

Late start didn't dim the pleasure of Begonia parade

Commonwealth Land and Title's entry — War Bonnet and Peace Pipe — was the grand prize winner Sunday afternoon in the Capitola National Begonia Festival Nautical parade.

Delayed more than 20 minutes from its scheduled 2 p.m. starting time because of an electrical transformer fire that plunged most of Capitola village into darkness shortly after midnight Sunday morning, the parade was viewed by more than 15,000 spectators when it finally started.

Eighteen floats were built this year by business and community groups, but the village blackout at midnight Sunday stopped all work on the huge barges until dawn. Festival officials decided to delay the parade starting time so that all floats could be completed.

Power was restored by PG&E crews in the river front area shortly after noon Sunday.

Commonwealth's winning entry was a giant Indian head with war bonnet and peace pipe, covered by thousands of red, yellow and white begonias picked by volunteers at Brown Bulb Ranch begonia gardens in Marina.

First place in the group division went to the Depot Hill Athletic and Drinking Society's "Cattle Boat," a recreation of an old-time cattle boat with dozens of frantically moo-ing cows drifting down the creek. Second place was awarded to Jojo Urbancic and the Kids for their "Rockin' Horse." Third place went to the Santa Cruz Office of Education for its covered wagon bearing the slogan "Capitola or Bust."

In the commercial division "Yosemite Sam," built by David Lyng and Asso-

ciates, was the first place winner.

Second place went to Mervyn's Dept. Store for its "Dance Hall Girls." Third place went to a "Cowboy in a Balloon" created by the Kaleidoscope children's toy store.

The Mayor's Trophy was given this year to Cathedralite Domes for their "Chuckwagon." The President's Trophy went to the Felton Empire Winery for "Mad Duck Goes Western," and the prize for the best first-time entry was given this year to Zelda's Restaurant for their "Damsels in Distress."

The blackout occurred at 12:05 a.m. Sunday when an underground electrical transformer on Stockton Avenue, between Capitola and Riverview Avenues, erupted into flames.

Investigation later showed that the fire apparently started when damaged insulation on the transformer's lead-in cables caused a short circuit.

The accident blacked out more of the Capitola Village area, with power restored on the east side of Stockton Avenue several hours later.

But it wasn't until after noon, less than an hour before the scheduled start of the Nautical Parade, that power was turned back on in the residential area west of Stockton Avenue, including the riverbank construction areas.

In the meantime Sunday morning, Festival officials arranged, first with the owners of The Copa wine bar and then with the Venetian Motel, to borrow enough electricity to power the festival's public address system, and the amplifiers for the Clean Machine band.

The Venetian Motel was contacted after a second

power outage blacked out the businesses along The Esplanade at 11 a.m., leaving the Venetian Motel — 300 feet away — as the only nearby source of PG&E-supplied power.

Orchard Supply Hardware and building contractor Larry Gordon both made portable generators available as a last resort source of electricity during the parade.

Judging also took place Sunday in the Home and Commercial Decorating Contest.

The Grand Sweepstakes prize went to the Fanmar Fanatics, 310 Fanmar Way, for the "Blues Brothers singing 'Rawhide'." In the Commercial Division, Aries Art, 201 Capitola Ave., was named first with their rendition of "Gilley's Saloon" in Houston.

Second place in the division went to Duke's Deli, 110 Stockton Ave., with its "Hanging Tree." Third place was awarded to Chameleon Design, 107 Capitola Ave., for their "Cowboy Hat."

In the Home division, Kris Macdonald, 417 Riverview Ave., took first place with an old-time saloon.

Second place went to Linda Bjornson and friends at 311 Riverview Ave., for an old cow pony "Heading for the Last Roundup."

Third place in the division went to the Woodside Family and their friends, 317 Riverview Ave., for "Old Paint" also heading for the last roundup.

