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# Farmington Observer

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**The lunch crunch:** A bite of school lunch will cost a few more bits this fall. /3A

**Ice is nice:** Farmington Hills' new ice arena should more than break even in its first year of operation, says a city official. /4A

**Local Y ranks high:** The Farmington Area YMCA has been selected from more than 376 entries to receive the Award of Merit. /10B

## TASTE

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## MALLS & MAINSTREETS

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# Some like it hot at parade

Umbrellas were popping up all along the Founders Festival parade route Saturday, even though not one raindrop fell from the leaden skies.

BY BILL COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

The cold drinks were flowing, a hot wind was blowing — punctuated by an occasional shower provided by Farmington Hills firefighters — at the Farmington Founders Festival parade Saturday.

The crowd came, but not in the numbers of previous years thanks to 90-plus degree heat. At 9:30 a.m., there were still some places to sit along the curb of Grand River Avenue near Farmington Road.

Despite the heat and humidity, there was plenty of enthusiasm. "I've been coming for many years," said Farmington resident Helen Prassel as she sat in a lawn chair with a book along Grand River. "I love this parade. It's hokey, silly and fun."

And parade participants seemed to adjust to the heat by taking a few precautions.

Miss Farmington Audrie Charnackas used an umbrella, a la parade, to ward off the rays while waving to the crowd. And Farmington Festival Band members, clad in purple T-shirts and cool white shorts, were treated to plenty of water between sets along the parade route.

"It was very hot," said Latoeba Seey, a band member from Farmington Hills. "But they kept bringing us water. It was actually a lot of fun."

Farmington Public Safety Officer Jack Showalter said it was the hottest parade day he could remember in his 10 years on the job here.

But that didn't stymie the creativity of those who came to march or to watch. The parade featured a float from the Stafford Hospital's MASH float was the top commercial float followed by First of America's and Miss Lowell's Too Cozy, which featured a horse and carriage, ladies and gentlemen in period. Grand Rapids also won the president's award for best festival float.

Gill School won the organizational float, with Special Services and



BY AP PHOTO BY BARBARA LAKSHMI

No rain on this parade: The only showers to fall on the hot Farmington Founders Festival parade spectators came from the Farmington Hills firefighters who cooled things off with their hoses.

Salem United Church finishing second and third, respectively. Gill's float won for best original concept, a tribute to World War II veterans.

Parade's Dynamite won the best crowd competition, followed by James' School of Boston. The Bertram Hatch School of Dances won the precision drill competition followed by the Farmington Hills School of City Cheerleaders and the Farmington Hills Pom-pom Squad.

Farmington and Farmington Hills officials, 47th District Court Judges Fred Harris and Maria Parker and State Rep. Jan Dotson were among those taking part. Hills regional candidate Paul Sowersby and his supporters, called "Paul Sowersby's opposing Alder Vagabond," were passing out balloons.

Although cold drinks were being vendors along the parade route and business was anything but hot, one vendor described business as shaky and some had packed up their tents

because of the heat. Kids rides at the carnival in the Downtown Center parking lot had to shut down because not enough kids were riding and the seats were too hot to ride on.

"It's been slow," said Dick Carroll, who was selling raffle tickets for the Lions Club. "It's down from last year."

But good humor prevailed despite the heat. "We've had ice cream showers thanks to the Farmington Hills firefighters," shouted firefighter Don St. Clair, aka Gadget the clown.

Some of the marchers had surprising energy. Two ladies from the Danie Decker Center, clad in black "let's go" and thigh-high stockings, marched their way up Grand River.

This year's festival had a World War II theme, with veterans represented throughout. Parade Grand Marshal "Uncle" Jack Carr rode at the front and veterans distributed American flags.



Festival sounds: Alex Marshall, 6, of Farmington Hills, plugs his ears against the noise of the fire trucks.



Memorabilia: Glenn Fochler, showed his colors from a vintage automobile. At right, Dr. Michelle Dedman from Botford General Hospital hands out Band-Aids with co-worker Judith Bushley.



# Heat, outages make Edison customers sizzle

BY BILL COUTANT  
AND LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITERS

First the heat seemed stuck on high in the area. Then the wind blew and the rain poured down.

How bad did the wind blow in Farmington Thursday evening? Just ask the man who was up a ladder, working on a sign at the Nine-Grand Party Store. He was blown off the ladder and landed 26 feet away.

He was treated for cuts and bruises at Botford Hospital.

"It's doing all right," store owner Mark Zuzna said. "I told him to watch the wind, and he said, 'It's all right. I'm done.'"

Power outages followed the heat wave, wind and rain Thursday.

While Detroit Edison crews scrambled to repair lines and restore power in the Farmington area, utility officials were explaining yet another serious power outage.

Despite the installation of a new transformer on Freedom Road and a new power line connecting the city with a 18,000-volt substation in Southfield, about 8,500 households were initially without power in the two cities, and about 7,500 households were without power Friday afternoon in the wake of Thursday evening's storm.

"There's not anything that's going to eliminate (outages) with the fury of a storm that has 60-mile-an-hour winds and numerous lightning strikes," said Edison spokeswoman Mary Kay Benn. "Something like that has a tremendous potential to do damage to equipment."

## 55 Hills emergencies

In fact, Farmington and Farmington Hills did not get the worst of the storm that at one point had left 91,000 Oakland County households without power and about 330,000 without power in southeast Michigan.

"On a normal day we have 14 emergencies," said Lt. Mike Carr of the Farmington Hills Fire Department. "Yesterday (Thursday) we had 55 emergency runs."

Carr said 48 of those were during the storm period from 8:30-10:30 p.m. Of those, 36 were related to downed wires. He praised the city's dispatchers who took "hundreds of calls" and directed them without any problems.

See GUYANEE, 5A