

COWBOY BOOTS AND COUNTRY ROOTS

# Fair & Flawless

COUNTY FAIR STARTS ON A STRONG AND DELICIOUS NOTE



Laura Rider passes out pie slices to the audience watching the apple pie contest judging Tuesday at the Santa Cruz County Fair.

DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

By SHANNA MCCORD

smccord@santacruzsentinel.com

WATSONVILLE — Seabright resident Samantha Geston had never attended a fair before Tuesday's opening day of the 128th annual Santa Cruz County Fair, where she and her 3-year-old daughter Cecilia took a front row seat for the pig races.

"I wanted her to have the experience of the atmosphere, the colors, the animals," Geston said. "It's one of those memories all people deserve to have."

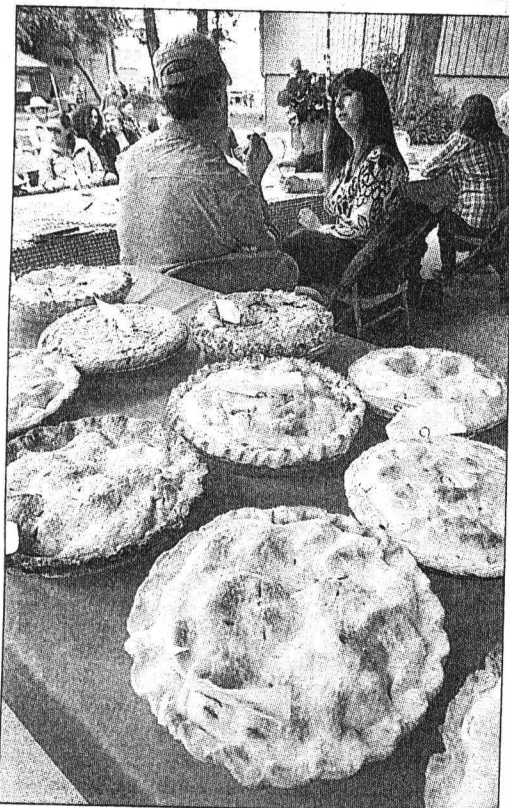
While the All-Alaskan pig races drew an audience of 100 to watch the little guys run around a dirt track, the rest of the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds just outside Watsonville was packed with classic fair events — funnel cakes, corn dogs, farm animals, pony rides, carnival games, music, art and crafts.

This year's theme is "Cowboy Boots and Country Roots," depicted in the fair poster by a father and son in cowboy hats walking hand in hand next to a little girl reaching up to grab some balloons from a man on a horse.

The weekday crowd was thinner than the thousands expected to show up Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Fair spokesman Steve Stagnaro said the six-day fair, which ends Sunday, will draw

SEE FAIR ON A2



Apple pies wait to be judged at the Santa Cruz County Fair Tuesday.

DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

## IF YOU GO

SANTA CRUZ  
COUNTY FAIR

**WHEN:** Through  
Sunday

**WHERE:** 2601 E. Lake

Ave., Watsonville

**HOURS:** Noon-11 p.m.

Wednesday through

Friday; 10 a.m.-10 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday

**COST:** Ages 13-61

\$10; Ages 6-12 \$5;

Kids 5 and under free;

