

arts & culture

Rick Springfield Had Audience on Its Feet at The Sharon

Villagers and visitors alike came out in droves to see the “Jessie’s Girl” singer live in concert March 12.

By TAYLOR STRICKLAND  
Daily Sun Senior Writer

Rick Springfield kept audience members moving all night long during last week’s concert at The Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center. The show opened with a video compilation of Springfield’s various TV and movie roles, followed by the burning eagle from his “I Want My 80s” 2023 tour. A deafening roar erupted from the assembled crowd as Springfield made his grand entrance.

To the audience’s delight, Springfield not only still looked like the quintessential rock star with his silver earring and “Working Class Dog” suit, but he also played the part.

From slamming on his guitar to scattering a dozen roses on stage, the 74-year-old rocker made sure to include all of his signature stage tricks. And he did it all with his trademark modesty and self-deprecating humor.

“I don’t know how the



I don’t know how the youngsters do it these days.”

RICK SPRINGFIELD  
Musician and actor

youngsters do it these days,” Springfield said.

Springfield has made a reputation for himself as a soft rocker with a hard pop hook.

The Australian-American singer and musician got his start in garage bands like Icy Blues, Moppa Blues, Wickedly Wak and Zoot. He released his debut single “Speak to the Sky” and his debut solo album “Beginnings” shortly before moving to the U.S. in 1972.

Despite the relative success of “Speak to the Sky,” which reached No. 14 on the



Rob Grabowski | The Associated Press

Rick Springfield performs Aug. 31 at RiverEdge Park in Aurora, Illinois. Springfield drew a crowd to his March 12 performance at The Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center, where the 74-year-old not only looked the part of the quintessential rock star, but he played it too, slamming on his guitar and scattering roses on the stage.

Billboard Hot 100, Springfield didn’t get his big break until the release of his fifth studio album, “Working Class Dog,” in 1981. The album spawned his one and only No. 1 single, “Jessie’s Girl,” which won him a Grammy Award for best rock vocal performance.

Springfield is also well-known for his extensive TV career. One of his earliest roles was Dr. Noah Drake on “General Hospital,” solidifying

him as a TV heartthrob in addition to a rocker.

Most recently, Springfield starred alongside Meryl Streep in the 2015 movie “Ricki and the Flash” and guest starred as the Devil himself in season 12 of the CW series “Supernatural.”

His latest album, “Automatic,” was released in 2023.

Keeping the audience out of their seats most of the night wasn’t Springfield’s only feat.

He also managed to elicit a few proper call and response interludes from the crowd.

He entertained fans with a rapid-fire compilation of songs, which included a hilarious interlude with “Bruce,” a song that makes obvious reference to Springfield’s longtime frustration at often being mistaken for Bruce Springsteen.

The concert ended with the

iconic “Jessie’s Girl,” to which the entire crowd danced and sang along as Springfield performed shirtless. Many throughout the crowd were on their phones recording videos, snapping photos and FaceTiming friends and family not lucky enough to score tickets.

Among them were friends Sam Hickerson, Alyssa Gibson and Keara McCardle. Each sported their own Springfield merchandise, including custom guitar picks and a “Jessie’s Girl” T-shirt.

“It was fantastic,” McCardle said. “Absolutely fantastic.”

McCardle was visiting from Augusta, Georgia. Hickerson, a Village of Belle Aire resident, invited her and Gibson, of Summerfield, to the concert.

Hickerson and Gibson said they see one to two shows a week at either The Sharon or the Savannah Center and typically love all of them, but both felt there was something special about the energy Springfield brought to the stage.

Gibson said the quality of his voice was great, while Hickerson joked that his physique put all the other men in the audience to shame.

Gibson said many of the songs during the show made the urge to get up and dance irresistible, while McCardle said she would like to see more rock ‘n’ roll shows at The Sharon in the future.

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