

# 'Down home' time in Aptos

By BILL AKERS

As if on orders from the Aptos Ladies Tuesday Evening Society, the morning fog lifted and a warm sun beamed down on the several thousand people who gathered to watch the Fourth of July parade in Aptos Village — an event that has managed to maintain its strictly home-town flavor over the past 20 years.

After the parade — which is the "world's shortest parade" in name only, for it went on for more than an hour — a good share of the crowd found its way to Aptos Village park to munch on funnel cakes, skewered sausage, hot dogs, hamburgers, watermelon and home-made pie and slurp snow cones, beer and other assorted thirst

quencher. And there were games — shoe kicking, sack races, watermelon eating and peanut pushing — for kids and adults to play.

It was, in short, the same kind of folksy Fourth of July celebration the Aptos Ladies have been putting on, and the natives and the tourists have been enjoying, for the past two decades.

The "First Lady" of the Aptos Ladies, Lucile Aldrich, put the parade crowd at 8,000 and said it was the "biggest ever." It was also, she said, the most orderly and happiest crowd in memory, and there were no incidents of an untoward nature to report.

The parade was also the biggest ever, with double the number of vehicles of

last year, she said, and with the usual array of kids, pets, families, horses, formal and informal community groups that moved at a snail's pace from Rancho del Mar to Aptos Village Park. Also on hand, as scruffy and boisterous as ever, was E Clampus Vitus, whose members were encamped by the Bay View Hotel and who, by parade time, had a full head of steam up. It was the Clampers who kept the parade down to a slow walk, but no one was in a hurry as paraders and spectators exchanged pleasantries as family and friends passed by.

Aptos Village was awash with people before, during and after the parade as Terry George and his orchestra serenaded from the porch of the Village Fair and members of the antique car clubs held tailgate parties in the Aptos Station parking lot.

Parade judging was done in the park after the parade, and when it was over the following winners were declared:

—OLD FASHIONED COSTUME: Maria Grant, first; Don and Beverly Sircable and family, second; and Ann Isaacs, third.

—PETS: Chuck and Robyn Pickens (bird); Christy Burroughs and friends (dogs in pantaloons); and Pammy Goff (dog.)

—HORSES: Betty Emmons, ("Miss Liberty" on a Lippanzer); Frank Lamoly (Appaloosa stallion); and Fred Engel, (whose mount was uncharitably listed as a "flea-bitten grey.")

—GROUP: Liberty Twins, Jennifer Sohl and Amie Walton; Day Valley 4-H; and the Aptos Chicks.

The Liberty Twins' parade triumph turned to tears in the day's only mishap. As the two young girls were driving their miniature car down the road into the park, the wheels caught in the loose gravel and the driver lost control. This caused the car to go under a fence and roll down a four-foot bank, throwing the girls out.

The Aptos Fire Department's paramedics were summoned and it was determined there were no apparent serious injuries beyond a possible broken finger. As a precaution, Miss Walton was taken to Dominican Hospital where she was treated and released.

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A wiggly worm charmed them in Aptos.

Photos by Kurt Ellison