

Parade will feature patriotic theme

By TOM BARR
STAFF WRITER

Don't be surprised if you hear "Anchors Aweigh" played a time or two at Farmington's annual Memorial Day parade on Monday, May 25.

That's the Navy's song and the United States Navy will be honored at this year's parade, which will feature the armed forces, veterans organizations and civilian components passing in review along Grand River Avenue.

The parade will start at the Uptown Shopping Center at 10 a.m. Memorial Day. The one-mile route will be northwest along Grand River to the memorials at Oakland and Grand River.

About 50,000 will line Farmington's main street to watch, said Walter Christensen, parade chairman, and some 5,000 will participate.

"I feel it's important to the community to have this kind of thing," said Christensen, a member of the Groves-Walker American Legion Post who has organized many parades over the years.

"It's for our patriotic identity. It's important for all of us — especially the kids — to remember that they have what they have today because of the veterans who gave their lives."

Clifford E. Mann, past commander of the American Legion post in Berkeley, will give the welcoming address. Mann, a Vietnam veteran, is

a 21-year veteran of the Southfield police force. He has held numerous Legion offices.

Capt. Shirley J. Thomas, a Birmingham resident and a member of the U.S. Naval Reserve, will be the keynote speaker at the parade. She was one of the first women officers to be accepted into the Training and Administration of the Reserve (TAR) program. She became the first woman to be promoted to the rank of captain in the TAR program.


Four high school bands — including three from the Farmington public schools and another from Charceville — will play in the parade. Sea Cadets, ROTC members, Boy and Girl Scouts and local politicians also will be on hand.

Many awards will be presented and special plaques will be given to members of the area U.S. Naval Reserve who participated in Operation Desert Storm last year.

Christensen also said he's trying to set up a flyover of vintage World War II bombers during the parade.

Christensen and the veterans organizations are trying to raise \$2,000 for the plaques. He said he's raised three quarters of the way there. "Anyone interesting in contributing should call Christensen at 474-8554.

The parade is sponsored jointly by American Legion posts 316 and 190 and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2369, all located in the Farmington area.



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
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