

# Farmington Observer

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## Explosive celebration



A real blast: Umbrellas helped keep the raindrops away ever as the night lighted up for crowds of sky-watchers for the Farmington Hills 25th Anniversary edition of fireworks at Founders Sports Park on Eight Mile Road. It was the first city fireworks show in many years.



Catching: Matthew Watts, 3, chases as Vera Williams blows bubbles before the fireworks Saturday.



Loaded to fire: Bob Heinrich (left) reloads a cannon while Curt Nixon fires one during the Farmington Area Philharmonic Orchestra performance of the "1812 Overture" on Saturday. Nixon's sister, Karen, directs the orchestra; Heinrich serves on its board.

## Encore!

### Fireworks show gets sky-high reviews

"Let's do it again!" That seemed to be the consensus among Farmington Hills community leaders following the gate three-day celebration the city gave itself June 25-28 to mark the 50th anniversary of its establishment. "It's not just that the fireworks were well-done," said City Manager Dan Hobbs. "It was the 'community feel' of the weekend. "That's something that Farmington Hills prides itself on and definitely will want to build on it. "Singing, dancing, fireworks ... I'm sure we're going to be talking about that." Overcast skies and a thundering rain shower one hour into the day kept away some people, added co-chairman Jeff Stewart. "We could have handed three or four times the crowd."

But the event itself "came off real well," he said. "I'd do it the same again." "In fact, I'm trying to line Bob Seger up for the 50th anniversary," Stewart said, tongue-in-cheek. "He'd be about 75 then, and that's appropriate." In all seriousness, he said it was the promise of the massive fireworks show Saturday night - which drew about 2,000 cheering, horn-honking celebrants - that helped induce him and his wife, Sherrie, who organized Friday night's opening hoodoo, to take on their duties. "I've thought for a long time we should have fireworks every year," he said, recalling the displays of years back at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge Campus. He said he would like to explore the possibility of joining with the

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City of Farmington Founders Day organization in perhaps co-sponsoring an annual fireworks and concert. The estimated \$20,000 weekend celebration, which drew a lot of sponsorship donations, cost the city between \$10,000-\$15,000, according to Hobbs. The big celebration, which incorporated the history of the Hills' growth from farming community to modern, high-tech city, ranged from a Friday night country hoodoo to rural history exhibits from the Hills' past on Saturday, huge fireworks display Saturday night and a look to the future Sunday with dedication of a new city park.  
Please see FIREWORKS, A2

## Kids' pet contest poops out

Kids Day at the Founders Festival won't be the same next week. After a 30-year run, the pet show has been dropped due to an "embarrassing" lack of interest.

At the annual Kids Day in the Park pet show, no owner could ever get their animal to spell apathy. They didn't have to: In recent years, participants did it themselves. Which is why Plaza Veterinary Hospital's Dr. John Richardson decided to shut down the contest. This year's Kids Day in Park on Tuesday, July 7, will be minus tail-wagging pooches and finicky felines. Last year's event in Shawwassee Park only drew 34 participants, which is a far cry from the 240 who registered for the first one in 1968. "It was really embarrassing to see kids get on stage and you could tell that they had not done any preparation," said Richardson, who sold his veterinary practice and works one day a week at the Plaza clinic. "It was embarrassing to me as the master of ceremonies and I think it was even embarrassing for the kids." Since 1984, the pet show has been a main attraction of Kids Day in the Park.

Please see PETS, A2

## Parade to open temple

1,500 expected Sunday

The day after Americans celebrate independence, upwards of 1,500 people will mark their dependence on a new temple in Farmington Hills. On Sunday, the Jain Society of Greater Detroit commemorates the opening of a two-story, 25,307-square-foot temple with a religious procession. The nine-boat procession starts 9:30 a.m. at Mercy High on Middlebelt and heads north to the temple on 12 Mile Road. As part of the week-long Pratihaha Mahotsav installation ceremony, another program takes place 9-11 a.m. Friday, which includes a planned visit by Naresh Chandra, India's ambassador to the U.S. Until the \$5.1 million temple was built, the Jain Society of Greater Detroit rented space from other churches, including the Unitarian Universalist Church on 12 Mile and North-western. "That's when we decided we needed a place of our own, so we won't have to run around," said Vastupal Shah, who lives in Sterling Heights. In 1991, the Jain Society of Greater Detroit bought the land on 12 Mile and started construction in 1995. However, the society needed a nudge from the city of Farmington Hills when the building process bogged down.

Please see TEMPLE, A6

## IN THE PAPER TODAY

### COMMUNITY LIFE

**Pumped up:** A husband and wife are the driving force behind Botsford Hospital's new cardiac center./B1

### SPORTS

**Softball all-stars:** Six girls from Farmington schools - the largest representative of any community - are members of the 1998 All-Observer softball team./C1

**Undefeated:** Farmington Post 346 just keeps winning American Legion baseball games and was 12-0 following a mercy-rule victory Monday./C1

### ENTERTAINMENT

**Music:** Lori Amey and R&B/blues singer Thoretta Davis open Lilith Fair shows July 6-8, at Pine Knob./E1

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## FARMINGTON FOCUS

### City offices closed Friday

Farmington and Farmington Hills city offices are closed Friday, July 3, in honor of the Fourth of July. However, trash pick-up is not affected by the holiday. So, get those bags, barrels and containers out at the usual time. Bookbound beings and library patrons should also note that both branches of the Farmington Public Library are closed Friday.

### Drop box open

Through July 31, the Farmington Area Joycece will have a drop box available for donations to the Ronald McDonald House, which provides support and lodging for families of children experiencing serious illness and injury. Boxes are in both Farmington and Farmington Hills city halls. People may donate paper products, soaps, coffee creamer, tissue, sugar, paper towels, toilet paper, paper napkins, bleach, batteries and games. Call Sheila Williams at (313) 859-0072 for information.

### Ready for Founders Feet

Look in your Sunday's Farmington Observer for this guide to the Farmington Founders Festival. The special insert will help guide visitors to the week's worth of events, July 5-12.



Staffers: Editor Joanne Maliszewski and photographer Bill Bresler.

## Maliszewski returns as community editor

Joanne Maliszewski, an award-winning journalist and former reporter at the Farmington Observer, will take over as editor of the Farmington/Farmington Hills edition on Monday, July 13. She replaces Doreta Varga who will become editor of the Livonia edition. Also named to the Farmington staff is photographer Bill Bresler. He replaces Sharon LeMieux who left recently to care full time for her two young children. LeMieux will continue to work as a freelancer for the Observer Newspapers. Maliszewski worked as a reporter in the Farmington area for nine years before leaving to cover Canton. She was later

named Canton editor and most recently worked as editor of the Plymouth Observer. She is a 1987 Observer & Eccentric Journalist of the Year, an award she received while working as a reporter covering Farmington Hills. She edited the 1997 Michigan Press Association general excellence newspaper, as well as winning a 1997 Suburban Newspapers of America award for breaking news and a 1991 Suburban Newspapers of America award for environmental reporting. "It will be fun returning to Farmington where I worked as a reporter for almost 10 years. I'm eager to reacquaint myself

with the people and the community. It's sort of like going home again." "Joanne's enthusiasm, background and eagerness to cover the community will continue our commitment to quality community journalism in the Farmington area," said Susan Rosiek, managing editor of the Observer Newspapers. "Joanne and Bill round out a fine news team at the Farmington Observer which also includes reporters Tim Smith and



Varga

Please see EDITOR, A2

