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WOODWARD Dream Cruise '97

This is a catch-the-date reminder for the 3rd annual Woodward Dream Cruise and a request for Dream Cruise memories and favorite spots along the strip where people used to stop. We want our readers to send us their memories in 150 words or less. The top 12 or so will be published in the official Woodward Dream Cruise guide as a supplement to the Eccentric week of the cruise. The cruise is Saturday, Aug. 16.

Entries can be sent to:
Attn: Sue Wills, The Eccentric
805 E. Maple
Birmingham, MI 48009
Or faxed to her attention at (248) 644-1314



STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LESLIEUX

Calm before the Festival: With much of the preparation done, Founders Festival administrator Jody Soronen can only hope for "75 and sunny" next week. The week-long festival of events begins Sunday.

Ready, set, for our big Fest

By Todd Wicks
STAFF WRITER

Back in January, while the rest of the Farmington area was recovering from the holidays, Jody Soronen was thinking about the 33rd annual Founders Festival.

Temperatures may have been bone-chilling, but Soronen and other staff at the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce were already planning for the hot July week where nearly 80,000 people would invade the area to attend the yearly festival.


Fast-forward seven months to the present: A good portion of the community is in full swing, preparing for the fast-approaching event.

As festival administrator, Soronen is still going strong.

"It's a long-term process," said Soronen, community affairs director at the chamber. "Obviously, the closer we get to it in the last couple of

See **FOUNDER'S, A2**

- What: Founders Festival
- When: July 6-13
- Where: Downtown Farmington
- Highlights: Tuesday is Kids Day in Shiawassee Park; Wednesday Miss Farmington is crowned; Thursday to Saturday, check out arts and crafts, food, sidewalk sales, performers and rides; Saturday is Parade Day, starting at 10 a.m. on Grand River.
- More info: See insert in Sunday's Farmington Observer for a map; or call the chamber, 474-3440.



IN THE PAPER TODAY

Links time: Three of the teens who trashed San Marino Golf Course this spring get sentenced. /A2

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New for '97: 'Gala Parties'

One of the new features of this year's Founders Festival is the revival of Gala Parties at the Farmington American Legion Hall. In the 1940s, the Legion held Gala Days to raise funds for construction of its current building. Since next year is the 60th anniversary of the building and

the 75th anniversary of the Legion in Farmington, the time seemed right to bring them back again. "We've been thinking about doing something for years, and now that the Ox Roast is not going on, we thought we'd give the community the Legion facilities to have some fun in," said Wally

Christensen, chaplain of American Legion Post 346. On Friday, July 11, deejays will spin songs from the 1940s/50s for dancers. The music of the 1950s/60s will be featured on Saturday, July 12. Both nights are

See **GALA, A2**

We're HomeTown Communications Network Inc. now

Suburban Communications Corporation, publishers of community newspapers, shoppers, telephone directories, specialty publications and Web and Internet products, has changed its corporate name to HomeTown Communications Network, Inc., effective immediately.

Philip H. Power, chairman and owner of the company, whose publications are distributed in Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio, said the corporate name was changed in order to reflect the company's evolution into a provider of multi-media local information networks.

"Our core business is community newspapers," Power said, "but to serve the needs of our reader customers and our advertisers, we need to link them with our local telephone directories, niche publications and Internet services in order to put them in touch with their world, whether it's their own hometown or the entire global village."

"That's the strategic vision of our company," Power added. "To create a network of local information sources. That's what lies behind our name, HomeTown Communications Network."

"We won't change the names of our newspapers, some of which are more than 100 years old, but we will develop ways to show how our various information products are linked together into a network," Power concluded.

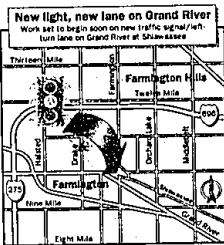
Overall, HomeTown Communications Network publishes 67 community newspapers, including the Observer & Eccentric newspapers in suburban Detroit, HomeTown Newspapers in western Oakland and Livingston counties and Community newspapers in the Lansing, Michigan suburbs. The Community Press publishes 28 newspapers in the Cincinnati region and northern Kentucky, while Michigan Directory Company publishes 20 community telephone directories in a variety of Michigan communities. Other publications include a golf guide, entertainment travel tabloids and senior, health, new homes and horse magazines.

