

It's pomp and pageantry time

By Loraine McClish
staff writer

AT ABOUT 10:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 12, Kristen Conley will make her last official act as Miss Farmington 1988 when she places the crown on head of the young woman who received the biggest score from the judges and wins the title of Miss Farmington 1989.

The audience that fills the spacious dining room at Vladimir's in Farmington Hills will have seen a polished performance executed by the 14 contenders vying for cash and prizes in the Miss Farmington Scholarship Pageant.

The extravaganza took six weeks to pull together by professionals in many aspects of show business. They volunteer their expertise to make those contenders look as good as they can possibly look when the spotlight shines on them.

The women receive training through mock interviews, quizzes on current events, and workshops on grooming and makeup. They also learn how to walk the runway, how to handle difficult situations and how to be their own public relations person. They get advice on wardrobe selections, help with talent presentation — whatever it takes to put that woman's best foot forward.



Kristen Conley
1988 Miss Farmington

Meanwhile, the contenders are in intense rehearsals for the production numbers they perform together in the local pageant — a close facsimile of the Miss Michigan and Miss America scholarship pageants.

More behind-the-scenes goings-on leading up to pageant night is bringing in the money. Ads for the program book have to be sold. Sponsorship for the contenders have to be committed, and donations to ever-increase the amount of scholarships to be given

must be solicited to make the event happen.

WITH 100 percent of the workforce giving time and talents without charge — from the traffic director in the parking lot to the technician handling the lights — it takes \$10,000 to do it right.

Sarah D'Ascenzo, now winding up her third year as executive director for the Miss Farmington pageant, is adamant that the best way to perpetuate the pageant is to name a Miss Farmington Scholarship Pageant board of directors and to handle it like a business on a year-round basis.

D'Ascenzo said everyone she has talked to about this believes it is a good idea, but so far she has had few takers.

The pageant, she said, is just not well organized. Too few people are asked to do too many jobs. Much of what is done gets done hodge-podge and last minute, something not fair to the contenders or to the community that holds the Miss Farmington franchise.

Nonetheless, the Farmington pageant keeps producing winners. Holly Ann Schmidt (1976), Kelly Lynn Garver (1985) and Melanie Churell (1986) were all named Miss Michigan.

Somebody here is doing something right. Having three winners in 10 years, with competition coming from 31 other cities in Michigan each year is certainly beating the odds.

Fest marks 25th year

It's silver anniversary time for the Farmington/Farmington Hills Founders Festival.

Launched in the summer of 1964, the festival has evolved into a community tradition.

For the past 25 years, the festival has grown along with the community and has changed along with the

show has always gone on.

The festival has proved to be a fun-filled time of togetherness for family and friends, year after year.

Significant societal changes can be seen in the growth of our community's population, from 35,000 in 1954 to more than 140,000 today, and in our strides in the areas of civil rights and technology.

With the move to change, the time we stay together has gone for grownups, balloons, ice cream and other items remain to change.

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Founders Festival has taken on the role of the "old time" carnival, filling the need in our community for "down home" fun for the whole family.

Much of the credit for this special section of the Farmington Observer goes to the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce.

Special thanks to the Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce for providing information on festival events and activities.

Creative photographer Randy Bost coordinated the photo selection. Observer advertising representative Aronica Bussey-Melhart coordinated advertising. Festival pageant director, advertising artist, Olympia Merillat, designed the cover. Observer editor Bob Stiles contributed the section. Staff writers include Joanne Kullensiek, Conley Hahn, Loraine McClish and Susan Buck.

Time capsule to be buried

A time capsule will be buried at the second annual Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution Picnic, which this year will conclude the Farmington/Farmington Hills Founders Festival July 8-16.

The old-fashioned Blessings of Liberty picnic will be held in Heritage Park, on Farmington Road north of 10 Mile in Farmington Hills at 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 16.
Organizations will choose an item or object symbolizing its thrust to include in the time capsule.

The capsule will be buried and marked with a plaque and the planting of a commemorative tree. It will be opened on the 250th anniversary of the ratification of the U.S. Constitution in the year 2041.

Concert theme: U.S. music

Mostly American describes the music to be presented in concert at the Farmington Historical Museum on Saturday, July 15.

As an added feature during the Farmington/Farmington Hills Founders Festival, the choir of St. Thomas A'Becket Church of Canton Township will present music from the

turn of the century in the museum at 2 p.m., with an encore at 3 p.m.

The choir is directed by Jamie Clark, who teaches music in the Detroit Public Schools.

The concert will be held in the museum, 33805 Grand River, Farmington. The regular \$1 donation is the cost of admission.

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