

UFO, rave buffs party in Rachel

A promoter says tonight's 'Abduction' appeals to fans of electronic dance music and people interested in extraterrestrials

By Ray Parker
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Las Vegas ravegoers are jetting to Rachel tonight for what's being billed as a combination UFO political rally and techno music festival.

"We're bringing together two different groups," said Will Roberts, the promoter's spokesman. "The group that's into electronic dance music and those into UFO propaganda. It's for free, open people who are into taking away barriers.

"Part of the experience will be the desert landscape." < p> Promoters estimate more than 500 people will descend on Rachel, a tiny community of about 100 residents known for its proximity to the military's classified Groom Lake base at Area 51. UFO aficionados swear the base is where the government is hiding crashed alien vessels and performing autopsies on captured extraterrestrials.

ZZyZx Productions is banking on interested parties paying \$25 for the event, called Abduction, which will be held on 10 acres of barren private property about 140 miles north of Las Vegas.

Promoters received a Lincoln County permit and posted a \$2,500 cash bond.

The desert festival will feature drum circles, a local alien painter and booths full of "experiencers" < people claiming alien abduction.

Not all Racheleans are happy about the event.

Pat Travis, owner of the Little A'Le'Inn restaurant and motel, said she's worried about the possible consequences of having so many people tapping the town's limited resources.

"There's only eight Porta Potties out there," she said. "That's not a lot for 500 people. They're not coming out here for a political rally. That's just a come-on.

"They say there's not going to be drugs and alcohol. Yeah, right."

But Travis said she hopes the partygoers will be coming out with an open mind. She testifies to her own encounter with alien life.

"A beam of light came through my back door," she said about her UFO encounter. "It came about six feet into the room. It was 20 below zero at the time."

Raves began in the late 1980s when teen-agers in large cities would break into abandoned warehouses, throw an all-night party and leave at sunup.

During the events, disc jockeys mix prerecorded music, improvising beats and linking different rhythms together.

Abduction promoters say their all-night event is not really a rave.

"This is not a rave because the public eye perceives that (word) in the wrong way," Roberts said. "We're bringing a

positive message. No alcohol will be allowed."

Still, the Las Vegas Raves World Wide Web site, which lists rave locations and times, features the Abduction event in Rachel (<http://www.unlv.edu/~bright/lvraves>).

The tiny town received national attention in April when Gov. Bob Miller named State Route 375<which connects Alamo and Tonopah and runs through Rachel< the Extraterrestrial Highway.

Twentieth Century Fox, the studio distributing the film "Independence Day," brought the movie's stars and director to Rachel for the highway dedication and a promotional tie-in.

Ever since that event, "upper and lower Rachel" have been feuding, said Glen Campbell, director of the Area 51 Research Center, a private watchdog group he started in Rachel three years ago.

"I find it ironic she's (Travis) objecting," said Campbell. "I have no idea what a rave is. But there probably is a subculture of young people interested in these (alien) events.

"The whole idea that this is a political rally is ridiculous."

During the event, petitions will be distributed urging the federal government to release more information about Area 51 and the alleged cover-up of crashed alien craft in Roswell, N.M., on July 4, 1947.

Jason Suttle, the show's promoter, explains how the event came about.

"My father was interested in UFOs and I was interested in techno music," he said of their company's first event. "The rave scene is a lot cleaner here because everyone has to be 21.

"We're getting a lot of feedback. Sounds like it's going to fly."

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