

# Hamming it

## Farmington Amateur Radio Club on guard for parade

**A**ttention everyone: This is the Farmington Amateur Radio Club. The parade has begun at Botsford.

"They're on their way."

With that message around 10 a.m. Saturday, Jim Prest of Farmington Hills put the 14 club members working communications for the 39th annual Farmington Founders Festival parade on alert.

Not that the club members, some of whom were in their 15th year on the club's parade network, didn't know what was going on.

Working with walkie-talkies from assigned sites along the parade route since early that morning, they'd been in almost constant contact with each other and with Prest and Chuck Tanton at the base station in the Farmington Observer office.

The hams, as radio amateurs are popularly known, helped coordinate the parade by passing messages back and forth among the various parade workers and officials via their communications network.

Although each could hear the others' messages, the relay from Prest served as a backup in case messages became garbled, cut by static or otherwise encountered problems.

"It's a passive thing," said Prest of

**The hams, as radio amateurs are popularly known, helped coordinate the parade by passing messages back and forth among the various parade workers and officials via their communications network.**

their parade participation. But the group also works such events as the Walk America and 10K Run and has come in handy when a runner or walker or even a bystander passed out. Medical attention summoned by radio arrives that much faster.

"Happily," he noted, "we've never had to save a life yet."

The FARC, as the club is known, helps out not only with parades and runs but also makes monthly storm-warning siren checks.

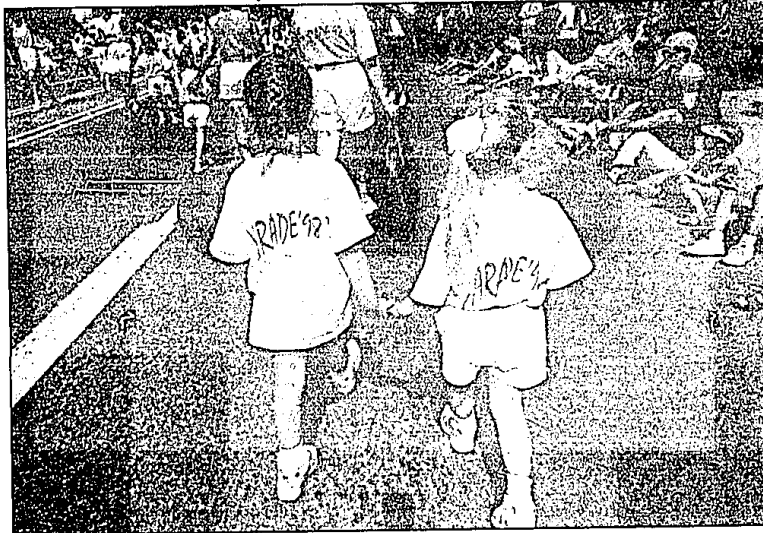
The activities are a sort of civil service that also benefits the club.

Prest explained that the federal government allocates radio frequencies to amateur radio operators and a lot of private companies would like to have those frequencies for private use.

"One way to keep a frequency is to do civic work and show you're deserving of it," Prest said.

The radio club makes use of two frequency bands: a VHF - Very High Frequency - channel for local events and lower frequencies for short-wave communications, which lets members talk around the world.

It's this love of communication, often coupled with a love for radio, that draws people into



**March:** Emily Siskosky, 4, left, and Lauren Schenkel hold hands while walking in the Farmington Founders Festival Parade Saturday, July 11, 1998. Both are students at the Barbara Hatch School of Dance. Their shirts read, 'Parade '98'.

amateur radio clubs and becoming hams, a term that once was used to refer to amateur actors, Prest said.

Modern applicants must pass federal tests to get their radio licenses. And the work that entails - coupled with the ease of accessing the computer/Internet today - is killing interest in ham radio, particularly among the young, he said.

"Kids are losing interest," he said. "It's too hard. They have to work and learn."

