LOCAL MOJO: "ONE DAY OF PEACE, LOVE & REAL GOOD LOCAL MUSIC" IN CONNECTICUT



MojoFest brings live music to the Mansfield Drive-In Theatre and Marketplace on Saturday, Oct. 17, 2026, in Mansfield. The Woodstock-themed festival featured 16 local artists from across New England, along with food trucks and vendors.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PARKER MEYERS, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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The vast fairgrounds of Mansfield Drive-In were alive with dancing, connection, and melody during the Mojo Connecticut Music Festival on Saturday.

The Woodstock-inspired event took place on a 43-degree evening, and its lineup consisted mainly of indie and alternative rock bands, with touches of folk and country fitting the atmosphere of red leaves and reunion well. Ruby Leftstep opened the night, followed by Wavy McGrady, Tweed Sugar, Autumn Drive, Overserved Again, Different Font and headliner Morrissey Blvd.

Energy was kept high from the main stage by Boston-based DJ Avdrey. Many friends joined Alec Beane, Prackup, DJ Zvng and others on the deck stage for more electronic beats and house music.

Henry Morrissey, one of the three brothers who comprise Morrissey Blvd, explained that the band became involved with Local Mojo during his time at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, when Marketing Director Shanti Furtado booked their first show.

Morrissey was "really really stoked" about headlining their first festival together, and dreamed the crowd would "all huddle as close to the stage as possible to stay warm," which was exactly what they did.

"It's so electric when there are a bunch of local music lovers together, which is what Mojo is really good at curating," said Morrissey. He described much of mainstream art in today's world as "force-fed" to us by means of social media. Local Mojo puts bands on a stage where people have the choice to listen, which Morrissey felt grateful for.

More than a few festival-goers credited Connecticut-based band Tweed Sugar as their reason for attending the festival. George Cooke, a fifth-semester biomedical engineering major at UConn currently living in a house with fraternity brothers of Alpha Sigma Phi, said, "I'm here to see Tweed Sugar. The lead singer, Lorin, is from A Sig," and for that reason, "all of my friends are here."

Lorin Pellegrino, singer and guitarist of the band and a 2026 UConn graduate, had followed Local Mojo since they hosted the Mojo Amherst Music Festival of Massachusetts in April 2026. Upon hearing of Mojo Connecticut, he contacted the brand, saying, "Please get us in that show."

Pellegrino "felt really happy about the set" afterwards. "The show went great. A lot of people knew us from playing frat parties." Despite playing more originals than covers, he said that "by the end [of the show], we gained a lot of momentum."

Pellegrino was able to "relate to everyone in the crowd, more so than in a random bar." Compared to a lineup of touring acts, he prefers how personal the festival is.

Indie rock band Autumn Drive of New Bedford, Massachusetts, was next to play. Having played Mojo Amherst and Mojo Boston, lead vocalist Charlie Gamache described the crowd Mojo attracts as "a pretty rowdy bunch" and stated that tonight people were "in really good spirits" despite the cold. When asked why this event in particular felt special, guitarist Aiden Parker explained that even in a place such as Mansfield where they hadn't ever played, "people will approach us and already have a certain song they like; it's the coolest thing."

The festival was home to more than just music; Chip's Seeds, Spiked Ade, and The Sausage Guy were a few of the vendors keeping attendees fed. Vermont-based clothing brand Salvg was also set up, displaying one-of-a-kind pieces handmade from recycled fabrics.

The owner, Mars Souligny, was a vendor at Mojo Burlington and was asked to join the festival again in Mansfield. She focuses on "sustainable fashion and creating things from resources we already have." She believes events like Mojo are "really good for young people to make connections and experience being together."

It was hard not to spot Chris Ferretti, a UConn father of two from Brooklyn. The man chatted with a circle of younger guys playing Hacky Sack, outfitted in a giant rainbow Grateful Dead top hat. He explained that his children, seventh-semester allied sciences student Dana and fifth-semester physics major Dante, invited him to Mojo knowing "Dad will go to a concert, and Dad did!"

Ferretti has attended 507 Grateful Dead shows since 1987 and continues to feed his love of live music. "With everything else going on in the world, it's a great thing to see the younger community get together," he told me. His wife and children gathered around him, joined by a few friends, and paused the interview to insist I needed a custom sticker of Ferretti from his backpack. Multiple generations enjoyed Mojo Connecticut.

The pink haze of the setting sun fell upon dancing people and friends holding each other close. Creators and lovers of music stayed warm and stayed loud on a Saturday night in Mansfield.

