



Barbara Demery of Farmington Hills loads her three toddlers — Ana and twins Matt and Luke — into a shopping cart.



Members of the Mercyaire perform a holiday song and dance for the large crowd at the recent Old Fashioned Downtown Farmington Holiday.

Oh come all ye spenders!



Hundreds of happy children — and a fair sprinkling of adults — watch and wave as Santa Claus lands in a helicopter in the Downtown Farmington Center.

Season launched in city

SANTA CAME to town, as did hundreds of area visitors and shoppers.

Farmington's fifth-annual holiday event, An Old Fashioned Downtown Farmington Holiday, launched the holiday season Dec. 1 for downtown merchants and residents who came to enjoy a variety of events in the city's center.

Jerry Winger of the Bon Ton Shoppe, who stood outside greeting people most of the day with the store's Miss Kitty character, said traffic in and out of downtown was "steady" most of the day.

Organizers of the season launch are calling the event a success, and will meet today to discuss how to top it next year.

Some of this year's events included "creating an ornament" at the downtown branch of the Farmington Community Library, free showings of the movie *Francer* at the Civic, tours of the Farmington Historical Museum, the arrival of Santa Claus by helicopter, and the annual holiday tree lighting sponsored by the Farmington Area Jaycees. A free turn-of-the-century trolley carried people throughout the downtown from 1-7 p.m.; it was never empty.

A number of community groups, including the Farmington Players dressed in Dickens-style garb, helped create the holiday image.

Saturdays through Christmas 1-5 p.m. at the Village Commons Shopping Center, there will be a gift wrapping service sponsored by the Farmington Area Jaycees with proceeds going to charity. Visits with Santa will be from 1-5 p.m.

A number of area residents won in drawings at downtown stores during the Saturday promotion. Gift certificate winners and the respective stores at which they won included Linda Engren and Kay Vail at the Bon Ton Shoppe; Jim Lollar at Books Abound; Jenny Bunnell at Clothes Encounters; Michelle Jones at Dagwood's Deli; Ernie Pacal at Hot Dawg & More; Mrs. Greenwell at the Lace Curtain Shop; Dedra Clark at Sweet Connection and Sylvia Goldstein at Marco's restaurant.

Other winners included Cheryl Bigelow, who won 25 free movie passes from the Civic Theatre; Helen Lapham who won a \$35 porcelain box from The Rocking Horse; JoAnn Curtin who won a \$30 Santa musical box from Warren's Corner; and Marge Smith, Mary Ellen Crane and Judy Kowalewski who won a facial, pedicure and massage, respectively, from the Village Clippers.

Winners of a window decorating contest sponsored by the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers included the Focal Point Studio in first place, Bon Ton Shoppe in second place and The Rocking Horse in third place. Winners receive advertising space in the newspaper.



Farmington residents Margaret and John Yagerle see the Christmas sights from the trolley.



Actor Frank Markus is a toy soldier for children.

Staff photos
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