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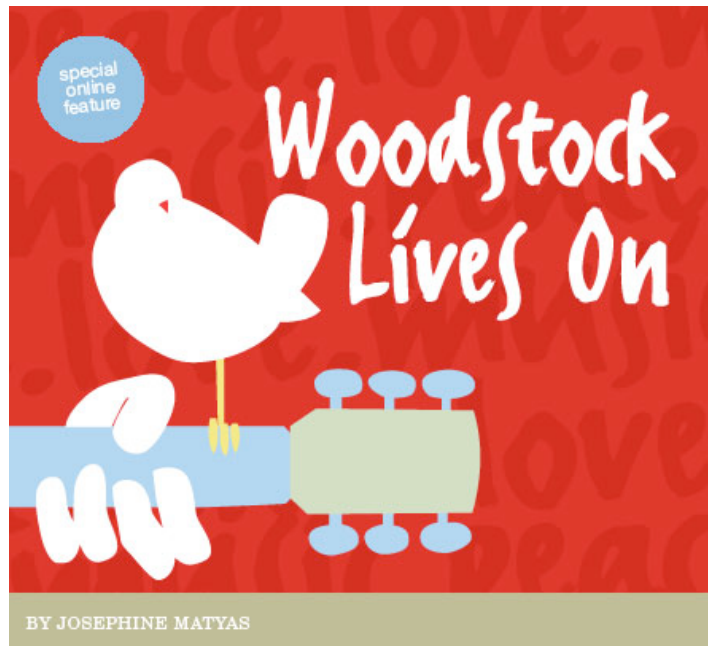
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FEATURE 2



If you are of a “certain” generation, you may want to sit down before digesting this tidbit: August 2009 marks the 40th anniversary of Woodstock. This may cause some angst for those who grew up with the mantra to “never trust anyone over 30.”

Counted among *Rolling Stone* magazine’s 50 Moments that Changed the History of Rock & Roll, the 1969 Woodstock Music & Arts Fair exceeded all expectations with more than 400,000 people — twice as many as organizers had anticipated. There was also more rain — and therefore lots more mud — and a 34-km long, massive traffic jam that closed the New York State Thruway. By all accounts, Woodstock ranks as one of the most successful, and significant, events in contemporary music history.

Besides the endless gridlock of cars, shortage of porta-pottys and fields of mud, Woodstock is known for the four days of co-operation, social harmony, peace and outstanding music. It defied all odds (panicked local officials had predicted violence, crime and unrest) and galvanized the influence of the counter-culture generation. Things haven’t been the same since.

Some of the Woodstock alumni settled here in Kingston (the July/August issue of *Kingston Life* has a first-hand trip down memory lane from one of them) and there are many local

places, people and events where the spirit of that generation still thrives.

You can feed your body and soul at The Sleepless Goat Café Worker Co-operative, a downtown "collectively owned restaurant . . . committed to shared values derived from a participatory, non-hierarchical workplace and a consensual decision-making process." In addition to the mugs of fair-trade coffee and dishes made from local, organic ingredients, you'll find a staff and space that practise a model of socially and environmentally sustainable and ethical business.

Hop across Princess Street to Chez Piggy where, 30 years ago, Rose Richardson and Zal Yanovsky (an original band member with The Lovin' Spoonful) renovated an abandoned limestone stable, launching one of Kingston's landmark dining experiences.

And the spirit of Woodstock literally sings in the city's music venues and ventures. The Open Voices Community Choir, for example, is a non-auditioned, adult choir that a group of musically minded friends who loved to make music together started in 2002. Today, there are 120 members who perform several times a year to sold-out venues.

The seedling for groups like Open Voices rose from another beloved eastern Ontario musical event, the annual Blue Skies Music Festival, where up to 3,000 artists and music lovers gather outside Clarendon every August for concerts, jam sessions and workshops designed with a sense of democracy, co-operation and social harmony. Sounds like a mini-Woodstock.

In town, the music lives on at small, locally owned ventures like the Kingston Guitar Shop (vintage and new guitars, accessories, workshops and repairs), where they support local artists and festivals. Or if vinyl is part of your trip down memory lane to the summer of Woodstock, check out Zap Records or Brian's Record Option, where they've likely got the tunes you're looking for.

On one of our glorious summertime weekends, take a few moments to poke around the restaurants, shops and community groups here in Kingston. You'll find the spirit of Woodstock is alive and well . . . and just raring to head into the next 40 years!

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