

*'It's a visual event that young people can participate in, otherwise the community becomes without soul, without animation.'*

RICCARDO GAUDINO, CO-CHAIR, TEAM SANTA CRUZ OF COMMUNITY TEAM BUILDERS

## Return of the Venetian boat parade



Homer Lighthall is the sailor behind the pelican mask and next to the flying pig Sunday as he and other sailors paraded from the harbor to the wharf. Dan Coyro/Sentinel photos

### Meant to boost local businesses, event goes largely unnoticed

SENTINEL STAFF REPORT

Decorated boats in a "practice" water parade sailed past the surfers in the crowded Cold Water Classic competition on Sunday, then disappeared into the fog.

**SANTA CRUZ**  
Riccardo Gaudino climbed aboard the Catherina at the Santa Cruz Small Craft Harbor, excited about bringing back the historic Venetian Water Carnival of 1905 to celebrate 100 years of Santa Cruz beaches.

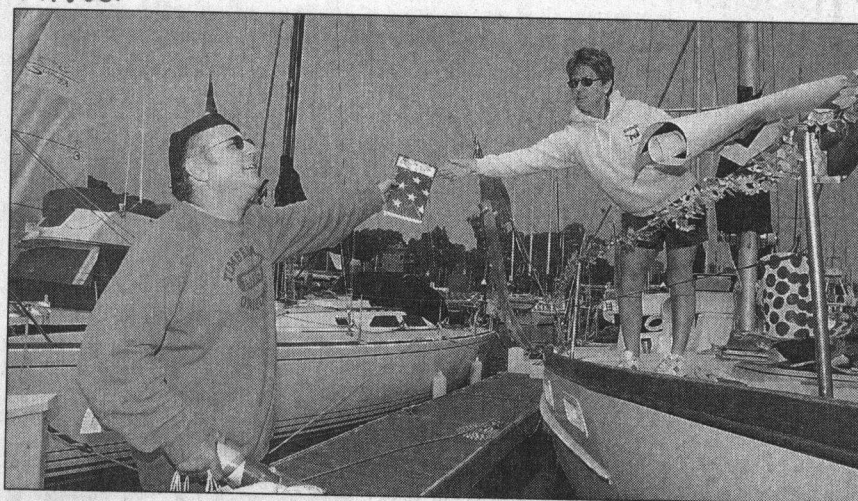
Gaudino, a Watsonville resident and co-chair of Team Santa Cruz of Community Team Builders, said he wants to bring back the community event to Santa Cruz to boost local business during the month of October. He also wants to expose local youths to a part of Santa Cruz history.

"It's a visual event that young people can participate in, otherwise the community becomes without soul, without animation," he said.

However, his vision fell short as the six boats sailed by the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf and area businesses saw no jump in sales.

Marilyn Ray, manager at Miramar fish grotto, said nobody at her restaurant knew about the event.

"It didn't bring any business, unfortunately," she said. "It was just a regular Sunday."



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Riccardo Gaudino delivers boat decorations to Jenny Dogey for the boat parade Sunday, intended to stir up support for bringing back the once-popular Venetian Water Carnival.

She blamed it on the foggy weather and a lack of promotion for the event.

Diners in the ocean-view seats ignored the boats as they sailed past the restaurant.

"They're going to have to have more than just boats coming around for people to see it," Ray said.

Gaudino said the swells were too high for the boats

to make it to their destination: the Capitola Wharf. Instead, they had to turn back to the harbor.

He hopes to get organizations from all around the state to enter a boat in next year's official event, attracting tourists and helping the local economy.

For information, go to [www.welovesantacruz.org](http://www.welovesantacruz.org).