



STAFF PHOTO BY ANN HEALEY

A nice ride: Alexander and Benny Brown seem to be getting a kick out of one of the rides in Shiawassee Park Tuesday.

## Founders Festival fun Park teems with kids' stuff

BY TOM BARR  
STAFF WRITER

**T**wo huge inflatable gorillas held up signs saying "KIDS DAY" in Farmington's Shiawassee Park. You know the Farmington Founders Festival has started when the kids swarm over the park.

Tuesday was indeed a day for the kids with tot-a-soled rides, fire department demonstrations, pony rides, a petting zoo and even a stray political statement — a tent for the "Vote Yes on the Ice Arena" forces — for their parents.

Hundreds of kids converged on the park with their parents to do the rides, eat some pizza, ogle some cute pets and maybe sniff a stinky sneaker or two. "It's a nice start to the Founders Festival,"

said Louise Owens, a Southfield resident, as she walked down the hill from her parking spot in the Our Lady of Sorrows lot with her two foster children.

"The rides are nice," Owens said, "and we like the things that the fire department does."

The kids had the run of the park, and many adults seemed to enjoy watching them.

"I like just watching," said Farmington Hills resident Wally Christensen, passing time until he could judge the annual pet show. "I saw a little boy go running from his mother. He wanted to get to that pony ride so bad."

Virginia Campbell of Farmington awaited the popular pet show. Seated on the grass, she seemed

in perfect control of three grandchildren and three dogs.

"They don't have a category for cute dogs," said Campbell, "but if they did we'd win hands down."

Bonnie Hall of Farmington also had a canine entry for the pet show.

"We're enjoying everything," she said. "We just wish our puppy was a little happier with the other dogs."

Laura Wright of Farmington Hills was in charge of four small boys, the youngest in her arms. "It's a nice little laid-back thing they do for the kids," she said, as she watched one of her kids on the kiddie-car ride.

According to one estimate, about 800 youngsters attended this year's Kids Day.



Calm down, girl: Mindy Hall, a 9-year-old Farmington Hills girl, tries to calm her pooch, Cristina Joy. They're wearing matching vests for the pet show.



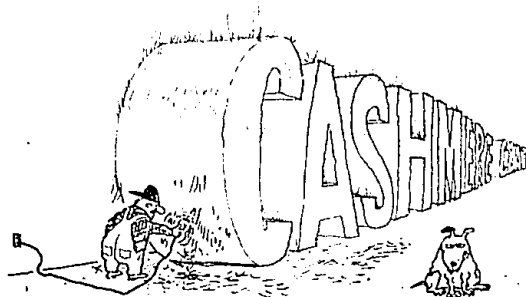
Giant bubbles: Above, part of the fun at Kids Day is the bubble game, as Lauren Belt, 4, of Farmington Hills, finds out.

At right, 3-year-old Meagan Sutherland, dressed for the day, struggles with her dog, Kelley, before the pet show at Kids Day in the Park.



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