre said. "This is bigger than we expected. It is awesome."

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"It feels surreal," Davis said after he and Bahre were pronounced man and wife. "The ceremony was better than anything I imagined or expected. I wouldn't have had it any other way."

"I knew it wouldn't be a conventional wedding, and this was even better than I'd hoped."

It was one of "four or five" weddings Wavy Gravy said he performs each year as a member of the Universal Life Church. He seemed touched by the beaming faces of the newlyweds after his work was done and a loud cheer went up through the tent.

"Oh, yeah. That's why I do this," said Wavy Gravy, who is the master of ceremonies for the Vibes

festival. "I'm in it for the smiles and the buzz. What I do lets me generate a high that's not available in the pharmaceutical world."

Bahre's family wasn't in attendance, but Davis' mother and sister couldn't stay away.

"I didn't believe he was getting married, so I made sure I was here to see it," mother Jean Davis said.

"It's definitely him," she added of the offbeat wedding. "This is typical of him."

His sister Shannon, agreed.

"They go to a lot of festivals together and camp and I start to the music, so this definitely made a lot of sense for them to do it this way," she said. "I'm just glad that he's happy because that's the most important thing."



Ned Gerard/Connecticut Post

Aaron Boxer, of Carlisle, Mass., practices his clarinet in his camper while waiting out the rain Friday at the Gathering of the Vibes at Seaside Park in Bridgeport.

Spirits remain high as festival

Thousands handle bad weather in stride

By **KEN DIXON**
and **SEAN SPILLANE**
Staff writers

The Gathering of the Vibes was more like the gathering gloom Friday, as continuous showers dampened the bodies, if not the spirits, of thousands of jam-band lovers at Seaside Park in Bridgeport.

Festival organizers said that as many as 10,000 campers descended on the sprawling, landmark beach, setting up tents and rain shelters just in time for the first blasts of rain, which began in the predawn and continued through the afternoon.

The precipitation, which was expected to taper off during the night and into today separated the prepared from the merely wet on the first full day of

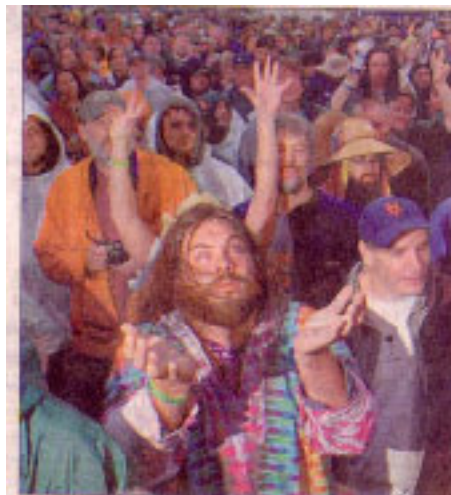


Vibes schedule, stories and photos available online.

► Please see **SPIRITS** on A7

visitors handle bad weather

Saturday, August 11, 2007 A



Festivalgoers listen to a concert by the Mickey Hart Band on Friday night at the Gathering of the Vibes.

SPIRITS CONTINUED

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the festival's weekend-long return to Seaside Park. By midafternoon, city police said no arrests had been made.

Bill Schietinger, general manager of American Medical Response, said 20 people had been transported from the park to local hospitals, but none appeared to have life-threatening ailments.

"We had someone with an apparent seizure, someone with an allergic reaction to a bee sting and a man had a pretty badly broken wrist," Schietinger said at medical headquarters next to the Perry Memorial Arch at the Park Avenue entrance.

Nearby, a young woman was sitting at a picnic table, getting treatment for a typical injury: a bare foot cut from broken glass.

Depending on when they arrived, campers were pleased with peaceful sites in groves of trees near the twin music stages, or not so happy when they had to pitch tents far from the music.

"We've been doing these at various places for 20 years, so we're pretty organized," said Rock O'Donnell, 38, of Ridgefield, who was with about 20 friends in a choice spot among maple trees near the Civil War Soldiers and Sailors Monument.

