

Fallfest a success despite the rain By Megen Wessel, Times Staff Writer Thursday, October 03, 2002

"We are a little disappointed that we lost Thursday and Friday," said Ronald J. Schroers, chairman of the Fallfest committee and supervisor of recreation and activities for Westminster. "But we needed the rain. And now we're trying to focus on the positive here and are looking forward to next year already."

**This year's Fallfest began with the usual parade, which included a visit of two officials from Westminster's sister city Paide, Estonia.**

"The parade went off fine. We had a little bit of rain at the end, but that's OK," Schroers said.

Then three inches of rain fell on the area Thursday and Friday, forcing the gates to Fallfest to remain closed.

"We feel that we delivered in two ways: we got three inches of rain and three days of the festival," Schroers said with a chuckle.

The festival, which organizers claim is the largest charitable event in the county, began in earnest Saturday.

Schroers said the crowds at Fallfest on Saturday were larger than last year and helped boost the entire event earnings by a half-day.

Proceeds gained by Fallfest are used to offset expenses incurred and any profits are then distributed to local nonprofit charities serving the Westminster area.

Last year, four charities each received \$5,000 checks, the largest amount given by the Fallfest committee in its 24-year history so far.

Schroers said he is unsure how much will be given to this year's selected charities, which include the Carroll County Children's Fund, the Westminster Kiwanis Club, Mission of Mercy and Residents Attacking Drugs.

Meanwhile, the Fallfest committee has already begun to plan next year's event, which will include a few new twists in honor of Fallfest's 25th anniversary, Schroers said.

Some new possibilities for the event will be a black tie fund-raising event in February and a larger than usual parade the weekend before Fallfest begins.

"We're thinking big for next year, the parade could be a two-hour thing," Schroers said.

Charity checks will be presented during the Westminster City Council's Nov. 11 meeting at City Hall.