

# Beach Street fans are cruisin' for another Revival 9/19/85

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IN THOSE days, Beach Street wasn't one-way and Pacific Avenue wasn't a garden mall. There weren't any such things as garden malls, at least not in small California towns where the street was the scene and the All-American sport going down was called *cruisin'*.

In those days a Honda wasn't a luxury sedan, but a 50-cc motor scooter made mostly of plastic. Volkswagens had begun showing up on U.S. highways, multiplying, well, like beatles — but still, everyone knew that when it came to making cars, Detroit was the place.

The '50s and '60s marked the coming-of-age era for all the duck tailers, bobbie soxers and greasers with the pack of Marlboros rolled into the sleeve of their t-shirts. The era of teen dreams, of teen style, of teen freedom, all rolled up into one convenient symbol: the auto-mobile.

Some of the hot rods may have baby seats instead of rumble seats these days, but the era will be nostalgically remembered and enthusiastically relived when the Beach Street Revival returns this weekend.

Sponsors of the Holiday Inn-based event, now in its eighth year, are expecting some 400 cars and some

20,000 people for the three days of jitterbugging, car shows, old costumes, trivia contests, rallies, submarine races and who knows what else?

The rock 'n' rollers of the past may have become the bankers, lawyers, dentists and insurance agents of the present, but they keep showing up from various spots in the U.S. for this quasi-historical event.

"They come basically to go back in time," said registration director Bobbie Nelson, "not to get drunk and go crazy."

Along with festival director Doug Martine, Nelson outlined the schedule for this year's event. Based at the Holiday Inn, things got under way this afternoon with registration and a pool party, followed by a spoli party for the "survivors" who were in Santa Cruz during the era in question.

The daytime focus of the event Saturday and Sunday will be the outdoor "festival," complete with lots of food and information booths (ranging from car care products to Mothers Against Drunk Driving) and almost 400 cherried-out vehicles. It begins at 11 a.m. in San Lorenzo Park and the adjacent benchlands.

A "Summer's End Poker Rally" runs from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., beginning at the Holiday Inn. In the event, competitors drive from one checkpoint to another, getting a playing

card at each stop and trying to come up with the best poker hand. Saturday's program also includes an all-day model car contest and display, an afternoon bikini contest and an awards banquet beginning at 7:30 p.m.

A group of young ladies from Turlock who call themselves the Backstage Dance Company, doing the jitterbug, twist and other rituals of the times. The car from the film "Bonnie and Clyde" — a '34 Ford given the Swiss cheese treatment — should be an attention-getter among the other displays.

As in the past, the Coconut Grove will be the main site of evening activities — a sock hop beginning at 9 p.m. tonight, and a costume ball featuring the band Shaboom, beginning at 9:30 Saturday evening.

To avoid some of the impromptu street racing by non-participants which coincided with some Revivals of the past, the Revivalists will be leaving their exotic machinery in the County Center parking lot Saturday night. They'll be going to the Coconut Grove via a shuttle bus.

The festival concludes at 4 p.m. Sunday with another awards presentation, this one honoring everything from the Best Corvette to the best fat fenders.

Admission is free to all the San Lorenzo Park events. More information and dance tickets are avail-

able from the Great Reinero's Shirt Factory, 218 Riverside Ave., 426-9181 or 425-9888.

**H**OT-RODDERS may have been born to be wild, but most have grown up to be responsible — and to favor milder pleasures of the "good clean fun" variety. The highway patrol will have a booth at the festival, as will Mothers Against Drunk Drivers.

