

# A skillful and nostalgic performance delights old and young alike

By Clark McGaugh

Arriving at The Dead show July 2 at Columbia Meadows was not unlike taking a stroll through Berkeley's Peoples Park in my youth. We were greeted by a sea of tie dye, smiling people of all ages, babies to grandparents, maybe great-grandparents, who looked at wares put on display by vendors set up prior to the show.

As we approached the ticket gate we were delighted to find Further 2, the wildly painted converted 1942 International school bus brought to Columbia Meadows by Ken Kesey's son Zane. The original Further was a 1939 version made famous/infamous by the Merry Pranksters.

Next to the bus was a booth set up by The Conscious Alliance to collect donated food destined for Columbia County food pantries (435 lbs. of donated goods were collected). The Conscious Alliance is a group dedicated to feeding the hungry throughout the United States and are "on tour" with The Dead, collecting food at each show. Being in the first thousand to donate food, we received a limited edition

poster designed by famed Grateful Dead artist, Stanley Mouse.

Grateful Dead song writer, lyricist, and balladeer Robert Hunter opened the show by simply walking on stage with his guitar – without introduction – and beginning to play. It was great listening to songs I knew played by the man who wrote them, and they were the same only different. I especially enjoyed *Box of Rain* as well as *New Speedway Boogie*.

The Dead followed with a wonderful show, opening with *Liberty* and followed by one of my favorites, *Easy Wind*. Warren Haynes vocals on *Dear Mr. Fantasy* were outstanding. They ended the first set with another favorite, *Iko Iko*, with an animated, smiling, arm-waving Mickey Hart leading the crowd on the chorus.

Opening the second set, Bob Weir switched to an acoustic guitar for *The Weight*, *Peggy-O* and the popular *Friend of the Devil*. Then they blew me away with a rendition of The Beatles *She Said, She Said*. *Drumz/Space* was very good, and drummers Bill Kreutzmann and Mickey Hart didn't miss a beat before rolling into a mesmerizing *Stella Blue*.



The Dead at Columbia Meadows, from left are Phil Lesh, Bob Weir and Warren Haynes.

After finishing the set with *Franklin's Tower*, bassist Phil Lesh told the crowd how thrilled he was to be there, and that he was there only because of an organ donor from whom he received a life-saving liver. Lesh urged everyone to become donors. Bob Weir then addressed the crowd, saying that many nations in the world are democracies...in name only... that they are run by/for the

"elite" and that this election may be the last chance for a "real" vote. Weir urged everyone to "Vote your mind, vote your heart."

The Dead then, after performing twenty songs, finished the show with *Unbroken Chain*.

A good time was had by all!

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