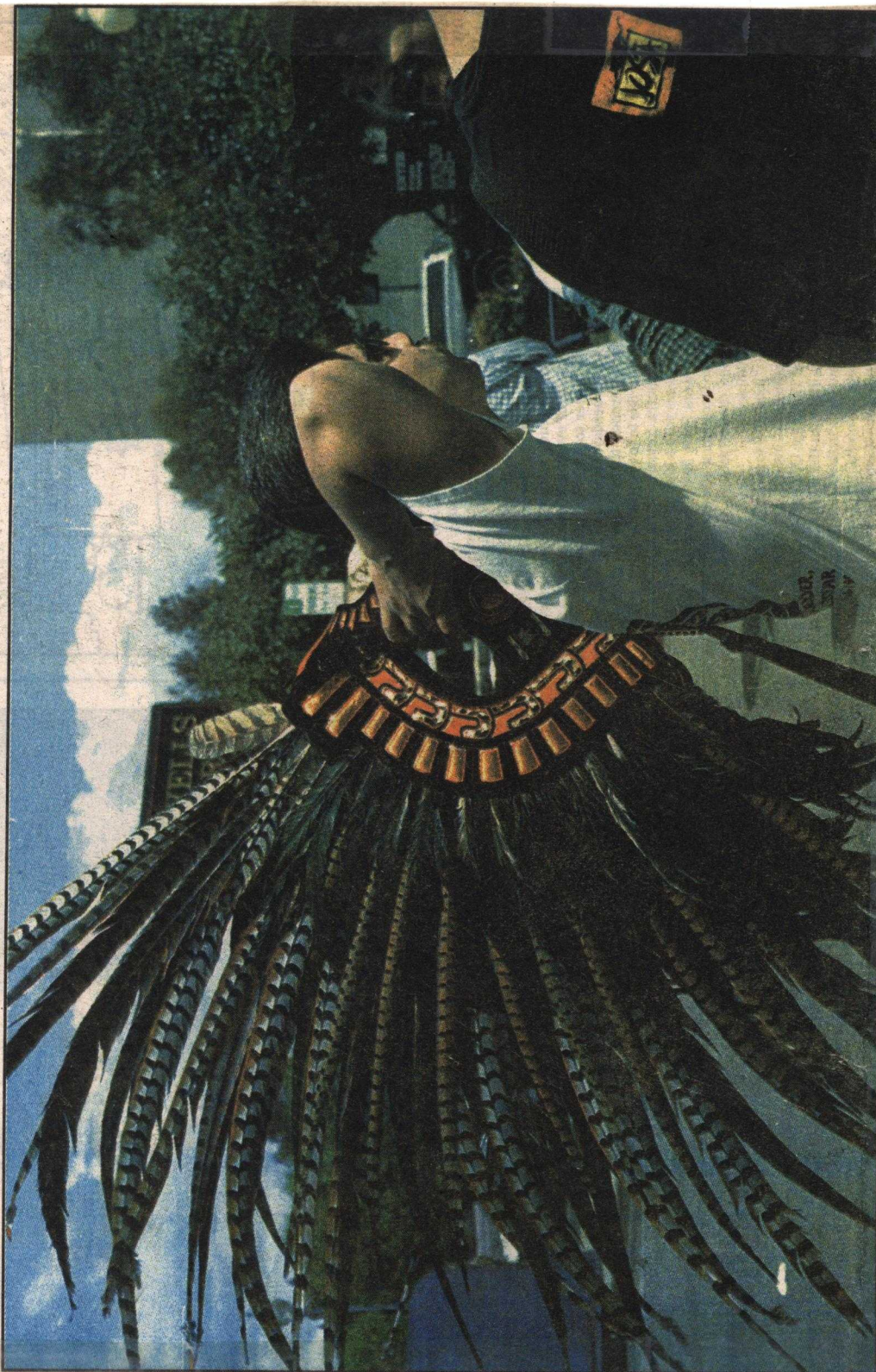


1990-2000

Cinco de Mayo fest draws thousands



White Hawk dancer Martin Jimenez balances a feather headdress he wears during performances. More photos — Page 6.

Family friendly party unites community at plaza

By DAVID PACINI
STAFF WRITER

WATSONVILLE — Close to 10,000 celebrants converged on the Watsonville Plaza for a Cinco de Mayo block party that included live bands, food booths, and plenty of games and rides for kids.