"Today it's easier to talk to someone in another country on the Internet."

However, what teens don't realize is the potential for community service that can be sorely needed in times of natural disasters, such as forest fires, floods, storms and earthquakes, and the man-made kind, such as airplane and boat accidents.

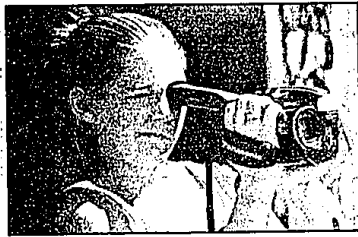
With a ham license, a person can even go on vacation in his car or on foot and maintain two-way communication with the rest of the world.

"You can always find someone to talk to," Prest said.

And if they're far enough south in the United States, hams can even hear the space shuttle missions - the clubs' lower radio frequencies require that the shuttle be visible in the sky, he said, and shuttle orbits are nearer the equator.

As for Saturday's parade? "Smooth as silk," said Prest.

For further information, contact Prest at 474-8765 or Charles Bates at 553-9301.



**Watching:** Sarah Goetzhe videotapes the Farmington Founders Festival Parade July 11, while the hams made sure all was well.

### Fresh Coffee.



### Fresh Bakery Items.



### Fresh Paint.

BAGELS  
NOW  
AVAILABLE

Grand Opening

3050 Union Lake Road  
Just South of Commerce Road  
In the Town Center Plaza  
(Farmer Jack, Powerhouse Gym)

COFFEE  
COOLATTA  
NOW  
AVAILABLE

**\$1.49 COMBO #3**  
Bagel with plain Cream Cheese  
and Medium Coffee

**99¢** regular \$1.99  
16 oz. Coffee Coolatta

Good only at 3050 Union Lake Rd., Commerce

Good only at 3050 Union Lake Rd., Commerce

One coupon per customer per visit. May not be combined with any other coupon or premium offer. Shop must retain coupon. Taxes not included. Coupon may not be reproduced or transferred. Void where prohibited, taxed or restricted by law.

One coupon per customer per visit. May not be combined with any other coupon or premium offer. Shop must retain coupon. Taxes not included. Coupon may not be reproduced or transferred. Void where prohibited, taxed or restricted by law.

LINE 2  
DUNKIN' DONUTS  
OFFER GOOD THRU  
8/19/98

LINE 2  
DUNKIN' DONUTS  
OFFER GOOD THRU  
8/19/98

Corner of Orchard Lake Rd. and Ten Mile in Farmington

Your Hometown Savings Headquarters

## Summer Produce Spectacular

<p>Red Ripe - Whole <b>WATERMELON</b></p> <p><b>\$2.59</b> Ea.</p>	<p>Home Grown <b>SWEET CORN</b></p> <p><b>12/\$1.99</b> In Husk</p>
<p>On the Vine <b>TOMATOES</b></p> <p><b>\$1.99</b> Lb.</p>	<p>California <b>CANTALOUPE</b></p> <p><b>99¢</b> Ea.</p>
<p>Whole Boneless <b>PORK LOIN</b></p> <p><b>\$1.79</b> Sliced Free Lb.</p>	<p><b>PEPSI</b></p> <p>12 Pack Cans Or 8 Pak Bottles - Limit "3" -</p> <p><b>3/\$7.00</b> + Dep.</p>

WE ACCEPT

**DOUBLE**  
Manufacturer's  
**COUPONS**

See Store For Details

**UP TO**  
**50%**

Ad Starts  
7-20-98

Check Sale Items in  
Store Paper

ADVERTISED ITEM POLICY: WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO LIMIT QUANTITIES. Each of these advertised items is required to be readily available for sale. If we do not have an advertised item, we will offer you that choice of a comparable item, when available, reflecting the same savings or a cash check which we will give you to purchase the advertised item at the advertised price within 30 days. Only one coupon discount will be applied per item. No sales to Dealers.