

Enjoy music under the stars Thursday

Enjoy live music under the stars at 7:30 p.m. Thursday evenings in Heritage Park.

Henry Cruz Y La Buena Vida

June 12
Outstanding World Music Vocalist award given by the Detroit Music Awards. Enjoy Latin music to heat up the night.

Farmington Community Band

June 19
The Farmington Community Band, with over 65 members, will perform popular music from many composers and eras.

Brazilian Love Affair

June 26

A spiky large ensemble specializing in the music of Latin America, led by 2003 Jazz Vocalist of the Year Sheila Landis and Rick Matle.

Ed Nuccilli & Plural Circle

July 10
Plural Circle Orchestra is a fabulous 17-piece Big Band, playing jazz standards and original compositions by trumpeter/leader Ed Nuccilli.

Jeremy Kittel

July 24
Jeremy Kittel, the 2000 U.S. National Scottish Fiddling Champion, has played solos at the White House, Hill Auditorium and for outdoor crowds of thousands.

Farmington Community Jazz Band

July 31

This entertaining group of 20 talented musicians from the Farmington Community Band will perform jazz and dance music.

Prime Vocal Jazz

Aug. 7

Six sensational singers backed by a swinging jazz band perform lively renditions of favorite swing, pop, jazz and classical tunes.

Farmington Community Chorus

Aug. 14

This 80-plus member chorus features vocalists from all over the Metro Detroit area. Style range from Broadway to Motown, Big Band to jazz.

PLATES

FROM PAGE A1

events like car shows and parades, can be licensed one of two ways — with Historical Vehicle Plates or Authentic License Plates.

The problem for Griffith is that he opted for the second method, which has gotten him stopped three times in the past 12 months by Novi Police and his 1974 BMW impounded the last time.

Authentic License Plates are license plates that were issued the same year the collector vehicle they're displayed on was built. The problem, according to Kelly Chesney, a spokesman for the state Secretary of State's office, is that records for Authentic License Plates are kept in a different database than the one for the other nearly 9 million other wheeled vehicles licensed in the state.

That means that if the owner of a vehicle with Authentic License Plates is pulled over for a traffic stop, the license plate number is going to come back as "not found" or, as in Griffith's case, registered to a different vehicle.

Griffith said he was on his way to a BMW dealership in Canton May 13 to have motorcycle serviced for an upcoming show near Battle Creek when he was stopped by Officer Kristie Gruenwald shortly after 8 a.m. He said that since he'd been stopped and released by Novi Police Officers last spring and again last summer, he was pretty sure what was going on.

Motorcycle plates are the same color as car and truck plates for any given year and Griffith's blue-and-yellow '73 plates stand out. Twice before, he said, he had explained to Novi Police officers that information on Authentic License Plates is kept in a different database at the Secretary of State's Office in Lansing.

This time, however, Officer Gruenwald told Griffith that there was a duplicate plate number registered to a Honda motorcycle in Oronogo. The officer decided the BMW was stolen and had it impounded.

"At one point I thought I was on Candid Camera," said Griffith. However, he added, when Officer Gruenwald announced she was having the



Richard Griffith's license plates have caused problems for him in Novi.

motorcycle impounded, "I was beside myself," said Griffith.

"The bike is 99 percent original," he explained, adding he's won several awards at vintage motorcycle shows with the machine. He said he became worried when officers called in a tow truck, but remained calm even when the tow truck driver tossed his battery cover in the grass.

He noted there are nine other members of the R90S Sport Owners Club in metro Detroit. Griffith said he was puzzled that police would impound his motorcycle as stolen, but not arrest him.

He said when he asked officers how he was supposed to get back to his home in Farmington Hills, they said they would drive him.

The whole situation, said Chesney, could have been avoided if officers had e-mailed the Secretary of State's Driver and Vehicle Information Center.

She said the center, which is open daily from 8 a.m. to midnight, can determine if an authentic plate is valid in under three minutes.

She said that's because there are only 41,599 Authentic License Plates on file with the Secretary of State's Office.

The 31,284 Historical Vehicle Plates in the system are part of

the Secretary of State's main database.

Novi Police Chief Doug Schaeffer, said he was "very surprised to learn that not all license records are kept in the same manner." However, he added, "We accepted responsibility for our errors. The system is what the system is."

He said the department made arrangements to return Griffith's motorcycle to him at no charge and a training directive has been issued to all officers. Chesney explained that information on Authentic License Plates is kept in a separate database because there is always a chance that the state has reissued a license number that a vehicle collector wants to use. Griffith said he was told by police after he eventually got his motorcycle back that he should carry a document from the Secretary of State's office, in addition to his registration and proof of insurance.

"The scary thing is," said Griffith, "even with the extra paperwork, you're at their mercy if the cops don't want to believe you."

"We appreciate the inconvenience," said Schaeffer, adding the department has sent Griffith a written apology.

Phil Foley writes for the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700.

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