

# Rocky Wall Productions announces exciting 2022 Silver Bay Music in the Park Concert Series

Nelson T. French,  
Rocky Wall Productions

Rocky Wall Productions, a nonprofit organization dedicated to producing and promoting live music events in Silver Bay and on Lake Superior's North Shore from Duluth to Grand Portage, announced its 2022 Silver Bay Music In The Park Concert Series. A series of 8 FREE outdoor concerts will be held on Friday nights at Silver Bay's City Center Park. Each concert will start at 7:30 p.m. and will be held at City Center Park on an outdoor stage that will be located near Silver Bay City Hall. Inclement weather backup location will be Reunion Hall in Silver Bay.

In making the announcement, Rocky Wall Productions President Nelson French said, "We are very excited to be bringing live Friday night outdoor music to Silver Bay once again this year. We are thrilled to announce a variety of regionally and nationally recognized musicians will visit our community this year. We plan to create a positive community vibe downtown on Friday evenings and encourage young and old, residents and visitors alike to join us for some excellent music."

## Two Harbors to Spend \$50k on Festival of Sail

By: Katee Rose

Plans to move forward with the Festival of Sail were discussed in the last Two Harbors City Council meeting. The current estimated cost of the event is anticipated to be roughly around \$167,000. The city has determined they are able to spend around \$50,000 towards the event, which will go towards public safety. "Police are wondering what direction they are going in, Parking and traffic have always been a concern....there are people working on that. We need these officers to be here to take care of that. We also have a community we need to take care of. What we do on a day to day basis because tall ships are here does not go away. We still are responsible to the public," says the Two Harbors Chief of Police, Rick Hogenson. "I just ask that we trust that we have a plan in place that will make the Tall Ships Festival safe and successful for everyone"

The city has 9 officers that are able to be present for the Tall Ships Festival. All other law enforcement will have to be sourced from outside the city, with a total of 22 uniformed officers. According to Hogenson, the price tag for contracting outside law enforcement to support the event is a hefty one and the city wants to ensure that the public safety workers are well cared for. They will be working with a Red Cross program to take care of public safety workers and will provide breakfast, lunch and dinner to assigned staff for the event.

There has been quite a bit of miscommunication during the unfolding and preparation going into the planning of this event. Especially with finding the funding. There were suggestions around paid permit parking, although the police chief says they have enough to do during the festival other than checking for tickets in car windows and doubts the cost of permits would be worth it. The council also went back and forth looking to get support from Lake County and other entities, as well as looking at using revenue from the local campgrounds, trying to find ways for the event to not be a burden on Two Harbors taxpayers. Two Harbors is moving forward with Tall Ships and will do whatever they can to lessen the dollars the city has to pay, crossing their fingers for a positive economic impact from the event for local businesses.

Event planner Craig Samborski stated he has the numbers from previous Tall Ship events

Rocky Wall Productions is pleased to present the following outdoor Friday night concerts and dates:

- July 15<sup>th</sup>  
Charlie Parr 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm
- July 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Sam Miltich and the Clearwater Hot Club 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm
- July 29<sup>th</sup>  
Lolos Ghost 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm
- August 19<sup>th</sup>  
Fredy Argir and Sarah Burton 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm
- August 26<sup>th</sup>  
Alexander Craig 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm
- September 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Dusty Hearty 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm
- September 9<sup>th</sup>  
Paul Metsa and Sonny Earl 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm
- September 16<sup>th</sup>  
Robby Vee and His Rock & Roll Caravan 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm

"This is an amazingly diverse mix of musicians ranging from jazz and bluegrass to singer-songwriter folk and rock and roll", said Silver Bay resident and Rocky Wall Productions Board member Gene LaFond, "we plan to fill downtown Silver Bay with great music and entertainment the second half of this summer."

"We encourage you to bring your lawn chair and show up downtown any time after 5:30 pm, and plan to grab a dinner prior to the concert at the Northwoods Café, Jimmy's Pizza or at one of the local food trucks and vendors that will be present before and during the concerts." said board member Lisa Berg.