REFERENC

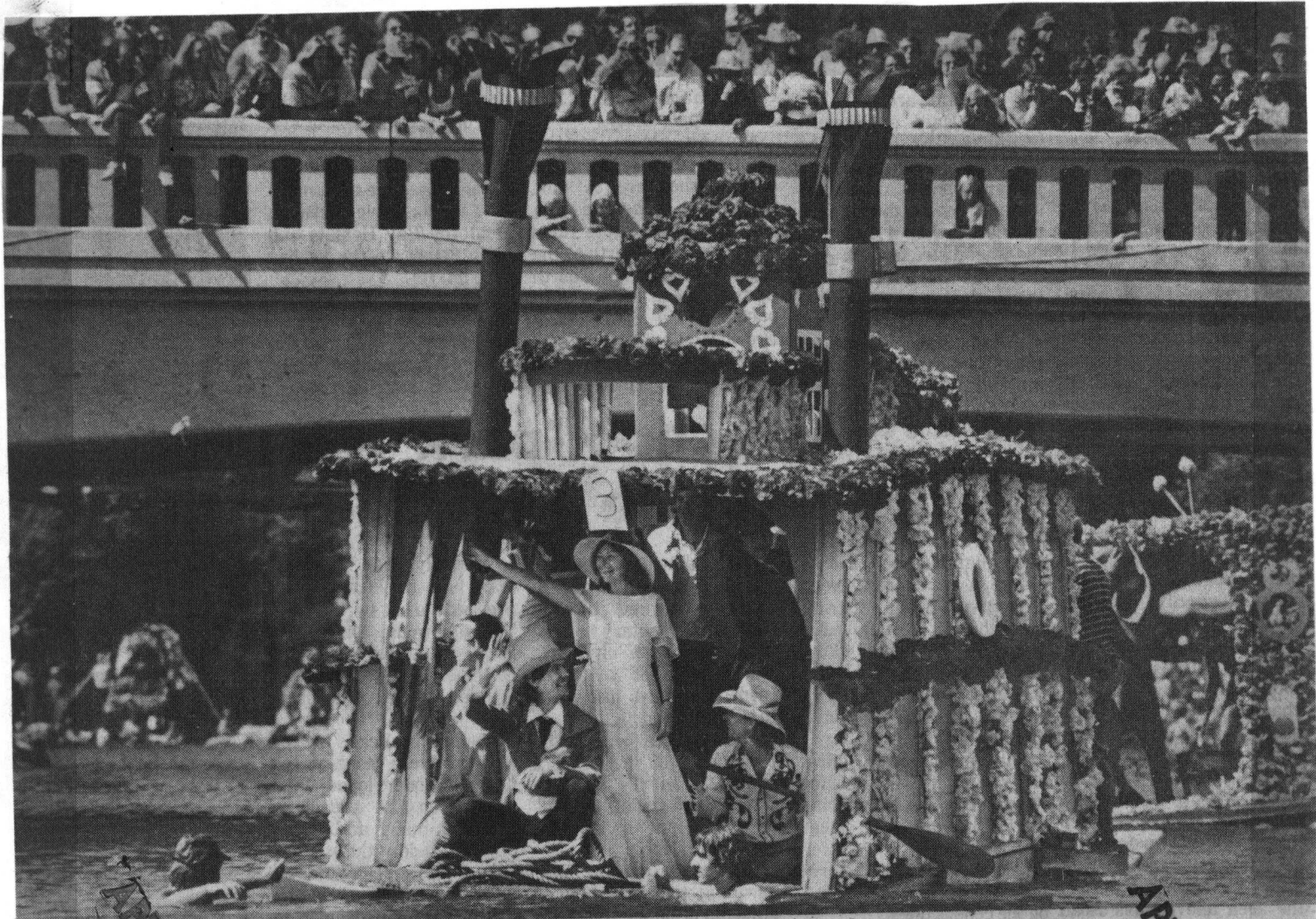
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The Hanging Tree won a second place ribbon.

Photo by Kurt Ellison



The River Boat cruised down Soquel Creek Sunday.

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