


SE Connecticut hosts live tunes aplenty with second Make Music Day events

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Summer is noisy — probably by design and perhaps by literal definition. The windows are open, and folks are outside where the warm air echoes with the sounds of frivolity: boats, cook-outs, motorcycles, lawn mowers, road construction that can't be done in winter, fireworks, and so on.

And, yes, music.

This last resonates because today marks the beginning of summer — the solstice! — and Connecticut celebrates by taking part in the global Make Music Day. It's an inclusive event that started 36 years ago in France with the idea that anyone and everyone would be invited to join and play music or host performances.

Organizations and communities throughout Connecticut officially began to take part in Make Music Day in 2018, and our region is a big part of the celebration. From Colchester and East Haddam to Old Lyme, Ledyard, Stonington, Groton, New London and more, area musicians and bands will perform all day and into the evening — some more than once — at familiar live music rooms as well as businesses, parks, outdoor pavilions, restaurants, farms, and just standing around on the streets.

"Last year was a great success for our first go-around, and this year is bigger, with more than 115 live, free music performances across the region," says Wendy Bury, director of the Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition, a coordinating sponsor for the event. "More towns got involved this year, and word spread among musicians and venues."

The "all are welcome" ethic truly shines. In New London, not only are popular music/entertainment spots like 33 Golden Street, the Oasis Pub, the Garde Arts Center, the Telegraph Record Shop and Hygienic Art hosting bands, you'll be able to catch live tunes at such disparate spots as the Custom House Maritime Museum, New London Homeless Hospitality Center, and New London Main Street Gallery & Sidewalk. Acts will similarly entertain on the Parade Plaza Whale Tail Stage, the Waterfront Park at City Pier, Fiddleheads Food Co-Op, Waller, Smith & Palmer, Noble, the Right Path Organic Cafe, Hot Rod Café, Cultured Studio, and RD86.

Not only that, but area and national businesses are chiming in on logistics as well. The Hohner harmonica company has provided about 100 harmonicas for the region; Guitar Center has donated 100 kazoos; and Spindrift Guitars has gifted 10 sets of guitar strings for participating players. The National Make Music Day Alliance also sent guitar instruction books and drumstick. And WCNI, the popular Connecticut College radio station, will broadcast live from the front of New London Main Street.

"Last year's Make Music Day was magic throughout the region and certainly here in New London," says Rich Martin, owner of the Telegraph and one of the event coordinators for the event. "Music could be found all over the city in all of its many splended guises from folk to jazz to rock and beyond. It's a wonderful way to kick off summer and celebrate community and expose yourself to new vibes you many never have explored before."

Among the many live music spots in other area communities are Gillette Castle State Park in East Haddam; the East Lyme Community Center; Mystic Shipyard; Washington Park in Groton; the Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center (who will stream their events live on their web site); Reliance Health in Norwich; and, one of last

year's highlights, the Make Music Day Old Lyme festival stretching across the entire town in coordinated fashion.

"Making music? What's not to like?" asks Nick Johns, the singer/songwriter/guitarist for Marvelous Liars, who play at 8 p.m. on Waterfront Park's City Pier Stage in New London. "This is an event created to share music with local communities across the country and more. Everyone involved in organizing this locally do it for a common reason: People need a break from the noise of life sometimes and to just do something fun. As a band, we get to do that just for the listener, and hopefully you pick up a few new fans along the way."

Lisa Marien, the jazz vocalist who teaches music at Nathan Hale Arts Magnet School in New London, is an eager first-time participant. She performs four times today, at 9:30 a.m. at Cold Spring Farm in Colchester; at 12:15 p.m. in front of the Garde Arts Center; at 2:15 in the Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center in Ledyard; and at 7:30 p.m. in New London's Noble.

"I found about Make Music Day too late to get involved last year, but I'm excited to jump in with both feet this year," she says. "It's a great opportunity to introduce my music to new audience, and I love the idea of people sharing their hearts and coming together through the gift of music."

The idea is pretty infectious — as per the participation of the Groton Family Farm. Patriarch Warren Burrows, an amateur blues harmonica player who dreams of performing in blues clubs during "retirement," says the farm is "in transition" and he wanted to offer the spot as a Make Music Day venue to showcase the property and put some musical focus on Groton.

"This is going to be a lot of fun," Burrows says. "I love music and want to share it, and I want people to see that, in the future, maybe this land could be the site of a family village where people could celebrate music and food and community together. If (the farm's) last hurrah was as part of Make Music Day, that's a pretty good thing."

MAKE MUSIC DAY — PARTIAL REGIONAL SCHEDULE

New London

Waterfront Park Stage at City Pier, Water Street

4 p.m. — U.S. Coast Guard Dixieland Jazz Band

6 p.m. — Brad Bensko Band

7 p.m. — Funkasville

8 p.m. — Marvelous Liars

9 p.m. — Slyne and the Family Stoned

Whale Tail Stage at Parade Plaza, at intersection of State and Water streets

2 p.m. — Geoff Kaufman

2:30 p.m. — Suave-Ski

3 p.m. — Monch

3:30 p.m. — Harmonica Lesson & Demo with Blunt White

4:30 p.m. — Ada Mae Florek

5 p.m. — Chris MacKay and Toneshifters

6 p.m. — NL Drone Orchestra

Garde Arts Center, 325 State St.

