1st Maryland Jazz Festival at Oregon Ridge Pk.

Storm cancels the Saturday concert

By Bob Matthews

The weather was just perfect for an outdoor concert, although it was boiling during the day, by evening there was a breeze and a temperature in a bearable 80 degree range.

And so, myriads of the faithful, laden with lawn chairs, picnic coolers and blankets decended on Oregon Ridge Park over the weekend where the First Maryland Jazz Festival was about to take place Friday night.

The opening act was Baltimorean Gary Thomas and his group. They fell victim of time constraints, and were shooed off too early, according to Gary.

But, it was understandable as the festival promoters attempted to keep things on schedule. After all, there is a curfew at the park which must be observed.

Gary admitted that he was bushed, having rushed back from Montreal where he completed a gig with Jack DeJohnnette.

* * *

Next up, in a remarkably swift stage setup change, was Ramsey Lewis and the group, who proceeded to captivate the audience with a deep bow to straight ahead jazz.

Of course, he played all of the things for which he was famous, "In Crowd," and the like—but leaned heavily toward straight jazz and swinging blues.

He did a tantalizing tidbit from his upcoming album, featuring gospel-flavored jazz and black folk music. There were even snatches of "Lift Every Voice and Sing," in it.

Needless to say, he and the group exited to a standing ovation, and then the crowd settled back to enjoy Sarah Vaughan—the next performer.

Have been listening to Sassy for over 30 years, and her voice has never sounded better. But as the guys in the backroom are wont to say, she really showed her behind this time.

From the moment she came on stage, there were complaints—the lights are too hot . . . there are too many bugs . . . there is no glass of water as called for in the contract . . . there is no box of tissues, also called for in the contract . . . and on, and on, and on.

All this went on, interspersed with superb vocalizing—but it certainly detracted from the performance.

When someone offstage held up a sign telling her that she should get off in five minutes—she blew up. After berating the messenger from on stage, she stalked off, and lapsed into language better associated with sailors on leave in a bar.

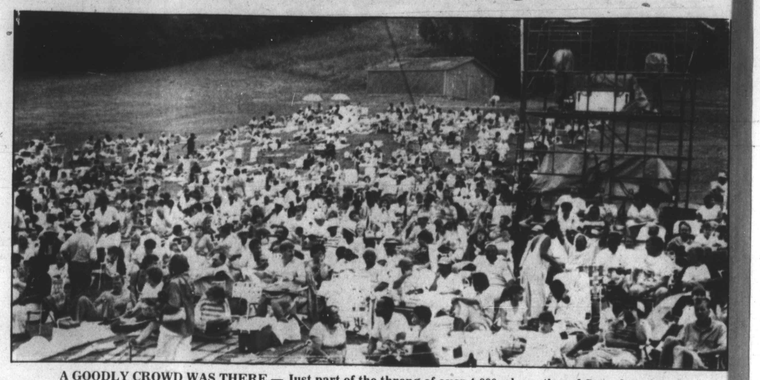
Naturally had to inquire about all this, and was told that "well, Sarah may have imbibed a smidgeon too much. . ." This doesn't excuse such unprofessional behavior, in our book.

* * *

The antics of Sarah seemed even more illogocal as the next performer took the stage. Tony Bennett, exuding class, proceeded to wrap the audience around his finger, and actually seemed that there was no problems with the weather.

While we have always liked Tony's voice, we were never overly impressed that he was a true jazz singer. In the Frank Sinatra mode, he has always been a true "saloon" singer in our book.

And, true to this assessment, he paid allegiance to his pop music roots, and the high point of his performance this evening was a medley of tunes written by Irvin Berlin.



A GOODLY CROWD WAS THERE — Just part of the throng of over 4,000 who gathered Saturday night for the 1st Maryland Jazz Festival. Alas, it was not to be. A lightning storm sealed its doom.

Of course, the songs for which he is famous were done, culminating in the now classic "San Francisco."

