

Town's bandstand ready for concerts

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WEST NEWBURY — Despite acts of vandalism during the off-season, the West Newbury Community Bandstand is repaired and ready — just in time for the annual summer concert series.

The series begins on Thursday and runs every Thursday evening from 6:30 to 8 through the end of August. The gazebo, behind the 1910 Office Building, 381 Main St., is the site for the free family concerts.

The three West Newbury youths, charged in April with damaging the balustrade and sound system of the gazebo, will go to court this month, according to police Chief Jonathon Dennis.

"We hope the court will order restitution," said Dennis.

The concert series kicks off

with the Merrimack Valley Concert Band, featuring local musicians of all ages playing popular family songs, show tunes, Dixieland and contemporary tunes.

It's rock 'n' roll night on June 8 as rock bands and various performers from Pentucket Regional High School invade the stage for the Pentucket Youth Jam.

Local piano legend Joey Edwards presents an evening of classics and original songs that span generations on June 15.

"Get there early for a good spot before his busload of fans arrives," said series co-organizer Brian Young. For the past several years, Young has planned the summer series with help from Chuck Rotundi.

Acoustic artist Chris Reddy performs for the first time at the gazebo on June 22. His solo show is a mix of covers from instrumental finger picking to Coldplay and originals that

have been compared to late '70's Jeff Beck fusion and Tangerine Dream soundscapes, Young said.

Then buckle up on June 29, when Taxpayer, one of the hottest bands on the Boston scene, comes to town.

Taxpayer features several local musicians, including singer-guitarist Jared Marsh, guitarist Mike Jones and drummer Rob Adams.

Kate Redgate, known on the local music pub and coffeehouse scene, performs on July 6.

Then on July 13, the Thomas Machine Works Band, featuring Young, Rotundi and four other local musicians, performs for its fifth summer at the bandstand.

"There's always a surprise or two that will make your evening memorable," Young promises of his band's performance.

Jazz fills the air on July 20 as The Nick Goumas Quartet offers rhythmic and harmonic sounds and some unique jazz improvisation.

The acoustic trio, City of Roses, displays its complex compositions and intricate vocals on July 27.

The band, which is returning for its second year, plays everything from country to folk to rock.

On Aug. 3, legendary folk singer Bill Staines is back.

Staines delights audiences at an average of 200 concert dates a year throughout North America.

Artists such as Peter, Paul and Mary, Nancy Griffith, The Highwaymen and Jerry Jeff Walker have recorded Staines' songs.

The melodically acoustic sounds of Johnny Moore are highlighted on Aug. 10; then The Darlings, led by Johnny Girouard, offer a mix of bluegrass and country.

Bluesy retro guitar, driving rhythms and pervasive fiddling are the hallmarks of DownDog, playing on Aug. 24.

The season ends where it all began with the Merrimack Valley Concert Band on Aug. 31.

"It'll send you into the fall season with an upbeat, hand-clapping and flag-saluting family night filled with truth, justice and the American way," Young said.

The free concerts are held rain or shine. For more information, call 978-363-1100, ext. 10 or access www.town.west-newbury.ma.us.

"Each week brings its own special sound, so set aside your Thursday evenings, pack your lawn chairs and blankets and head on down to the bandstand," Young said. "You won't regret it."