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Downtown Alive! with Summer Jam

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July 11, 2009

By [CHRISTINE S. MOYER](#) cmoyer@scn1.com

AURORA -- It was around 6 p.m. Friday when people began gathering downtown on Galena Boulevard.

They carried collapsible chairs and pushed strollers.

They ate pizza on the steps of North Island Center and scooped spoonfuls of shaved ice into their mouths.

Friday, kicked off Aurora's Summer Jam, which is the city's youth-oriented portion of Downtown Alive!

The weekend's featured bands -- Sister Hazel on Friday and Eve 6 today -- aimed to attract a younger crowd to the annual celebration.

Beatriz Sanchez, 14, of Aurora, never heard of either of the bands, which were popular in the '90s. She looked for a possible hint from her friends, but they just shook their heads.

"We're just hanging out and taking pictures," Sanchez said, holding a digital camera in her lap.

The girls are excited about the Aug. 14 Downtown Alive!

Sanchez pointed to a poster. "Hi Infidelity," she said. "They're a good band."

As the sun set on Aurora, Chicago cover band Spoken Four jammed for the crowd.

Their set list ranged from the Jackson 5's "I Want You Back" to "Hot in Herre" by rapper Nelly.

The music drifted beneath the Galena Boulevard bridge, where a handful of people kayaked near the dam in protest of a proposed state rule that would force paddlers to pull their boats out of the river 300 feet north and 50 feet south of any dam as a safety measure.

People walking by stopped to watch the kayakers and, of course, the six palm-size ducklings waddling after their mom on the river's bank.

Back on dry land, Brian Biro of Aurora showed off his 1963 camouflaged Swiss Army Troop Carrier in the car show.

Biro noted that Friday's crowd seemed smaller than past years. It could have been the

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threat of inclement weather, he speculated aloud.

Nearby, a couple carrying a cooler walked toward Downtown Alive's entrance on Stolp Avenue.

Staff at the entrance turned the couple away. No coolers this year. It's a rule, along with paying \$1 for a wrist band for those who want to drink alcohol.

"Ugh," the man said with a sigh as he turned around. "We have to pay \$1 for a wrist band."

They marched down Stolp Avenue into the parking garage.

A few minutes later they reemerged. But this time they didn't have a cooler.

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tryme wrote:

The city of stupid people really screwed up downtown alive this year. They should have just let it be, and kept it the same. Its pathetic. Thanks aurora (idiots)...for nothing.

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