

Farmington has old tradition of fun and games

By CORINNE ABATT

Recreation is a fun use of leisure time. It builds an important sense of well being. It promotes camaraderie and enhances community spirit—on short it is a vital part of the good life.

Thomas Jefferson labeled it the pursuit of happiness and placed it among the

foremost rights of American citizens in the Declaration of Independence.

From the time the small Quaker community called Farmington was first established, recreation was a part of the total life of the people. Through the years, there have been hundreds of clubs—dramatic, literary, church, service and athletic. In these calm days before World War I, Farmington folks—old and young—could

look forward to spelling bees, quilting bees, picnics, dances, hometown talent shows, political rallies and parades on Memorial Day and the Fourth of July.

ALTHOUGH FARMINGTON was founded by Quakers who were never big on drinking, taverns flourished for men seeking a refuge from women talking about cake and bread recipes and how to make a

rebellious offspring keep his glashes on in January.

Of the early taverns, the "Hubbick," at Eleven Mile and Power, was one of the best known and most popular. The original building has been remodeled several times and now is the residence of the Lee-Juliano family. The present owners have painstakingly restored the home, which had an upper attic that once served as a place for drovers to bed down and a large room on the second story with spring floors for dancing.

Lee Peel, author of "Farmington A Pictorial History," devotes his final chapter to recreation and titles it, "So What Did They Do for Fun? Nothing."

He breaks recreation history into three periods. The first spans from 1824 to the 1870s, the second from 1870 to 1940, he calls "The Town Hall Days," and the third is from the 1940s to the present.

While one must speculate on forms of recreation in the first period, some generalizations can be made. As Peel points out, the mills along with the taverns were popular meeting places. The churches, which were abundant in the community from its early days, offered a place to visit with neighbors and friends. And merely hitching the horse to the wagon, driving into town and stopping for cider or sassafras along the way was a big day in the life of the farmers.

Almost certainly, too, there were picnics, ball games, herashoes, croquet and toward the end of the 19th century, tennis (long skirts only for the ladies) and bicycling.

In the Town Hall days, recreation became more organized. For one thing, there was a place for everyone to meet. The Town Hall was built in 1876 on the north-west corner of Farmington and Grand River. It still stands, although larger than the original, as one of the fine examples of late 19th century architecture.

The Town Hall offered a place for all kinds of activity—from political rallies to Eastern Star meetings and basketball games.

Schools were centers for recreation by the early part of the 20th century and sports activities baseball and football at the high school were among the most popular.

For those who preferred less violent contact sports, there was a local movie theater, usually a community band and the Festival Urban Hallway to satisfy a spirit of adventure and a yen to travel beyond the boundaries of the small town.

Recreation today is a complicated and sophisticated undertaking, but the old idea of providing plenty of activity right at home still prevails.

In addition to the high school sports events and a number of worthy independent groups, there are several umbrella organizations which act as both innovators and supporters of leisure activities.

The Farmington Area Recreation Commission was formed in 1941 and Douglas J. Gaynor was appointed first full-time director in January 1973. The group initiates year-round programs and cooperates in helping other groups implement theirs. The Farmington Community Center on Farmington Road north of Ten Mile is a popular place for those who seek a produc-

tive use of leisure time. Classes for all age groups held in the charming brick country home are always well attended and are in such variety to peak the interest of almost every local person. Mrs. Alberta Taylor, center director, schedules everything from classes in how to be a clown to horseback riding, skiing and art and craft in between.

The home and grounds were given as a community center in 1988 by the heirs of Luman Goodenough. One of the most recent events that has rapidly developed into a tradition is the ethnic festival held on a weekend in late spring.

Lending support, new ideas and a sizeable amount of creative pizzazz to the cultural life of the community is the Farmington Area Arts Council under the leadership of Mrs. Marlowe Belanger. Many times it is the arts council, the recreation commission and the cities who coordinate events together.

Others which have had a strong influence on the life of the community are the Farmington Community Band, the Farmington District Library, and several organizations which have taken leadership roles in the last 10 years. These include

University Hill Church, Merry Center, the Farmington Musicals and Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge Campus.

The stalwarts in the community who have been providing recreation with the purpose of building character and stressing community service, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, now grouped under the more general term Scouts, and the Farmington Y.M.C.A. have filled important roles for many years.

Since it was first organized in 1984, the Founders Festival has been one of the sparkling events of the year for Farmington and Farmington Hills. Under the sponsorship of an independent group, the festival is the one event when all are welcome to participate. From the rodeo to the Mass Farmington contest, from hot dogs to sumptuous meals, from the game tent to helicopter rides, it has something for everyone—a total community event that the founders of Farmington would have enjoyed as much as the thousands who attended today.

It is a 21st century salute to a dynamic community which combines a solid respect for history with an appreciation for the present.



