

## ANNUAL SHOW

# Car fans gear up for Woodies

More than 200 vintage woodie cars will flock to Santa Cruz wharf Saturday

By LUKE BARNES

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SANTA CRUZ — More than 200 vintage woodie cars will flock to the Santa Cruz wharf Saturday for the 19th annual Woodies on the Wharf event:

"It's probably the most beautiful place in the world to have a woodie car show," said Rowland Baker, one of the founding members of Santa Cruz Woodies. "You'll never find it anywhere else."

Baker bought his own woodie back in 1988 — a '49 Dodge 700. "It was pretty worked, the dash was rough, and it had no seats but it did have a new paint job."

"I can tease my friends because they can go out and buy parts with a credit card," he said, since parts for the Dodge are rare in comparison to other woodie models. During the years Baker drove the car, he gradually fixed it up.

Yet Baker would never consider any other car, and after working with his family to fix it up, the Dodge has taken on a life of its own.

"When you work together building something there's a bond so it's a part of the family," Baker said.

Don Iglesias, owner of a 1949 Mercury and one of the original members of Santa Cruz Woodies, agrees wholeheartedly: "We've had that thing since '91. All cars become part



BILL LOVEJOY/SENTINEL FILE

A pair of old-timers bask in the morning sun at Woodies on the Wharf in 2012.

of the family and it would be inconceivable to get rid of it."

Iglesias said that the relationship between woodies owners and wharf merchants has blossomed over the years.

"In the beginning the merchants were worried, but right after the first years they knew and we knew," he said. "Originally, it was about the cars, but over time it's become about the people of Santa Cruz."

Baker agrees, estimating that overall the event brings roughly \$600,000 to the Santa Cruz economy over the weekend.

"The history of woodies and surfing goes back to the 1950s when people were looking for a cheap means of transportation," Iglesias said. "It was

a motel on wheels for a lot of people in the early days."

Iglesias' passion for the cars, however, is more personal.

"My folks had a '51 Ford wagon and I remember being a kid in the back of that traveling," he said.

When Iglesias' mother got Alzheimer's at 87, he took her for a drive in his woodie from

San Francisco to Santa Cruz, like they used to do as a family in the Ford station wagon.

"The smile on her face was priceless," Iglesias said. "It reminded us of a simpler time."

## IF YOU GO

### WOODIES ON THE WHARF

**WHAT:** A car show at Santa Cruz wharf with more than 200 pre-1960s 'woodies', with music, raffle and food. Free bike valet and entry.

**WHEN:** Saturday, June 22, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**WHERE:** Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf

**DETAILS:** <http://www.ittybittyurl.com/1K8s>

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