

# The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

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OPINION

## A 'grandma' performance in Cobb County changed my mind about concerts

The Beach Boys' most recent concert in metro Atlanta created an atmosphere of enjoyment and without chaos.



**The Beach Boys' most recent concert in metro Atlanta created an atmosphere of enjoyment and without chaos. Johnny Van Zant of Lynyrd Skynyrd, Mike Love of the Beach Boys and Lee Loughnane of Chicago. (AP file photos)**

**By Maddy Milk – For The Atlanta Journal-Constitution**

I attended what some people might jokingly call a “grandma concert,” and after one evening, I couldn’t help but think: Maybe we should all be doing concerts this way. Growing up in metro Atlanta, I’ve attended concerts at venues all over the state. I’ve seen artists from nearly every genre, and over the last 20 years I’ve watched concert culture evolve. Somewhere along the way, concerts stopped being relaxing and started feeling like an endurance test.

Long walks from parking lots, endless concession lines, overcrowded venues and fighting through crowds have become the norm. Then I attended the [Beach Boys concert](#) at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre on July 17. Seeing the Beach Boys had been on my bucket list since I was a child. With opportunities to see them becoming increasingly rare, I knew I couldn’t pass this one up. I expected a great concert. What I didn’t expect was that the venue itself would become one of the highlights of the evening. I avoided the stereotypical traffic nightmare. When the lights came up, I glanced around the audience and realized there were very few people under the age of 40 in the orchestra section. The crowd was relaxed, polite and simply there to enjoy the music. There was no pushing, no chaos and no sense that everyone was competing for the best experience.

From the moment I arrived, everything felt effortless. Friendly staff greeted me at the entrance, helped me find my section and patiently waited while I stopped to grab a drink. There were no long concession lines,

no confusion about where to go and no frustration. Every employee I encountered genuinely seemed happy to help.

The concert itself was everything I had dreamed it would be. I sang along, danced in my seat and enjoyed every minute of the performance.

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When the show ended, I was reminded of just how different this experience had been. Within minutes, I was back at my car and on my way home.

No hourlong wait to leave a parking deck. No traffic nightmare. No exhausting trek back to the car. I know where I want to go for future events

After years of attending concerts throughout Atlanta, it honestly felt like an alternate reality. Maybe the biggest surprise wasn't seeing the Beach Boys. It was discovering how enjoyable a concert can be when the venue is thoughtfully designed, the staff is welcoming and the atmosphere allows people to simply enjoy the music.

I'll still attend concerts downtown when an artist I love comes to town. But after this experience, the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre will be the first venue I look for.

Sometimes the best concert isn't just about who's on stage — it's about how you're treated from the moment you arrive until the moment you leave.

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*Maddy Milk is a Marietta, Georgia-based travel and event writer.*