



Poles aplenty: Fishing rods were going in different directions at the annual fishing derby Saturday in Shiawassee Park. Above right, Veronica Laird, 8, of Farmington Hills, gets the hook out of her finger. She came to the Rouge River in Shiawassee Park with her aunt, cousin and a buddy. Lower right, Nick Pedersen, 10, of Farmington said it took him 50 minutes to catch this trout.



Cast of hundreds turns out for 3rd annual derby

The third annual Farmington Fishing Derby is not about the ones that got away. This event is about fish tails that wiggle to tell the story — not slippery tales of woebegone whoppers.

More than 450 children turned out for this year's event Saturday in Shiawassee Park, which with its meandering stream and shade, provides perfect sanctuary for the preplanted trout.

The derby coincides with opening day for trout fishing in Michigan.

Anglers with state of the art rods and reels shared the water with novices holding bamboo poles and other contraptions.

Farmington Hills Special Services and the city of Farmington sponsor the event.

"They were catching them, but it was slower than last year," said Farmington City Manager Frank Lauhoff. "The temperature dropped overnight and they weren't biting as much. But everyone had a good time."

"It's a great family event. It's the quietest event where you would have that many children in

one place. They're all concentrating on fishing." This is the first year that children had sole domain of the trout-infested water during the four-hour event. Previously, kids and adults shared the fishing for two hours each.

Adults — with fishing licenses — were invited to cast their lines after the event ended at 1 p.m. Upwards of 300 trout were left. This year, Farmington Hills Special Services Department planted 600 rainbow trout with half of those caught.

The rest escaped the lure of the derby.

Former Hills mayor, businessman regarded for his civic involvement

Charlie Williams wasn't the type to sit back and let others set the agenda.

"Dad was a real doer," said son Todd Williams.

Community service wove its way throughout Williams' life, which was filled with business, political and civic involvement.

The retired accountant died of cardiovascular disease in Florida April 23. He was 63.

Williams, a 38-year Farmington Hills resident, served on the city council from 1982-85, which included an appointed term as mayor in 1984. His council term was short but eventful.

He headed the council during a particularly tumultuous time, which included him once telling then-Councilwoman Joan Dudley to "shut up."

Later, Williams said he didn't mean the outburst, which he attributed to poor health. "I was sick. And I guess I had a short fuse," Williams said in a 1985 Observer interview.

"There were disagreements, but he was never disagreeable," said Jan Dolan, who was on the council at the time. "His sense of humor always came through. He never took himself too seriously, which I like in people."

As an accountant, Williams worked for a firm that did the books for the Detroit Lions and Detroit Tigers. With the Lions, he befriended then-team broadcaster Van Patrick. The pair owned a printing shop franchise.

Williams, who started his own accounting firm in downtown Farmington, went on to own Speedy Printing and Burger King franchises. He also owned the Burger King on Grand River.

He started his son, Todd, in the restaurant franchise busi-



Charlie Williams

ness. The family owns Burger Kings in Royal Oak and Warren.

"He was a good dad," said Todd. "He set up both of his sons in business. He was very generous."

Williams proved unselfish with his time.

Despite numerous business interests, he was involved with the Farmington Jaycees, Farmington Masonic Lodge, Elks Club, Exchange Club, Farmington and Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce and Farmington Area Goodfellows. He was an avid fund-raiser for the Michigan Republican Party and Botsford Hospital.

He donated the building for his accounting business on Grand River and Middlebelt to Botsford and set up a charitable trust for the hospital. The building will be renovated for hospital administrative services.

"He has always, always been a good friend and strong supporter of the hospital," said Gerson Cooper, Botsford chairman. "We knew he was winding down. One

day he called me and said 'Let's go out to lunch' and he gave us the building."

In the 1960s, Williams ventured into politics and was elected to the Farmington Township Board. He resigned when he moved to Farmington.

As a Hills council member, the fiscally conservative Williams urged the city to spend budget surpluses for capital improvements. He also backed the hiring of current Farmington Hills police Chief Bill Dwyer.

Williams didn't seek re-election because of health reasons, which included diabetes and heart problems.

He suffered a stroke while watching the Detroit Lions play the Green Bay Packers in Lambeau Field in 1992. Another stroke later left him in a wheelchair.

He retired and sold his business in 1995, but continued to do people's tax returns until last year.

While his health continued to deteriorate, his wife, Janice, provided comfort, Todd said.

Williams is survived by wife Janice; brother Richard Williams of West Bloomfield; sister, Diane Pettis of Detroit; daughters Deborah Al-Dary of Novi and Donna (Jeff) Delosh of Plymouth; sons Charles H. of Farmington Hills and Todd (Barbara) of Farmington Hills; and six grandchildren.

Funeral services were at Thayer-Rock Funeral Home with the Rev. Walter Dickinson officiating. Entombment will be at Oakland Hills Cemetery in Novi.

Memorials may be sent to Botsford Hospital's Development Department, 28050 Grand River, Farmington Hills 48336.

Fergie to talk weight loss in Farmington Hills

On May 1, Weight Watchers will host Sarah, Duchess of York, for a day of special events.

The morning begins with a press conference breakfast at Weight Watchers headquarters in Farmington Hills where CEO Florino Mark and the Duchess will speak about their weight loss experience.

They will be joined by three Weight Watchers members who have lost at least 100 pounds each.

At noon, Florino and the Duchess will appear at the 1998 International Women's Show at the Novi Expo Center.

At 1 p.m. they will appear at Twelve Oaks Mall in Novi where

the Duchess, who recently became a lifetime Weight Watchers member, and Mark, who heads Weight Watchers International's largest franchise, will each share their weight loss stories and honor Weight Watchers members who have lost 100 pounds or more.



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