The group had two pop-up shelters and a tarpaulin set up over a cooking area near a semicircle of tents.

"We're trying to maximize everything in this area," said Tammy Buffett, 40, of Kentucky, who had filled a Jeep with her and her husband's share of the group's equipment.

"The gear has really

Vibes prices

A sampling of the many items for sale at the Gathering of the Vibes:

Smoothies: \$5
Fresh Juice: \$4
Garlic grilled-cheese sandwich: \$3
Veggie Quesadilla: \$6
Chicken kabob pita: \$8
Small Ben & Jerry's ice cream: \$3.50
Tofu Marsala: \$7
Twisty Fries: \$6
Grilled chicken satay: \$5
Slice of cheese pizza: \$3
Vibes mouse pad: \$6
Vibes Travel mug: \$18
Vibes T-shirt: \$20 to \$30
Vibes poster: \$15

—KEN DIXON



accumulated over the years," she said.

O'Donnell got there early and when he claimed the spot, he immediately text-messaged his friends for the rendezvous.

Buffett said the highlight of the spot was the close proximity to free, hot showers, as opposed to the inclement weather with temperatures in the mid-50s.

Some complained of long lines of vehicles getting into the park, as late arrivals Friday were directed to the isolated West Beach, about a mile-and-a-half by shuttle bus.

"It sucks that we had to be out here," said Eric Osmanoglu, 26, of Paterson, N.J., as he and Jen Acosta, a 27-year-old teacher, waited with a friend from Florida for the yellow school bus shuttle to the main concert area.

They camped in a wind-wiped

overflow area across from the bathhouse, as the crowd swelled far beyond the 6,000-person estimate.

"We've sold out of camping tickets," said a fatigued but proud Ken Hays, executive director of Terrapin Presents, sponsor of the event. "We still have single-day tickets available for Saturday and Sunday." The event's Web site says single-day tickets are \$70.

The general vibe of the Vibes was peaceful and partying. Many celebrated the morning with beer and marijuana, the use of which seemed ubiquitous at campsites and in front of the stages.

The rain and cool weather caused a significant drop-off in business for at least one vendor, Ben & Jerry's ice cream.

"It is hurting us, but hopefully Saturday and Sunday we'll make it up," said Michael McCarthy, of Burlington, Vt. "It was pretty busy



Photos by Ned Gerard/Connecticut Post

The crowd dances to the music at the Gathering of the Vibes in Bridgeport on Friday. At left, Aliza Girard, 3, of Bridgton, Maine, keeps bundled up during a rainstorm.

SPIRITS CONTINUED

yesterday, nothing too crazy, but it's kind of a treat just to be here listening to the music."

On the flip side, the cold has boosted sales at Taste of Budd's Chocolate Desserts, which had the longest lines at the food court.

"The foul weather definitely improves our sales of warm cookies, cappuccinos and cocoas," said Dan Budd, who is doing business at the Vibes for the seventh straight year. "But we're diversified. We have plenty of

frozen treats to cool people off, as well as warming them up in the foul weather."

Sales of warm-weather wear also were helped by the rainy and chilly conditions.

"A lot of people are coming in for the fleece pullovers and the long-sleeve T-shirts," said Warren Congdon, of Greenwood Lake, N.Y., who was working at the Terrapin Presents merchandise tent. "And people started coming in for the bucket hats when it started raining

and now we're sold out."

At the Underground Collective tent, the sweat shirts were big sellers.

"Absolutely," said worker Kate Eldredge of Ithaca, N.Y. "We don't always wish for bad weather, but we were hoping to get rid of a lot of our sweat shirts and it's working out that way."

The weather forecast for today and Sunday is for sunny skies and temperatures in the high 70s to low 80s.