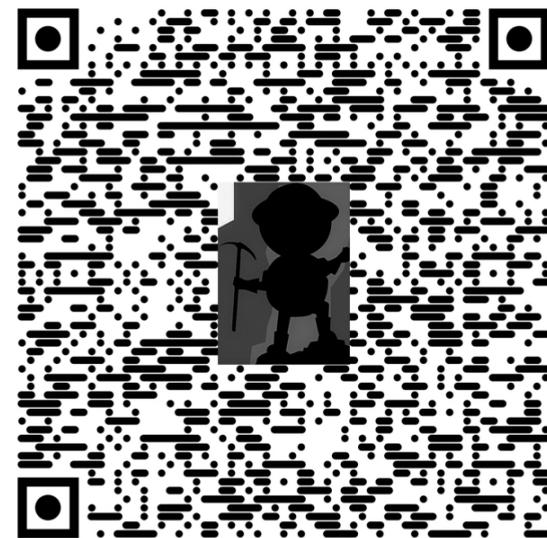
Rocky Wall Productions is an all-volunteer Silver Bay 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization producing and promoting live music in Silver Bay and on Lake Superior's North Shore from

in other cities and that he's never seen such a big budget needed to put on the Festival of Sail. "Two Harbors is not different, it's not. The parking is the same, traffic's the same, public safety needs are the same," Samborski said.

The council commented that they feel the whole thing was rushed and they didn't get estimates of costs until too late in the game. "The sad thing about this is, we got the information way too late, and we started planning, way too late. When you don't even know anything about a festival this size until October the year before. It's going to happen, with all the planning that has gone into it up until this point, but we had no way of knowing how much this was going to cost the city of Two Harbors."

Samborski expressed he started planning this in July and doesn't understand why the mayor didn't talk with the rest of council about all of it, but that's what happened. "The Council approved it, and we moved forward, we put tickets on sale, we did contracts, paid for marketing, and we keep coming back to things. I am trying to help you find a solution, these events are extremely good for communities financially....I do not have all the answers, but we've been on this merry go round for over a year and I've been trying to be professional and not throw people under the bus, but I can only go on based what your city representative said to me. That's all I can do."

"I had gotten texts and emails daily from the mayor saying everything is going great up here," Samborski said. "I'm spending more time on this event than any other one, and I've done 21 of these so far. That's the reality. I've been looking through all the emails and texts from the last year. That we are standing here, having this conversation today, is rather surprising to me....This is not normal for when I do this event. The communication is not like this....when you're dealing with the mayor of a city, you're thinking you're plugged into the



Scan the QR code above using your phone's camera or a QR Reader app for more details on the first concert in the Silver Bay Music in the Park Concert Series - Charlie Parr.

Duluth to Grand Portage. Bringing the best of Americana Music to the North Country. More information at [www.rockywallproductions.org](http://www.rockywallproductions.org).

The 2022 SILVER BAY MUSIC IN THE PARK CONCERT SERIES is sponsored by a generous grant from Lovin' Lake County and donations from Adams Automotive, Bay Trip Licensing and Outfitters, BRI-ESA'S Convenience Store, Cliffs Northshore Mining, D&D Services LLC, Nelson & Marilyn French, Homestead Dental, Wade and Crystal LeBlanc, Norshor Agency, North Shore Federal Credit Union, Northwoods Family Grille, Julie's True Value Hardware, Van House Construction, and Zup's Grocery of Silver Bay. Generous in-kind donations have also been provided by the City of Silver Bay, Lake County Press, Jerry Lavigne, David Drown/Lisa Berg, Lemondrop Shop Backdrops, and Nelson and Marilyn French. Tax-deductible donations to help support these concerts are accepted. For more information email Nelson French at [ntf5418@gmail.com](mailto:ntf5418@gmail.com)

city, and that's my reality," Samborski commented.

"It's been messy, I'm not pointing fingers, but I don't believe the council was aware of what was going on the whole time. We were trying to do our best to make the event happen," said one councilor. Someone from the public asks where the mayor is during this important city council meeting and discussion about an event he was spearheading and advocating for the city to host. There was no explanation given for his absence.

"We certainly could have planned and prepared better for this event had we been apprised of all of it when it first started. Now, again, as many have said, the ship has sailed and we need to move forward, I will accept this resolution as long as there is no dollars coming out of the general fund, and to let the public know that even though the dollars are coming from an enterprise fund, that's still funds the City of Two Harbors could be using for other things. That being said, we're kind of in a position where commitments have been made, tickets have been sold. I think after this there would be a long review of how the City of Two Harbors moves forward with events like this to make sure we're not caught behind the eight ball again. I also want people to know that the money that's being used that the city is putting forward is not for the Festival of Sail, it's money that will keep our community and citizens and those visiting our community safe. I want to make that clear, but again, I'm really hoping we can find other funding sources so that we don't have to take money from those enterprise funds that are available to us because that money could be used for other things for our community," says Counselor Glaser.

The city would like to thank Lovin' Lake County for stepping up with their support and will continue to try and squeeze in some more ideas of how to get the funds to pull this event off in a safe way for the community.