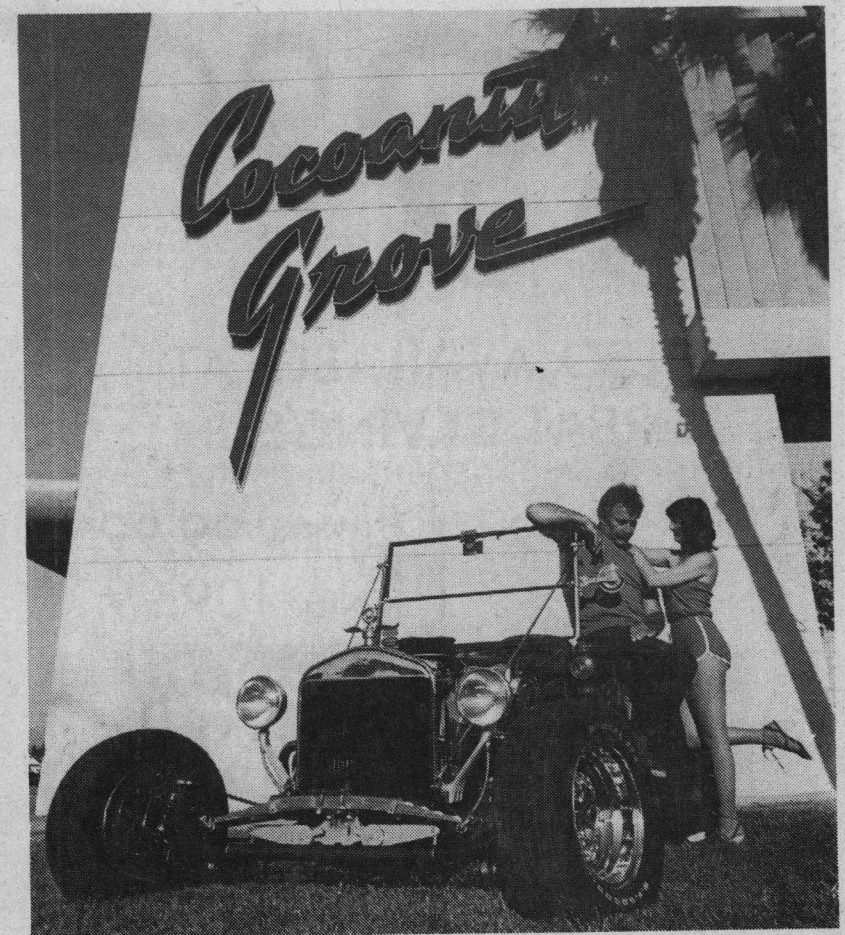
But, just as the times have changed, that era has taken on a luster, a patina that just keeps getting better.

"I can't explain the feeling," said Nelson, "but when you're cruising it doesn't matter how many kids you have, what your problems are, whatever. It just makes you want to go, 'yahoo!' You feel like there's a reason for living."

The feeling comes from putting on the old clothes — the poodle skirts, the leather jackets, the t-shirts, the bobbie socks, she went on. "It comes from seeing the old faces, even if there are a few new wrinkles."

Like Martine, she is one of the "survivors." They're the ones who remember Santa Cruz, the way it used to be. Along with preserving and driving the cars — an activity which falls somewhere between a hobby and an obsession, depending

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Dan Coyro/Sentinel File

Rick Petersen and Toni Little strike a cool pose.

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on whom you're talking to — remembering the good old days is what the Beach Street bunch is all about.

It's remembering the way everyone cruised on Pacific Avenue through the winter, then the boys dumped their local honeys and moved down to Beach Street to meet "foreign girls." It's remembering when "Woolworths was a three-way stop where you'd find out where the parties were," said Nelson.

Actually, cruising itself was sort of partying without ever leaving your car, explained Martine. Social engagement took place through the car window. All it took to "change party situations" was just a little touch of the toe to the accelerator.

Bonesio's Liquors was the "turn-around spot" at one end of Pacific;

no one quite remembers how you turned around at the other. The coolest spot to be was in front of what is now the Cooper House, just watching it all go by.

"If you were going to a movie or something, you just plan to cruise for an hour first," recalled Martine.

Or else, maybe it would be four girls. "If each one put a quarter in, you'd have enough to cruise for a long time in a Volkswagen," said Nelson.

"People still cruise," she continued. "It's a definite problem all over the state. In Los Gatos if you go up and down three times, you're in trouble. But it doesn't mean the same thing now. Everything was smaller then. Kids today are looking for something to do when they cruised; when we cruised, we were doing it."