

# The Pearly Baker Band's Bash At The Z



by Ivey  
Winkler

NBG writer Ivey Winkler sat down with Mike Mahoney of Pearly Baker to chat about the upcoming 'Bash at the Z,' taking place this Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, at 7 pm. If you've never been to a Pearly Baker concert, the Zeiterion Theater is the place to see them play. They'll be bringing their regular set of Grateful Dead, Bob Dylan, and classic rock to a bigger stage and a bigger audience, and will be joined onstage by some funky friends. Tickets for the event can be purchased [here](#).

**So Pearly Baker is a local band, but the Zeiterion usually hosts national touring artists and performers. How did you end up playing a gig there?**

**Mike:** So the story goes like this: On our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary we played a gig at the Bull Pen. I was just expecting a normal Pearly Baker crowd that night, but we ended up being shocked by the hundreds of people who showed up. I'm surprised the fire marshal didn't show up to shut us down. There were so many folks there they ended up snaking around the sidewalks outside.

After that night, we started thinking that maybe we needed a bigger venue for our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary down the road. Fast forward a few years and I'm driving past the Z like I do every day on my way home and it hits me, I called my band mate Ken and told him, "We should play the Zeiterion." Of course I had a hard time charging people more money to come see us play, so

we thought that turning it into a benefit concert would help us give back to the community that had supported us for so many years.



**How did you decide on the United Way of Greater New Bedford Hunger Commission as your charity?**

**Mike:** I called up Senator Mark Montigny, a friend of mine from college, and asked him what charities were in great need in the New Bedford area, and he got me in touch with the fine professionals at the United Way. Program director Bill Shell and his staff at the Hunger Commission have been incredible throughout this whole process; without them the concert simply would not have happened.

**When the concert was held last year to celebrate your 25th anniversary, did you know this was going to be a yearly event?**

**Mike:** We thought we'd get maybe 300 people at the concert. I remember asking ourselves, what if we only got a few hundred seats filled. At the end of the day, we just decided that it would be a rockin' concert with 300 of our closest friends in a kick-ass venue. Turns out, over 900 people showed up, and all the proceeds and food donated went to the Hunger Commission. How could we not turn this into a yearly event? Three weeks after the concert last year, we started planning this one.

**Tickets for the show are only \$15. That's an amazing price to see any show at the Z, and yet last year you raised over \$18,500 for the Hunger Commission. How does it make the band feel to know they're making such a difference in the area?**

**Mike:** It feels great to support those less fortunate than us. More families are in need this year than ever before, and the Hunger Commission has 27 food pantries from Wareham to Rhode Island that they need to stock. These guys work on a shoestring budget and depend on the support of hundreds of

volunteers, so the more food and money we can provide the better.

**For those attending the concert, you really wanted to get the word out about bringing non-perishable food items.**

**Mike:** Yes, that is something that we're hoping to really get out there. Please bring bags and totes and truck loads of food. Any non-perishable food item works, especially staples like juice, peanut butter, and pasta. Nothing in glass jars though, that could get pretty messy!



Ideally, everyone will leave a bag of food by the door before the concert- maybe they could even put it in their car right now so they won't forget to bring it. We've already been promised bags and bags of food from some of our fans who are renting a bus for the evening. How cool is that?!

**Can people buy tickets at the door?**

**Mike:** Yes. Last year we had about 200 people just show up and buy tickets, so if you're downtown this Saturday night, come on by!

**I was there last year, it was such a great mix of young people, older folks, and "dead-heads." I can't wait to hit the Bash at the Z again this year!**

**Mike:** Well, we can't wait to see all our friends again too, it's gonna be a great night! I just want to make sure I get a big THANK YOU out to Senator Montigny and his assistant Terri Noel, The Hunger Commission staff and the folks at the United Way, Dori Legge at the Z, and to all of our generous sponsors.

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