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Cool cats crank out smooth tunes

Annual JazzFest features young, student acts

By Lindsay Powers
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The sounds of the saxophone, trumpet, bass and more could be heard June 9 as the 18th annual Takoma Park JazzFest swung into the Old Takoma area.

This year's festival, which drew about 3,000 people, included an educational theme, with five of the event's dozen acts made up of students ranging from middle-school to college age, said **Bruce Krohmer**, the event's producer and one of its founders. Among the groups and solo acts that performed from about 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., the Red Line Quintet featured students from Montgomery Blair High School and Albert Einstein High School, while the Takoma Park Middle School Jazz Ensemble also added its musical talent to the mix.

Matt Wigler — who has played at the festival since he was 14 and is now 19 — played the piano for attendees.

“He's just been growing up with the festival,” Krohmer said.

Krohmer said the festival included a little bit of blues and folk along with the jazz.

The group ilyAIMY offered energy and a family-friendly performance, Krohmer said.

“I was trying to draw in families this year,” he said. “It really helped to get families interested.”

A day before the performances, the festival offered workshops at Montgomery College's Takoma Park-Silver Spring campus, including those for grade-school children as well as more advanced students.

One workshop teacher taught “how to sing jazz and appreciate jazz,” Krohmer said.

For Krohmer, the festival marks an opportunity to help people learn about the genre.

“It's really important to educate people about jazz or they're going to forget about it,” he said.

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