A large stage spanned Main Street at East Beach Street, upon

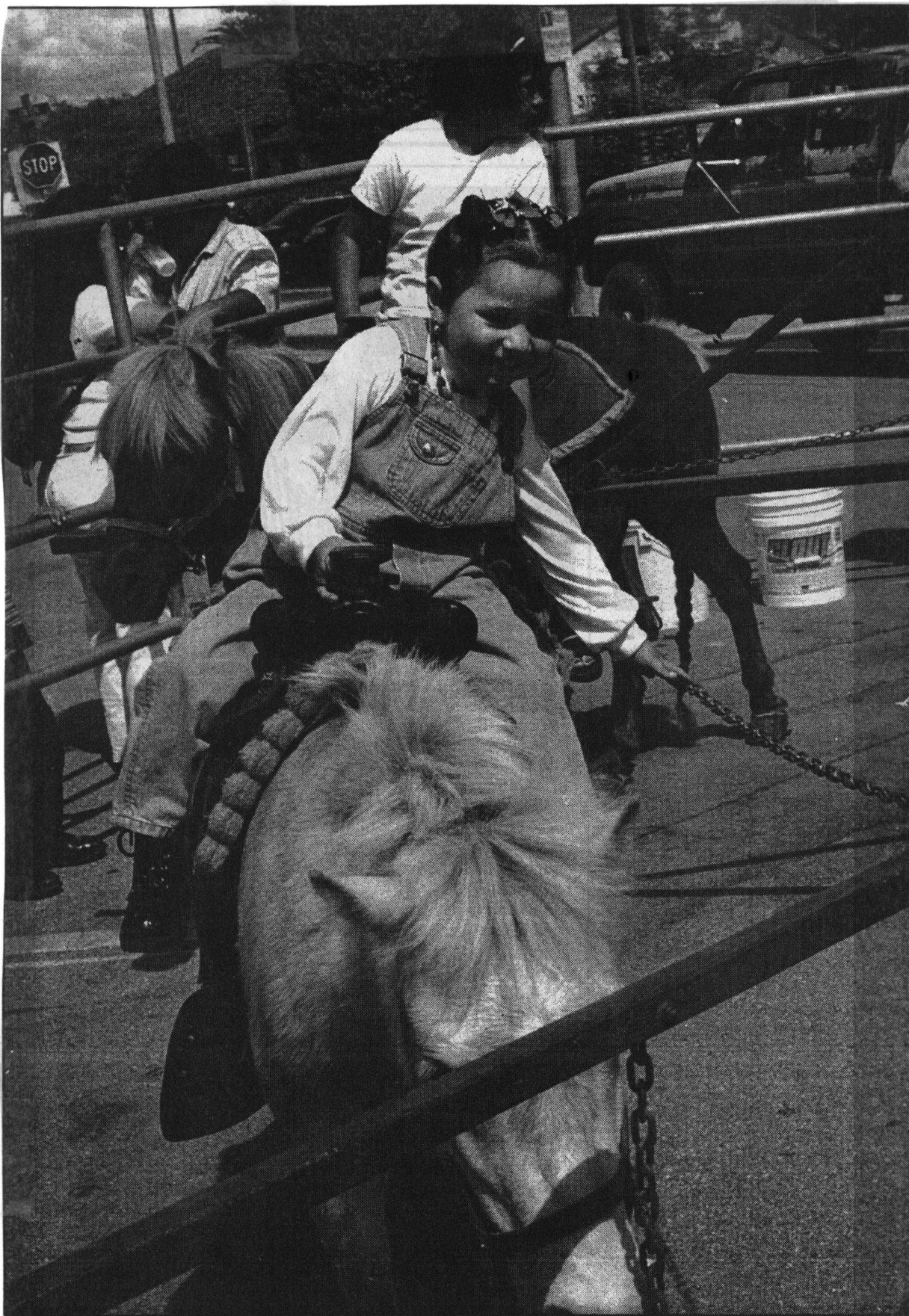
which a procession of performance groups dazzled the large crowd with a range of dances and popular music styles. Longtime Watsonville favorites Ballet Folklorico-Los Mexicas, Mariachi de Eleazar Cortes, and the White Hawk Dancers were joined by Los Angeles import Quinto Sol, a rock and "barrio roots" group that was a hit with the many

teenagers in the crowd.

About 15 food booths offered the festival-goers their choice of delicacies from countries including El Salvador, Mexico, and the United States. Ice cream vendors were mobbed by children, eager for cool treats under the mostly sunny skies.

Emcees made bilingual public service announcements during the

performance breaks, urging the crowd to vote no on Proposition 227 and to register to vote. In addition, a number of community service booths offered information about a range of subjects, from becoming a citizen to how to get information on choosing a electricity provider.



A pony ride delighted this young girl on Peck Street.

FESTIVAL

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The many children at the festival were entertained by "funhouses," filled with air for their astro-jumping pleasure, face painting by Marylou Alejo and Georgina Maldonado, and balloon artists who made animal figures and hats in abundance.

They also enjoyed pony rides and arts and craft activities set up at booths throughout the plaza.

The alcohol-free event found families lounging on the park's grass, visiting with friends, and watching their children playing.

Others shopped in the area's stores and strolled on the downtown streets, greeting acquaintances and friends.

Celia Rosales and Enrique Andrade make a good match as they watch Quinto Sol perform.

**Photos by
David Pacini**



Edgar Resendis, (from left), Sami Baldivia, Levi Baldivia, and Andrew Canales, members of The Jokers soccer team, do battle with balloons at the festivities.

Cinco de Mayo

Quinto Sol, musicians from the Los Angeles area, belt out barrio roots and rock music.

