



Brenda Sondgroth of San Juan Bautista displays her bunnies within a patriotic framework Saturday at the Santa Cruz County Fair, which ends tonight. Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel photos

# Last chance

## Santa Cruz County Fair wraps up tonight



By LIZ KELLAR  
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

Fairs

It was all things cute and cuddly at the Junior Fair Board Small Animal Barn Saturday afternoon. Drove of children and their parents made their way through the exhibit at the Santa Cruz County Fair to ooh and aah over chicks, piglets and goats.

"I like the bunnies the best because they're so cute," said Aneesa Indindoli, 6, of Gilroy. Her favorite, she said, was the "fat gray one."

Aneesa's father, Tony, said her first introduction to livestock did not go well. He said he held her up to get an up-close-and-personal look at a hog. Her reaction was far from enthusiastic. Ever since then, he says, she has called the annual event the "pig fair."

Down the path at the livestock arena, the harsh reality of the junior livestock auction is under way.

Here, the pigs and lambs these 4-H club members have spent months raising are going up for bid in front of a cheering audience. Sunday, the winning bidders will pick up their animals and take them to slaughter.

As the auctioneer's warp-speed pater wound down, Alyssa Bartlebaugh's 122-pound lamb sold for \$3 a pound. Bartlebaugh, 15, is a member of Corralitos 4-H. She is also showing her horses this year.

"This lamb wasn't that well-made," she said ruefully, explaining the judges look for good conformation, meaning less fat and more muscle.

She says she is used to sending her lambs to slaughter by now; this is her sixth year of competition.

"My first year I was really upset," she said.

She said she's happy other people will buy her lamb to eat, but she can't stand to eat something she raises.

"It grosses me out," she said.

Many of the 4-H members were donating a portion of the sale of their animals to the families of New York City firefighters killed in Tuesday's terrorist attacks. By mid-day Saturday, they had raised over \$1,200. At least two youths pledged to donate 100 percent of their proceeds.

A group of 15 guide-dogs-in-training and their handlers was an unusual addition to the crowd of fairgoers making their way through the livestock barns.

The black and yellow Labrador retrievers were training to become guide dogs for the blind, said Michael Conrad of Guide Dogs For the Blind Inc.

"The fair is a perfect opportunity for an outing," he said. "There are lots of



A competitor in the hunter division of dressage clears a hurdle during the horse show at the fair Saturday.

distractions — the noise, the smells, the people, the animals. At this one site you can encounter almost anything a blind person would encounter."

The handlers, from groups in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties and Tri-Valley Guide Dogs, train puppies beginning at 8 weeks old. Conrad said the training, which takes about a year, can cost about \$50,000.

The dogs eventually took refuge in the relative quietness of Paddy Smith Park, where a recreation of an Indian village had been set up. They lolled in the shade, perking up only with the prospect of fresh water.

The village, with four teepees, recreated Indian life in the 1830s, complete

with a trader and an Indian woman stirring a pot over the campfire.

The woman in question calls herself Bunny Hugger — real name Mayme Cerini. She is part of the Oregon Territory Living History Association, a group of re-enactors who ply their trade at fairs, schools, summer camps and church assemblies. They make pots, weave pine-needle baskets, and hold traditional dances to show a vanished way of life.

"If we don't teach our children, the culture will be lost," said Gwen Mitchell, who goes by "Finds Her Way." She said almost all of the members in the group have Native American blood.

## If you go

**WHEN:** 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. today.

**TICKETS:** \$6 adults, \$4 seniors and children ages 5-11.

**LOCATION:** Santa Cruz County Fairground, 2601 E. Lake Ave., Watsonville.

**SPECIAL EVENTS:** Extreme Sports shows at 1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Cook's Racing Pigs at 11 a.m., 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. The Coasters play at 6:30 p.m.

One who doesn't is Bunny Hugger's husband, Darryl. As an Irish-Italian, his role is that of nomadic trader. His moniker is Dancing Frog. Why is a complicated tale involving broken legs, scrub boards, and dancing in circles.

"The ambiance of this fair, the people who've come through here have been excellent," he said. "It's been a privilege to be here."

The compliment was returned by Garrett Torres, 11, of Corralitos, who pronounced the encampment "cool."

"It would be neat to have a little teepee in the back yard," he said.

"I'll have to put that on my list," said his dad, Mark.

Contact Liz Kellar at  
lkellar@santa-cruz.com.

## Pie time

SENTINEL STAFF REPORT

WATSONVILLE — The Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau called it the first ever Day-Old Apple Pie Baking Contest.

Judging for the farm bureau's 24th annual pie contest was scheduled to take place Tuesday at the Santa Cruz County Fair, but was postponed one day.

Judges said the pies were just as good Wednesday. The winners in each division remain on display through today in the Crosetti Building at the fairgrounds.

Winners in the junior division are: first place, Logan Estrada; second place, Lindsay Pavlovich; third place, Kayce Pavlovich.

Winners in the senior division are: first place, Patricia Doler; second place, Sara Karn; third place, Scott Covington.

Winners in the masters division are: first place, Devin Kasunich, who also won Best of Show; second place, Maggie Kasunich; third place, Keena Kasunich.