

The long weekend will wrap up Monday with a few more activities for festival-goers, including a fishing derby on Capitola Wharf beginning at 6 a.m., a children's art event in Esplanade Park at 11 a.m., and rowboat races on Soquel Creek at 1 p.m.

Come Tuesday, the festival will add the finishing touch to a collection of memories to a summer that felt like it has flown by.

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For information about the Capitola Begonia Festival, visit www.begoniafestival.com.



Alanna Anderson/Register-Pajaronian

ABOVE: Festival-goers line the balconies of Capitola businesses during Capitola Begonia Festival's 2008 nautical parade as the floats end their trip down Soquel Creek in the lagoon. **BELOW:** The makers of the "We All Live in a Yellow Submarine" float (shown) wave to the crowd during the 2008 nautical parade as the float passes under a bridge into Soquel Creek's lagoon.

Begonia Festival offers fun as summer ends

By ALANNA ANDERSON
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A frenzied energy seems to fill the air around Labor Day weekend, as if the holiday itself smacks people in the face with the reminder that the carefree days of summer are coming to a close and fall is right around the corner.

Crowds rush to the stores for last minute back-to-school shopping and to take advantage of Labor Day sales. A shortage in meat hits many grocery stores as people spend Labor Day, if not the entire weekend, barbecuing. And a never-ending sea of colorful umbrellas lines the beaches, regardless of the weather, as many spend the weekend lounging in the sun one more time before heading back to work or school the Tuesday after.

Capitola has its own long-standing end-of-summer celebration. Every year, thousands of begonias in vibrant reds, pale yellows, shades of pink and other colors fill Capitola Village during in the Capitola Begonia Festival.

The festival unofficially began in 1952 with a few floats decorated with begonias; however, it didn't become known as the Capitola Begonia Festival until 1954. The popular event, now in its 57th year, has gradually become what it is today, with activities spread out over three days.

Festivities kick off Friday with the movie "Chicken Run" shown on the beach beginning at dusk. This family-friendly movie is free and open to the public. People planning to attend are invited to bring a picnic dinner, low-back beach chairs, and blankets and jackets for the cool evenings. Free popcorn will be provided.



Activities will start back up bright and early Saturday with a sand sculpture contest on Capitola Beach. Registration begins at 8 a.m. Participants will have a few hours to construct their works of sand art before judging, which is scheduled to begin at noon. Contest winners will be awarded trophies.

From 4-7 p.m., the public will have the opportunity to meet Ruth Korch, the artist of this year's festival poster, at Pacific Gallery on 321 Capitola Ave. Selected pieces of her art will be on display in the gallery.

Other activities Saturday in-

clude a concert in Esplanade Park from 4-6 p.m., featuring The Houserockers; the movie "Superman" shown on the beach at dusk; and an opportunity to watch the floats take shape as participants construct their floats out of begonias from 4-10 p.m.

On Sunday at 8 a.m., horseshoe fans can compete in a doubles tournament on the beach, while children will be invited to create chalk-art masterpieces on the seawall starting at 9 a.m. The band Mike Hadley and the Groove will wrap up the day with a concert at Esplanade Park after the parade. Shortly before the pa-

rade, boxes of cut begonia flowers will fill Esplanade Park for people to use to decorate their hair, hats, sunglasses and whatever else comes to mind.

The festival will come to a culmination Sunday afternoon with the nautical parade. At 1 p.m., nine floats constructed mainly of chicken wire and begonias and reflecting this year's theme, "Capitola Takes Flight," will make their way down Soquel Creek, starting at the Stockton Bridge and ending in the lagoon at the beginning of Capitola Beach.

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