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## Festival producer revives Mind Jam

**Georgia Geis**  
The Arizona Republic  
Jan. 18, 2002

Call her the Tempe festival producer that could.

Against the financial odds, Lora Elizabeth Heiniemi, or "ralo," brings the 12th annual Earth Mother Mind Jam back to the Valley.



Mark Henle/The Arizona Republic

The Jan. 26 show will feature 300 musicians, artists, poets, performance artists and vendors from 11 a.m. to 1 a.m. at Nita's Hideaway in Tempe.

Lora Elizabeth Heiniemi, or "ralo," is the driving force behind the 12th annual Earth Mother Mind Jam, which will take place at Nita's Hideaway in Tempe on Jan. 26.

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The musical styles range from funk to alternative country to folk to Native American to reggae to rock with some crazy performance art and poetry in the mix.

Former keyboardist for the Grateful Dead and the Tubes, Vince Welnick, will headline the festival, performing with the Loco Super Stars.

Heiniemi, in her late 30s, first daydreamed about having her own Woodstock-like festival growing up in the "boonies" of Minnesota. She had a colorful childhood, the daughter of pro wrestler Luscious Lars Anderson.

She is a musician herself, one of the few people in the country to perform solo with a bass guitar. But it is talk about her "baby," the Earth Mother Mind Jam, that makes her eyes light up.

"This is my life's mission," she said.

Her mission began in 1987 when she produced her first festival, "All Together Now," with Valley musician Slim Golba. She then discovered the South Mountain venue known as "the Baseline Mansion."

The Baseline Mansion was the perfect Bohemian outdoor venue for The Earth Mother Mind Jam, which started there on a makeshift stage in 1989.

The back yard was filled with families lounging on blankets and children running barefoot chasing large beach balls. In the front yard, a drum circle lasted all day and night. The festival would happen sometime between April and May to

## If you go

**WHAT:** 12th annual Earth Mother Mind Jam, featuring 300 musicians, artists, poets, performance artists and vendors.

**WHEN:** 11 a.m. to 1 a.m. Jan. 26.

**WHERE:** Nita's Hideaway, 1816 E. Rio Salado Parkway, Tempe.

**INFORMATION:**

celebrate both Mother's Day and Earth Day.

"My intention with the festival is to provide an event that is known for the finest local and regional, national and international, independent artists. I want to provide a conducive atmosphere for artists to showcase their life's works," Heiniemi said.

After a decade at the Baseline Mansion, Heiniemi moved the festival to Flagstaff.

The mansion was being surrounded by new housing developments, and the three-day festival that drew a couple of thousand people had outgrown its home.

The 11th annual festival in 2000 could have held 30,000 people at the Coconino County Fair Grounds. Heiniemi, who always dreams big, thought she might fill the venue.

Unfortunately, the 3,000 to 4,000 patrons were not enough to support Heiniemi's dream, and the event was a financial failure.

"I'm proud of the show, but I'm still recovering financially," Heiniemi admits.

She also swore to many people that she was finished producing the Earth Mother Mind Jam. But after a year to reflect, and after the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, she decided to try again.

"I realized that the most important thing is building community and celebrating life," she said.

The event has many new sponsorships: Zia Record Exchange, Four Peaks Brewery, The Muse Coffeehouse, Club Tattoo, HyBurn,

The show is open to all ages, but is geared toward adults. ID required to enter the bar area. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the gate. Available at Zia Record Exchange, Nita's Hideaway, [ticketweb.com](http://ticketweb.com) or [themindjam.com](http://themindjam.com), (480) 894-9894.

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knotradio.org, Gentle Strength Co-op and the Arizona Institute of Reflexology and Clinic.

Her biggest support has come from her relatives. They have given more than what they could afford over the past 12 years. Heiniemi's eyes welled with tears when she described her younger brother's generosity. He gave her money to live on for the past couple of months so she could concentrate on the festival.

This year the festival is scaled down to one day at Nita's Hideaway. The back parking lot will house the main stage and one small side stage, and inside will be a third stage.

Heiniemi has planned to alternate mellow to heavier music from the inside to outside stage so there will be something for everyone going on at once. There will be food for sale from Four Peaks Brewery, The Muse and NY West. Vendors will display their original artwork and jewelry.

Scottsdale-based HyBurn will be making live recording of the acts on the main stage that will be available for purchase within 15 minutes of the performance.

Artists scheduled include Chico Chism, Vic Masters, Walt Richardson, Juarez, Truckers on Speed, The Hammertoes, Horticulture, Worms Union, Brandy Lintecum, Sarge Lintecum and Hans Olson.

Others who have signed on include Joe Myers, Jotham & Robby, Cleopache, Big Blue Couch, Sweet Papa Dave, Carey Slade and the AKA Band, Brent Babb and Curtis from the Dead Hot Workshop and Mary McCann.

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