

# Long Beach

## BUSINESS JOURNAL

October 12-25, 2010

## Focus On Long Beach

An Annual Guide To The City's Cultural Arts

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**Gregg Young**

## Gregg Young

### Guitarist/Singer Songwriter

If you haven't yet heard of Gregg Young's 2nd Street Band, you must not get out to Long Beach street fairs much. They play at most of them and have been doing so for years.

Young and his 2nd Street Band have six CDs on iTunes and e-stores all over the world. His funk/groove/reggae/jazz/blues compilations have won awards and can be heard on his Web site, [www.greggyoung.com](http://www.greggyoung.com).

Young, a guitarist, singer, songwriter, arranger, bandleader and producer, also operates his own boutique record label called Shore Records.

Originally from San Francisco, Young grew up with a Mexican mother and German father. Young's first musical inspiration was his Uncle Freddy, who sang traditional Mexican folk songs and played guitar. His uncle taught Young how to play guitar and took him and his cousins to rock shows where Young got "the bug" to play music.

Young started playing Bill Graham shows at the famous San Francisco venue The Fillmore. He was signed to a major label as a teen and released a few vinyl LPs and singles in the 1960s. After deciding to further his music education, he concurrently enrolled at University of California, Berkeley and the College of Alameda, where he studied and played in the jazz ensembles.

Because he would have had to train as a classical guitarist at Berkeley, Young decided to attend California State University, Long Beach, instead which was ranked No. 5 in the nation at the time for its jazz commercial music program. While in school, Young played various jazz guitar gigs in the area and taught private guitar lessons. He formed Gregg Young and the 2nd Street Band in 1984.

Young said local government seems to have a lot more focus on the arts than when he first came to Long Beach. "I remember a time on 2nd Street when street musicians weren't allowed. It was tighter. I don't think at that time the arts were considered an economic driver." Young said that not only is the arts good for the economy, but that the cultural arts are important to everyone in every community. "Without cultural arts, what would we have? Life would be dismal, dreary and bleak."

— Staff Writer Tiffany Rider