* * *

Then came Saturday. The lineup called for McCoy Tyner, Freddie Hubbard, Benny Golson, Roberta Flack, Herbie Mann and Maynard Ferguson to perform.

Kickoff time was supposed to be 6 p.m., and at about 4, a thunderstorm hit the area suddenly. Hail came down the size of marbles, a slashing rain inundated the area about now.

A sound check was underway, and all of the technical equipment was exposed to the elements—the equipment was soaked. All the while, lightning was slashing through the area in jagged bursts.

Just south of the concert area, a lightning bolt struck a tree, which promptly fell, taking with it the power lines that brought in the current to the concert area.

Now there was no power for anything. The concessionaires were on hold, inside the office areas, computers couldn't operate, pumps, fans and air conditioning were on hiatus.

BASIE BAND — Frank Foster takes a fiery solo as the Basie band goes through its paces at the Oregon Ridge Park festival. Frank is the current leader of the group, and that famous Basie rhythm and style continue.

Then the wait began, all the while folks were streaming into the area. Actually, the storm had cooled things considerable, so there was no complaints at this point.

And so, we waited . . . and waited . . . and waited. Finally, someone came on stage to announce that there had been a power failure, BG&E was on the scene, and power was expected to be restored soon.

Alas, it was not to be. When finally the power came on, the matter of the soaked sound equipment remained. Roberta Flack got on the phone and started calling all of the sound people she knew.

She sent her technician over to help. The word came back that it would take over 3 hours to get things running. Elzie Street, the promoter, was tearing his hair trying to get things under control.

The prohibitive cost of disaster insurance meant there wasn't any. Although this would be rightfully considered "an act of God," the contract of the musicians decreed that they get paid whether or not.

It was here that the real pros came to the fore. Roberta was quick to say she would be available for a makeup concert. The same with Freddie Hubbard and some of the others.

So, finally, the official announcement was made. Saturday night tickets would be good for Sunday night. Or, there would be a makeup concert in August where the Saturday night tickets were—all that would be needed.

* * *

Sunday night seemed almost an anti-climax. Things ran so smoothly, once they got started—just a wee bit late—that the events of Saturday night receded swiftly from memory.

The Great Guitars, Charlie Byrd, Herb Ellis and Barney Kessell, led off and set the tone for a totally delightful festival. There's is all straight ahead jazz, and it was sheer pleasure to hear these pros perform.

Then came to us, the highlight of the festival, the appearance of the Count Basie orchestra, led by Frank Foster. When we say that they came out cooking, and smoked the entire set—you can believe that this band was at the top of its form.

Had a few trepidations over how the band would sound without Count and Freddie Green, but we needn't have worried. They swung just as they have always done—exquisitely.

* * *

It was Nancy Wilson's turn next, and she launched into her standard song and patter routine which is slick and appropriate, for before it was all over, the audience was completely captivated.

The festival ended on a high note with Mel Torme doing his standard schtick, all the while singing and scatting up a storm (oops, that's a dirty word).

His was a fitting close to a really spectacular outing. We congratulate the festival promoters for a job well done under exceeding difficult circumstances.

Couple of asides, got word that next year's concert is practically a certainty—Coors beer has promised to underwrite it. And, Mel Torme will appear on "Night Court" this coming season, and Harry Anderson (Judge Stone) will finally get a chance to meet him.

Hurray for the 1st Maryland Jazz Festival—may there be many more.

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SOLICITATION OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND

Completed A/EE Questionnaires are due at 4:30 P.M. in the Division of Purchasing for:

ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES for US 29/Brokenland Parkway Water and Sewer Relocations, Capital Project S-6149 by Friday, July 29, 1988.

ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES for US 29/Seneca Drive Water and Sewer Relocations, Capital Project W-8156 by Friday, July 29, 1988.

Howard County hereby notifies all parties that Minority Business Enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit Expressions of Interest in response to this notice and will not be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex or national origin in consideration of an award. It is the goal of Howard County that Minority Business Enterprises participate in at least 10% of the total value of such contracts.

