

Officials close door on special CRUS'N events

BY SUE COBB
STAFF WRITER

Former Pasta Stop owner Roger Ratkowski has a beef with the City of Farmington. Officials have denied four special cruise nights that would begin in Farmington and end in Livonia - June 18, July 9, Aug. 13 and Sept. 10.

"I was disappointed that I was not informed that I was on the agenda so I could answer any of your concerns and I am deeply disappointed in your motion to deny any further support for this event," Ratkowski wrote city manager Vince Pastue in a June 16 letter. Typically Ratkowski, Dennis

Page of Page's Food and Spirits and Darrell Marx of Darrell's Firestone both on Farmington Road, hold CRUS'N the Grand from 5-9 p.m. for 20 Mondays in the summer. Ratkowski closed Pasta Stop on Farmington Road earlier this year because of declining business and health reasons. Shows are held in the municipal lot behind Page's Restaurant.

Ratkowski received permission last year for a special cruise event out of the city to Roush's Auto Museum in Livonia.

He wanted to tie in special cruises to the "Great Race" in Livonia, an event he had pitched to Farmington City Council members earlier this year.

Detractors have said the sponsors only want to promote their own businesses. Bill Laverty, owner of the Magic Brain on Farmington Road, collected the names of about 25 area business people who prefer the event be moved.

They suggested using the Downtown Farmington Center, which could give more exposure to the cars and bring more foot traffic into the center.

Pastue said Ratkowski knew the city wasn't supportive of the special events, even before the official council meeting. "I had a conversation with him ahead of time and I

expressed my reluctance," said Pastue.

He couldn't remember whether he provided Ratkowski with the meeting date.

Both Pastue and Public Safety Director Gary Goss had issues with the special cruises and the additional officers it would require.

"I think of it like a funeral procession," Pastue said, in that officers must just as carefully make sure the cars proceed safely out of the city.

In the future, Pastue hopes any event requests will first go through the Downtown Development Authority.

Last year, the special cruise drew 188 classic cars and there's just not enough room to stage all of them before the cruise starts, Goss said.

He doesn't know why Ratkowski wasn't informed about the agenda item.

All council agendas are posted in the lobby in front of the police desk at Farmington City Hall, he said.

Each special cruise would require a minimum of two or three officers on call back, which amounts to four to six hours of overtime, Goss said.

The cruises also would take place during peak traffic hours of 5-6 p.m. The Department of Public Services would have to provide cones and barricades.

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Living museum

The Our Lady of Sorrows sixth-grade class gave people the chance to meet these famous figures of history through a Living Wax Museum. By tapping these famous people, parents, teachers and guests brought these "figures" to life and learned about their accomplishments. Pictured (left to right) Queen Elizabeth 1st (Andrea Gonsky), Christa McLaughlin (Marie Bergeron), Mary Poppins (Bridget Hickey) and Indira Gandhi (Marissa Martz).

'Hello Dolly' opens June 26 at NFHS

The 9th Annual Farmington School District / Community musical, "Hello Dolly" will be presented 7:30 p.m. June 26-28 and 2 p.m. June 29 at 2:00 p.m. at North Farmington High School. This musical group recently won the Farmington Area Arts Commission 2003 Distinguished Service to the Arts Award. This was presented to three of the directors; Dean Cobb, Sue Cobb and Lucy Koviak, during a tribute held in April. Ticket prices are \$10 adults and \$8 for senior adults and students. All seats are reserved. Tickets will be sold in the front lobby of North Farmington between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. each weekday. Or patrons can call the box office at (248)426-4740 or send an e-mail to sue.cobb@farmington.k12.mi.us requesting tickets.

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