

# Memorial Day

## Parade spectators honor vets, enjoy community spirit

By TOM BAER  
EDITOR

**P**ride was showing on Kimberly Kustron's happy face Monday morning as she awaited the start of Farmington's Memorial Day Parade. "My father's going to be in this parade," announced the 30-year-old Farmington resident. "Edward Kustron. He's a World War II vet with three Purple Hearts, and I'm so proud of him. My dad is very lucky to be alive for this day."

The 1995 edition of the annual Memorial Day Parade was dedicated to Farmington-area WWII vets like Kustron, who marched (or more likely rode) along Grand River through downtown Farmington. More than 200 were honored Monday.

The parade marked the continuation of a year-long commemoration in the Farmington area of the end of World War II.

"We were just in Washington, D.C. and saw Arlington Cemetery and all that, so Memorial Day means more to us this year," said Ellen Otto, a 39-year Farmington resident.

"I want to see the veterans from 50 years ago honored," said Arlene Curd, whose husband, John ("Uncle Jack") Curd, directed the WWII commemorative activities in Farmington.

Parade-goers watched clowns, politicians, high school bands, Scout troops, military people (current and former), military vehicles, classic cars and other trappings of Memorial Day morning in Farmington.

"I enjoy it every year . . . the excitement, the noise, the military," said Art Fredrickson, who lived in Farmington 25 years before moving to White Lake Township.

Added Jane Pewtress, a Farmington Hills resident, "We like the bands and all the noise." Her poodle, Toto, sported an American flag attached to his collar.

And there were some very practical reasons for attending the parade.

"Our kids are in the North Farmington marching band," said Mary Barnes, who staked out a section of curbstone in front of

**"All I can say is that I'm proud to be an American, I'm proud to have fought for my country . . . and on Memorial Day I'll always remember the buddies who didn't come home."**

Bill Winters

the Masonic Temple. "I have three kids in it. Would have had three, but one had to work today."

Many were bundled against the unseasonably cold temperatures. "Well, at least it isn't raining," someone said.

"It never rains on North's marching band . . . maybe a little heavy dew sometimes," said Al Barnes, Mary's husband.

After the parade, a World War I veteran — 89-year-old Charles Reeves of Southfield — placed a wreath on the war memorial at Grand River and Oakland Street.

Reeves, who served in several armored divisions in the "war to end all wars," was spry enough to drive himself to and from the parade Monday. He retired from the Ford Motor Company in 1961.

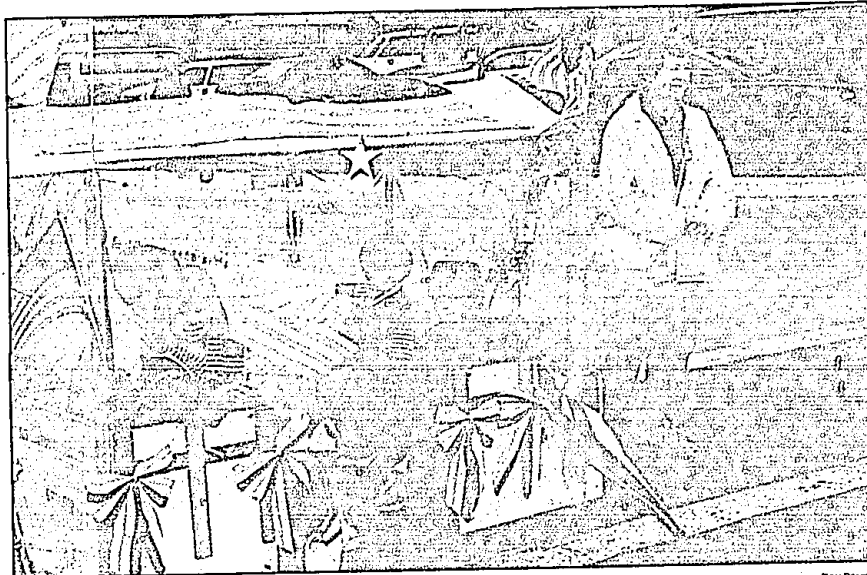
Other wreaths were placed and several speeches were made, reminding spectators that Memorial Day was for remembering the country's military personnel who died in battle.

"All I can say is that I'm proud to be an American, I'm proud to have fought for my country . . . and on Memorial Day I'll always remember the buddies who didn't come home," said Bill Winters, past commander of American Legion Northwest Post 190 in Farmington Hills.

In keeping with the WWII parade theme, the Best Unit award was given to all veterans of that conflict. Some other parade winners:

Best Adult Float — Redford High School ROTC Hummer.

Best Youth Float — Girl Scouts, Group 33.



RON POKREY

With flag in hand: Five-year-old Hanna Ozgrniowski (extreme left) and her chums had a box seat the parade in downtown Farmington.

Best Mounted Group — Golden Wing Motorcycle Club.

Best Youth Group, Boys — Cub Scout Pack 162.

Best Youth Group, Girls — Brownies 672.

Best Marching Unit — VFW Post 2269.

Most Outstanding Vehicle — Model T Ford that carried Charles Reeves.

Best Marching, Youth — Harrison High Flag Corps.

Lead Band — North Farmington High School Marching Band.

Most Outstanding Military Unit — Redford High School Junior ROTC.



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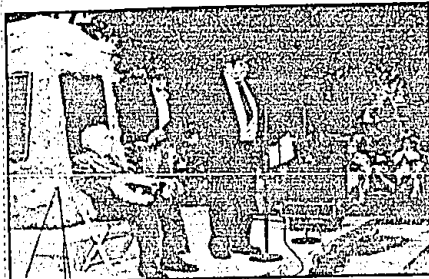
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Bundled up: The calendar may have said May 29, but young Garrett Beck (left) and his parents Kellie and Steve Beck used blankets to stay warm at Monday's Memorial Day Parade.



RON POKREY

Parade coronation: The American Legion's Wally Christensen introduces World War I vet Charles Reeves, 99, at the war memorial.