

Founders Fest: It's a family affair

The 22nd annual Founders Festival will boast a scholarship pageant, kids day in the park, children's pet show, ethnic food booths, arts and crafts, battle of the bars and parade along Grand River.

Beginning Monday, July 14, and running through Saturday, July 19, the festival involves a year of planning for coordinator Jody Soronen and her volunteers.

"This year's volunteers have played a key role in getting the festival off and running," said Soronen, Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce executive director.

This year's volunteers are Madalyn Belag, Jon Grant, July Gural, Eric Johnson, Suzanne Miller, Kent Nichol, Chuck Schulkins, Marlene Theobald, Delilah Tretnik and the Farmington Radio Club.

Theme for this year's festival is "Farmington, A Down Home Place." Festivities begin with the scholarship pageant, Miss Farmington of 1985, Kelly Lynn Garver, recently selected as Miss Michigan, will turn over her reign at 7 p.m. Monday,

'Most of the fireworks in this area are aerial shows and I want to make this (Founders Festival) presentation special. The ground cluster bombs show bright flashes of color, which is something we've never done before.'

— Dick Megregian,
Hye-Tech Fireworks

July 14, at Vladimir's, Farmington Hills. Tickets go on sale Monday, July 14, at the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce.

KIDS DAY in the park will be held from noon to 5 p.m. at the Farmington City Park, Sileswasse and Power. Games, rides and entertainment for the whole family, along with the 19th annual Founders Festival Pet Show, will be featured.

Children 16 years and younger may enter their pets in one of many categories, including: the twin class, the best trained pet, the pet with the waggiest tail, the most articulate pet, the shaggiest pet, the best dressed pet and owner, the oldest pet and the best presentation of a caged pet.

"There are many categories so each of the kids has a chance to win," said pet show chairman, John Richardson, a veterinarian who works for the pet show sponsors, the Plaza Veterinary Hospital.

"Trophies will be awarded to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in each category."

Beginning Thursday, July 17, and running through Saturday, July 19, the Downtown Farmington Center, Grand River and Farmington Road, will feature ethnic foods, arts and crafts and side walk sales from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. A host of entertainers will perform at the showmobile, also at the downtown Farmington Center.

On Friday, July 18, the Farmington Hills Fire Department will take on the Detroit Fire Department's clown team in the annual benefit softball game for the Ann Arbor

Burn Center. The game will be held at 7 p.m. at the Farmington High School Field. Donations for the Burn Center will be accepted.

FESTIVAL ACTIVITIES conclude on Saturday, July 19, starting bright and early with Fox Trot runs. The 5-kilometer race begins at 8:15 a.m. and the 10K race begins at 8:30 a.m., with the starting line for both races at Grand River and Farmington Roads. The cost will be \$7 for early registration at the Farmington Hills YMCA or \$10 the day of the race at the starting line. Everyone who enters the race will receive a "Founders Festival Fox Trot" T-shirt.

Following the race, the Founders Festival parade begins at 10 a.m. The parade starts at the Grand River Drive-In and travels west on Grand River to Farmington Road. The parade will be filled with local bands, celebrities, Shriners and many others.

On Saturday morning, dancin' Denny Schaffer from WCZY-FM, and Dave Lockhart from WNIC-FM, both area residents, will lead a panel of local celebrities for the judging of the fourth annual "Battle of the Bars." The lighthearted competition begins at 11 a.m. at D. Dennis's, at the corner of Orchard Lake and 12 Mile Roads. The contests will decide the pubs and restaurants with the tastiest sandwiches, most creative drinks and the best service.

The evening will wind down with "Music Under the Stars" and a fireworks display. The Oakway Symphon-

ny will perform under the direction of Francesco DiBlasi and guest conductor Ernest Jones. The concert begins at 8 p.m. at Oakland Community College and features selections from several musicals including Judy Stein's "Gypsy."

TO CARRY the festival out with a bang, there will be a 30-minute fireworks display presented by Hye-Tech Fireworks. Dick Megregian, director of the fireworks, promises something different this year with ground cluster bombs.

"Most of the fireworks in this area are aerial shows and I want to make this presentation special," said Megregian. "The ground cluster bombs show bright flashes of color which is something we've never done before."

The show will begin at 10 p.m. The Botsford Inn in Farmington Hills is celebrating its 150th anniversary this summer and has many activities planned throughout Founders Festival week.

Beginning Friday, July 18, Jean Fox, this year's parade Grand Marshal and local historian, will host an Author's Tea Party 2-5 p.m. Fox will discuss her recently published book, "More Than a Tavern: 150 Years of Botsford Inn."

On Saturday morning, July 19, a parade of Ford Antique Auto Club members will travel to the Botsford Inn from Fairlane Manor in Dearborn. Restored and preserved Ford vehicles will be on display all afternoon.

The Banjos of Michigan, featuring Drew Frech on piano and Gary Webb on piano, will perform a six-song Saturday afternoon. Two performances are scheduled for 2-3 p.m. and 4:30-5:30 p.m.

FOLLOWING THE Banjos of Michigan at 3 p.m. Alice McCoy of

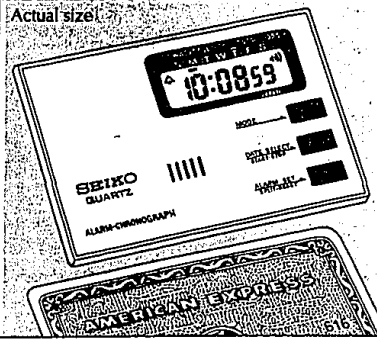
the Detroit Story League will narrate age-old American folktales. Children of all ages will enjoy the tales told by this storyteller.

Continuing the entertainment at 3:30 p.m., the Sweet Adelines will

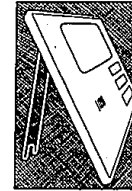
perform their barbershop quartet-style concert. This award-winning quartet is sure to be a crowd pleaser. For more information about the Founders Festival, call the Chamber of Commerce at 474-3440.

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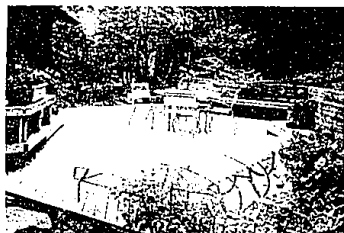
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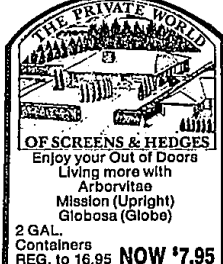


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