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Rock 'n rain test Founders' Festival resolve

Crafters undaunted

By Tom Beer
staff writer

It rained hard on the Farmington Founders' Festival last Thursday. It rained a whole lot harder the next morning.

It let up some Friday afternoon, but folks were saying it looked like we were going to be blessed with a little more rain for the weekend.

This festival, the 19th annual, will be remembered as one of the wettest ever. Rain, or the threat of it, was keeping spectators home and vendors closed, at least for parts of the first two days.

Jody Soronen, executive director of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce, which oversees some festival events, used one word — "disappointed" — to describe her feelings about the situation.



Mary Turton, chairwoman of the craft area, found a dry spot to wait out Friday morning's thunderstorm. "Everybody's a little on edge when it rains," she said.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

D-Js are mystified

By Diane Gale
staff writer

Sparks flew at the Farmington Founders' Festival Friday afternoon when radio station WORD, Oakland Community College's student station, was told they couldn't play their music to festival crowds over a loudspeaker.

"The music they do allow (festival officials) seems to appeal to affluent people that tend to be in the older range group, who don't like rock 'n' roll," said WORD station manager Steve Reeves.

"There are a lot of younger people out here who would like to hear the music," he said.

Reeves, 21, describes the music they play as "alternative aggressive" and "new wavish."

"Outsiders would call it new wave with some rock, but that's not what we do," Reeves said.

"We don't like to call it new wave, because we don't play it all the time, it has a bad connotation and they associate it with punk music, and this isn't punk."

According to Jody Soronen, festival committee member for the Chamber of Commerce, the grounds didn't have enough electrical outlets to accommodate the radio station. Committee members were advised, by an electrician, not to hook up any more outlets to the facility, she said.

"The board of directors from the festival decided from the feeling of the community that rock music wasn't what the community wanted to hear," Soronen said.

When WORD applied for a permit to participate in the festival they didn't mention that they would be playing music, according to Reeves and Soronen.

Some of the food and game vendors are playing rock 'n' roll music out of their booths, but committee members haven't seemed to object, Reeves noted.

As of Friday, the radio station, which is based out of Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge Campus, had to settle for passing out literature from a booth.

"Our intention wasn't to blast everyone out from miles around," WORD disc jockey Merri Jo Ortman said. "We just wanted to let them have a taste of our music."

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Harvey Ostrander of Farmington perches on a chair to get a bird's-eye view of the Farmington police auction.



Scrabble under a tent was a safe escape from the rain for Manny Kramer, Tiffany Sayre and Melissa Sayre from Rochester.

Hills resident

Trustee appointed for C'ville

Norman Hunt, a former Clarencville school trustee who two years ago decided to step down after serving for 15 years, has been appointed to a one-year term on that board.

He was among four residents of the Clarencville district who applied for the vacancy created last month when Lee McDowell resigned. McDowell, who was elected to a four-year term in 1981, had served two years. He said personal problems prompted his resignation and that he was moving from the district.

Hunt, 65, lives in Farmington Hills and becomes the only non-Livonian on the board. The Clarencville district includes parts of Livonia, Farmington Hills and Redford Township.

The other candidates included Linda Albert of Livonia, a former candidate for the school board; Lawrence Bibik of Livonia and George Roberts of Farmington Hills.

Board members approved Hunt's appointment in a 5-0 vote on Thursday. Hunt has agreed to serve the one-year term caused by the resignation of Lee McDowell but told trustees he doesn't plan to run for re-election.

In a public interview last week, Hunt told trustees he applied for the appointment because "I thought the experience I've had would be beneficial for a year."

Trustee Barry Sherman said he was glad Hunt applied and expressed a desire to serve for only one year. Sherman said he was reluctant to select one of the other three because it most likely would give that person an edge in the June 1984 school board election.

The other trustees agreed. "It gets kind of lumpy when you're dealing with your neighbors," quipped one member of the audience at last week's board meeting. The Clarencville district is comprised of about 2,000 students.

Last week's board action marked the second time that Hunt has been appointed to the Clarencville Board of Education. In 1980 he was appointed to the board to fill the unexpired term of Fred Bailey.

Hunt and his wife, Faith, raised their family on St. Francis Street next to what was formerly Edgewood Elementary School. It was his involvement with the school's PTA that led to his appointment to the board in 1980.

According to state law, an election must be held in June 1984 to fill the remainder of McDowell's term. Hunt's competitors for the appointment said they would be interested in running for the board in June.

Albert, a homemaker, is active in PTO and band parents in the district. Bibik has five children in the Clarencville district. Roberts, an electrician, is a member of the Farmington Hills Zoning Board of Appeals.



Norman Hunt appointed trustee

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