

Fourth Of July Celebration Sparkles With Volunteer Spirit

By BOB McDOWALL

It is a privilege to write this column, and I thank the Chamber of Commerce for letting me tell about the Edmond Fourth of July Celebration.

The idea of Edmond Fourth of July Festivals started very humbly in 1972, during morning coffee conversations at Around the Corner Cafe with Ray Rogers, Mark Winters, A.C. Caplinger, and several others.

These men felt the need to keep families in Edmond and wanted to have parades and fireworks as they had had in their youth - making it truly a memorial celebration.

The hat was passed, and Edmond merchants generously donated towards watermelon and local entertainment at Stephenson Park in 1973. Nearly 1,000 people attended that first year.

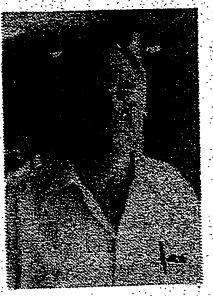
The Festival has remained "free" from its inception and has grown to be one of the largest activities in the Southwest, attracting an estimated 120,000 people.

The trend has been for local residents to invite their families to Edmond so they won't have to be out of town that weekend.

The second year the City of Edmond and Chamber of Commerce got involved. Gwen Springer became active and still serves as our treasurer. Jerry James joined the committee the third year and he still serves as a co-chairman of the parade.

In 1977, the Fourth of July Committee moved from sharing office space with the Chamber of Commerce to holding their meetings at Central State University. In 1983, the Chamber of Commerce, under the leadership of "Mo" Anderson, furnished several volunteers to help in the parade. Dana Hieronymus, the executive officer, helped pull a large balloon.

Also in 1983, the Fourth of July Committee joined the International Festival Association. Paul Kessler and Jerry James attended their convention that year and came back to us with ideas and enthusiasm that we're still using today.

BOB McDOWALL	
Edmond Area Chamber Of Commerce Working For You	

sors and other private donations to complete our constantly growing budget. Central State University and the Edmond School system provide manpower and facilities without which we could not survive.

The past presidents of the Festival Committee have been: Lucy Munford, Mike Stokes, Rob McDowall, Gwen Springer, Joe Chase, Steve Gragg, Gordon Wynn, David Campbell, Jerry James, Gary Shomber, Darrell Gilliland, Mark Winters, Ray Rogers, and A.C. Caplinger.

The Festival Committee is an all-volunteer organization that meets and plans all year long with new and better activities each year. Many plans have already been made for 1989. We always need more helpers so if you want to be part of the planning for the Fourth of July festivities, please join us.

Some of the activities planned for this year are: a street dance, barbecue, and auction to be held at Arcadia Lake on June 30; a rodeo to be held at the Edmond Round-up Rodeo Grounds, July 1-3; a golf tournament at Cedar Valley Golf Course on July 1; a road rally on July 3; a bike tour on July 4; the parade on July 4 followed by park activities and entertainment and fireworks in the evening.

You will find full and complete information on these activities in promotional materials. Come and be a part of this exciting experience in the life of Edmond.

Bob McDowall is a member of