Under the leadership of its first full-time director, Douglas J. Gaynor, right, the Farmington Area Recreation Commission has added many new activities to the list of old

standards. Others on the staff from left are: Mary Rogger, Dave Justus and Jeff Farland. (Photo by Cynthia Abatt)



Batter up

Sue Becker (center) of 25850 Arden Park Drive, Farmington, will be the "Honorary Tiger Bat Boy" at the Aug. 9 game. She won the honor through a contest sponsored by Dameron Motor Sales, Farmington. Celebrating the honor are her sister, Tracey, and Doug Dameron. Sue will receive a Tiger uniform and helmet and an autographed baseball, personally presented by Bill Freehan. (Staff photo)

Put on running sneakers and get on mark to go

Farmington marathoners put on their running shoes and get ready for the Farmington Founder Festival mini-marathon scheduled for Saturday, at 8:30 a.m. Those interested still have time to register by sending entry blanks to the Y.M.C.A. Mini-Marathon Race, P.O. Box 334, Farmington, 48031. Contestants also may register at the race.

Contestants are to report to the Farmington Hills City Hall parking lot, Eleven Mile and Orchard Lake at 8:30 a.m. It is suggested that participants be appropriately

attired for the race. Transportation for belongings to the finish line will be provided.

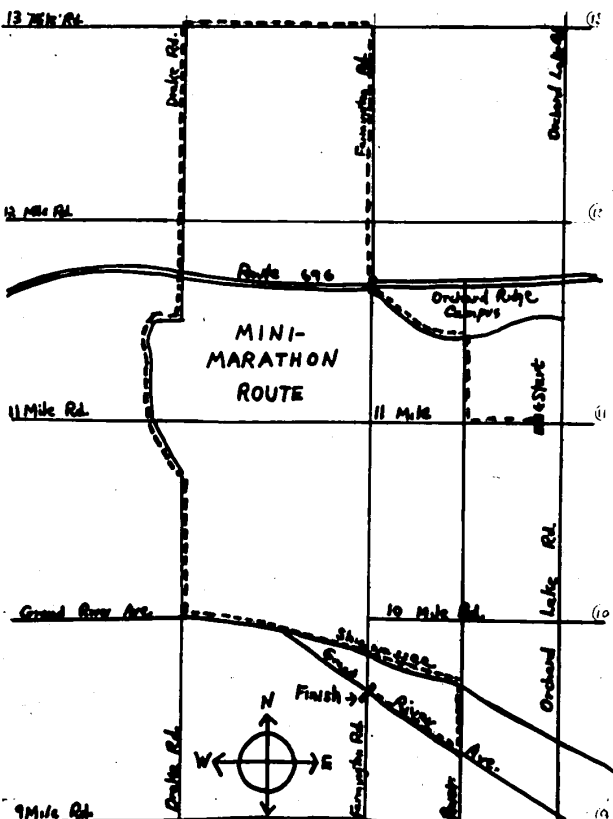
The race is divided into four divisions. The Men's Open Division is for those younger than 40. It will be a 10-mile run.

The Master Division is for men 40 years and older. It also will be a 10-mile run.

A Women's Division, for those 18 years and older, will be a five-mile run. The Youth Division, 17 years and younger, is for both male and female. It will be a five-mile run.

Prizes will be trophies for the first five finishers under 40 years of age. Three similar trophies for the over 40. Medals will be provided for 4th through 10th place finishers under 40 years, similar medals for 4th through 10th place finishers over 40 years.

The winner of the women's division will receive a trophy, with the second and third place finishers receiving medals. Medals will be provided for the first five finishers in the youth competition.



Marathoners can clip out this map so they won't get lost during the festival mini-marathon. The race begins at Farmington Hills City Hall, Eleven Mile and Orchard Lake, and ends

at Grand River and Farmington Road. Just follow the dotted line and you're bound to make it.

9th Annual SNAPSHOTTER SHOW AND CONTEST



See Black and White and color photographs entered by amateur photographers whose general excellence equals many of the professionals. Photographers from throughout lower Michigan have entered.

NOW Through Sunday, Aug. 1st

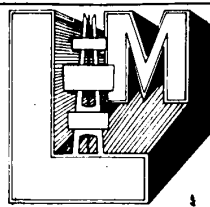
KIDS!!! WIN A T-SHIRT

Play miniature golf at Livonia Mall. If you get the ball in the clown's nose — you win a humorous T-shirt! (Sizes through size 14, only). Low score players during the week have a chance to enter our weekly playoffs for trophies. No charge for play-off!



Beautiful Vocal Harmony by: SWEET ADELINES THURSDAY, JULY 29th 7:00 p.m.

LIVONIA Parks & Recreation HANDICRAFT DISPLAY THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY JULY 29 thru 31st



LIVONIA MALL 7 MILE RD at MIDDLEBELT OPEN DAILY 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday, Noon-5 p.m.