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## Ferndale will welcome thousands for Dream Cruise

By Michael P. McConnell  
Daily Tribune Staff Writer

FERNDALE-- Ferndale organizers say they expect about 60,000 people to visit the city during its portion of this year's Woodward Dream Cruise.

The Ferndale Downtown Development Authority took over the city's organizational control of the event two years ago and has tried to make it more amenable to area businesses, said DDA Executive Director Cristina Sheppard-Decius.

"I think since we've taken this on we have been able to get a better handle on what works best with our businesses," she said.

The Woodward Dream Cruise now attracts more than 1 million people along the 16-mile classic car parade route on Woodward from Ferndale to Pontiac.

The event started in Ferndale with a classic car show organized by Ferndale resident Nelson House back in the early 90s.

Ferndale breaks even on its sales and sponsorships and its \$95,000 budget for the event, Sheppard-Decius said.

Though some Ferndale officials in the past have talked of opting out of the event, the city would still have to pay for the extra police officers it needs for crowd and traffic control during the cruise even if the city hosted no cruise-related events.

This year's 13th annual Ferndale Woodward Dream Cruise & RetroFest will feature a strolling fire eater and juggler, as well as an expanded number of cars in the "Mustang Alley" on East Nine Mile Road.

"It's grown from about 350 Mustangs three years ago to over 500 this year," said Michael Lary, Ferndale's event coordinator for the Woodward Dream Cruise.

"This year we're focusing on trying to have more of a festival feeling along with automotive related

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exhibits," he added.

New this year will be exhibits from the Ferndale Historical Society, a mobile interactive exhibit from the Henry Ford Rouge Plant, a view of the future from engineering students at the University of Detroit-Mercy, and restored classic cars from Detroit Muscle, Lary said.

Other activities from previous years include a classic car show of police and emergency vehicles, The Ferndale Classic Car Show, a Kids Play Zone, the Cruiz'n Food Court and two live entertainment stages on West Nine Mile Road.

"We're the only city that has two stages of live entertainment" during the Woodward Dream Cruise, Lary said.

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