

# 'Cook With The Hook' captures bluesman's visit to city

BY SAM BONACCI  
NEWS STAFF WRITER

GARDNER — A rare piece of Gardner's history was unearthed recently when a 1974 performance by blues legend John Lee Hooker at the city dump was made available on DVD.

"It's been sitting in my basement for 35 years. I felt guilty about it because I was the only person able to watch it for so many years," said Bob Boyd, who directed the footage of the concert for the video dubbed "Cook with the Hook." "My motivation was ... just to get it out there so people can see and hear it. That is what art is all about."

The footage captures the famed singer and guitarist's full performance during a July 6, 1974, concert known as "Down in the Dumps." Mr. Boyd was working as the programming director for the local cable station in Leominster at the time, and jumped at the chance to capture the performance on film.

"At that time, that had to be the biggest musical act ever in Gardner," he said. "It was a wondrous experience, because John Lee was kind of an idol."

The hot July day saw 6,000 people fill the grounds of the dump to see various performers, but it was Mr. Hooker that got Mr. Boyd's attention.

A mobile recording van that was used primarily to record sporting events was brought to

the grounds after Mr. Hooker gave his approval. Mr. Hooker's daughter has told Mr. Boyd that this is the only video in existence of one of her father's full concerts.

"Back in the day, nobody recorded the concerts. Literally. So this is the first and only of its kind," said Mr. Boyd.

The video captures the signature sound of Mr. Hooker's blues riffs and the energy of the crowd. It was Mr. Boyd's first attempt at cutting a live music performance, and it got under his skin.

"The Hooker thing told me how much I enjoyed doing, that and that's why I kept up with that," he said. "I still do it to this day."

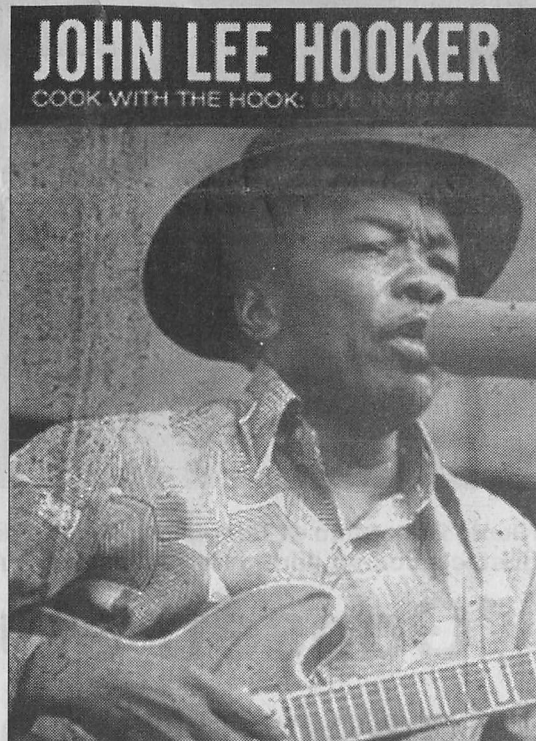
In the 1980s Mr. Boyd moved on to create his own company, Group Five Communications, but he always came back to the music scene. He would often step out with members of his company to film artists such as the Ramones and Joan Jett at the Casbah in Manchester, N.H.

Mr. Boyd spoke of how advanced and accessible recording technology has become, and noted that many performers were never captured on film.

"Back in 1974, if you wanted to record video, there were no cell phones. There were no small cameras," he said. "You had to have the gear and be a professional, or you didn't get it at all."

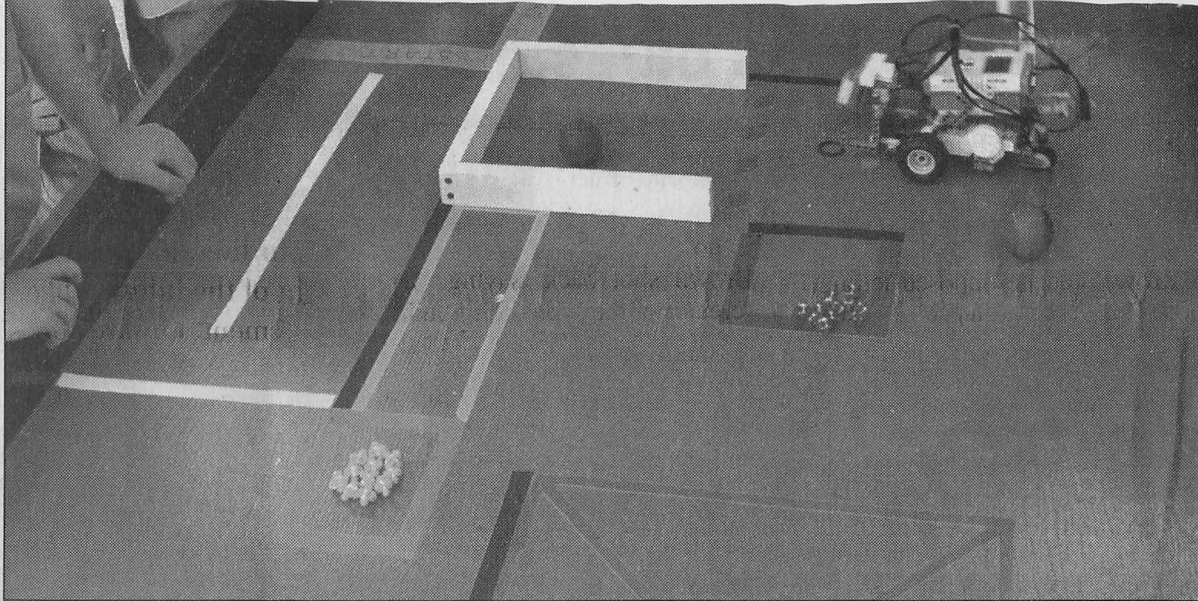
The DVD is available now through Amazon or [www.mvdvisual.com](http://www.mvdvisual.com).

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Courtesy image

The DVD "Cook With The Hook" features John Lee Hooker's performance at the 1974 "Down in the Dumps" concert in Gardner. Bob Boyd, who directed the footage, had the concert film in his basement for more than 30 years.



News staff photo by MARK HARANAS

Nicolo Donarumo of Templeton, right, looks on as the robot her team created runs through an obstacle course during Narragansett's Summer Robotics Camp.

## 'Gansett students return to classroom for robotics camp

**From ROBOTS, Page 1**

"They're at home using these ... They don't realize that they're learning engineering, team building skills, mathematical

For example, if the robot can drive a ball into a box, the students gain five points. If students can navigate their robot through four pipes without

that will compete at the conclusion of the two-week camp from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday. The public is invited to attend as each team gets

Leblanc's apartment after neighbors reported hearing a domestic disturbance, and a woman screaming.

Gardner Police Officer Sean Lafrennie describes in his police report walking into a bizarre scene inside Mr. Leblanc's apartment.

Mr. Leblanc was standing in a darkened bedroom, according to the officer, covered in blood and wearing only his underwear. There was blood on the floor and the furniture, and the entire apartment was covered in a white powdery substance.

The white powder was later determined to have come from a fire extinguisher that was used in the struggle between Mr. Leblanc and his wife.

Mr. Leblanc's wife had managed to get away from the apartment just before police arrived, according to reports. Mr. Leblanc told officers he was God, and his wife was Satan, and they were engaged in battle at the end of the world.

Mr. Leblanc also told police he was bipolar, and had recently stopped drinking. He repeatedly asked the officers if his wife was dead, according to Officer Lafrennie.

The victim had stab wounds to