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By Cathy Tyson



The proposed location of a permanent stage Photo Cathy Tyson

A group of dedicated Rotarians have been working on making a permanent stage for their annual "Concert at the Reservoir" on the east side of the reservoir. For the last sixteen years the group took on the herculean task of constructing a temporary stage for the event, then disassembling it after the concert. Noting that Rotarians are aging, former Club President Dick Holt, who founded the annual Concert at the Reservoir fundraiser seventeen years ago, always had a vision of a permanent stage.

The "Concert at the Res," as it's affectionately known, has maintained its original purpose - hosting an open air concert with public school band members, from which half of the funds raised go toward supporting local school music programs, and the other half fund Rotary projects.

Initial plans are being evaluated by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), which owns and operates the Lafayette Recreation Area. "We're exploring design options and building materials to ensure the proposed stage is consistent with environmental conditions and general use by our visitors at the reservoir," said Nora Harlow, Community Affairs Representative at EBMUD.

Holt describes the Reservoir as, "one of Lafayette's greatest assets;" he and fellow Rotary member John Sherry said EBMUD has been terrific to work with.

The location for the proposed new stage is a natural amphitheater on the east side of the Reservoir, nearer to the parking area - allowing easier access for the elderly and handicapped, and not far away from the children's play area. For the past seven years, and again next month, the concert has been held on the large flat picnic area on the west side.

"The proposed stage would be greener than the grass," opined Rotarian John Sherry. If it's given the green light, the roughly 40' by 40' stage is estimated to cost \$80,000. The Lafayette Community Foundation has agreed to sponsor the project.

"Service above self," is the motto of the Rotary Club; "Investing in the Civic, Cultural and Environmental Health of Lafayette" is what the Lafayette Community Foundation is all about. The permanent stage project, although still in the works, seems like a natural collaboration for these two groups.

This year's Concert at the Res is set for May 15 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Stanley Middle School's Symphonic Band will be performing, along with bands from Bentley and Acalanes as well as the Big Band of Rossmoor. If approved, the proposed new stage may be ready for the 2011 Concert at the Res.

Reach the reporter at: cathy@lamorindaweekly.com

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