

Krushing It: ‘Backyard Concerts’ are Back

By Don R. Lewis | Jun 23, 2026



THE BEAT Onye & The Messengers takes the stage June 25 and is led by Nigerian master percussionist Onye Onyemaechi. Photo courtesy of Onye & The Messengers.

Sonoma County’s KRSH radio has always been one to give back to the community. Be it through giving voice to local charity and non-profit groups on-air; showing up at community events including art receptions, fundraisers and of course, music events; or putting on concerts for listeners and the Bay Area at large.

Their annual “Backyard Concert” series, which takes place in the radio station’s literal backyard (3565 Standish Ave., Santa Rosa), kicks off Thursday, June 25 and continues throughout the summer in the backyard and beyond.



Mindi Levine, KRSH program director and host of the *Mindi in the Morning* show, has been putting together the lineup for the “Backyard Concert” series shows for the past two years. In looking at this year’s acts, she may very well have outdone herself with a vibrant mix of the best of local and Bay Area bands as well as national touring acts. All shows are free and all ages, with doors at 5:30pm and music at 6pm.



Levine takes great pride in creating these shows and says she seeks to “mirror the eclectic KRSH programming in terms of the sound and the types of bands that I book. This means striving for a balance of established acts, up and comers as well as a diversity of genres.”

Speaking to this, she notes, “In terms of ‘Sonoma grown’ artists, we feature bands that have a nice local following; sometimes they are headliners, and sometimes they’re more ‘up and coming.’”

When asked to expound on this, she says, “Some artists start out as openers and grow into headliners the following year, as is the case with Ellie James, who was an opener in 2024, and now she’s headlining and kicking off opening night.”

Indeed, the June 25 show will see Ellie James & the Electric Dream headlining with Onye and the Messengers slated to open. James’ music has an edgy quality that proves a nice addition to her more





pop sensibilities while Onye and the Messengers' afro-beat and global grooves assure ample time for warm-up dancing.

On Friday, July 10, the Backyard

Concert series takes a field trip over

to Santa Rosa's Courthouse Square, where one of longtime county superstar Eric Lindell's many band iterations, the aptly named Westside Summer League, will headline with fellow local mainstay Sebastian St. James Band opening the night.

Thursday, July 23, things are back at the KRSH backyard with arguably the biggest "get" of the KRSH backyard concert series, Teddy Thompson, who will be making his only Bay Area appearance at this show. Fellow touring act John Hollier & the Reverie kick this special night off with their folk-rock stylings.

Even though he retired from daily radio duties back in 2021, DJ and event producer Bill Bowker still gets on the mic Sunday for his *Blues with Bowker* show as well as Wednesday nights with *Krush Americana*. Forever unable to stop the music, Bowker presents the David Luning Band on Thursday, Aug. 6 with another "see them so you can say you saw them when" touring artist, Max Gomez.

Staying with the theme of KRSH specialty shows writ large, Thursday, Aug. 20, Big Dave's Rockabilly Roadhouse presents Deke Dickerson & the Whippersnappers with Jinx Jones kicking things off.

Like every great summer, at some point, the sun and fun must end. And this happens with a bang as the party moves back downtown



to Courthouse Square with the annual Sonoma County Super Jam featuring The Pulsators. This event always has special surprise guests. At press time, confirmed musicians include Volker Strifler, John Courage, Willy Jordan, Audio Angel, Andre de Channes, Michael & Amy Berry, Anna Jae, Joe Campbell and more.

Levine recommends showing up before 5:30 doors for the ones in the actual backyard, as space is limited. Each week features a different food truck, beer via Moonlight Brewing and wine; all are cash only.

For more information, visit KRSH.com.

