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**MIGHTY UKE DAY 7**  
**FRIDAY - SUNDAY, MAY 12 - 14, 2016**  
**OLD TOWN LANSING, MI**

*“Mighty Uke Day is a celebration of the diminutive yet dynamic ukulele and honors its unique ties to Michigan culture, as well as its contributions to music education and appreciation in the schools and community.”*

**Mighty Uke Day** in Lansing’s Old Town is the Midwest’s largest ukulele festival; it brings together live shows, workshops, open mic performances, children’s activities, strum-alongs, jams, and much more in a three-day celebration of the “people’s instrument,” Friday through Sunday, May 12 - 14. Performers and virtuosos share the stage with amateurs and local ukulele clubs. The Lansing Area Ukulele Group and other groups and solo artists will be featured in performances throughout the day.

The seventh year of the event will feature “The Women of the Great Uke State” with **Rachael Davis** headlining the festival Friday, May 12 and **Heidi Swedberg and Daniel Ward** headlining Saturday, May 13. Opening the shows will be Michigan musicians *Marlowe, Julianna Wilson, Olivia Millerschin, Gerald Ross & Frank Youngman, and The Ukulele Kings*. The weekend’s events will conclude with an acoustic performance by *Heidi and Daniel* on Sunday, May 14.

Many people know **Heidi Swedberg** as Susan, George Costanza's fiancée on "Seinfeld" who died licking wedding invitation envelopes. She has acted in a variety of other television shows and movies but has an even longer history with the ukulele. When she was 5 years old Heidi, received her first ukulele from the Hawaiian Easter bunny while living in Kailua, HI. She has fond memories of teaching herself chords (she claims to have invented the Em chord at the age of eight) and writing songs in her room in Albuquerque NM. She is passionate about people, which is why she loves the ukulele. Encouraging others to engage and connect through music, she teaches and performs for all ages, from the smallest children to older adults. She is a regular columnist for *Ukulele Magazine* and collaborates on recordings and instructional books.

**Daniel Ward** was born in Los Alamos NM, where he exposed to a wide variety of musical styles, including Mexican mariachi, Spanish flamenco, world music and jazz. By the time Daniel completed his degree in classical guitar and composition, he was playing flamenco guitar with dancers, electric jazz, trumpet, lute and world beat music around the globe. In 2009, he was introduced to the ukulele and all of the music inside him found a new home on

the four strings. Since then, he has become a premier ukulele performer and clinician, known for his command of Latin and world styles, with an expressive right hand that delivers beauty, speed and force. He has been a featured performer and workshop instructor at many ukulele festivals across the country and most recently the Ukulele Festival of Great Britain. His first ukulele CD recording “El Ukulele” is a lively adventure in what the instrument can do. More info at: [www.danielward.net/](http://www.danielward.net/)

Michigan native and Nashville TN resident **Rachael Davis** is renowned for her expressive and explosive voice as she is for uniting the often disparate worlds of folk, blues, country, and pop. Solo, and as a member of *Shout Sister Shout* and the *Sweet Water Warblers*, Rachael is well-known in the Michigan music community and is gaining an audience across the US and in Europe as a powerhouse vocalist and songwriter. She has a particular affinity for the ukulele which allows her to explore and play a variety of song genres and styles.

The weekend kicks off with a flash mob at noon Friday, May 12 with an appearance by what has been certified by Guinness as the world’s largest playable ukulele.

All events will be held in historic and picturesque Old Town Lansing at various locations, including the Urban Beat Event Center (1215 Turner), Elderly Instruments (1100 N. Washington), Sir Pizza Grand Café (201 E. Grand River), The Old Town General Store (408 E. Grand River), Red Cedar Friends (1400 Turner), MICA Gallery (1210 Turner), Mother Earth & Baby Boutique (1212 Turner), Absolute Gallery (307 E. Grand River), and other locations. The Friday and Saturday evening concerts will be held in the beautiful Dart Auditorium at Lansing Community College, sponsored by LCC Radio 89.7 WLNZ. Up-to-date information is available at [mightyukeday.com](http://mightyukeday.com) and on Facebook at [facebook.com/groups/mightyukeday](https://facebook.com/groups/mightyukeday).

Many of the day’s activities are free of charge. Tickets for the concerts and workshops are sold ala carte and are available in advance online via [mightyukeday.com](http://mightyukeday.com) and at the door during the festival.

A silent auction of ukuleles and accessories and other proceeds from the festival will benefit *Music is the Foundation*, a 501(c)(3) non-profit that supports a variety of music programs in Mid-Michigan classrooms and communities. ([mightyukeday.com/mitf/](http://mightyukeday.com/mitf/))

Mighty Uke Day is generously sponsored by Elderly Instruments, Kala Brand Instruments, GHS Strings, Dave’s Ukes, LCC Radio 89.7 WLNZ, Dean Transportation, Sir Pizza Grand Cafe, the Old Town General Store, the Old Town Commercial Association, Interlochen Center for the Arts, and others.

A full schedule, tickets, downloadable poster, and much more are available at [mightyukeday.com](http://mightyukeday.com). Up-to-date info can be found at: [facebook.com/mightyukedayfestival/](https://facebook.com/mightyukedayfestival/)

*“If more people played the ukulele, the world would be a better place.”* Jake Shimabukuro

*“It’s the thinking man’s violin”* Krusty the Clown