

# Barbecue brings back old Farmington days

BY CAREY HANS  
STAFF WRITER

The upcoming chicken barbecue sponsored by the Farmington Jaycees has more to do with a sense of community than just eating chicken.

The barbecue is one of a long list of events which will take place at "Family Day in the Park" in Shawnee Park on Saturday, Aug. 22 as part of Farmington's 125th Anniversary of Incorporation as a village.

Longtime Jaycee Matt Ratliff, organizer of the barbecue, likened the day-long event to "a good old-fashioned county fair — in one day."

"This Family Day in the Park is very important to me," said Ratliff, a former Jaycee president. "I grew up in Farmington when there were a lot of activities in the park."

"Come on down to Family Day and you'll get a taste of what Farmington was like years ago."

The barbecue is being revived by

**'Come on down to Family Day and you'll get a taste of what Farmington was like years ago.'**

**Matt Ratliff**  
longtime Jaycee

the Jaycees for the special day, which will have an old-time flavor including loads of games, square dancing and other free activities.

The Jaycees began their chicken barbecue tradition in 1964, then repeated it for several years in the Shawnee Park. It coincided with the annual Founders Festival fireworks display in a day when chicken cost only 28 cents a pound.

Back in those days, upwards of 1,100 people would attend the event. One year it rained, and the chicken barbecue tradition eventually lost its flavor for the local group

said former organizer John Richardson. "It was not a long-time deal," he added.

But with the year-long celebration of Farmington's 125th anniversary, organizer Shirley Richardson approached the Jaycees, asking them to host a special barbecue once again.

Ratliff said the Jaycee board agreed, and he eventually took over the organization of the event. Also special to this year's barbecue event is that it will involve not only current Jaycee members, but some 30-40 people who have been Jaycees over the years. "It's kind of a historical thing with the Jaycees too," he added.

Those wishing to partake in the barbecue must purchase advance tickets which will entitle the bearer to half a barbecued chicken, baked beans, cole slaw, roll and butter, lemonade and dessert. Ratliff said no money is being made on the dinner, and that the Jaycees are doing



Inaugural event: On hand for the first Farmington Jaycee Chicken Barbecue in 1964 are (from left) Earl Richardson; Richard Tupper, now a Farmington councilman; Bob Butten; Norv Kennedy; and Mac Moore.

it as a community service.

"It's one less thing mom and dad are going to have to worry about — like packing a picnic lunch," he said.

Although Aug. 10 is the official deadline for purchasing tickets, Ratliff said he would allow tickets to be sold through this Friday, Aug. 14 when the Jaycees must order the chicken.

The barbecue will be held, rain or shine, on from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$5 each and can be purchased around town from Jay-

cees and others involved with the 125th anniversary. Or, call Farmington City Hall at 474-5500 or the Farmington Hills Special Services Department at 473-9570. Tickets are also available at the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce.

Ratliff said the Jaycees expect to serve about 500 dinners.

## OBITUARIES

### MARK A. KELLY

Mr. Kelly, 33, of Farmington died Aug. 3 in Botsford Hospital.

Born in Farmington, Mr. Kelly was an engineer for General Dynamics. He attended Our Lady of Sorrows School and graduated from Catholic Central High School and Lawrence Technological University.

Survivors include his parents, C.R. (Dick) and Barbara Kelly; brother, Martin; sisters, Patricia Russell, Lisa Brinkman and Cecilia Riley; grandmother, Viola Kelly.

Mass was celebrated Aug. 6 in Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, Farmington, with the Rev. Mike Knear officiating. Burial was

in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Southfield.

Memorials may be made to Lawrence Technological University in memory of Mark Kelly, 21000 W. 10 Mile Road, Southfield 48075. Arrangements were made by the Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington.

### HELEN CONAR

Mrs. Conar, 92, of Farmington Hills died Aug. 4 in Charter House.

Born in Greece, Mrs. Conar was a homemaker.

Survivors include her daughter, Mary Oostman; four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Services were Aug. 6 in the Heene-Sundquist Funeral Home, Farmington, with the Rev. Stephen J. Anthony of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church officiating. Burial was in Forestland Cemetery, Detroit.

### VIRGINIA J. BAKER

Mrs. Baker, 65, of Farmington Hills died Aug. 5 in Providence Hospital, Southfield.

Born in Hamtramck, Mrs. Baker was a clerk in Arnold's Drug Store and G&W Discount. She worked as a secretary for Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

Survivors include her sons, Gary, Greg and Rex; sisters, Irene Burchi and Sylvia Wolay; four grandchildren.

Services were Aug. 8 at the McCabe Funeral Home, Farmington Hills, with the Rev. Bob Scheden of Newman House, Schoolcraft College officiating. Memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society or to the family.



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## Petty visits local dealer

Richard Petty, NASCAR champion race car driver, will bring his national 1992 Fan Appreciation Tour to Bob Sellers Pontiac/GMC Truck dealership in Farmington Hills 6-8 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 12.

Appearing with him will be Karen Savally of radio station WCSX (97.4 FM). Bob Sellers is at 38000 Grand River at 10 Mile Road, the public is invited to attend.

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