

Hocus Pocus Park breaks ground in SV

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SCOTTS VALLEY — Dignitaries turned the first shovel of dirt Tuesday at Hocus Pocus Park, honoring a man whose gift of laughter made him a local institution.

Scotts Valley's newest park is named for longtime resident Carl Hansen, who not only made children laugh as Hocus Pocus the clown, but also made them smile as the first Kris Kringle at the old Santa's Village along Highway 17.

"He would have loved this," said Florene Hansen, standing in for her husband at the park's dedication. Carl Hansen, 91, suffers Alzheimer's disease and lives in a home in Saratoga.

His namesake park, which stretches from Whispering Pines Drive around the new Valley Commons subdivision to Lundy Lane, is expected to cost about \$225,000, according to Conrad Sudduth, the city's recreation division manager.

Phase 1, along Whispering Pines Drive, is expected to be completed in about three months. It will in-

clude benches, a picnic area and a full basketball court.

Construction on Phase 2, along Lundy Lane, will begin after the nearby sewer plant expansion project is completed next fall. That phase will include a play area, swings, pavilion and restrooms.

"There's really not anything at this end of town for the kids," said Sudduth. "The seniors (at nearby mobile-home parks) wanted things at the park for their grandkids."

A tearful Mrs. Hansen said she was happy the community had chosen this way to honor her husband, who not only entertained local children, but also those who watched his longtime television show on Channel 11.

The city plans to erect a plaque explaining the man behind the clown face, and it may feature one of Mrs. Hansen's favorite photographs, which she calls "My Three Husbands." It depicts Hansen, as well as his Hocus Pocus and Kris Kringle alter egos.