

FRIENDS, FAMILIES ENJOY TRADITION

Opening day offers prizes, puppies and sweet treats



PHOTOS BY DAN COYRO — SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL

First-time entrant in the Santa Cruz County Fair apple pie contest, Annie Hines of Pasatiempo, waits for the judges to taste her apple pie Tuesday at the fairgrounds.

By Donna Jones

djones@santacruzsentinel.com
@DonnaJonesSCS on Twitter

WATSONVILLE » For Annie Hines, Tuesday, the first day of the Santa Cruz County Fair, turned out pretty well.

Though she missed placing in the county Farm Bureau's apple pie contest, Hines, a native Minnesotan who's called Pasatiempo home for the past 13 years, earned three blue ribbons for her Lisbon lemons, Bearss limes and black jack figs. Her blood oranges placed second in the tree fruit division.

"The fair is so whole-

some and family oriented," Hines said. "We just love it."

Competition is a big part of the fair, and traditionally the apple pie contest is one of the opening events. Ronald Downing of Scotts Valley baked the Best in Show pie. Downing also took first place in the adult division. Emilie Stevens of Santa Cruz won the youth division, and Tim Vetterli of Soquel took first in the master's.

Opening day also is Senior Day, and older residents, many who have been attending the fair for years, comprised the larger part of the crowd strolling

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Anne Easley of Santa Cruz snaps a photo of Robin Butterworth's collection of 1950s science fiction movies which garnered first place in the collections division at the Santa Cruz County Fair.

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— Les Roth, Watsonville resident

Fair

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the lanes, checking out the exhibits and snacking on fair food.

"You can't walk 50 yards without meeting someone you know," said rural Watsonville resident Les Roth, preparing for a stint as a docent at the nearby Agricultural History Project by sharing a cinnamon bun with wife Joyce. "It's no calories if you share," he assured a passerby.

Inside Harvest Hall, Jim Dallas of Capitola, bent on impressing sister, Jackie Dallas, visiting from Austin, Texas, perused the agricultural displays. She noticed a bunch of rainbow carrots. He pointed out an unusual watermelon radish. Nearby, prize-winning pumpkins were on display.

"She thought everything was bigger in Texas until she saw those pumpkins," he said, chuckling.

Connie Brock of Santa Cruz was one of several peo-

FAIR SHOWS

Nightly shows are at 7:30 p.m. at the Amphitheater, except on Sunday, which will be at 7 p.m. at the Main Horse Show Arena.

Today: Meghan Linsey with Tyler Cain.

Thursday: Tsunami Band.

Friday: Jamie Lynn Spears.

Saturday: The Houserockers.

Sunday: Morros del Norte.

ple demonstrating crafts in the hall, in her case, rug twining. It's easy, she said, as she wove folded pieces of cloth through warp thread strung on a wooden loom. You can recycle old sheets or whatever fabric you have on hand, she said, and once friends know you're doing it, they contribute odd bits of cloth.

"It's very Zen," Brock said, "very relaxing to do."

At the Agricultural History Project's Yesterday's Farm, a group of women were spinning wool, and a trio of Clydesdales were on display near vintage tractors.

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIR

What: Exhibits, entertainment, livestock, contests and carnival.

When: Noon to 11 p.m. Wednesday-Friday; 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Saturday; 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday.

Where: County Fairgrounds, 2601 E. Lake Ave., Watsonville.

Cost: \$10, adults 13-61; \$5 children, 6-12, or free on Wednesday; \$8 seniors.

Parking: \$5 main lot; \$20 valet.

Details: www.santacruz-countyfair.com or 831-724-5671.

Steve and Sarah Tabor watched sons Jake, 3, and Levi, 5, try their hand at pumping water the old-fashioned way. Coming to the fair is a way for their children to experience the way things were done before they were born, Tabor said.

"For them, it's probably about the food," he said.

Patty DiNapoli and 16-year-old twin daughters Jenna and Angelina

stopped by an adoption center run by Dog Spot Rescue of Vacaville near the fair's main entrance, and promptly fell for King, a 4-year-old black-and-tan German shepherd who had been neglected by a former owner.

"He is just tugging at my heart," DiNapoli said, adding the family had plenty of room at their Felton property for another pet. They previously adopted another German shepherd and also a one-eared bunny. "We're rescue people."

Volunteer Kate Montgomery said the nonprofit rescue group focuses on problem dogs facing euthanasia, and works to socialize and train them before putting them up for adoption.

"We give them the skills to be so they'll be successful in their hopefully final home," she said.

Montgomery said the group could use help while at the fair. To volunteer, call 209-631-4223 or write marylovesdogs5@gmail.com.