

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fan-based movement launched to “thank the Grateful Dead for 50 mind-bending years”

April 21, 2015 – When you go to an anniversary party, you bring presents, and the Grateful Dead’s 50th anniversary shows should be no exception. So say the Deadheads who started [nfadead50.net](http://www.nfadead50.net) to organize massive displays of gratitude for the band during their upcoming Fare Thee Well shows in Santa Clara, Calif., and Chicago, Ill. But what do you get the band who has everything?

“We’re calling on Deadheads everywhere to do two things,” said Rob Neff of Baltimore, Md., who founded the group’s Web site and Facebook group. “The first is that we want to raise the largest donation ever collectively given to the Rex Foundation, the band’s charitable foundation.”

Fans can always donate to the Rex Foundation independently, but if donors go through the Not Fade Away site (<http://www.nfadead50.net>), they can earmark their donations as being part of the fan-based movement. Fans are encouraged to follow the instructions carefully. The Rex Foundation is keeping track of how much is raised through this effort, as an explicit “thank you” to the Grateful Dead from the fans.

And the second present for the band?

“We also are calling on everyone to sing ‘Not Fade Away’ to the band at the *start* of the second set all five nights of the Fare Thee Well tour,” said Neff. Normally, if the band plays the song “Not Fade Away,” it happens at the *end* of the second set. The audience chants the words “know our love will not fade away” as the song closes, and continues chanting until the start of the first encore. Chanting it earlier will indicate to the band that the fans organized the chant on their own.

“If we sing at the start of the second set, it will be clear that this is an expression of fan appreciation,” Neff explained. “We want this to be something special – a clear expression of our love and gratitude.” Details on coordinating the exact time to start the chant are available on the group’s site.

The Not Fade Away movement started as the result of a single Facebook post in a Dead-related group, according to Vicki Fletcher of Omaha, NE. “One day, someone asked ‘Hey - what do you think about the idea of doing something special in Chicago for the band as a thank you?’ And so from there we all just started brainstorming all sorts of ideas.” Fletcher is a founding member of the Facebook group #NFA, where members coordinate efforts.

Fletcher proposed donations to the Rex Foundation in reaction to another idea being discussed in their Facebook group – having fans bring in thousands of roses to toss onto the stage during the final show in Chicago. “At 64 cents per rose, that comes to \$40,000. With all of that money being spent on roses, why not just give the money to the Rex Foundation?”

Established as a nonprofit charitable organization by members of the Grateful Dead and friends in the fall of 1983, the Rex Foundation aims to help secure a healthy environment, promote individuality in the arts, provide support to critical and necessary social services, assist the less fortunate, protect the rights of indigenous people and ensure their cultural survival, build a stronger community and educate children and adults everywhere.

When Jerry Garcia died a month after the Grateful Dead's concert at Chicago's Soldier Field on July 9, 1995, the band stopped playing together as the Grateful Dead. The remaining original members Mickey Hart, Bill Kreutzmann, Phil Lesh and Bob Weir have not played together since 2004. In January, they announced that they will play together for the last time for Fare Thee Well. The final show will mark 20 years, almost to the day, since the band's final 1995 concert. It also marks 50 years since the Grateful Dead first started in 1965. Phish frontman Trey Anastasio, pianist Bruce Hornsby and keyboardist Jeff Chimenti will join them onstage.

The Not Fade Away movement has a few other tricks up its sleeve and hopes to announce further efforts to thank the Grateful Dead in the coming weeks. Fans interested in joining the discussion are welcome to join the Facebook group #NFA. Links to the group can be found through the Not Fade Away Web site.

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