

A Personal View: All New Local News and the La Honda Fair

by Leah Lubin



Propel your mind back about one year to a simpler time when we knew that our local music scene was excellent and beyond, and we had weekly access to it in La Honda.

We'd sit together outside or inside listening to music, eating and drinking, but most of all, happy and grateful that such good music was made available to us.

With a change of hands, the music scene that was, was no longer. No one was to blame, life and its many changes. Closer to home, here in SkyLonda, Alice's Restaurant brought back Rufino, a well-known local chef who has done the cooking rounds in many of the local dining establishments. Then, the Boulevard Grill suddenly closed. But, late in May the energy seemed to shift. We were having brunch at the Blue Sun Cafe in Boulder Creek (in my opinion the best vegetarian restaurant in the Bay Area) when my husband and I heard a tape of The Waybacks being played while we ate. Back home, at SkyLonda, we saw a flyer that said that This Way Up would be playing at Apple Jack's in La Honda and that the La Honda Country Fair and Music Festival was about to happen. Things were looking up and the summer music festival season was about to begin. I was in the Skywood Trading Post when Beshara told me more good news: the Boulevard Grill, now called Four Corners, was reopening with one of its new owners as chef. The SkyLonda community is very small and we need our establishments to stay open and succeed.

One issue brought up to me by Karen Bird, a local realtor, was the neglected state of the "Red Barn" on Highway 84 between Skyline Boulevard and La Honda. The barn, now owned by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, was in need of a new paint job and other maintenance. "We're going to have a local fundraiser to help with this matter," said Karen.

About one week before the La Honda Country Fair, I called the phone number on their flyer and was surprised when Reid Dennis from The Mark Reid Band answered the phone. Not so strange when you consider that he's married to Paula Dennis, fair organizer. The fair is held each year as a benefit for the La Honda Elementary School Art and Music Department.



"What's new Reid?" I asked. "Well, I'm building a music studio from scratch on my property in La Honda. It's to be called Elf Ent. I got the name from the tree people in *The Hobbit*." Expect to see the Mark Reid Band play with David Elias on Sunday afternoon at the Fair," Reid said. "I'll look forward to it," I replied.

Saturday, June 9 rolled in clear and warm. We arrived at the La Honda Fair in time to hear a great set from Rasko and Holy Smoke, all the more impressive since this was their first performance in two years. As they were setting up for the next band, the power suddenly went out. "It's a rolling blackout," everyone said. But, it wasn't. The problem was a true PG&E crisis—no power all the way from the coast to La Honda. As I looked around, it seemed everyone simply settled down and enjoyed it. A young "hippy dude" sat on the edge of the stage and started playing his drum. Quite good too! With other musicians joining in with their acoustic instruments, the power finally returned two-and-a-half hours later.

Highlights from Saturday included Groovy Judy, a mix of "Psychedelic meets New Wave" hippie woman with a strong rock 'n' roll voice. The Lollygaggers warmed up by their second song and kept the energy going. Super-popular Gary Gates Band did what they always do: perform a great set. Tight, dance-worthy, happy and up, feel-good stuff.

Sunday, the weather was slightly cooler. We planned to be at the fair in time for Foggy Mountain Jam, but, unbeknown to us, they had changed time slots with Mark and Monica. So, unfortunately we missed Foggy Mountain Jam, but enjoyed Mark and Monica very much.

The last three acts were as follows: Banana Slug String Band— they were so funny, and entertaining and had all the kids glued to their act; This Way Up— good as always with strong harmony and original sound; with The Mark Reid Band joined by David Elias closing up the Fair. It completed what seemed to be the best musical time I've had at this small fair. Growing in popularity, but still comfortably backwoods.