

Friends help keep mighty Rouge flowing

By Susan Buck
staff writer

IT WAS easy to see who the victors were at Rouge Rescue '90 in Farmington Hills Saturday morning.

They were the folks who wore medals of different sizes and shapes — mud-splattered, dirt-caked faces and water-soaked clothes. Those who used the most elbow grease showed it.

More than 200 people registered to work in various ways at the fifth Rouge Rescue in Farmington Hills, part of an annual cleanup throughout the Rouge River watershed basin.

City officials and area volunteers put on gloves and pitched in to help Mother Nature smile again.

This year's cleanup formed behind Here's Restaurant and Vonachem Dachshund Kennels on Grand River, just east of Middlebelt.

The restaurant provided hot dogs, soda pop, baked beans and potato salad to the weary souls who traversed steep slopes to clean this year's designated portion of the Rouge, which winds through southern Farmington Hills.

Even the makeshift paper plate holders, plastic flying discs turned upside down, had an environmental motif that read "Recycle America."

Those who came worked hard on a sunny, sticky day.

STATE REP. Jan Dolan of Farmington Hills volunteered to help with the lunches. "I don't go down (into the river), but I used to go down," she said. "It's a never-ending job. What's neat is when whole families come. These aren't the people who complain about city services. These are the people who come to work."

By 10:30 a.m., Farmington Hills council members Aldo Vagnozzi and Nancy Bates were ready for a break. "I was on the leaning line and the flat line," Vagnozzi said. "The slopes are steeper this year."

Added Bates: "One truck got stuck and they had to unload it and reload it again."

Workers formed a chain gang. John Merenda of West Bloomfield arrived to check on the progress of his son, Michael, 13, a Warner Middle School student who donated his time for the second year.

Helpers also included cousins Autumn Osborne, 11, of Farmington Hills, and Tiffany and Shannon Justice, ages 11 and 13 respectively, of Novi. After the cleanup, they planned to treat themselves to roller skating at Bonaventure Roller Skating Center in Farmington Hills.

GROUPS LIKE the Knights of Columbus, Big Brothers-Big Sisters, local Boy Scout troops and the First Presbyterian Church of Farmington were also at the site.

Hills city officials were quick to extend handshakes, after first removing their soiled gloves. "We've found that this small stretch of the river has cut many new passages throughout the flood plain, adding to the problem of erosion and fallen trees," said Jean Barrett, assistant to Tom Blasell, public services director and local rescue coordinator.

Volunteers found logjams, tires, an engine and partially filled jugs of antifreeze.

But what will many volunteers re-



Peggy Lemmon of Farmington Hills passes debris away from the river.

member? The 25-pound snapping turtle that was dislodged from its home and made repeated efforts to return to it until somebody passed him over to another section.

"I'm amazed at what can be done in a short time period," said Terry Sever, a Hills councilman. "It's great to see the water flowing again."

At lunchtime, mascot Parky the Panda dropped by to boost spirits. Word has it that he's a good friend of Richard Lampl, Hills community development coordinator.

Also on hand were William Costick, Farmington Hills city manager; Steve Brock, his assistant; Blasell's son, Christian, 12; Richard Marinucci, Hills fire chief; his son, Jeff; Deputy Fire Chief Peter Baldwin; District Fire Chief Bob Rebtow; Lois Vagnozzi and her granddaughter, Michelle Pantalao.



Farmington Hills District Fire Chief Bob Rebtow removes a log while pitching in to keep the river flowing.



Friends of the Rouge team up in Farmington Hills to clear out logjams and other debris restricting the flow of water in the river.



AT LEFT: Cristine Smith (left), 21, of Wixom, and Gabe Slack, 12, of Farmington Hills, stand in line for hot dogs and salad after the morning river rescue in Farmington Hills.

Staff photos by
Sharon LeMieux

police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

● BREAK-INS PROBED

Video electronics and a stereo system were reported stolen from a house on James Court May 25-28.

Garden tools, a VCR camera and two VCRs valued at \$4,000 were reported stolen from a house on West Skye Drive May 26-27.

A VCR, two color TVs, jewelry, a computer, a shotgun, a fur coat and coins valued at \$4,250 were reported stolen from a house on Parkhill May 31.

● EXPLOSIVES SEIZED

A 28-year-old Ferndale man and a 26-year-old Tennessee man were arrested after 14 M-200 explosives and some hashish, marijuana and narcotics paraphernalia were found in their car during a traffic stop May 27, Farmington Hills police said.

An M-200 is equivalent to a quarter stick of dynamite, police said.

● WOMAN DUPED

A Detroit woman was duped out of \$760 in a phony investment scheme that began as a discussion over a red pencil case in the checkout line at the Target department store at West River Centre in Farmington Hills.

The woman gave this account to police:

While she was standing in the checkout line at 3 p.m. Tuesday, a woman behind her picked up a red pencil case from the floor and asked her and another woman if it be-

longed to either of them. They said no.

The woman who found it opened the case and said money was inside. The three then walked to the lot.

The woman with the case said she worked at a nearby bank and suggested all three go there to check to see if the money was real.

At Comerica, 29456 Grand River, the woman with the case went inside. When she returned, she said the case contained \$100,000 and four gold coins.

She said if they raised another \$1,000, they could open a joint bank account and live off the interest from the money they found.

The second woman said she had \$500 in her purse.

The victim said she had \$60 in her purse and agreed to go to her bank

and credit union to withdraw \$700 more.

Back at Comerica, the woman with the case went inside, then returned to the car and told the victim to go inside to speak with a certain man.

When the victim went inside, no one by the name she was given worked at the bank. The other two women, meanwhile, had driven away with the victim's \$760.

● LOUD PARTY

Three 18-year-old Farmington Hills residents were ticketed for disorderly conduct after officers investigated at 5 p.m. a loud party where beer was being consumed Thursday at Heritage Park, police said. About 50 young people were present.

Dolan schedules campaign kickoff

election '90

The primary is Aug. 7. The general election is Nov. 6.

● DOLAN KICKOFF

State Rep. Jan Dolan, R-Farmington Hills, will kick off her 1990 campaign for re-election with a picnic in the park family event 1-4:30 p.m. Sunday, June 17, at Farmington

Hills' Heritage Park, on Farmington Road, between 10 and 11 Mile.

Hot dogs, balloons, games with dad for Father's Day, a magician and more will be waiting for supporters. For more information, call Dolan's campaign manager, Nancy Bates, 553-2401.

Dolan is seeking her second term in the state House representing the 69th District. She will have no opponents in the primary. But Farmington Hills Democrat Barry L. Brickner will square off with her in the November general election.

PEARL COLLECTION

Moan to 8 p.m.
Fine Jewelry Salon
Thursday, June 7
Rochester

Friday, June 8
Birmingham

The allure of pearls goes on... very evident in our contemporary collection of cultured pearl and South Sea pearl necklaces, earrings, pendants, pins and rings. And, loose strands of cultured pearls may be made up into any length necklace or bracelet you may desire.

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