

New Miss Farmington's reign begins with activities

My name is Kelly Zander and I'd like to welcome you to Kelly's Korner, the once a month update on my exciting year as Miss Farmington/Oakland County. I am honored to hold this title and the responsibilities of representing our community. I look forward to keeping you informed of all my activities and accomplishments this year.



Kelly Zander

Thank you for all the support with the Miss Farmington/Oakland County Scholarship Program.

This year, we were pleased to hold the pageant at the Costick Center. All the contestants would agree the large stage was a pleasure to perform on, especially for the dancers like myself.

We had a wonderful sound and lighting system and more seating than last year to accommodate more pageant goers. For a backstage look, the girls and myself enjoyed the spacious dressing room and appreciated the layout of the backstage area.

The show went smoothly because of all these wonderful benefits. Each of the contestants had an extraordinary experience. Lasting friendships were made between all the girls including Samantha Steedloff, Leilani Thorn, Brooke

Brennan, Kelly Edwards, and Kristyn Sokolnicki. I neglected to mention two dancers of my court, Jill Marinucci and Karen Green as my first and second runners up. Congratulations are in order for all these wonderful young women.

There are many activities I am looking forward to in the year ahead. This first month alone has been very busy and fulfilling. I made my first appearance at the Farmington Hills city council meeting, where I introduced myself and told council of my plans for this year.

The Founders Festival was wonderful and I enjoyed seeing everyone come out for the parade. I owe a big thank you to Metro Bank for lending the beautiful float for myself and

the rest of the girls in the court. You might have seen me in July at the Founders Festival working on the concessions for the Masonic Temple at the corner of Farmington Road and Grand River. That was my small way of saying thank you to the members of the Masonic Temple who sponsored me in the pageant.

I was overjoyed when Glen Martin offered me tickets to see President George W. Bush speak with Poland's President, Aleksander Kwasniewski, at Oakland University. It was a wonderful opportunity which I shared with Jennifer Hoemke and my father.

On July 21, I visited Canterbury Village for their Ronald McDonald fundraiser. What a surprise and honor to

see my name on fliers at the "meet and greet" with Kelly Zander Miss Farmington/Oakland County. Canterbury Village has asked me to be the Grand Marshal for their Christmas Lights Parade and I will be the official host when Santa arrives on Nov. 29.

Shortly after the Founders Festival and my trip to Canterbury Village I rushed up to Central Michigan to work at the Mid American Pom Camp. I had a splendid time working with pomers from around the state and teaching them pom routines as well as good sportsmanship and healthy living habits. I had so much fun working with my team for the week, White Pine Middle School.

In the year ahead, I look forward to working with Denise

White from William Grace Elementary School in hopes of initiating a mentoring program.

All in all, this should be a great year for the program and myself. I am sure Ginny Morris, the pageant's executive director, will keep me busy preparing for Miss Michigan in June 2003. She has plans for fun shopping outings, interview preparations, and will be calling me daily at my new home in East Lansing as I enter my freshman year at Michigan State University.

I'm looking forward to helping out the community and implementing my mentoring platform. Until next month, never stop lending a helping hand.

West Nile leads to empty feeders, empty yards and empty skies

Empy feeders, empty yards, empty skies! Where have all the birds gone?

I've had this question asked many times during the last month by concerned residents. The West Nile Virus is probably the main culprit in this case.

I, too, have noticed a lack of birds in my yard. We've had five or six chickadees at our feeders for the last 16 years. We've had them nest in the bird boxes almost every year. Now they're gone. I have been able to walk up to house finches as if they were tame.

I have found dead birds in the yard with not a mark on them as have many of you. This was occurring last summer but we didn't pay much attention because the news hadn't yet started their overkill campaign on this matter.

Many callers have also wondered about the lack of squirrels and other wildlife in their yards. We are having another season of drought in the Farmington area. All

forms of nature react to this in one way or another. We have had four or five winters with not much moisture. We no longer have April showers.

We go from winter to summer with our winter patterns.

