

Steamy weather punctuates parade

By Casey Hans
staff writer

YOU HAD it made in downtown Farmington Saturday if you were in the shade.

Colorful floats, marchers and bands graced Grand River Avenue, while everyone else pretty much found a spot, sipped on refreshments and tried to stay cool during a hot 24th annual Farmington/Farmington Hills Founders Festival Parade.

The communitywide event fell on the final day of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Com-

merce-sponsored festival. This year's parade was sponsored by Botsford General Hospital.

A bit of a breeze enlivened the spirits of the hundreds that lined the main thoroughfare, and even a sprinkler was set up at the intersection of Power Road, compliments of on-duty public safety and police officers.

Chamber of commerce president Jon Grant called the Saturday morning event "another great parade."

THE FESTIVAL'S "Kaleidoscope of the World" theme was highlighted

with several entries from the area's Cultural Awareness Committee, an award-winning float from the Finnish Cultural Center, and several other units.

"I hope they come out again every year," Grant added.

But there was more than cultural diversity stressed Saturday.

Despite chamber of commerce efforts to keep political activities to a minimum, the parade offered many candidates a chance to unleash campaign rhetoric and hand out free balloons and assorted political paraphernalia to a captive audience. Most are facing a challenge on the Aug. 2 primary ballot.

The parade, which had nearly 80 entries, took about two hours. A panel of three judges selected winning parade entries.

JUDGES INCLUDED Mary Bush, Bill Flattery and Bob Christ, who made the following selections:

• President's Award for the best theme — to the Farmington Community Library for its float about reading.

• Queen's Trophy for original concept — to Botsford General Hospital.

• Commercial Awards for floats — first place to Botsford hospital, second place to Boblo Island/AAA of Michigan and third place to Kinder-care.

• Organizational Awards for floats — first place to the Finnish Cultural Center, second place to the Farmington Rockets Cheerleaders, and third place to the Farmington Community Library.

• Motorized Drill Team Award to the Farmington Elks.

• Marching Drill Team Awards — first place to the Detroit Commandery No. 1 and second place to the Farmington Rockets Cheerleaders.

• Baton Corps Award — to the Washington Steppers.



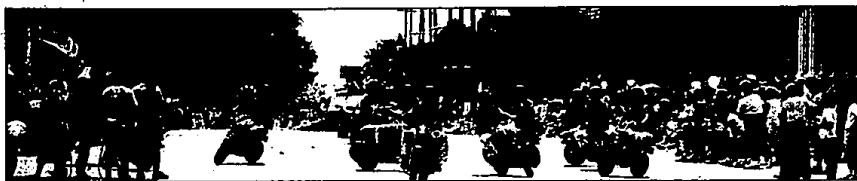
Tracie Beacher of Farmington and her mother, Shirlie, receive a refreshing spray from a Farmington public safety hose.



Valerie Tabaczka (left) and Robin Wharton, Farmington High junior varsity cheerleaders, stop for a water break on the parade route.



Chinese young people taking part in the Cultural Awareness Committee's parade unit sport masks native to their homeland.



The award-winning Farmington Elks Lodge's motorized drill team performs in front of the parade reviewing stand.

AT RIGHT: The Moslem Temple boasted 14 Shriner units in the Founders Festival parade Saturday morning. Among the units were clowns on bikes — who proved a big hit with the kids.



Staff photos
by
Randy Borst



The Farmington Rockets Cheerleaders finished second in the organizational awards category for their parade float and performance.

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