

BEGONIA

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This year's festival features 12 different events, including a sand-sculpture contest, two movies and a fishing derby, in addition to art contests for kids and concerts featuring Mike Hadley and the Groove and The Houserockers.

"We say the event is for children of all ages," Banks said. "It's a really great family event. We really want to give back to the community and to the different families and friends that support the community."

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The 58th annual Capitola Begonia Festival will begin at dusk on Sept. 3 with a screening of "Beach Blanket Bingo" and will run through Sept. 6. For information, visit www.begoniafestival.com.



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian file

Huge crowds commonly gather along Soquel Creek in Capitola Village for the 2009 Begonia Festival. This year's parade takes place Sept. 3.

Capitola gets ready to bloom

Begonia Festival Preparations under way for 58th annual Begonia Festival *R P 8-24-10*

By TODD GUILD

OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

To be sure she gets a riverside seat for the nautical parade at the Capitola Begonia Festival every year, Aptos resident Jan Seibert said she arrives at the beach hours before the flower-bedecked boats come floating by.

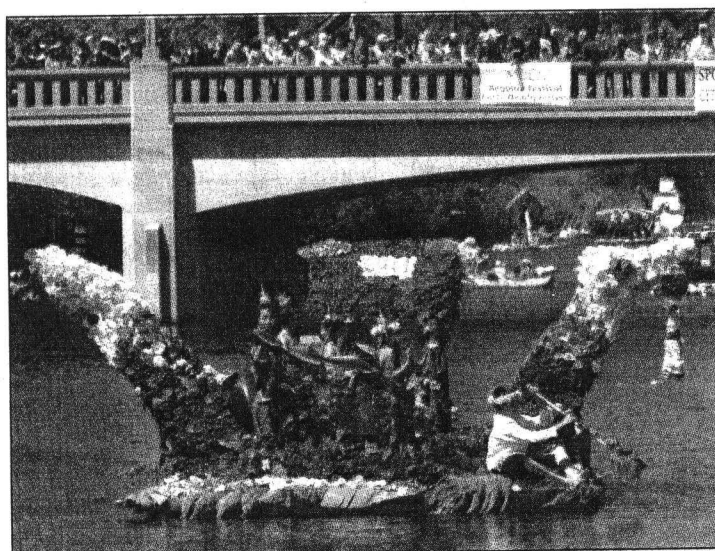
Seibert, along with her three children, sets up a blanket at the mouth of the river on Capitola Beach and makes a day out of the event, playing Frisbee with her family and swimming until thousands of people pack the beach with their towels to await the parade.

Seibert, 35, said she's been coming to the Begonia Festival since she was in elementary school and has made coming to see the parade a family tradition.

"It wouldn't be summer without the festival," she said.

Now in its 58th year, the Capitola Begonia Festival is expected to draw 30,000 people to the four-day event that helps cap the end of the tourism season in a town that bills itself as a summer destination.

The festival is highlighted by the nautical parade, which this year will feature



This begonia dragon float was created by the staff at My Thai Beach, a Thai restaurant in Capitola, for the 2009 Begonia Festival.

Tarmo Hannula
Register-Pajaronian

11 floats, each one festooned with thousands of begonias.

The parade draws crowds that not only fill the beach, but pile on Stockton bridge and sit atop the nearby train trestle to catch a glimpse of the multicolored spectacle.

The town has been named by Sunset

magazine as one of "our favorite beach towns" and one of the 20 best small western towns.

"The Begonia Festival is uniquely Capitola," festival president Lin Banks said.

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