

First Open-Air Appearance At WPCC Plaza

Symphony To Give Pops Concert

Regardless of age, sex or color, every resident of Burke County is invited to attend admission free the "Pops" concert to be held out-of-doors (for the first time anywhere in the 25-year-history of the North Carolina Symphony) on the plaza of the Western Piedmont Community College next Thursday evening at 8:15 o'clock.

There will be an abundance of chairs for all who care to sit. However, informality is urged and those who prefer to take

blankets and pillows and sprawl out on the grass may feel free to do so.

Jazz will highlight the performance as eight jazz and percussion musicians have been added to the sixty-member Symphony orchestra for the playing of the contemporary work "Lions," by Ned Rorem, which never before has been performed in this area. The Loomis McGlohon Jazz Quartet will play it.

Local leaders of the Burke

County Chapter of the North Carolina Symphony Society are greatly excited by the event. "Actually," explained Mrs. Frank DiSanto, county president of the group, "it is a goal that we have been working towards for the last five years.

"When a membership chairman — this year it is James Culberson — and his committee works so industriously to raise a goal of over \$6,000 to bring the Full Symphony Orchestra to Morganton for two adult concerts

and two children's concerts, it seems a shame that every seat in the auditorium is not occupied.

"Most of us have felt," she declared, "that the combination of an informal 'Pops' concert held out-of-doors and featuring lighter music and jazz in symphonic arrangement would offer tremendous appeal to the younger element in the county and now next week's response will tell the story."

See Symphony page 6A

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(Continued from page one)

Many obstacles stood in the path of an out-of-doors concert. Firstly, she pointed out, permission had to be obtained from the orchestra's director, Dr. Benjamin F. Swalin. His initial reluctance stemmed from the fact that (1) an outside performance could be canceled out due to bad weather thus messing up a tight around-the-state-tour schedule; and (2) playing in the open air makes for great acoustical problems.

"Last fall," she continued, "Dr. Swalin gave his consent but with a few big privosos. (Namely, the orchestra would require some type of shell equipped with flooring, ceiling, and ceiling illumination.)"

Working on the premise that the concert would take place in the Morganton High School football stadium, a committee, under the direction of board member and publicity chairman Charles E. Sasser toiled for weeks on these requirements.

A shell was sketched and a small model built by local architect Marvin Folger, free of charge. It was acoustically sound and physically attractive. However, when it was put out for a cost estimate, it figured at about \$15,000. (Part of its high cost hinged on the provision that it would have to be easily convertible for storage.)

Not to be daunted the committee put on their thinking caps again and after investigation found that the most crude type of temporary shell could still run into several hundreds of dollars.

Because of lack of funds, this idea was also abandoned. The only alternative left was to find another location that might already possess some of the necessary physical qualifications.

Suddenly, the college plaza loomed into mental view. A telephone call to Dr. Gordon Blank, president, assured the group of a pleased and happy reception. And, the rest will be history. Why not use this site again and again and again?

In the event of rain, the concert will still take place on the plaza with the audience moving up there, too, and overflowing into the adjacent buildings' lobbies, where chairs will be placed.