

Flowers 8/13/90
A festival atmosphere



Mike McCollum

Florist Lezlie Reynolds shows how to trim and arrange dried flowers for head-pieces and bouquets.

Event showcases Pajaro Valley flowers

By LARAMIE TREVINO
STAFF WRITER

Sunshine, music, flowers and plenty of learning opportunities drew moderate crowds to the Pajaro Valley Flower Festival in downtown Watsonville over the weekend.

With rapt faces, people stood several rows deep before horticulture demonstrations and flower displays, picking up bits of knowledge imparted by industry experts.

For example, yesterday, florist Lezlie Reynolds, from A Flower

For All Reasons in Santa Cruz, used a Swiss army knife to show about a dozen onlookers how to trim and tuck dried-flower bouquets at an arrangement exhibit.

"Always strip as much as you can," she said.

"You have to learn the subtleties," Reynolds told a questioner wanting to know what helps a person master the art of flower arranging. Reynolds explained that a sprig of baby's breath, for example, like all flowers, has a front side and a

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back side. Knowing which is which helps the arranger find the most visually pleasing way to show a display, she said.

Billed as a showcase for the valley's \$44 million crop, the flower festival was held on the 200 and 300 blocks of downtown Watsonville Saturday and yesterday. Paid admission was estimated at 1,500 Saturday, but final figures for the festival weren't available. About 1,000 people lined Main Street yes-

terday afternoon for the hourlong parade. The festival was co-sponsored by the Watsonville Area Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture and the Watsonville Recreation Department.

Festival committee chairman Dave Vanni said 4,000 paid admissions would put organizers at the break-even point. Entering the display areas cost \$5 for adults.

Among Saturday's festival goers was a contingent from

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Chico, who along with other visitors, read about the event in Sunset Magazine, Vanni said.

A resident of Gilroy and long-time volunteer at the Gilroy Garlic Festival, Vanni ventured a comparison between Watsonville's fledgling festival and the internationally renowned garlic extravaganza.

"This being the first year — we're doing a whole lot better than the garlic festival did," Vanni said.

Just as garlic chefs share their recipes, cut-flower representatives provided their prescriptions for keeping cut blooms fresh. One of the more popular stops was a display showing how cut roses fare in different solutions. Those relying on plain Pajaro Valley well water sported droopy necks, while those that took five aspirins in their water looked fresh.

"What I recommend is Seven-Up," the ubiquitous Vanni, also a leading rose grower, suggested to onlookers. Even when roses are put in water, Vanni explained, they won't take it in unless a preservative is added to keep the stems from sealing up.

While expert information was available to those seeking it,

more than a few people wondered why more flowers weren't displayed.

"Everybody that comes to me asks, where are all the flowers?" said Sgt. Jim Ihlen of the Watsonville Police Department.

From his vantage point in the middle of the exhibit area, Ihlen had a clear view of the handful of flower stalls amid the crafts and food booths.

Both days, officials reported orderly crowds. No major mishaps were reported to the American Red Cross tent, where three cases of blistered feet were the most serious ills presented to volunteer Pam Waddell, who sat facing the main stage.

The main stage was the scene for one of Sunday's highlights, a sizzling performance of well-known musical hits of the 1960s by the Shirelles.

Re-creations of "Going to the Chapel," "Soldier Boy," "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?" and other hits prompted the multi-generational crowd to sway and reminisce.

Among the fans was a young couple whose 7-year-old son and 19-month-old triplets represented the third generation enjoying Shirelles sounds.

"My mom used to listen to them so I grew up listening to them," said Miriam Valadez of Watsonville.

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Flower Festival



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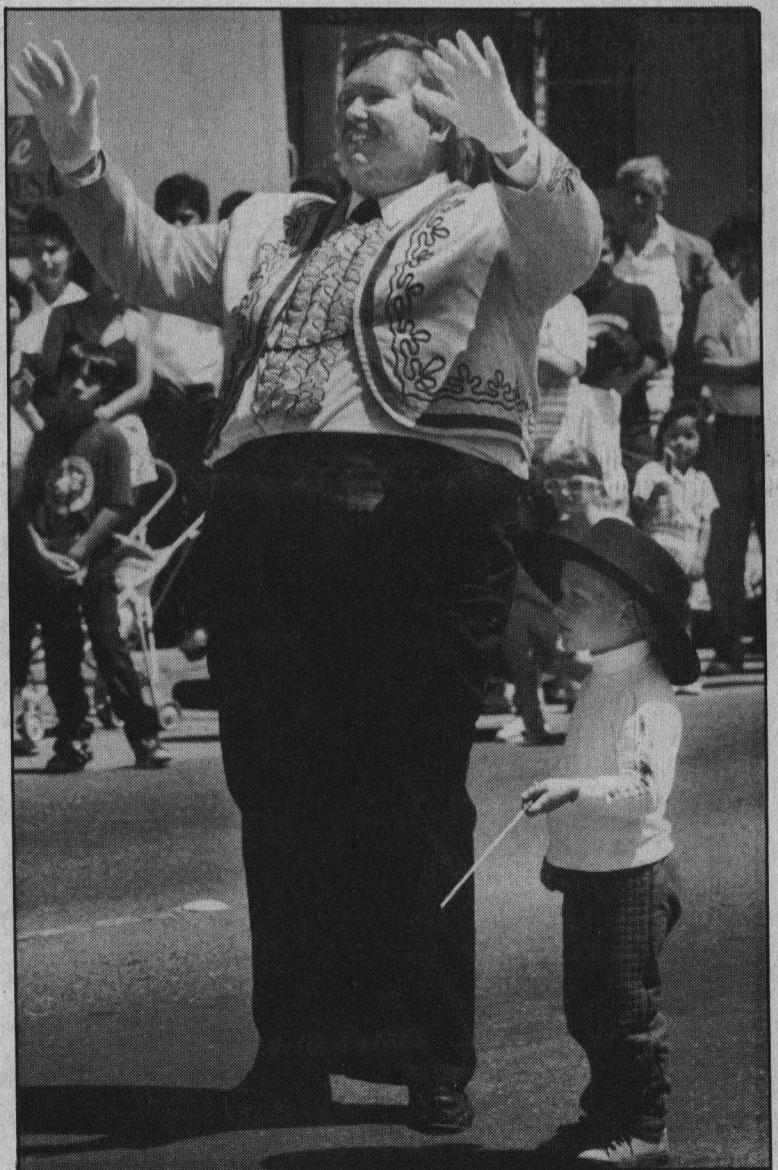
David and Juanita Camacho of Watsonville brought their six children to watch the parade,

from left, Monica, 9, Lúcia, 11, Paul, 4, David Jr., 6, Jose, 12, and Elizabeth, 8.



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Vanila Helm of Pacific Grove was among the visitors interested in flowers.



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Gene Smith of the Watsonville Band gets a little help during yesterday's parade from 3-year-old Kenny Kelly of Watsonville.