

GENERAL REPORT

Submitted to ACT and Chairwoman, Jessica Hodorski

Forwarded to Brett Simmons, Torrington Park & Recreation Department

From Jacque Williams, Committee Chair & Ed Cannata, Co-Chair

1st Annual Folk Music Festival “Coe Park Unplugged”

RECAP

The collaboration between ACT and Park & Rec took place Saturday, September 20, 2014 in Coe Park from 1 pm to 7 pm. This event was unanimously passed by both ACT and Park & Rec as an opportunity to showcase Coe Park as a music venue and create a draw for artists to perform in Torrington. The music event featured seven musical performances, a musical tribute of the Star Spangled Banner, a drawing by the Warner Theatre for tickets to a movie event. A tent was set up for the artists to sell merchandise, a Karate presentation was given in the center of the park, non profits lined Litchfield Street and Food vendors served patrons in the designated “Food Court” area.

We estimated seeing between 500 – 600 people visit the park throughout the event. Our last unofficial count was 538 for the day. There were 5 non profits in the park, 2 merchants new to Torrington were invited and 1 police officer on sight. Coe Park was cleaned up and shut down at approximately 8:15 pm (1 hour and 15 minutes after the conclusion of the event).

State representatives Jay Case and Michelle Cook were on hand to give remarks throughout the day. Our distinguished mayor was also present and very supportive of our collaboration.

The main marketing and promotion of the event came to fruition through the talents of Ed Cannata. The 60 second commercial that Ed produced would prove to be the main impetus behind the success of the event (2,000 email invites were sent). The commercial was seen on Cable 5 during the Neighborhood News and was viewed daily throughout the week (We paid for six 60 second spots a day for the entire span of the promo (We may have received up to 12 a day due to rebroadcasts). We also had the event listed in the Park & Rec fall/winter directory. One of our volunteers passed out flyer/programs at the High Street Stop n Shop.

The food vendors did okay. Both O’Connor’s and Sol Café saw the advantages of being at the event and promoting their businesses. Dos Amigos, already a bit familiar with the process, did

well. There were some issues in regards to the Health Department. The restaurants stayed busy during the entire event.

A “Green Room” was set up for the artists inside the Civic Center which was warmly received by the musicians. We received food donations from Dominos Pizza, Dunkin’ Donuts, Ciesco Catering, Stop n’ Shop and Nejaimes throughout the day to keep the artists and volunteers comfortable. Charlotte Hungerford Hospital donated two cases of bottled water.

SUMMARY

With all the mitigating factors surrounding the launching of this event, I think a great foundation has been laid to weave this into the Arts & Culture fabric. Every aspect of this event can be improved upon, but the bar has been set high. There is a folk music movement growing in our region, I feel strongly that the commission should seriously consider getting this event on the agenda as soon as possible so we can get started on planning the 2nd Annual Coe Memorial Park Folk Music Festival...”Coe Park Unplugged II.”

As the rest of the downtown continues to be re invigorated, this could be an event that could have legs well into the future. I can see making this event into a 2 day event. Again, depending on how the rest of downtown pans out. Parking issues may need to be addressed more stringently in the next planning phase as well as increased security concerns if more growth is anticipated. We could have had up to 1,000 people in the part, if not for an administrative issue that occurred that was out of our control. We also could have collected a small fee from the non profits to use our tents and to help offset a few expenses. I also think 1 or 2 more demonstrations (ie: Kempo Karate) in the park would make the day more eventful.

Contributors aiding on our behalf were:

- Jack Reynolds and Minuteman Press donated a banner for the stage (\$150).
- Giordano Signs paid to rent “pipe & drape” for the stage backdrop (\$107).
- Being that this was the first time for two of the restaurants to participate in an outdoor dining event, consideration was given by the Health Department. Hopefully they will have a more coordinated process for the next event.
- Flyers and marketing materials requiring time/paper/ink were donated by the Singer Songwriter Network.
- TH Channell Productions took on administrative tasks (ie: Artist necessary paperwork, electronic communication with vendors/artists, social media, etc.).
- Ed Cannata designed all promotional (postcards, flyers, banners, signs, 60 second TV commercial, radio spot).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Musicians

- 1) Arrive at least one hour before performance time.
- 2) Hot tea will be provided in Green Room.
- 3) Bring sweater or jacket.
- 4) Give audio tech a diagram of your stage set up.
- 5) Bring back up batteries, guitar strings, cables/cords.
- 6) Bring a PR person to pass out info & sell merchandise.
- 7) Roadie to do idiot check.

Food Vendors

- 1) Be there 2 hours before and have food ready to serve at the start of the event.
- 2) Work with the other food vendors to provide paper products, plastic ware, ice, etc.
- 3) Have banners & signs customer made for their tent.
- 4) Have all forms of payment available (Credit, Debit and Cash).
- 5) Have coupons to give out for repeat business after the event.

Non Profits

- 1) Have two volunteers split 2 – 3 hour shifts.
- 2) Have plenty of signage (advertise prior to the event).
- 3) Bring plenty of marketing & promotional material.
- 4) Bring plenty of water.

Make sure non profits are included in flyer/programs.

SPONSORS

Private Donations - \$450
Steven Todd (Brooks, Todd & McNeil) - \$250
Steve Temkin (T&M Builders) - \$100
Giordano Signs (Pipe & Drape Rental) - \$107
Torrington Savings Bank - \$100
Union Savings Bank - \$100

CONTRIBUTORS

Singer Songwriter Network, LLC – Print Marketing, Social Media
TH Channell Productions – Administration, Publicity & Promotion, Film Production (In the process of editing).
Ed Cannata, EMC Interactive – Graphics Design, Advertising

Non-Profits

Warner Theatre – Ticket giveaway
Kidsplay – Frisbee giveaway
Early Childhood Collaborative
FISH

Food Vendors

Dos Amigos - \$75
Sol Café - \$75
O'Connor's Public House - \$75

Green Room Donations

Dominos – 2 large 2 topping pizzas
Ciesco – Sandwiches
Nejames – Hot food, pita chips & hummus
Stop n Shop – Ice
Dunkin' Donuts – Box of Coffee & Hot Water
Charlotte Hungerford Hospital – Bottled Water