

## Here are the questions and answers:

The following questions were posed by the newly reformed Downtown Farmington Business Association. Responses were given by Jim Stark, president of the Farmington Area Founders Festival Inc., which oversees the annual event, now known as the Farmington Area Family Fest.

**1. Is the charge of \$50 a general participation fee or is it being collected to fund specific expenses? If so, what are those expenses?**

The \$50 contribution will go into the general revenues used to fund various festival expenses. These include but are not limited to promotion, advertising, insurance, new street banners, shuttle service and professional services.

**2. Why was this fee not charged in previous years?**

The Chamber of Commerce underwrote the entire festival and parade and covered the annual shortfall.

**3. What is the long-term plan for funding the Farmington Area Family Fest and does it include increasing or decreasing fees for downtown merchants?**

Through sponsorships, fund-raising efforts and general revenues we hope to keep any and all contributions as low as possible.

**4. Are we being charged \$50 for the entire three days of the festival, or just for Friday, June 23? We have heard that the other two days (Thursday, June 22 and Saturday, June 24) will have concurrent DDA-sponsored events, during which it is our understanding that downtown merchants are entitled to freely display and sell products in front of our shops.**

The special event license issued to the festival for the duration of the week pre-

cludes any other entity from having a special event in the downtown area.

**5. Who is responsible for representing the downtown merchants at the Farmington Area Family Fest planning meetings and what steps has that representative taken to get input from merchants?**

The festival committee has from the start invited any and all merchants interested in participating in the festival to attend any one or all of several organizing meetings that were held. Judy Downey of the DDA is a member of our executive board.

**6. What steps are being taken to assure merchants are adequately informed during this planning process?**

The community was invited to several open forums where all aspects of the festival were discussed and the attendance at these meetings was disappointing. Both newspapers have published several stories regarding the change in festival leadership. We will request that the DDA include any information in their newsletter and are exploring the possibility of putting together a special information flyer for the downtown merchants.

**7. On what specific date will downtown merchants receive promotional literature and signage for the Farmington Area Family Fest to post in our storefront windows as advertising for the festival?**

As soon as the date is identified, the merchants will be notified through one or more of the above methods.

**8. Is the Farmington Area Family Fest intended to be a profit-making venture? If so, how much profit is created and what is that money used for?**

The festival and parade is a non-profit, 501C-3 organization. If any profits are ever realized, they will be re-invested in the festival. Historically speaking, the festival has consistently been a money losing event.

**9. What organization or individual is available to assist us merchants in developing business plans to make our participation in the festival more profitable?**

Mike Watts and Watts Up, Inc. are available for consultation and advice.

**10. Which areas of the downtown do the Farmington Area Family Fest board of directors oversee for the festival, and which areas and activities are privately run (i.e. the Masons and the Methodist Church) in conjunction with your board's operations?**

Under the ordinance passed by the city council, the festival committee oversees any and all festival activities.

**11. What is the selection process/criteria for approving out-of-town vendors to sell items at the festival? What considerations are given to the competition that particular outside vendors bring to established downtown merchants?**

Vendors are selected based on quality and variety through a juried process. Several committee members have attended festivals in other areas to help the selection process.

**12. What are this year's rates for participating in the Founders Day Parade held during the festival?**

Stark referred to information forms that were attached to his responses.

## Festival from page A1

On Friday, Pavlik confirmed that the written response from Stark was received and is being studied before being shared with other members of the association, which re-formed after several years of being dormant.

"He (Stark) has given us something, yes," said Pavlik, who did not want to comment about the festival board's answers until getting the chance to meet with other association members.

FFAF board member Carleigh Flaharty, also president of the Farmington Area Chamber of Commerce, said the letter, signed by Stark, was sent out Thursday to Burns and Pavlik, who volunteered to be the information pipeline to association members.

"I believe they'll be sharing it with their merchants," Flaharty said, adding that Stark and Farmington City Manager Frank Laushoff collaborated on the responses.

A town hall meeting concerning the raft of restructuring-related issues brought up by merchants is expected to be scheduled for sometime in late March, although Flaharty said a meeting hasn't yet been set up. That restructuring, city officials said, was to make the festival financially self-sustaining and more of a regional draw during a time of year when many communities hold such events.

