

## Viva!Vienna and Festivals

VH: Do you know how Viva Vienna got started?

JS: Yes. The Chamber of Commerce. Bob Dicks. I don't know if he was president of the Chamber of Commerce. He decided that we needed a festival. At that time, it was a one-day festival and hugely successful. It remained like that. I don't know when it went to two days. But then it got too much for the Chamber to do, to handle. It went to a committee of us. I was on the committee that ran Viva Vienna for a while. And then the Rotary Club decided to take it over. I'm a member of the Rotary Club, so of course I'm still active in Viva Vienna. Oh let me think. I think one time we—I have written down someplace when it started. Maybe 35 years? I don't know. I shouldn't say. But I have it down some place.

VH: Do you remember the first one? What it was like?

JS: Oh I do. It was exciting because it was a carnival-type thing. And always before, the Little League had had a carnival to raise money. They always had it up in the Giant parking lot. That was before Outback or anything. That was the money-raiser for Little League. Then it moved down to where Viva Vienna still is now, and Little League still ran it. Eventually the Chamber took it over. I don't know whether there were vendors that first year. I'm sure there was food. It was mostly the carnival rides.

CG: So I'm guessing you and your children went down that first day and rode those rides?

JS: The kids were so excited, so excited. And you know, Vienna was such a safe place that you could just drop them off. They could either walk home or...and of course that was before cell phones, but you could say 'Ok, I'll meet you at such-and-such a place at such-and-such a time' and you'd pick them up and bring them home. I never worried about them. Never, ever worried about them.

CG: Do you recall how big that first Viva was?

JS: Well it seemed big. It was probably just the carnival. It was in the very same spot where it is now.

CG: All the town members went?

JS: Oh it was packed, of course.

CG: Vienna holds other events as well—the Fourth of July fireworks, Viva obviously too...

JS: Right. Oktoberfest. We love festivals. Stroll on Church Street that we have in the winter. We love festivals. I love closing down streets so people have to get out of their car and enjoy. We actually closed part of Maple Avenue for the Madison Homecoming Parade on a Friday afternoon. I said, 'you know what, parades are great. These are kids. Just get out of your car, in twenty minutes it'll be over with.'

CG: I actually attended Madison, so we were very thankful for that.

JS: It's a neat thing, yeah.

VH: Do you have a favorite story from any of those festivals?

JS: Oh golly. Well, the last Oktoberfest I went to, I forgot—I didn't take any ID. They said I couldn't buy any beer without ID.

CG: Oh no!

JS: I'm like 'Please, please!'

VH: And the Mayor card didn't work?

JS: Just silly things like that. I mean, I know that they have rules to follow but I was like 'Oh, why did I forget that?' It's a real tradition for our family, our whole family, to get together for the Fourth of July. I usually have a picnic here, then we go up and watch the fireworks.