All bidders shall submit with their Expressions of Interest the County's Minority Affirmative Action Certificate.

Persons or firms interested in submitting an Expression of Interest are requestd to pick-up a package explaining the required elements and evaluation criteria from the Division of Purchasing, Second Floor, John Lee Carroll Building, 3450 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043 or call (301) 992-2036 (TDD 992-2323).

By Order,
Harry H. Bain
Chief of Purchasing

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

CCB/BJC Alumni Meeting

The Alumni Association of the Community College of Baltimore will meet on Sat. July 16, at 11 a.m. at the CCB Liberty Campus, Gaare Auditorium of the Nursing Building.

All graduates of CCB and BJC are invited. A GALA Alumni Reunion is scheduled for November. Call Herb Sledge at 396-1597.

Bon Secours seeks volunteers

Volunteers are needed to work with Bon Secours Hospital's Geriatric Telephone Reassurance Program. This free service provides a support system to help homebound senior citizens remain independent in their homes, as well as relieve isolation and loneliness for those living alone.

Volunteers make daily contact with each person, allowing time for friendly conversation, checking on health status, and giving reminders for prescription refills, doctor's or clinic appointments, and medicine schedules.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer in the Telephone Reassurance Program should call Delma Herskovitz, 362-3096.

"Field to Factory: Afro-American Migration, 1915-1940

The Baltimore Museum of Industry, in conjunction with the Maryland Commission on Afro-American History and Culture, will host "Field to Factory: Afro-American Migration, 1915 - 1940" from June 11 through August 21.

This exhibit, organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibits Services, will be enhanced by a special section of artifacts pertaining to the impact of the Great Mirgration in Maryland.

On Sun., July 24 there will be a Gospel Concert and reception at 3 p.m. and on Sun., August 14 there will be a Blues/Jazz Jamboree on the Museum pier at 3 p.m.

All special programs are free with Museum admission. The Museum of Industry is located at 1415 Key Highway, less than one mile from Harborplace. Free parking on the Museum lot.

4H Expo revue at Lexington Market

City 4-H'ers have no cows — but please, come see our fashion revue, homegrown vegetables, crafts and demonstrations of club projects at Lexington Market State on July 16, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Have fun at this preview of our State Fair entries.

City youth, 8-18 and adults, discover more about 4-H at "4-H Expo '88." 4-H'ers have a sense of belonging, and we welcome new members. Call 396-4906.

The University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service's program is open to youth ages 8-18 regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, religion and handicap.

Thrift shop features items for all

The Women's Auxiliary of the League for the Handicapped at 1111 East Cold Spring Lane is featuring their summer merchandise in its Family Thrift Shop. Shop hours are Monday thru Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. All proceeds from the sales go toward sending disabled children to Camp Greentop, the League's residential summer camp for the disabled.

The shop offers clothing for men, women and children at prices everyone can well afford. Household items are also available, along with jewelry, handbags, appliances, etc.

Your clothing and other items are also welcome at the shop. A tax deductible slip will be given for all donations, and the Auxiliary is most appreciative of such contributions throughout the year. Parking is free.

Library Card Campaign Launched

A campaign to register each child in the Towson area for a library card is being launched July 1 by the Towson Area Branch of the Baltimore County Public Library as part of its 50th anniversary of community service.

The project goal is to register 2500 children, a target which represents 50 children of each of the library's 50 years. All new registrants will receive a special bookmark and have their name written on a giant candle.

Call 296-8500 or visit the library, located at 320 York Road.

New computer hotline available

MBS Computer Services announces the opening of a new hotline for IBM PC or IBM PC Clone computer users.

The MBS hotline is designed to answer basic questions on choosing, installing and learning to use computer equipment and software. Callers can also get recommendations on local computer stores, consultants and computer clubs.

This is a free service and available to both business and personal computer users

To contact the hotline call (301) 358-1575 between the hours of 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. daily.

