



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel file photo

Monterey Bay Sanctuary and all its uses will be celebrated this weekend.

'Oceanfest' celebration kicks off for weekend at Capitola Theater

Concerts, clowns, lectures celebrate bay, theater's 50th birthday

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CAPITOLA — Theater lovers on Friday ventured to bring the outdoors into the spotlight.

The Capitola Theater kicked off their first weekend hosting the Oceanfest Sanctuary Celebration conference, complete with a free lecture series on ocean issues, sidewalk clowns and night concerts. It is part of the theater's celebration of its 50th birthday.

But turnout was minimal for the first day of the multi-media event.

"It's tough to get crowds to sit inside on a day like this," said John Robinson, spokesman for Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuary, who was among the roster of guest

speakers at the weekend event.

Robinson answered questions from audience members after a slide show and speech on sanctuary issues and challenges to protection of the Monterey bay area.

"This is sort of the grit that is necessary to make something succeed and to keep going at a high production," said Mark Hager, technical director for the theater.

Those who attended said they were pleased with the presentation, however.

"They gave a fine slide presentation and talked about the history of the sanctuary and current conditions of it," said Kim Blake of Capitola. "What a treasure it was and it's a free lecture."

"We offer things that aren't available at other stage spaces," Hager said. "We're try-

ing to create a venue for that in Santa Cruz that is lacking."

Oceanfest is part of a five-week run of conferences held in conjunction with concert entertainment.

"We just threw a hat in a ring and we're doing what we can to create a venue not just for theater, but the environmental industry," said Dan Young, a spokesman for the event.

The conference continues today at the theater with more guest speakers from associations including Save our Shores, Surfrider Foundation and the Pelagic Shark Research Foundation. Lectures times are at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.

Evening concerts start at 8 p.m. and are \$10 at the door.