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(Sentinel Photo by Bill Lovejoy)

Begonias galore, but Christie Schmidt was a real bloomer Sunday.

Begonia Festival

# About 15,000 At Begonia Event Sunday

By PAUL BEATTY  
Sentinel Staff Writer

It was a mellow crowd of about 15,000 visitors and townspeople who stood on the Capitola Bridge and lined Soquel Creek to watch a begonia-ed bi-plane and a be-flowered Sun Tan Special sail into a tie for the Grand Sweepstakes in Capitola's Begonia Festival Sunday (see more photos on Page 10).

Under cleared skies from Saturday's early rain, the pleasant crowd jammed the oceanside streets of the town, cramming themselves with traditional junk food and causing no more problem than a few parking tickets and a couple of lost kids.

The winning floats making the afternoon excursion were Depot Hill Association's bi-plane with the youngest pilot in three counties, and Wooden Expressions' Sun Tan Special, equipped with steam, smoke and all the sounds of a passenger train.

Winning first in group category was Jo Jo and the Gang with a representation of Capitola in the good old days, which included a replica of the downtown hotel and six sister buildings along the Esplanade.

Second went to Howard Carr's "high wheeler," and third to the McLean-Gray family for their "popcorn vendor."

Artes Arts won first in commercial with its rendition of "juke box Saturday night," and a first time entry by Dominican

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Hospital, appropriately called "Florence Nightingale," floated away with second place.

Third went to Eric's Deli that turned out Cross-eyed Charley's stagecoach.

The \$150 Winning Sweepstakes prize will be split between Depot Hill Association and Wooden Expressions, Dianne Graves, festival coordinator, said today.

Home and Commercial Decoration winners were John Fitzpatrick and Linda Bjordson in the homes category, and followed by Jack Dunn and Demit and Kelly families.

Commercial decorations went to Dales Fine Pastry, French Kiss Boutique and Cornucopia.

The county's free beach shuttle bus was a lifesaver in keeping hundreds of the cars parked outside the cities' crowded streets and its work was aided by Eureka Federal Savings two-decker London bus.

A British couple commented about the two-decker, "Isn't that a familiar sight . . . but in the north district, the doors are at the rear."

Lines of children and their young parents waited patiently for ice-cream cones from a local shop—one of the few in the town that remained open during the parade in the early afternoon.

Capitola Police Officer James Bates told the press, "It's about the same size crowd as last year, and it's a real nice crowd—there's been no trouble at all."

One out-of-town couple arrived late and missed the floats, but were in time to see the human necklace that sat upon the undergirders of the Capitola trestle begin to leave their perches.

"What in the world is going on?" they asked and were told, "You just missed the Silver Anniversary of the Capitola Begonia Festival—come back next year."

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