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## Wrap up summer Beach Boys style with concert Wednesday at Foellinger Outdoor Theatre

By James Grant of The News-Sentinel  
Thursday, August 28, 2014 - 8:16 am

If you're looking to experience one last blast of summer before the calendar officially turns to fall, the Beach Boys concert Wednesday at Foellinger Outdoor Theatre may be your best bet.

Hailing from Hawthorne, Calif., the Beach Boys have become unofficial ambassadors of summer since they burst on the music scene in 1962 with the song "Surfin' Safari."

Originally comprised of three brothers — Brian, Carl and Dennis Wilson — one cousin, Mike Love, and friend Al Jardine, the Beach Boys' long and historic career has become the stuff of legend.

Most of the group's early and most popular hits focused on the sunny landscape and experiences of Southern California. Those songs were drenched in glorious harmonies that came to represent the Beach Boys' sound.

Songs such as "Surfin' U.S.A.," "Surfer Girl," "Fun, Fun, Fun," "I Get Around," "Help Me, Rhonda," "California Girls" and "Barbara Ann" optimized the fun-in-the sun aspect of life in California in the early 1960s.

This was a time when the baby boomers, the millions of children born between 1946 and 1964, were beginning to assert their own opinions and values, not only on music and fashion but also on all aspects of life.

The Beach Boys' music became the soundtrack to summer for millions of those baby boomers, and, from 1962 to 1965, the group pumped out 16 Top 40 hits that to this day represent the ideal image of summer fun.

Around late 1965, the group's main songwriter and producer, Brian Wilson, began to turn introspective, and the Beach Boys' music evolved to include some of the most complex productions and arrangements the pop music world had ever seen.

In 1966, the Beach Boys released their landmark album "Pet Sounds," which has been hailed by critics and fellow musicians as one of the most important albums of the rock era.

While the album has only grown in stature over time, it was met with lukewarm sales upon its release, causing friction among group members who were unsure of deviating from the Beach Boys' sunny persona.

While one of the group's biggest hits, "Good Vibrations," came from this period, less popular, melancholy-laced gems such as "Caroline, No" and "God Only Knows" (both from "Pet Sounds") came to represent the direction Brian Wilson wanted to take the group's music.

Unfortunately, as he became more creative and inspired, the Beach Boys' music became less accessible to a mass audience, and the group's popularity suffered.

The decline culminated in 1967 with the cancellation of an album called "Smile" (finally released in 2011 as a boxed set called "The Smile Sessions"), a record Brian Wilson envisioned as his "teenage symphony to God." He then withdrew from the group into a haze of drugs and depression.

The Beach Boys continued to record and tour in the late '60s and early '70s. With Brian Wilson taking a lesser role in their music, however, the Beach Boys' commercial appeal diminished greatly from their peak in 1965, and they were seen by some as passe.

Though recording some well-regarded music in the early '70s, the band seemed to flounder until 1974, when the release of a compilation of their most loved hits, called "Endless Summer," reached the top of the Billboard magazine album charts.

From that time forward, the Beach Boys' music, especially the early sun-filled hits, became a part of the fabric of American culture. The Beach Boys joined the rarified leagues of the Beatles and Bob Dylan as far as musical influence and stature.

In 1988, the Beach Boys even managed to hit the top of the Billboard Hot 100 again with the song "Kokomo," taken from the Tom Cruise movie "Cocktail."

Though founding group members Carl and Dennis Wilson have both passed on, the Beach Boys continue to tour and to make music.

With Brian Wilson finally managing to overcome some of his demons and becoming active in writing and recording again, the Beach Boys reunited in 2012 with all surviving original members to celebrate the group's 50th anniversary.

The group released a well-received and successful album called "That's Why God Made the Radio" and then embarked on an equally successful tour in the spring and summer of 2012.

In 2013, the group also released a massive six-CD boxed set called "Made in California" that cataloged the Beach Boys' extensive career and highlighted the incredible range and breadth of material the group created together.

Though the 50th anniversary reunion ended a little acrimoniously, Mike Love, who tours regularly as the Beach Boys with just Bruce Johnston (who joined the group in 1965) and himself as members, says the band will always be about family and fun.

"Long before we were the Beach Boys, the Wilsons and the Loves used to get together every holiday, every birthday," Love told The Austin (Texas) Chronicle earlier this year.



### More Information

#### Fun, fun, fun

**WHAT:** The Beach Boys in concert

**WHEN:** 7:30 p.m. Wednesday

**WHERE:** Foellinger Outdoor Theatre, 3411 Sherman Blvd. in Franke Park

**COST:** \$39, \$49, \$59, \$69, \$99. For tickets or more information, call the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department at 427-6000 or the Foellinger theater box office at 427-6715 the day of show. You also can order tickets by Friday at [www.fortwayneparks.org](http://www.fortwayneparks.org) or at the parks department office, 705 E. State Blvd., 8 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays.

"The thing that brought us together was music," Love said. "We used to love singing those harmonies. Brian and I would sing Everly Brothers songs. The Beach Boys was a family hobby that we turned into a profession. We're very blessed.

"I think the Beach Boys' legacy is 'Fun, Fun, Fun,' you know?" Love told the Austin Chronicle. "By and large, the Beach Boys' legacy is about incredibly positivity. We've traveled around the world and uplifted the spirits of hundreds of millions of people."