Farmington Hills ready for 20th birthday bash

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills is about ready to celebrate an end to those awkward teenage years with a party Thursday, July 1.

That evening at 7 p.m., former and current city officials will be part of the modest soiree during which the city's new fountain will be turned on. The public is invited, and refreshments — including a special birthday cake — will be served.

"We're ready for the celebration," said Mayor Nancy Bates. "The fountain is going to be a beautiful addition to the city."

The July 1 celebration and a "20th Anniversary Family Day in the Park" on Sunday, July 11, at Heritage Park are both open to the public.

The event will include the dedication of the new municipal plaza, which includes the city hall sign, fountain and new landscaping on the grounds of the city complex at 11 Mile and Orchard Lake.

"I think it's important that a community do things like build a fountain as well as the traditional functions of government," said city manager Bill Costick. "You need to have focal points in a city. It instills pride and a sense of community."

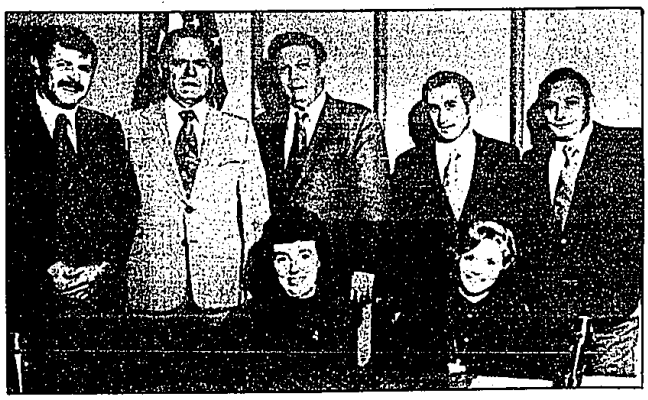
The event will include remarks by Bates, the introduction of dignitaries, former mayors, former city clerks and former city managers. Bates and the city's first mayor, Robert McConnell, will also have some fun comparing the city in its infancy to Farmington Hills 20 years later.

After the fountain dedication, refreshments will be served inside city hall, where there will be a historic photo display.

The fountain had been planned as part of the Year 2000 committee's plan to beautify the city.

In addition to the July 1 fountain dedication, a family-style celebration will run all day Sunday, July 11, at Heritage Park.

In the morning, there will be a 1- and a 3-mile hike, and a pancake breakfast to benefit the Special Olympics. Afternoon events will include a horseshoe tournament, a homerun derby, a Frisbee toss, sack races, a "bizarre" bazaar, displays by the Corvette Club and city vehicles, pony rides, a puppet show and a dunk tank.



First council: *Farmington Hills' first city council will be honored as part of the city's 20th anniversary celebration on July 1. Standing are (from left) William Ortman Jr., Earl Opperthauser, Keith Deacon, Robert McConnell and Fred Lichtman. Seated are Margaret Schaeffer, left, and Joan Dudley.*

With summer comes the return of the garage sale rites

For Carol Amrhein and her husband, Dick, a garage sale's success can be measured not only in how much money comes in, but how much stuff goes out.

"It's a lot of fun," she said. "Although we didn't get rid of everything we wanted."

The Amrheins, who own a realty office on Orchard Lake and 13 Mile, had their third garage sale in the 11 years that they've lived on Oak Point Drive. A lot of other Hills residents will be doing the same, but like the Amrheins, they might be surprised at what sells and what doesn't.

"Mostly it's nickel and dime stuff," she said. "We were hoping to sell a lawn mower and a bedroom suite, but we didn't. We sold things like an old meat slicer."

Amrhein also said books are likely to sell at a garage sale.

"They like books — novels and children's books especially," she said. "Children's toys and clothes also sell."

The Amrheins' sale had been planned for three days, Thursday, Friday and Saturday of last week, but they were rained out Saturday.

"We got rid of a lot of stuff," Carol Amrhein said. "And we did all right. We're planning to buy a video disc player for our stereo with this money."

Since there are no weekends in the real estate business, and since they could do much of their business by telephone, the Hills couple could both be at home for much of the time, although they took turns at the office Friday.

"I hope we don't have to do this for another three years," she said. "But we had fun."

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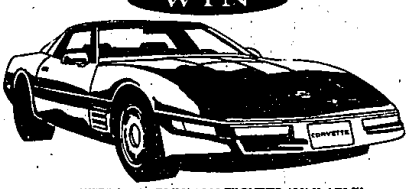

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