

Fourth Of July

Will This Year Be Last Aptos Parade?

By DON RIGHETTI
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"This might be the last parade, the last tango in Aptos."

It was the crestfallen comment of Lucile Aldrich, head lady of the Aptos Ladies Tuesday Evening Society.

Size—bigness—is killing the Ladies' Annual Fourth of July parade.

The Ladies started the Fourth of July Picnic, Parade and Games Day 15 years ago just for the fun of it. But it has gotten so big it has become more work than fun, Aldrich advised.

Over the years, the celebration has grown from one that attracted a few dozen people — about the population of Aptos at that time—to one which draws hundreds of local people and far-flung visitors as well.

"Some of the Aptos Ladies ascribe the dirt and litter along the parade route to out-of-town visitors," Aldrich said. "Although we have a lot of visitors, it's basically a hometown function. Evidently, the new generation of Aptos homeowners hasn't been here long enough to develop an old fashioned hometown sense of what's right."

"Some of the Ladies feel that some of the people moving here from San Jose and other places just haven't learned what it is to cooperate in a community."

She noted that even the coun-

ty supervisors had taken notice of what a mess the parade route was last year. And the supervisors reacted by making permission to hold the parade contingent on adequate cleanup of the route after the parade.

"This is a recent phenomenon," Aldrich said, "and one which may well spell the end of the Fourth of July Picnic, Parade and Games Day."

She said the Ladies simply can't do it all by themselves anymore.

"If some organizations or individuals want to step forward to help the Ladies," she said, "then the Ladies will become heartened and look forward to putting on a parade next year."

In addition to assistance in cleaning the trash up from the parade route, the Ladies need help: preventing kids from climbing onto the roofs of buildings to watch the parade, preventing people from throwing firecrackers into the parade, watching out for the theft of American flags and other decorations from buildings, Aldrich said. Additionally, she said, help is needed in crowd control, keeping cars out of the parade antique auto parking area, putting up microphones and loudspeaking systems "and just helping hands in general."

"So far, we've had only one couple offer its services," Aldrich said.

"The ranks of the Aptos

Ladies Tuesday Evening Society have been decimated over the years by death and by those who have moved away.

"Although every lady living in Aptos nominally is a member of the group, not every lady knows it."

"So, hopefully, some of these ladies will come forth and offer help from themselves or members of their families by calling me, Lucile Aldrich, at 688-2428."

"The Aptos Ladies will not decide until after this year's parade whether it will continue in the future, but on July 7 at 7:30 p.m. in the Aptos Library, the Ladies will show movies of the first parades and the last three or four. It's entirely possible this is the last time the Aptos Ladies Tuesday Evening Society parade will be seen."