

1985-1988

Apple Festival called a success

By JENNIFER KOSS
STAFF WRITER

Organizers of last weekend's 11th annual Apple Festival in Watsonville termed it a big success despite Saturday's foggy weather.

Crowds were light at the Main Street Revival at the fairgrounds Saturday, but turned out for every other event in numbers at least as large as previous years, organizers said.

Fog was the only reason the revival was not as well-attended as had been expected, Chamber Manager Charlene Shaffer said.

"The weather hurt the attendance," she said. "There's no question about it."

However, the evening's "Twilight Time Cruise," featuring vintage Main Street Revival cars parading through downtown Watsonville, drew large crowds, Shaffer said. So did a dance to the music of ShaBoom later on at the fairgrounds.

A good turnout also greeted "A Benefit of Culture & Music for Today's Youth, Tomorrow's Leaders" at the Fox Theatre Friday night, Chamber President Larry Donatoni said. He estimated about 800 people showed up for the musical event, including Apple Festival Queen Martha Chavez and the first and second runners-up, Kelly Palmer and Tricia McGrath.



Fred Silva drove a wagonload of members of the Watsonville Cham-

ber of Commerce and Agriculture in the parade down Main Street.

Diane Varni

"It was really a very uplifting evening," Donatoni said.

Tony Campos, one of the main organizers of the night at the Fox, said the money from ticket sales had not been counted yet, but he guessed that at least \$6,000 was raised to benefit youths in vocational training programs.

"What we wanted to do is basically bring the community together and work together to get ahead," said Campos, a member of the Chamber's Hispanic Affairs Committee, which sponsored the event.

Friday's event is the first of many that will be held with the goal of raising money for vocational training, Campos said. The committee is already working on Cinco de Mayo 1989, he added.

Sunday's parade down Main Street also brought the community together, parade chairman John Ettner said.

The sun came out to stay just as the parade was to begin, he said, adding that he'd heard crowd estimates for the parade of 10,000 to 15,000 spectators.

"The whole street was lined on both sides at least three or four deep," Ettner said.

Said Donatoni, "It was a tremendously successful event. It's the type of thing that really helps bring the very diverse elements of our community together."

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Donatoni said the "down-home type of bazaar" after the parade, which concluded the Apple Festival, also drew a good crowd to Callaghan Park.

And Shaffer said she was pleased with the entire weekend, except for Saturday's weather. It was "like a bad dream" when last week's warm weather disappeared, she said, but it's not the first time that's happened to the Chamber.

"We really do not have good luck with the weather," Shaffer said with a sigh.

least three or four churches complained this year that the parade coincided with their services.

"I am very concerned about that," Ettner said. "We received an awful lot of flak about it."

He added, "I think they have a pretty good gripe; they want to be able to participate too. It's a community event."

In general, however, Ettner said he was happy with the parade and with the crowds it drew to downtown Watsonville.

marched away with the sweepstakes award in the parade contest, Ettner said.

Ettner said this year was his first time organizing the parade, but that he and assistant Phil Ybarra have already decided to take on the job again next year.

One thing likely to be different next year is the parade's starting time; it's always begun at 11 a.m., but will probably be switched to 12:30 p.m. in deference to some local church members. Representatives of at

The Watsonville Band

The parade had about 100 participants, Ettner said, including six marching bands, Watsonville Mayor Betty Murphy and Councilwoman Gwen Carroll riding a fire-truck, and County Supervisor Sherry Mehl on an Army tank. Rather than a grand marshal this year, Ettner said the parade was led by "Big Apple" Sally Hansen, selected through a drawing that also entitles her to an apple pie a month for a year.