

# All that jazz

## Weekly music series reaches sound note

BY TODD WICES  
STAFF WRITER

Not gnats, not humidity, not even threatening storm clouds could stop the "Stars in the Park" concert at Heritage Park Thursday night.

Although the first concert was rained out and last week's was hampered by bad weather, about 200 braved the dark skies for the fourth installment of the weekly music series, which takes place on the hill near the park's entrance. This week, the Farmington Community Jazz Band entertained the crowd with an hour's worth of brassy hits — everything from Steely Dan and Stogie Wonder to George Gershwin and a swinging rendition of "Take Me Out to the Ballgame." Families sprawled out on blankets and senior citizens watched from lawn chairs, while children either danced to the music or amused themselves by rolling down the hill toward the band.

"We get people of all ages," said Cathy O'Rourke-Wendrick, a recreation specialist with the Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Department. "Some of them come and have a picnic dinner before the show. . . You get beautiful sunsets over the hill here."

The series features 10 shows each summer, and highlights popular, crowd-pleasing music at humane volume levels. Conduct-

ed by local high school music director Paul Barber, the Jazz Band provided a fitting soundtrack for the hozy summer evening.

Henry and Helene Wegler of Farmington Hills said they don't just go for the music, but to support local people.

"I think it's very nice if they have a good turnout," said Helene. "We go if we're free and weather permitting. We see our friends and neighbors (here)." Aaron and Missy Dick of Farmington are also Stars in the Park diehards, and attended nearly all of last year's shows.

"I like to people-watch, and the music's nice," said Missy. "I like to watch the senior citizens."

In an effort to keep things fresh, the Parks and Rec Department is always looking for new bands to showcase at the summer series, which is organized and scheduled in October. Next year, local artwork might be featured in the park at the same time.

"So many cities have outdoor concerts these days," explained O'Rourke-Wendrick.

So what makes Stars in the Park different?

"A hill," she laughed.

For more information on upcoming Stars in the Park shows, contact the Parks and Rec Department at (248) 473-9670.



Stage setting: The Farmington Community Jazz Band opened the weekly music series at Heritage Park in Farmington Hills Thursday night, playing brassy hits from Steely Dan to George Gershwin.



Sound of music: Jenni Greenman of Farmington, Alexandra Solomon and her sister, Cristina Solomon, Jenni's sister Fiona listen to the jazz music with their parents behind them.



Hill of a time: Seniors enjoy the concert, not to mention the view, while sitting on lawn chairs at the top of the hill in Heritage Park Thursday.

STAFF PHOTOS  
BY  
SHARON LEMIEUX

## FCC orders Time-Warner to pay refund to customers

BY TODD WICES  
STAFF WRITER

A 67-cent refund may not mean much to the average cable customer.

But multiply that by all the cable subscribers in Farmington, Farmington Hills and Novi, and it adds up to about \$300,000 — the amount that the FCC has ordered Time Warner Cable to refund to its customers.

In a letter dated May 20, the FCC announced that it had found several incorrect calculations in Time Warner's service rate increases for the projected period Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 1997. The order came in response to a complaint filed by the Southwest Oakland Cable Commission in March.

"I've been arguing since last winter that the latest rate increase was not justified," said Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi, a member of SWOCC. "Finally, the FCC agrees with the commission."

As a result of the miscalculated bills, the ruling states that Time Warner must do an extensive accounting of its costs and make refunds to customers, plus interest.

Vagnozzi was extremely pleased by the FCC's findings. "I think the residents ought to know that, at least at this stage, we've won," he said.

Time-Warner Vice-President and Regional Manager Tom

**"That was kind of a preliminary ruling. (The FCC) was just looking at some paperwork, and we feel they incorrectly applied their own rules. . . Our accountants just feel the FCC people made a mistake."**

Tom Bjorklund  
—Time-Warner  
regional manager

Bjorklund said the company plans to appeal the decision.

"That was kind of a preliminary ruling," he said. "(The FCC) was just looking at some paperwork, and we feel they incorrectly applied their own rules. . . Our accountants just feel the FCC people made a mistake."

"Certainly whatever the final decision is, through the FCC or the courts, we'll comply with. But I think it's certainly premature to expect that there will be refunds."

When the FCC found Time Warner rates to be unreasonable back in May 1994, the company gave refunds by putting credit on customers' bills.

The current mix-up stems

from a billing mechanism called a "true-up." To be specifically compensated for their additional expenses throughout the year, cable companies charge their subscribers a built-in rate. The FCC ruling stated that Time-Warner had miscalculated the number of months it could charge that "true-up" amount.

"It's a pretty complicated procedure," said SWOCC Executive Director Caren Collins. "Even I don't understand it. . . It's more than the average person should care about. They should care more about the bottom line on their cable bill."

Collins said that she doesn't expect there to be any ruling on the appeal for some time.

"The FCC has moved very slowly in the past," she said. "We were quite surprised to receive a response so quickly to this latest rate review."

In other cable commission news, SWOCC and Time-Warner agreed to seek a second time extension to negotiate a new cable contract. The contract was to be finalized in August, and now could be pushed back to Feb. 28, 1998.

"We feel we need more time, about an additional six months," said Collins. "Until then, (cable service) will exist the way it has under the current contract."

Each city council in the SWOCC — including Farmington and Farmington Hills — must approve the extension.

## UPSTAGE



Meet designer Heidi Weisel Monday and Tuesday, June 23 and 24, from 11 to 4 during our EVENING COLLECTION TRUNK SHOW in the Couture Salon. Entrance-making creations from top designers Badgley Mischka, Michael Casey, San Carlin, Marian Clayden, Helen Morley, Vicky Tiel, and Westcott will also be featured.

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## Shoplifting incident leads to drug arrest

Farmington Hills police arrested a 54-year-old Novi woman for heroin possession after a shoplifting incident at Kmart Thursday, which involved a store employee having her foot run over by a car driven by fleeing thieves.

The employee told police the incident occurred after she tried to stop the person in the parking lot after the individual placed 10 cartons of cigarettes in a shopping cart and then ran out without paying and into a waiting vehicle. The suspect shut the car

door on the employee. As the driver sped off, the car ran over her foot.

The employee had noticeable swelling on her left forearm and elbow, but declined treatment at the scene.

The assailant was initially described as a 6-foot tall white male wearing a white T-shirt, white shorts and tennis shoes.

Police traced the vehicle's plate to a Novi address. A witness said the person driving the vehicle was staying at the Bluebird Motel on Telegraph in

Southfield.

Police questioned the driver of a vehicle matching the description — a 1988 Dodge Shadow — when it pulled into the motel parking lot 2 1/2 hours later. A search of the driver's purse turned up a half-gram of heroin and a ledger detailing drug purchases.

The passenger, a Wixom woman, 31, was also arrested on an outstanding warrant. Her clothing matched that worn by the person involved in the shoplifting incident.