

Harmony in Washington Park

GROTON'S CONCERTS IN THE PARK PROVIDES INEXPENSIVE, EARLY EVENING FUN



Listening to music under the stars is one of those great stress reducers in life. Good weather, a blanket and a picnic basket can boost your mood as surely as a double shot of espresso.

For the fifth year, the city of Groton is getting into the spirit of summer music with its Concerts in the Park series at Washington Park.

The seven-concert series is co-sponsored and co-produced by Groton Utilities and the city of Groton Parks and Recreation Department. It started out in 2004 as a more limited event to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Groton Utilities.

"I said to Parks and Rec, 'Why don't we pool our money to do more concerts?'" said Frank Winkler of Groton Utilities. "I talked (city Parks and Recreation director) Mary Hill into going out onto the limb with seven."

They got the ball rolling and now it has become a summer institution in Groton. The concerts draw hundreds of people to the acoustically inviting park.

"We have a natural amphitheatre there," Winkler said. "There are people all over the place."

The concerts are designed to be appealing to families for a fun and inexpensive night out. People are encouraged to bring a picnic supper, as the starting time of 6:30 makes that especially appealing.

The concerts are postponed in case of inclement weather, a situation Winkler has run into a few times, so they've gotten used to adjusting on the fly.

"We test the weather gods every year," he said, "And we end up extending the schedule to close to Labor Day."

The series opened on June 20 and continues with the classic rock of The Black Burns on June 27. 9Teen plays July 11, Dick Campo and His Big Band on July 18, High Times on July 25, The Cartells on Aug. 8 and Rock 'n' Soul Revue wrapping up the schedule on Aug. 15. There are no concerts on July 4 or Aug. 1, City of Groton Day. There is room built into the end of the calendar in case the weather interferes again.

For concert information or cancellation notices, call the concert hotline, 446-4128.

There is no admission to attend, and parking is plentiful.

— Susan Banning

COUPLES DANCE TO THE SOUNDS OF THE DICK CAMPO BIG BAND DURING A SUMMER CONCERT IN WASHINGTON PARK IN GROTON. PHOTO JEFF EVANS