

Weekly Summer Concerts Entertain Los Alamos

All summer Friday nights in Los Alamos, you'll find downtown filled with music, folks gathered around a bandstand, having picnics, visiting with friends and enjoying the sunset. It's a big part of the charm of small town life in Los Alamos.

For Russ Gordon, the organizer of the Los Alamos Summer Concert Series, it started out as a fun way to promote his retail store, Gordons' CDs, DVDs and Concerts. In 1990 he produced 10 concerts in a parking lot in White Rock with 15 sponsors covering the costs. This year, seventeen years later, there will be 37 free performances, 3 fundraisers and more than 70 sponsors funding the \$120,000 concert series.

Since the concert series is designed to be a local event, Gordon has not actively advertised to attract out-of-towners, but the names and quality of the bands has often brought visitors from around New Mexico and the four corners area. Some of the biggest names have included the Red Elvises, Dave Alvin, Tim O'Brien, and the South Austin Jug Band.



The outdoor concerts are a flurry of energy for children. Toddlers run around freely, kids dance and teens gather not far from the watchful eyes of parents. "We try to make the concerts family-oriented and are working to get more food booths and activities sponsored by businesses," says Gordon.

To support the local businesses and sponsors, the concerts will sometimes be set up in the street or a parking lot, but most are scheduled for Ashley Pond. Also, the concerts continue year-round and not just during the summer months this year. Gordon says he would like to see an amphitheater constructed at the Pond to give it a downtown home. His vision also includes attracting visitors to Los Alamos with the concerts. "I'd like

folks to invite their friends and relatives to LA for a fun weekend rather than always going to the bigger towns for entertainment,” says Gordon.

Support for the concert series has been steadily growing, both in attendance and in sponsorships. Gordon says he has contacted nearly every business in Los Alamos over the years, and he frequently gets unsolicited checks for the concerts from civic groups, businesses and community members.

Fast Facts: Gordons' Summer Concert Series 2008

Performers: Local, regional, national, and international acts

Schedule: Weekly Friday nights, all summer long plus Mother's Day, Father's Day, the County Fair and Rodeo and ChamberFest.
For a complete schedule, go to:
visit.losalamos.com/events

Ticket Price: FREE

Venue: Many venues
Bring a blanket and/or a lawn chair

Contacts: Russ Gordon, russ@gordonsconcerts.com, 505-661-4891
Los Alamos Meeting & Visitor Bureau,
mvb@losalamos.org, or 505-662-8105

Lodging: Call Los Alamos Meeting & Visitor Bureau

With the support of concert series sponsors, Gordon is working to make Los Alamos a nicer place to live by providing more entertainment and giving local businesses a boost.

“It’s a new venture for me, to make a living doing concerts,” he says.

“What I enjoy most is doing concerts in Los Alamos.”

Gordon says the peaceful, small town atmosphere is what makes it possible to produce concerts in Los Alamos. “I hope to keep on doing them,” he says. “Los Alamos deserves it.”

Complete information and updates as well as lodging, maps, and other local information are available at Los Alamos’ online visitor guide at visit.losalamos.com