Over 62 \$8; Parking \$5

## SHOWS

**WHEN:** Begin at  
7:30 p.m. on the  
Amphitheater Stage

**WEDNESDAY:** Keith  
Anderson

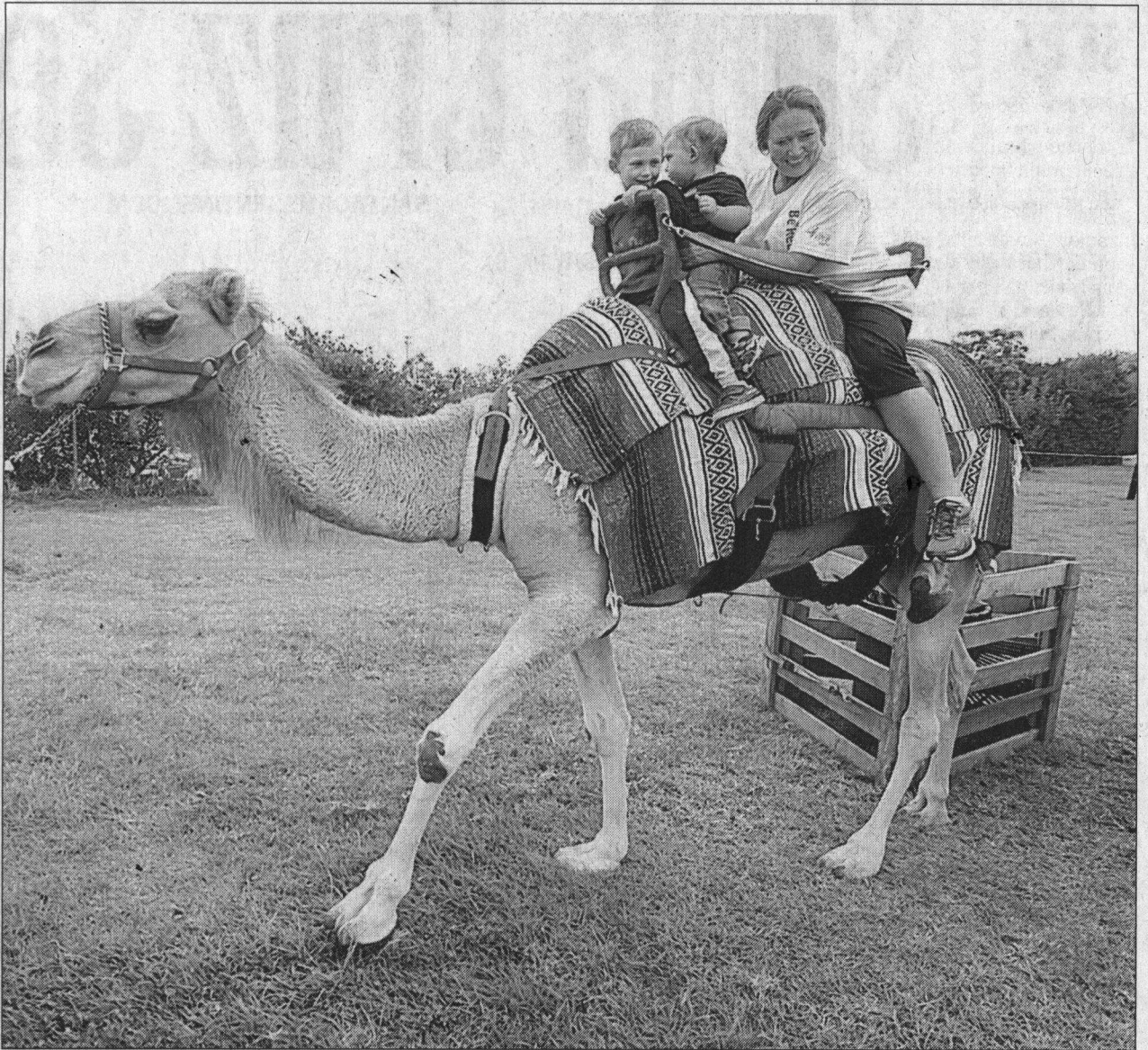
**THURSDAY:** Antsy  
McClain and the Trailer  
Park Troubadours

**FRIDAY:** Caravanserai  
— the Santana Tribute

**SATURDAY:** Frankie  
Ballard

**SUNDAY:** Pro  
Wrestling Revolution





DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

Joshuah Tonozi and Beckett Burrue of Santa Cruz ride a camel with their grandmother, Rebecca Schell, on Tuesday at the Santa Cruz County Fair.

## FAIR

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approximately 60,000, not including the local elementary students who attend Education Day on Wednesday and Thursday with their classes.

The fair is a yearly tradition not to be missed by the Skelton family of Watsonville.

Annie Skelton, her husband, three children and mother-in-law spent time on Tuesday hanging out in the livestock arena and small animal barn, where they visited with a mother goat and her three babies.

Skelton said her sons, ages 7 and 4, especially enjoyed the Lego display in the JJ Crosetti Building.

Her 1-year-old daughter rode a pony for the first time.

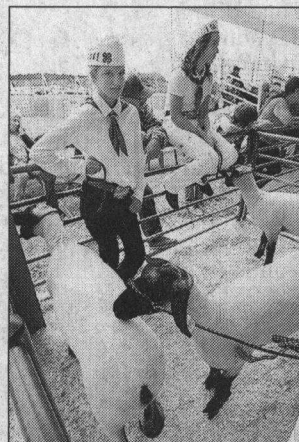
"We mostly love the animals and the displays," Skelton said. "We come every year, a couple of times. We can't stay away."

David Curtis and Linda Huffman ate from paper plates spilling over with tri-tip, beans, garlic bread and salad. For \$14, Curtis said the high-quality food was a good deal.

Curtis, a Watsonville resident, is a fair fan for the relaxed atmosphere and opportunity to see things out of the ordinary.

"Everything here is fun," he said. "We just walk through the midway and look at things. I like seeing all the people."

Huffman said the fair marks a change in the seasons.



DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

Julia Schmida of Corralitos and Delani Gross of Hollister wait to enter the judging ring with their market sheep Tuesday at the Santa Cruz County Fair.

"It's celebrating autumn for me. It's a cozy thing to do before winter," she said. "It

takes me back to my childhood. I know that sounds corny."

A big draw for many fairgoers is the collection of arts and crafts on display by local residents.

Yvonne McClish of Felton sat inside the Harvest Building with a group of friends demonstrating how to braid a rug with recycled coats and wool blankets.

McClish is a member of the Home Arts class at the Scotts Valley Seniors Center.

"It's just fun to see something made out of old blankets. They wear forever," she said. "We do these demonstrations so maybe somebody else will want to do it."

Follow Sentinel reporter Shanna McCord at [Twitter.com/scnews-mom](https://twitter.com/scnews-mom)