

# Orange presents tastiest foods and sounds

By Chris Sykes  
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Visitors to Monte Irvin Park were treated to a sampling of Orange's best cuisine through the city and its business community.

Saturday's inaugural "Taste of Orange" kicked off Restaurant Week, which runs through Friday. The event that highlighted the taste delights the city has to offer included a concert featuring "classic" 1980s artists, including the Force MDs, Hunter Hayes, Anonymous, Kenny Bobien and Colonel Abrams.

Food was available to purchase from local eateries, and a city official said more than 500 people attended the five-hour fair.

"Taste of Orange is part of our larger economic development strategy of marketing Orange as a destination city," Mayor Eldridge Hawkins Jr. said. "Our wonderful restaurants already attract dollars from around the around the region, and this event plus Orange Restaurant Week are designed to make many more people, residents and outsiders alike, aware of what Orange has to offer. Taste of Orange was a spectacular success."

Hawkins said the city's Urban Enterprise Zone program funded Saturday's event.

"The purpose of UEZ funding is to strengthen businesses in the zone for the benefit of everyone in Orange," Hawkins said. "The city still had funding in its UEZ budget for marketing and advertising despite state cuts. The funds are part of open projects."

Hawkins referred to the state budget in which, for the second consecutive year, Trenton will keep the full 3.5 percent sales tax collected in the city. Previously, the



Photo Courtesy City of Orange

A buffet awaits visitors during Saturday's 'Taste of Orange' fair in Monte Irvin Park.

amount was credited to the city's UEZ program for use in promoting commerce.

At Large Councilman Rayfield Morton is veteran music industry manager and promoter who once counted the Force MDs as clients. He has been responsible for bringing other notable performers to Orange and said it was worth hav-

ing them provide the entertainment. "It was a good time for residents of the city and visitors alike to come through and listen to some good music, eat some good food and have a good, safe time," said Morton.

Referring to the Lincoln Park Music Festival on Sunday in Newark, he continued: "Even

though there were two cultural events going on in Orange and Newark over the weekend, it wasn't like they were competing against each other for people or performers because what they really ended up doing was giving people from all over the greater Newark area a chance to do something positive."