

Festival from page A1

Attendance was down slightly at the 1999 festival, as were the number of vendors and crafters who set up for the week-long event. During the event, complaints from patrons seemed to be on the upswing, largely because of what some perceived as a lack of quality and variety.

"We're just trying to upgrade it, make it more contemporary and more exciting," said Mike Watts, who still defends how well the '99 festival did.

Poor weather cut into attendance more than anything else, he said.

Another problem alluded to by Laubhoff is that many people weren't in town during the festival because of the July 4 holiday and family vacations.

No more Big Top

Criticisms aside, Mike and Susan Watts — who are entering the second year of a three-year contract to operate the festival — aren't just changing the month it will be held. Until last year, the event was organized by the Farmington/Farmington Hills

'We researched it by going to other festivals. This will have more of an art show look.'

Mike Watts
— Founders Festival manager

Chamber of Commerce.

Gone will be the massive yellow tent that housed a number of vendors in the Downtown Farmington Center parking lot. Envisioned for the area are a number of smaller, pop-up tents, giving the entire area a more-consistent, less-obtrusive feel.

"We researched it by going to other festivals," Mike Watts said. "This will have more of an art show look than a 'You're under the Big Top.'"

Watts said the new set-up will be more functional. "People can see what's around."

The Saturday Founders Day Parade will still continue as a highlight of the week, Watts said.

Some Farmington residents, when told about the festival's date change Monday, had a wait-and-see attitude. Both Jan Bajek

and Derek Blair, however, thought the quality of the festival should be the number one priority rather than changing the schedule.

"If they don't improve how it's been the last couple years, not that many people will come to it," Bajek said. "I don't think (moving it) two weeks is going to make a big difference. They need to improve the quality."

Blair said last year's festival had a lack of focus and didn't do enough to celebrate Farmington's heritage — the "founders" of the city.

"They need to think of that instead of just setting up a lot of crafters," said Blair, who thought it might be a good idea to hold a school/community contest to come up with some good Founders Day-related programming.

Faye from page A1

aid cancer patients and their families. A local Gilda's Club operates in Royal Oak.

Ms. Faye was diagnosed with lung cancer in late August.

Using her log-on name Queenfunny, she got busy on her home computer accumulating e-mails (up to 50 a day) from comics across the nation and planned on compiling an inspirational book to give courage to others suffering life-threatening illnesses.

In an interview with the Farmington Observer a month ago, she said her faith in God and humor in everyday life were sustaining her.

Two benefits in her honor, one at Mark Ridley's Comedy Castle and one at Joey's in Livonia, were held in October, with several local

comedians performing.

She is survived by her husband, Frederick Sewell, sons Brian (Tracie) Pack of Holt and Nicholas Colson, of Farmington. Other survivors include her mother, Evelyn Patton, of Howell; and sisters Donna (Richard) Wright and Mary Jo (John) Wittenburg.

Memorial tributes can be made to the Alyce Faye Fund, C/O the Providence Health Foundation, American Cancer Society, or Gilda's Club of Metro Detroit.

Visitation was Tuesday and Wednesday at Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home in Farmington.

BUSINESS SCENE

New team member

Nick Richards of Farmington Hills has joined the staff at Services Marketing Specialist, Inc. in Detroit as a communication specialist. He will be responsible for writing and editing newsletters, implementing direct mail and public relations programs and conducting market research.

Staff expansion

Darrell Deam of Farmington

has been promoted to director of international operations at DataNet Quality Systems in Southfield. The new position will involve extending the availability of multilingual software beyond South America and the United Kingdom into Europe, Scandinavia, Africa, the Middle East and the Pacific region.

School fund-raiser

A&W Restaurants based in

Farmington Hills, is now offering area schools and nonprofit organizations a free coupon book worth \$10 in food discounts to be used as a fund-raiser. The books can be sold for \$2 each and all profits will be retained by the organization. Any organizations interested in participating can call (888) ANW-MUGS, Ext. 9185. e

Jewish occasions to be celebrated

The Bar Mitzvah of Adam Vieder, son of Debbie and Mark Vieder, will take place at Adat Shalom Synagogue in Farmington Hills.

The B'nai Mitzvah of Megan Nestor, daughter of Susan and Tom Nestor and Svetlana

Rivkin, daughter of Inna and Leonid Rivkin are also planned.

Services at Adat Shalom are Fridays at 5 p.m., Saturdays at 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., weekdays at 7:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. and Sundays at 8:30 a.m.

Meet the Author

Jane Breskin
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