

Summer has finally arrived, and for the Rockford Region, that means it's time for live music to begin. Not sure where to start? Don't worry! I've rounded up 10 of my favorite outdoor concert series in the area to help kickstart your summer playlist!

### [Dockside Live](#)

#### **Prairie St. Brewing Co.**

*Mondays, May 29 - September 4 (6 - 9 p.m.)*

On Monday nights, Prairie St. Brewing Co. hosts a relaxing evening with amazing drinks and food (seriously, I can't explain how much I love their cheese curds). Local and regional artists perform a wide variety of genres while listeners can kick back and enjoy the view of the Rock River. If Mondays aren't your thing, they should be now because Dockside Live is the perfect way to end your Monday blues.

### [Dinner on the Dock](#)

#### **Prairie St. Brewing Co.**

*Thursdays, May 11 - September 7 (5 - 10 p.m.)*

Also presented by Prairie St. Brewing Co., Dinner on the Dock tends to be a little bit busier than Dockside Live. This concert series is a classic here in Rockford. Prairie St. encourages patrons to dock their boats on the river and tune in to the local artists while enjoy craft beers, great foods (again, get the cheese curds!), and a good time with friends and family.

### **Music in the Park**

#### **Sinnissippi Band Shell**

*Tuesdays and Thursdays, June 13 - August 19 (7 p.m.)*

Ask any Rockfordian where the best place for a summer concert is, and they'll probably say the historic Sinnissippi Park Music Shell. Music in the Park is part of the Rockford Park District's free concert series "[Sounds of Summer](#)" where they feature live music from local and regional musicians. One of the best shows they feature is the [Phantom Regiment](#) performing songs from their nationally regarded competition shows.

### **Live at Levings**

#### **Levings Park, Rockford, IL**

*Sundays, June 4 - August 20 (5 - 8 p.m.)*

This free concert series is also part of the Park District's "[Sounds of Summer](#)" and

showcases Rockford's own in a local talent showdown followed by live bands. This is guaranteed to be a great time.

### [Music on the Rock](#)

#### **Burpee Museum of Natural History**

*Wednesdays, June 7 – August 9 (4:30 - 8:30 p.m.)*

Burpee Museum's outdoor concert venue on the banks of the Rock River features a natural, relaxed setting for live evening music. On the terrace of the Museum, you can enjoy drinks and treats from local vendors. Music on the Rock is the best way to celebrate making it halfway through the week.

### [Tuesday Evening in the Gardens](#)

#### **Anderson Gardens**

*Tuesdays, May 30 - August 29 (5 p.m.)*

Join friends and family for an evening of live music in the beautiful setting of Anderson Japanese Gardens. You can either pack your own picnic or enjoy food and beverages from local vendors. Listeners are also encouraged to bring blankets and chairs to relax on during the show – talk about the perfect date night!

### [Rockford City Market](#)

#### **City Market Pavilion**

*Fridays, May 19 - September 29 (3:30 - 8:30 p.m. (7:30 p.m. after Labor Day)*

The Rockford City Market is the place to be on Friday nights here in Rockford. It's hard to decide what to order with the huge selection of amazing food trucks. I like to get a sampling from several while walking around and shopping with local vendors. To set the tone for your eating and shopping extravaganza, they have local and regional performers every week who provide the perfect acoustics to enjoy throughout your evening.

### [Music on the Mall](#)

#### **Edgebrook Shopping Center**

*Fridays, June 2 - August 25 (6:30 p.m.)*

If the hustle and bustle of a downtown market isn't your thing, but you still want to enjoy live music and shopping – Music on the Mall is the place for you! Enjoy food and drinks from Lucha Cantina, shop at stores along the strip, and enjoy relaxing performances from local and regional bands.

### [Live Music on the Patio](#)

#### **Tower Kitchen & Bar at Embassy Suites**

*Wednesdays, June 7 - August 30 (6 p.m.)*

If you find yourself downtown on a Wednesday, live music from local artists on the patio at Tower Kitchen & Bar is the place to be! Their gorgeous patio overlooks Davis Park and the Rock River, allowing for a beautiful backdrop during performances! Insiders will tell you this is one of the best views in all of Rockford!

### [Woodsong Summer Concert](#)

#### **Klehm Arboretum**

*June 25, July 16, August 30, & September 10 (6 p.m.)*

Klehm's Woodsong Concerts are Ravinia-style events held in the beautiful Fountain Garden. I love packing a picnic and some blankets to relax on while listening to incredible performers. And, for the first time, Gelato Joe's will be at each concert serving up delicious treats to help cool you down during hot summer nights.

#### **Special Events:**

Fairs and one-off events are an amazing way to see some of your favorite artists, but they just don't fit into my list of concert series. So, here are a few of my favorite festivals and fairs in the area that I like to call my exceptions to the theme!

### [Old Settlers Days](#)

#### **Settlers Park, Rockton, IL**

*June 15 - 18*

As a Rockton native, I must include OSD! I might be biased, since I grew up right down the street, but Old Settlers Days is THE event of the summer. They bring live music, carnival food, drinks, and rides all to one place. If you're a country music fan, you need to go see all your favorite artists. I mean, one year they had Bret Michaels out mowing the lawn! But let me tell you – they don't always focus on country artists – peep my fuzzy picture of Nelly from his concert in 2018!

## [Winnebago County Fair](#)

### **Winnebago County Fairgrounds**

*TBD*

I'm stilling waiting on the big announcement of the Winnebago County Fair's dates and entertainment schedule but let me tell you – this county fair is the end all, be all of county fairs! They offer everything from lumberjack shows, pageants, petting zoos, tractor pulls, carnival rides, and, most importantly, concerts! Last year they had local artists such as Lola Blu and Flannel Daze, and national bands Shotgun Jane and Infinity. I'm certainly anticipating a great round up of talent again this year!

## [Festa Italiana](#)

### **Boylan Catholic High School**

*August 4 - 6*

Festa Italiana started about 40 years ago as a way for people of Italian heritage in the Rockford Region to connect, but now it's grown into an amazing festival featuring incredible, authentic Italian foods, a carnival with rides and games, and of course, live music! This year they have a wide variety of genres, classic country preformed by Back Country Roads, rock by the Lounge Puppets, and of course Italian preformed by the Vince Chiarelli Band. If you're looking for a place with good food, good company, and great music – check out the Festa Italiana!

The Rockford region has countless options for outdoor concerts throughout the summer and early fall! There are so many more like the [Rockton River Market](#) and [Wine Down Wednesdays](#) – both hosted on Wednesdays! I hope you use this list as your starting base and explore the world of music here in Winnebago County! If I missed your favorite, be sure to send it my way so that I can check it out this summer!