

Engines roar, dust flies:



Kicking up dirt, Timothy Bielacy barely can be seen behind the wheel of his four-wheel-drive vehicle (far left) while taking a test run in Farmington. Two other contestants (above) try their skill on the dirt track, Farmington Road near Twelve Mile. One of them (left) Claude Conn, tools around the track in his '62 Jeep.

Trucks show their stuff

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Back in the good old days, only farmers kept on an eye the progress of their tractor pull favorites. County fair racing strips were the arena in which farmer-contestants managed to coerce their tractors to pull 40,000 pounds of lead weight down a 300-foot stretch of dirt.

Now, in an effort to appeal to their city cousins, tractor pull enthusiasts are branching out into using four-wheel-drive vehicles to carry the weight in competition. Contestants who prefer the family Jeep to a souped-up tractor will appear in Farmington's Transfer Pull, July 24.

Part of the Heels and Wheels weekend during Farmington Founders Festival Week, the event is sponsored by the Farmington Jaycees and the Detroit area Wolverine 4-Wheelers. Sponsors are aiming the contest at the suburban and city resident.

"We're trying to appeal to the average guy. We use an ordinary vehicle that they might own," said Jim Sternett, 4-Wheelers president.

"THE AVERAGE spectator can't really relate to a big tractor. There are thrills and spills in this race. During a pull, he can watch a truck that he might own at home. Here, he can see his own machine pull that weight," said Sternett.

Among the four-wheel drive owners who wanted their own machine to do the same thing as the truck in the contest is Claude Conn, of Farmington Hills. Conn and his wife Connie will take their first shot at attempting to drag the weights down the 20 foot wide strip of dirt at Twelve Mile and Farmington Road.

"My wife and I have been in off the road races for about seven to eight years," said Conn who works in Livonia.

Conn is a veteran of drag races and close course obstacle events as well as cross country. He and his wife will drive their '62 Jeep separately in the same pulling event. Only drivers are allowed in the truck during the event. Each truck's distance is measured before the next contestant is allowed to exhibit his or her skill.

"It's a way to let off steam. We take that little Jeep and drive the heck out of it," he said.

ANOTHER DUO entering the contest is Joe Dunlap, of Plymouth, and his wife Shelli. Mrs. Dunlap was a spectator until a year ago, when her new husband persuaded her to try her hand at the four-wheel pull.

Dunlap has been competing for three years. This year he and his wife are sharing their '77 Blazer, which doubles as the family car.

"I used to have a racing Jeep but it became too expensive to maintain," explained Dunlap.

Men and women are attracted to the competition because it tests each vehicle's capacity rather than the wiles of the driver.

That's the way Timothy Bielacy, of Farmington Hills, sees it.

"It's the individual vehicle itself—you're out to prove what the vehicle can pull," said Bielacy, who is entering the pickup truck he bought four months ago.

Drivers have their choice of which class will show off the pulling ability of their vehicles in the most flattering manner.

Stock class pull prohibits drivers

modifying the truck's engine or altering the body frame.

SUPERCHARGED trucks are out of place in the four-wheel-drive pull, but drivers who like to tinker with their vehicle's engine can enter the modified and unlimited classes.

Unlimited class vehicles tend to be a bit heavier, weighing in at 8,000 pounds, but both classes frown on the addition of pressurized air systems to get that extra bit of power from the engine.

Exerting modified or stock trucks on dirt roads can kick up a lot of dust, Sternett admits, but the contest is usually free of major injuries.

"We don't wreck a bit of machinery. But you'd swear we would if you were to watch us," he chuckled.



CLAUDE CONN



JIM STERNETT



JOE DUNLAP

Staff photos
by
Harry Mauthe

Where, oh, where has dog owner gone?

Employees at the Village Animal Clinic, Grand River and Gill, Farmington Hills, are on the verge of adopting a blind chihuahua which was found wandering down Ten Mile near Middle Belt last Wednesday morning.

Instead of making the young dog a member of the gang, the employees are trying to find its owner, who evidently took good care of the animal, according to Sylvia Ball, of the clinic. "We're falling in love with the little spot," she said.

She's anxious to hear from the owner of the female dog. The pet's blindness is caused by cataracts in both eyes. It was well groomed and is house broken, Ms. Ball said. "It gets along amazingly well. It

hasn't bumped into any objects in the office. It probably can distinguish dark from light, she said.

Blindness has yet to prevent the dog from getting its fair share of treats. "When you rustle cookie wrappers she gets up on her hind legs and dances around. She doesn't have eyes but her nose is real good," Ms. Ball said.

ANYONE WHO is interested in the brown, white and black dog should contact Ms. Ball at 477-0334.

Basketball camp set

Students from the fourth through 12th grades are invited to register for the basketball camp to be held at Harrison and Farmington high schools, from June 22 to August 2.

Registration will be in the Farmington High School lobby on June 22, from 8 p.m.-noon. Cost is \$20.

Daily schedules for the camps are: Harrison—8-9 a.m. for fourth-fifth graders; 9:30-11 a.m. for senior high school grades; 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. for eighth and ninth graders; 12:30-2 p.m. for sixth and seventh graders.

Farmington High School schedule is: 8-9:30 a.m. for fourth and fifth graders; 9:30-11 a.m. for sixth and seventh graders; 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. for senior high grades; and 12:30-2 p.m. for eighth and ninth graders.

Chisholm is in Congress

Brian Chisholm, of Farmington Hills, has been elected to the executive board of the all-college student congress of Grand Valley State College. The student congress makes policy recommendations to the administration and provides a means for student input to various all-college governing boards and committees.

The congress also shares with the activities office the responsibility for the adoption of standards and regulations for student organizations. The executive board is composed of eight elected members and coordinates all student congress responsibilities.

Watson named to dean's list

Fred Watson, of Farmington Hills, was named to the dean's list at Lawrence Institute of Technology. The dean's honor roll requires achievement of a minimum 3.5 grade point average.

He is a graduate of Clarenceville High School.



THE SUIT THAT ISN'T.
SOFT FLOWERING
CHALLIS TO
DANCE AROUND
YOUR KNEES, A BLOOM
OF A SHIRT AND
THE NEW SHAPE
OF JACKET. CLEVER
KASPER. YOU'VE PUT
ANYTHING SUITIER
INTO THE PAST
FOR J.L. SPORT.

A buttoning dirdl, with a myriad of pinpleats at the waist, to show as much leg as you like. \$76. The ruffle-cuffed shirt, \$76. Both in a print of mauves, violets and more. With the crop of a raisin Ultra suede jacket, \$218. Sized 6 to 14. In the Woodward Shops at Hudson's Northland, Eastland, Oakland, Ann Arbor and Fairlane stores.

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Personal finance course is offered

The business administration department of the Orchard Ridge Campus of Oakland Community College will offer a course in personal finance during the summer session.

The class will meet on Monday and Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m., from June 29 through August 17.

A series of guest speakers from the community will be featured on such topics as investments; buying and selling a home; budgets; banking; federal income tax; home mortgages; consumer legal rights; buying a new car; life, auto and home insurance; and social security.

Registration will be on June 27 and 28. Tuition for area residents is \$48.