11 a.m. — Leigh and Sigel Duo

11:30 a.m. — Geoff Kaufman

12:15 p.m. — Lisa Marien

1 p.m. — Nickelodeon Barbershop Quartet

1:30 p.m. — Jess & Amy

2 p.m. — Hugh Birdsall

2:30 p.m. — Brian Gore

3 p.m. — Daphne Lee Martin

3:30 p.m. — King Cay

4 p.m. — Jeff Butler

4:30 p.m. — Irene Rissi

5:15 p.m. — Double the Dial

Custom House Maritime Museum, 150 Bank St.

Noon — Nickelodeon Barbershop Quartet

1 p.m. — Arielle Frommer

1:30 p.m. — Gilead Road

2:30 p.m. — Playa Plaers

3:30 p.m. — Irene Rissi

4 p.m. — Brad Bensko

5 p.m. — Bruce McDermott

The Telegraph Record Shop, 19 Golden St.

3 p.m. — Double the Dial

4 p.m. — Sonorous Rising

5 p.m. — Sweet Mercy!

Right Path Organic Cafe, 147 Bank St.

11:30 a.m. — Jazzpe 6/8

12:30 p.m. — Leigh & Hunter Duo

New London Main Street Gallery & Sidewalk, 311 State St.

11 a.m.-6 p.m. — WCNI 90.9 FM Radio broadcasting live

Hygienic Art Park, 79 Bank St.

4 p.m. — Jazzpe 6/8

5:30 p.m. — Pocket Vinyl

6:30 p.m. — Jeff Butler

Fiddleheads Food Co-Op, 13 Broad St.

10 a.m. — East Lyme Senior Guitar Group

11 a.m. — Hugh Birdsall

Noon — Three's A Charm

3 p.m. — The Ruta Beggars

4:30 p.m. — Lyme to London Trio

7 p.m. — Pocket Vinyl

Waller, Smith & Palmer, 52 Eugene O'Neill Drive

3 p.m. — Nickelodeon Barbershop Quartet

4 p.m. — Amy Bleasdale

5 p.m. — Pigpen

New London Homeless Hospitality Center, 730 State Pier Road

3 p.m. — Hugh Birdsall

Noble, 74 Bank St.

1:30 p.m. — Nickelodeon Barbershop Quartet

3 p.m. — Local Honey

5:15 p.m. — Jazzpe 6/8

7:30 p.m. — Lisa Marien

Cultured Studios, 176 State St.

4 p.m. — Chiba

RD86, 86 Golden St.

6-9 p.m. — Benny Velazquez Group

The Oasis Pub, 16 Bank St.

10 p.m. — Tranquil Dirt Bags

Hot Rod Cafe, 114 Bank St.

9 p.m. — DJ E@sy

33 Golden Street, 33 Golden St.

8:30 p.m. — Coma Hole

9:30 p.m. — Insano Vision

10:30 p.m. — Dark Ritual

Colchester

Cold Spring Farm, 46 Town Road

9:30 a.m. — Lisa Marien

8 p.m. — Nickelodeon Barbershop Quartet

11:30 p.m. — Acadia Forsaken

East Haddam

Gillette Castle State Park, 67 River Road

6:15 p.m. — Nickelodeon Barbershop Quartet

Higher Grounds Coffee House Gallery, 32 Main St.

10 a.m. — Steve Dedman

12:30 p.m. — The Sunday Postman aka Ben Martin

4 p.m. — Cosmos Sunshine

7 p.m. — Acoustic Open Mic

Acoustic Open Mic

EAST LYME

East Lyme Community Center, 41 Society Road

2 p.m. — East Lyme Senior Guitar Group Jam

GROTON

Bill Memorial Library, 240 Monument St.

10 a.m. — Sing-Along Musical Story Time

Groton Family Farm, 70 Fort Hill Road

12:30 p.m. — Hugh Birdsall

1:30 p.m. — Xeriah Bonano

2 p.m. — King Cay

2:30 p.m. — Ada Mae Florek

3 p.m. — Joe

4:30 p.m. — Old Lyme Orchestra

5:45 p.m. — F & Blues Band

7 p.m. — As Time Goes By

8:15 p.m. — Acoustic Soup

Washington Park, 155 Meridian St.

6:30 p.m. — Coyote River Band

Mystic

Mystic Shipyard, 100 Essex St. — Sails Up 4 Cancer

6 p.m. — The Troublemakers

The Music Place, 785 Long Hill Road

2:30 p.m. — Brad Bensko

3:30 p.m. — Blues Band All Stars

Mashantucket

Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center, 110 Pequot Trail

Noon — Little Fox Dance Troupe

2:15 p.m. — Lisa Marien

