

No roar, but Lions twang at annual concert

Club roasts bull, hosts car show for fundraiser

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By MEREDITH SOMERS
Staff writer

For some, the sound of Memorial Day is the sizzle of hamburgers on a grill. For others it's the crash of waves on the coast at the beach.

But for a strong crowd of Marylanders and Virginians on Saturday, it was the twang of banjos and the pluck of mandolins that heralded the unofficial start of summer at the Brandywine Lions Club's eighth annual Bluegrass in the Park event.

"Bluegrass is good, down-to-earth music. It's the real deal," said Jay Armsworthy of Jay Armsworthy & Eastern Tradition, one of the four bands that took the stage over the weekend. "Even by name, bluegrass is the roots of country music. It's so personable."

Whether it is the music or the artists that keep people returning for another concert, it doesn't matter to the Lions.

"We like bluegrass," said Roger Hamilton and Whitey Roberts, the Lions' president and crafts show chairman, respectively.

"People love it," Hamilton continued. "They just want to know when we're gonna do another one. You see lots of the same faces, but that's what Southern Maryland is: A lotta bluegrass."

The 65-year-old Brandywine Lions are part of the larger District 22-C, which includes several counties in Southern Maryland and Washington, D.C.

The Lions host a number of events during the year, including flea markets, craft shows and concerts.

When the Lions aren't donating money to the community, members also collect food and clothing for holiday and local food bank drives.

This year the daylong bluegrass concert was scheduled around Memorial Day as a more affordable option for the weekend, Hamilton said.

Planning for the event begins several months in advance, when organizers settle the venue logistics and contact bands to fill out the music program.

This year Armsworthy's band was joined by the Scott Brannon Band, Allen Mills and the Lost & Found Band and the Virginia Ramblers. All but Allen Mills and his musicians were return performers.

There was also a classic car show for visitors to explore between music sets.

Charlie McPherson of Charles County said he came to the event because his wife enjoys the music.

"She brings a book, sits down and listens. It's a good show," McPherson said. "I just wish there were six times more people."

No matter the attendance, the money raised from admission and food goes back to the community, often in the form of donations for scholarships.

"Even if it is \$20 or \$20,000, it goes back to the community," Hamilton said.



Silver Spring resident Charlie Honaker and his wife, Jean, enjoy some shade and the sound of music at Bluegrass in the Park



Tommy Rains, front, Frank Northrop and Alfred Gregory check under the hood of a 1951 Mercillac, which is a car with the body of a Mercury and the guts of a Cadillac. Gregory is the owner of the car and brought the ride to the classic car show held during the Brandywine Lions Club Bluegrass in the Park event Saturday.



Allen Mills, far right, and The Lost & Found Band take the stage.