

ART AND WINE

Events

Festival 'a big reunion' for community

Scotts Valley event combines wine, beer, crafts and music

By Jessica A. York

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SCOTTS VALLEY » Deborah "Zip" Destein and Rick Meyers of La Selva sat at the 15th annual Scotts Valley Art and Wine Festival on Sunday, absorbing the music, sun and cool breeze.

The two — each with a small friendly dog at their side — said they attended both days of the annual event in support of musician friends like harmonica player Ken Kraft, and could not help appreciating the venue as well.

"The ambiance is great," Meyers said. "There's lots of nice crafts here. This morning I bought some lawn ornaments. The prices are right, too."

Destein said this was their first time attending the event and that the park was "so pretty."

"They've got pleasant people, and it's so easy to park. And it's pet-friendly," Destein said, nodding at the dogs.

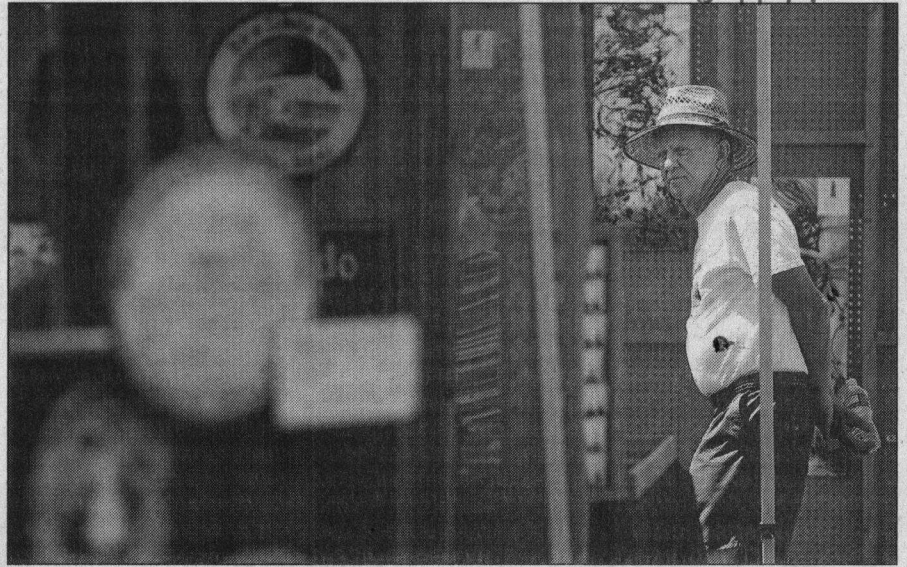
Scotts Valley Chamber of Commerce board member Farah Theissen said festival attendance appeared within reach of last year's estimated 7,000 visitors.

Slightly less than 1,000 vendors set up at this year's event, accompanied by 13 wineries and several beermakers, she said.

"What's so great about this event is we're really supporting the community," Theissen said. "It's all local and there's a lot of consistency from year to year. It's kind of like a big Scotts Valley reunion every year."

Theissen said adding beer booths in recent years to the strictly wine-centric event was a concession to the variety of festival attendees.

"Here up in the mountains, everybody loves their beer, and we want to reach out to everybody,"



PHOTOS BY KEVIN JOHNSON — SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL

David Deboer walks amongst vendor booths at the 15th annual Scotts Valley Art and Wine Festival at Skypark on Sunday.

Theissen said.

Jim Nieters, who lives just down the street from the festival, met up with his daughter Emily Nieters, friend Heather Orr of Felton, and large Goldendoodle, Darby. Glass of wine in hand, Nieters said he purchases one significant item each year at the festival. Plus, he gets a chance to supplement his Santa Cruz-oriented wine collection with new local wineries discovered at the event.

"I love all the artists. You see such great hand-painted work here," Nieters said.

Down the aisle from Nieters, the Valley Churches United Missions set up a fishing booth for children, offering a chance to "Buy your bait here, \$3." Year-old Asa Aumentado of Santa Cruz wielded a fishing rod with the help of his dad, Dave Aumentado.

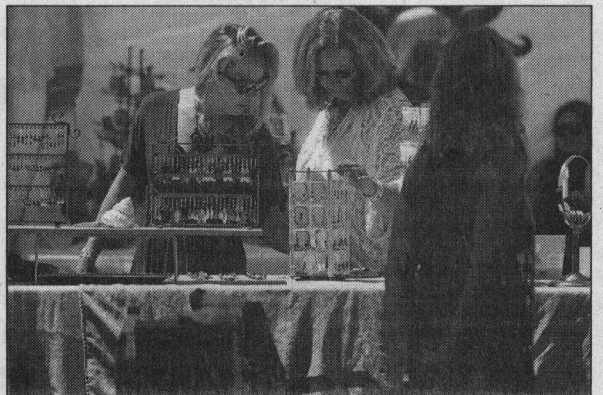
The two caught a box of toys, attached to the fishing line by a booth volunteer behind a hanging sheet.

"We're just looking for family activities," Aumentado said of coming to the event, while Asa's mom was hunting for hand-crafted earrings nearby.

Santa Cruz vendor Mary Hammond sat in a tent draped with "wearable fiber art" pieces, in her



Kaiju, a 10-month-old Swedish Mountain Dog, barks at string puppets as he walks through the annual Scotts Valley Art and Wine Festival on Sunday.



Shoppers browse through jewelry and other items at the 15th annual Scotts Valley Art and Wine Festival on Sunday at Skypark.

sixth year at the festival. The items, she said, have uses ranging from scarves to drapes and are created using a fabric stabilizer. Hammond said when she began creating her pieces, people were less likely to

spend on art. Things have improved, though, she said.

"I started out with yarn scarves. (But) I wanted to do something unique," Hammond said. "For me, it's filled up my walls."