A LITTLE BIT OF EVERYTHING

By **KEN DIXON**
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VIBES NOTEBOOK

BRIDGEPORT — When you put more than 10,000 people on a 370-acre park for three or four days, there are many, many brief scenes in the long days and nights of music and near-nonstop party.

10 a.m. Friday: One of the first groups I see includes two shirtless young men walking along, holding up a nearly incoherent woman. They are all soaked from the rain.

She has the look of someone who maybe has had too much of a drug known by an acronym, such as LSD.

"We'll just tell him you've been drinking and if he don't believe us, well I'll..." One of the men says as they limp along war wounded.

Later, EMS personnel say that among the casualties taken to local hospitals, there was one person who might have been on the short end of a bout with psychedelic drugs.

11:30 a.m.: I see 20 people waiting in line for four blue portable toilets near the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. Hundreds of the toilets are scattered throughout the park and their cleanliness is crucial to festival ambience and good feelings.

A young woman emerges from one of the contraptions and is

asked what it looked like in there.

"It's negotiable right now," she said, curling a lip, warning that toilet paper is low.

Later, Ken Hays, festival director, tells the *Connecticut Post* that crews are stationed around the clock at the festival, emptying and cleaning the portable toilets as it's needed.

Noon: Searching for something called the Solar Beach Stage and a local band called Big Apple'Achia, the shuttle bus takes me to the western end of the beach, at least a mile and a half from the main stage and, as it works out, a half-mile past the Solar Stage.

Traffic-control people don't even know where the stage is. When I finally find it, on Barnum Boulevard, it doesn't matter because the band canceled its appearance, although Electric Mayhem is wailing and sounding good.

12:30 p.m.: Amanda Valentine, 19, among a bunch of friends from Enfield with a dry shelter area and a backyard propane grill for cooking, says the nearby rest rooms were cleaned around dawn.

1 p.m.: Crowds of long-haired Vibesters, some without shoes, are cruising along Sound View Drive as 2-foot waves seek the shore.

Although the rules prohibit

vending without permission, a bearded man walks along with an open jewel box with about 30 crystals, for potential sales discussions. In the distance the Port Jefferson Ferry disappears into the fog and rain, heading for Long Island.

1:10 p.m.: About a dozen youngsters are in the Kids' Tent getting their faces painted.

1:40 p.m.: Tea Leaf Green, a jam band from Vermont — no surprise there — is playing what seems to be a song without end.

2 p.m.: The rain slows to a dull spit, allowing a couple people to use the shore breeze to power their bubble wands. A couple of the soap bubbles are huge and one nearly makes it to the drummer. Two thousand to 3,000 people are gathered around the Bandshell Stage as the nearby Terrapin Stage gets set up for Zero.

2:20 p.m.: The rain picks up again. A young woman is circling a Hula-Hoop around her hips to the beat of the band, holding a small umbrella over her head, smiling to herself on a rainy day. Despite the downpour, the field's drainage is good and there's no mud.

2:30 p.m.: In the VIP tent, Mel Harris from Fort Worth, Texas, is there to blog the concert. "This crowd is pretty laid back, which is what I expected," said Harris, whose reviews are on



John Galbyda/Connecticut Post

Ashley Kehrig, front, of Kittery, Maine, Gabby Gonzalez, center, of Long Branch, N.J., and Cam Zuidema, behind Gonzalez, of Long Branch, dance during a performance by Dickey Betts and Great Southern Friday night at the Gathering of the Vibes in Bridgeport.

MusicRoadMan.com.

2:40 p.m.: Wavy Gravy, the septuagenarian master of ceremonies, relives the '60s between sets.

"We are celebrating the weather," he tells the moist crowd.

then praises WPKN 89.5 FM for broadcasting the event live all weekend. "More rain, more rain, more rain," he shouts. "These events," he says a couple minutes later, "are best in hindsight."

5 p.m.: Ken Hays, the

organizer, says the Vibes are living up to his peaceful, partying reputation.

"That's consistent with this community," he says. "We're happy to represent them for the last 12 years."