Richard D. Aginian, president, said, "HomeTown Communications Network also provides a full range of Internet services which include site design and maintenance, display advertising and AdVillage, one of the first comprehensive stand alone Internet classified sites."

"Our community newspapers have consistently been recognized for outstanding quality by professional and trade awards," Aginian said, "but it is our readers and advertisers who set the standards we value the most."

Power, who started Observer Newspapers, Inc., the predecessor company in 1905, is also a founder of Suburban Newspapers of America and is a recipient of the Leather Award for outstanding services to the community newspaper industry. Aginian is an SNA past president.

For further information, please contact Dick Aginian at (313) 953-2200.



TAMMIE GRAY/STAFF ARTIST

Grand River next for road work

By Larry O'Connor
STAFF WRITER

Motorists on Grand River can expect to feel squeezed with traffic intermittently narrowed to one lane each way between Gill and Shiawassee. Road construction starts on the state road later this month.

Grand River is scheduled to be widened to accommodate a left-hand turn lane and traffic signal at the Shiawassee intersection. Through traffic on Shiawassee

from Grand River to Farmington Road is expected to be closed for up to 45 days as a result of the road project. That portion of Shiawassee Street will still be open to residents.

Preliminary work on the Grand River Road widening starts July 15 with full construction expected to get under way by July 24. The project will be completed by the end of September.

Long-term benefits outweigh short-term inconveniences, one resident said.

"I think it's going to make it harder to get in and out of my driveway," said Deb Watson, whose house sits near where roadwork will be done. "It's congested there during rush hour anyway."

The inability to get into her driveway easily forced Watson to move her business, Deb's Crafts Country Collectibles and Antiques, to the Village Mall.

"In the long run, (the Grand River

See **ROAD, A2**

No reservations Small plane crash won't deter pilot

By Todd Wicks
STAFF WRITER

"It was a great night to fly." William Kern of Farmington Hills remembers almost everything about the airplane crash he and a friend survived near Mettetal Airport in Canton the night of June 25.

From witness accounts and his own recollections, the 18-year veteran pilot has been able to piece together what happened in the accident that sent him and his passenger to the hospital and turned a Cessna 172 into wreckage.

"Believe it or not, I sort of

believe it or not, I sort of look at that bent and twisted airplane and say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'"

William Kern
—Farmington Hills

look at that bent and twisted airplane and say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant,'" said Kern. "If you look at the frame, there's hardly a straight

piece on it... "Because it did such a good job of sopping up the blow, I didn't. It did a nice job of keeping me in one piece." The Federal Aviation Administration is still investigating the crash.

That night, Kern, 40, was piloting the Cessna back from Grand Haven with friend and newly-licensed pilot Jacques Bourque, 61, of Livonia. They flew together regularly, giving Bourque some extra flight time and experience. The men also belong to the Great Lakes Air

See **PILOT, A6**



Still smiling: Farmington Hills pilot William Kern holds his extra headset, one that didn't get smashed up in the crash last week.

Buckle up patrol

Starting Friday, Farmington police will be giving 100 coupons for free car washes — courtesy of the folks at Colonial Car Wash — to motorists who themselves and their occupants are seat-belted properly. Coupons will be doled out through Sunday.

The question is: How are officers going to give out certificates without drivers thinking they're getting belted with a ticket for a moving violation? Michael Wiggins, Farmington Public Safety deputy director, explains:

"What we encourage our officers to do is observe people who are wearing their seat belts and wait until they pull into a shopping center

FARMINGTON FOCUS

or whatever."

Added Wiggins: "We're not going to actually stop people wearing seat belts. That would cause some problems."

Police hope the incentive of a free car wash will heighten awareness on seat belt safety.

Prize patrol

Farmington Beautification Commission members are on the prowl this month, looking for

local businesses, churches, schools, and multi-dwelling complexes to honor for their outstanding appearances.

"We are looking for excellence in color and variety of plantings in flowers, shrubs, and trees, as well as good maintenance," said Jackie Saito, commission chairperson.

Plaques and certificates are awarded in several categories: Overall Visual Appearance, Plantings, Landscape Maintenance and Window Display.

"Creativity and attractiveness in displaying products and services will be rewarded," said Saito.