After learning about the fee, which Stark's response said was needed to fund festival expenses such as promotion, insurance and new street banners, several merchants complained about a

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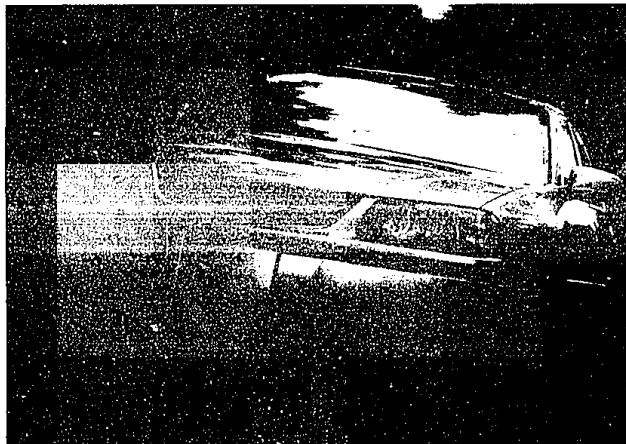
lack of communication and involvement in the festival's restructuring process.

The chamber formerly managed the founders festival until early 1999, when it turned the reins over to Watts-UP Inc. According to Stark's response, the festival consistently was a "money losing event" and that the chamber "covered the annual shortfall."

The letter also said that several open forums were held where "all aspects of the festival were discussed and the attendance at these meetings was disappointing" and that the FFAF has "from the start invited any and all merchants interested in participating... to attend."

Meanwhile, the merchants were informed that the FFAF is a non-profit organization and that "if any profits are ever realized, they will be re-invested in the festival."

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## RECREATION NEWS

### FAMILY NIGHT

Families can enjoy annual free Family Night from 6:30-9:30 p.m. Friday, March 3, at the Costick Activities Center in Farmington Hills. There will be free open swim at 6:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. The stage show at 7 p.m. will be Marc Thomas' "Children's Music Show," and Gordon Russ, the Magician at 8 p.m.

### HOOP CONTEST

Shoot your best shots and become a legend in the Farmington Hills "Hoop" Contest (Comparable to the backyard game "Pig" or "Horse"). The event will take place from 3:30-6 p.m. Saturday, March 4, at the Costick Activities Center in Farmington Hills. The contest ranges from ages 9-11 to 27 and up. The fee is \$7 per person.

Winners will receive an award. Call 473-9570.

### OPEN GYM

The Costick Activities Center Gym in Farmington Hills offers the following activities and times: Adult Basketball, 7:30-9:03 p.m. Thursdays and 9-11 a.m. Sundays; Teen Basketball, 3-5 p.m. Saturdays and 1-3 p.m. Sundays; Adult Volleyball, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Family Gym and Swim, 12:05-3 p.m. Saturdays. The cost to participate for residents 17 and under is \$2 and \$4 for non-residents. For 18 and over residents pay \$3 and non-residents pay \$5. For more information contact the Farmington Hills Department of Special Services at 473-9570.

### PARKEY EASTER

The Parkey Easter Eggstravaganza will be held Saturday, April 15. Activities will include snacks, games, a craft project, storytelling and an Easter Egg Hunt. 3-5 year-olds are scheduled from 10-11:30 a.m. and 6-10 year-olds are scheduled from 12:30-2 p.m. Call 473-9570 for information.

### ROCK CLIMB TRIP

Ages 12 and up can learn how to rock climb with knowledgeable instructors at Planet Rock on Tuesday, March 28. Vans will depart from the Costick Activities Center at 4:30 p.m. and return at 9:15 p.m. The deadline to register is March 17. The fee is \$35 per person. Call 473-9570.

### SKATING TRIP

Ages 12 and up can take a trip to Airborne Skate Park on March 29, leaving the Costick Activities Center at 6 p.m. and returning at 10:30 p.m. The deadline to register is March 17. The fee is \$15 per person who has equipment (helmet, elbow, wrist, and kneepads). The cost is \$24 per person for those without equipment. For more information call the Recreation Division at 473-9570.

### ADULT SOFTBALL

New team registration is currently under way. Call 473-9570.