Diabetes Center needs volunteers

Johns Hopkins Diabetes Center is in need of volunteers with Type II diabetes who have trouble losing weight to participate in a study of a new oral medication.

Persons 30-70 years of age who do not take insulin, are overweight, and have poorly controlled diabetes are eligible. Participants will receive free blood testing, physical exams, electrocardiograms, and a chest x-ray. Call the office of Diabetic Studies at 955-7669.

NAACP convention underway in D.C.

By Alicia Benjamin
AFRO Staff Writer

The NAACP is holding its 79th annual convention in Washington, D.C. this week and attractions include speeches by the two Democratic Presidential candidates, Gov. Michael Dukakis and the Rev. Jesse Jackson.

Also Republican nominee, Vice President George Bush, who is almost assured of winning the Republican spot.

The first of the political speakers, Bush is scheduled to give an address at the 10 a.m. session on today (Tuesday).

Jackson will speak this evening at 7 p.m. and Dukakis will address an audience on July 13, at 10:30 a.m.

Participants will also hear from a number of American leaders who represent various sectors of the U.S. society.

They will conduct workshops that provide NAACP volunteers with information and techniques they can use in their own communities, said Benjamin Hooks. About 16,000 people are expected to attend the convention.

Other scheduled speakers and workshop leaders include U.S. Sen. Edward Kennedy, D.-Mass., Dr. Frederick Patterson, founder of the United Negro College Fund, U.S. Rep. Floyd Flake, D.-NY and others.

The convention held at the Sheraton, Omni and Washington Hilton Hotels opened officially on Sunday evening with a keynote address delivered by Dr. Benjamin Hooks, NAACP Executive Director.

Hooks began his address with the history of Washington, D.C., blacks in America and the civil rights struggle.

"Here we are in communion with the spirit of the black man who did much to plan and shape this city (Washington, D.C.), Benjamin Banneker," said Hooks.

"In Washington, the capital of the Western World, we are in the city that knew Thurgood Marshall as a law student, as the intrepid Special Counsel for the NAACP, the man who took 33 cases to the U.S. Supreme Court and prevailed in 29," he continued.

Also, at the convention entitled "Vote-Be Heard," Hooks commented on what the NAACP and black people are expecting from both the Democratic and Republican parties.

". . . We serve notice on the Democratic party that it would be a tragic and fatal mistake for it to assume that it has a lock on the black vote," Hooks commented.

"We will be looking closely at its platform, pronouncements and practices that must address the issues which are of major concern to black Americans."

* * *

To the Republican party he said "it would be a terrible mistake to continue to ignore the black vote, by appealing to the right wing."

"It has to be clearly understood that blacks can vote for candidates who wear the Republican label, if their programs and actions are sensitive to our aspirations and responsive to our needs," he added.

"And finally, we make clear our opposition to those who would urge that blacks, for whatever reason, stay away from the voting booths this fall," he continued.

Black people have suffered too much to ignore their right to vote on election day in November, he said.

Problems facing black Americans can no longer be viewed as problems which only impact black people. Hooks pointed to the problems facing young black people to explain.

"If America permits millions of young black people to grow to maturity in the belief they have no stake in society, there should be little wonder when these young people act out their feelings of alienation and hostility," he said.

"The hard reality is that this nation must either provide education, training and work for these young people, or be prepared to lock them away from the larger society."

Hooks also spoke of problems with the current presidential administration, homelessness, economic issues and other problems which plague black people in the U.S.

The convention will conclude on July 14 with the presentation of the Spingarn Medal, the highest award the NAACP bestows on a man or woman of African descent and American citizenship who had made the highest achievement in the past year of years in any field.

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Sponsored in part by Coors, Big Show Expo attracts more than 50,000 visitors to a touring show of new products, educational demonstrations and selling strategies.

Ms. Calvin also founded the National Black Beauty Heritage Association, whose turn-of-the-century artifacts will visit the Big Show Expo.

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