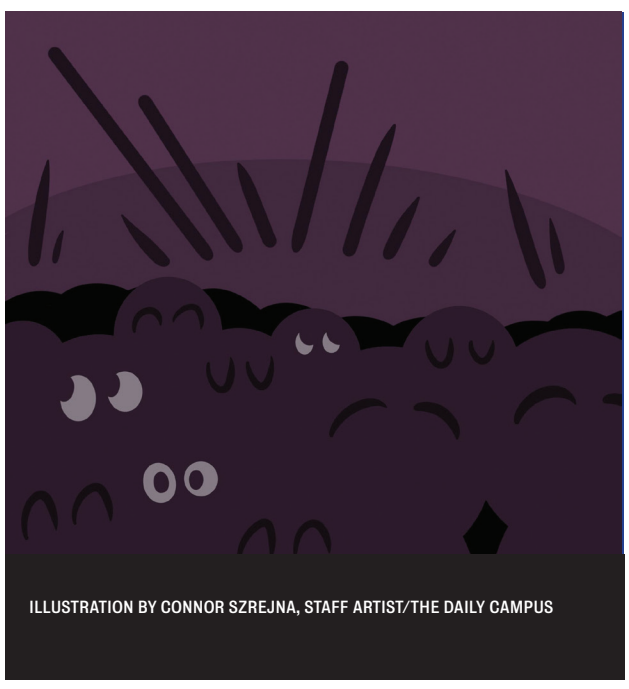


ILLUSTRATION BY CONNOR SZREJNA, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

The who-dunnit of the great Houdini

LOGO BY COLBI LORANGER, ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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Harry Houdini — the name is synonymous with magic. He performed grandiose escapes from handcuffs and straitjackets to locked boxes underwater. As a vaudeville act, he performed worldwide for thousands who came to watch his miraculous escapes. However, 100 years ago on Oct. 22, 1926, Harry Houdini went on to perform a trick that may have cost him his life nine days later on Halloween night — or did it?



Houdini, born Erik Weisz, was born in Budapest, Hungary, before he and his family immigrated to the United States in 1874. His father was a rabbi, and the family settled in Appleton, Wisconsin; Weisz became a young trapeze performer before moving to New York City in 1882, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica article.

He later met his wife, Wilhelmina Rahner, another performer, early in life, and they hit the road together; she later changed her name to Bess Houdini. They initially toured with his brother as a family, but Houdini's escape attracted the attention of Martin Beck, a rising "tycoon" in the vaudeville circuit, according to a PBS article about Harry Houdini. Afterward, he took his performances to an international stage while also putting down roots in New York City and Connecticut.

In the 1920s, he continued performing, though his 1926 tour was already plagued by unfortunate circumstances. Early on, his wife Bess came down with food poisoning, and Houdini himself broke his ankle but persisted, according to an article from the Yale University Press. In Montreal, on Oct. 22, 1926, two college students approached Houdini in his dressing room to test his pain tolerance. Never one to back down from a challenge, the 52-year-old agreed to be punched in the abdomen repeatedly by McGill student J. Gordon Whitehead.

The pain in his abdomen worsened, but Houdini continued to perform, not seeking medical advice until Sunday, when he reached Detroit. It was then that he was diagnosed with acute appendicitis and was advised to go into surgery; however, Houdini continued to perform in immense pain and just barely made it through the act.

The next afternoon, he would finally receive the operation, which confirmed that his appendix had burst and spilled bacterial pus into his abdomen. He would live for another six days before succumbing to the infection on Oct. 31. In the days before antibiotics, peritonitis was deadly.

While some believe that the stomach trauma that occurred on Oct. 22 may have led to appendicitis, it is not very likely, as stated in the Yale University Press article. It is more likely the case that the abdominal pain may have masked the symptoms of appendicitis, causing it to go unnoticed for a few days.

Despite his magician ways, Houdini was deeply skeptical of spiritualism and the beliefs mystics and mediums peddled in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As a result, he and his wife decided to perform an experiment where whoever passed first would attempt to communicate with the living a coded message after their death. Bess would go on to declare the experiment a failure before her death in 1943.

The only thing that Harry Houdini could not escape was death; it's unfortunate that he most likely would have survived with the advent of antibiotics a few decades later. Nevertheless, Houdini was incredibly influential in entertainment and magic, and his legacy persists even 100 years later.



Harry Houdini poses with handcuffs on, an homage to some of his most famous tricks. His death occurred on Oct. 31, 1926, nearly 100 years ago.

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