We had killing frosts late this spring which caused a lack of fruit and berries for wildlife. There are pockets of mosquitoes in some areas of town while other places have none.

Most of the callers have reported dead crows and blue jays. A few birds die each year anyway so they're not all related to the virus. However, in my lifetime, I can't remember a lack of some bird species like I have experienced in the last two or three months. Robins are scarce but that could be related to the lack of moisture and the insects and fruit that they eat. If food and water are scarce, the wildlife will move to find it if they can.

As a naturalist, I'm not worried about the West Nile virus when it comes to people. I'm not letting the past few weeks of media hype scare me into hiding in a closet. I am careful, if I'm gardening just before dark, to go in if the mosquitoes start to annoy me. I don't enjoy their bites whether the Nile Virus is around or not.

I don't believe in covering myself with bug spray containing "DEET" like the media has suggested. I feel that these sprays are more harmful to us than the mosquitoes. But that's my opinion.

I just received a report from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that states that a bacteria called "salmonellosis" is also killing many backyard birds. It can be controlled by keeping bird feeding areas clean.

If you would like more information on these matters you can contact the Wild Birds Unlimited web site at <http://www.wbu.com>. I'm as concerned as many of you folks are. The West Nile virus is here and needs to run its course.

We as people need to be more careful as to what we do. These invaders such as the West Nile virus, zebra mussels, ash tree borers, etc. are here because we are not good stewards of our environment. Until everyone works together to better our world for nature and ourselves things like this are going to continue to occur.

Maybe we'll learn someday.

Joe Derek is a naturalist with the City of Farmington Hills.

RELIGION CALENDAR

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall Festival

First Presbyterian Church of Farmington will host a Fall Festival beginning at noon on Sunday, Sept. 15. The day will include lawn games, a barbecue picnic, face painting for kids, and more. For more information call the church at (248) 474-6700. The church is located at 11 Mile and Farmington Road. All are welcome.

Building Dedication

The Vineyard Church of Farmington Hills, 29200 Shawassee, Farmington Hills, will be dedicating its building Sept. 15 beginning with services at 10:30 a.m., entertainment and refreshments 1:30 p.m. and the building dedication at 5 p.m. The church has been in residence for one year, renovating the previous Children's World structure, and are now opening the doors to the public.

ONGOING

Marriage Encounter

Weekend experience for married couples to improve their communication skills and renew their love. Friday-Sunday, June 28-30 and Sept. 20-22 at St. John's Family Life Center, 44011 Five Mile Road, Plymouth. Registration \$50, call Bill & Carol: (248) 525-2523 or Dan & Debbie: (810) 286-5524 or visit www.re4.net/detroit/wmme

Hill and Dale presents flower show at Warner Mansion

Hill and Dale Garden Club will present the standard flower show, *Deja vu with a Twist* 1-5 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 14 and Sunday, Sept. 15 at the Warner Mansion. The museum will have decent tours of the building during the show. There is a \$2 donation to the museum show, with proceeds going to the museum.

Flower arrangements, made by Hill and Dale and other Federated Garden Clubs of Michigan members, will be located throughout the mansion, and will include miniature and small arrangements in the children's bedroom, *pot de fleurs* (plants with cut flowers added) as well as four table presentations located throughout the museum. Other designs will enhance the music and sewing rooms.

Horticulture will be on exhibit in the

renovated barn. Any member of the community is welcome to enter their horticulture by coming to the museum 4-6 p.m. Friday, Sept. 13 or 8-9:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 14. All entries must be in place by 9:30 a.m. Saturday morning for judging. Judging will begin at 10 a.m. and will be completed by the 1 p.m. opening.

Three educational exhibits will focus on garden therapy, Hill and Dale's way of giving to the special needs children in the Farmington Public Schools; *Chive Beautification* with a pictorial exhibit of gardens maintained by the club at Heritage Park and Longacre House; and Membership with an emphasis on what the club does and what it requires of its members.

This event is open to the public. Call (248) 477-1053.

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