



Getting their goat: Above, Power Middle School kids (from left) Chelsea Kresky, Margo Szczygielski, Sarah Davies, Jennifer Altschul and Nicole Amato pet a baby goat from Barnyard Express. At left, 6-year-old T.J. Ellis of Farmington holds his hedgehog, Spike, who tied for third in the Most Unusual Pet category.

It's like a zoo at Kids Day in Park

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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Kids Day in the Park is a time of furious action, but there's also a moment for pleasant paws. While rides, games, clowns and balloon tricks consume children's abundant energy at the annual kiddie powwow in Shiawassee Park, nothing elicits the gleeful responses like a few moments with furry creatures. "Hi tiger!" screamed Alex Siegel, 3, of West Bloomfield who was with her friend Sara Gyselnick, also 3, of Farmington. They received playful pats on

the head from Detroit Tigers' mascot Paws, who later signed autographs and passed out decals. For those not into faux felines, there were plenty real ones. The 28th Annual Farmington Founders Festival Pet Show featured a selection of animals rivaling only those on Noah's Ark. Farmington Citizen of the Year Todd Lipa, chamber president Nurten Ural, and school board member Linda Eaberg had the difficult task of picking the smallest, largest, best dressed and most articulate pets. Creative efforts were not lacking. Sarah Bajek and her dachshund, Divot, took first place in

the Best Dressed Pet and Owner category for their hot dog and bun getup. Annie McFarland and her chicken, Fancy Nancy, and Alexander Grossi and his bichon frise, Apsen, tied for second place. Brendan Patrick and his Detroit Tigers-shirt-wearing iguana, Icy, shared third-place honors with Brittney Lyons and her collie Whisper. Smallest pet honors went to Carrie Nelson's appropriately named guppy, Tiny. Jeanett Poff and water frog, Be Hoppy, and Kevin Carron's green tree frog, Hop, finished second and third, respectively.

Kelli, Stacey and Brad Wallis' cat, Salem, won first prize in the Most Articulate category while Largest Pet top honors went to Christine Temple's Old English sheep dog, Susie. Deanna Geuer's German shepherd, Marty, finished second. Pets incarcerated in cages wouldn't be denied, either. Alia Koczara and her hamster, Teddy, won first place in the Best Presentation of a Caged Pet category. Stephanie LaBobascus' mourning doves, Carolyn and Angelica, were second while Christine Kenerson and Russian dwarf hamster, Wilma, were third. Best Trained Pets winners

were: Chrystie and Patrick Telford's Labrador retriever, Spooky, first place; Missy Weaver's Labrador retriever, Tara, second; and Sean Gough's Labrador retriever, Buster, third. Most Unusual Pet: Nick Patrick and iguana, Icy, first; Josh Wrobel and anole, Viper, second; T.J. Ellis and hedgehog, Spike, third (tied); and Ashley Wrobel and hedgehog, Thistle, third (tied). Pet with the Waggiest Tail: John McFarland and pygmy goat, Molly, first; Jessica Kwapiak and terrier mix, Buster, second; and Brett Podwoiski and cocker spaniel mix, Joey, third.



Awalting word: Jenna Noteman, 9, of Farmington, listens for the judge's decision in the Best Display of a Caged Pet category.



Judging it: Kids compete with their pets for the judges, including Todd Lipa (above) at Shiawassee Park.



Going whole hog: "Farmer John" Forshee and friend do a pre-show program for the Kids Day crowd.

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