

Beach Street Revival idled

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Money troubles, low attendance
doom '50s-style nostalgia event

By DAVE BROCKMANN
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WATSONVILLE — The Beach Street Revival is packing up and cruising off into the sunset.

After a 17-year run, Rick Petersen, organizer and promoter of the classic car show event, says he and the board of directors are "pretty much exhausted and tired of banging heads with bureaucracy."

So instead of bringing more than 300 classic cars and nostalgic music from the 1950s and 1960s back to the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds, Petersen is planning a private event called the Beach Street Revival Survivors Reunion. It will be in September at the Holiday Inn in Santa Cruz.

Petersen decided to cancel the revival because of poor attendance and because \$5,500 worth of memorabilia had been stolen during the car show last year.

A stabbing incident at an unrelated car show in April also caused attendance to dip at his show, he said.

Also, city officials canceled Beach

Street Revival's accompanying Twilight Time Cruise parade a year ago after it caused problems and gridlock on Main Street. The Watsonville Police Department recommended canceling the cruise.

Still, city officials lauded the event. "It was a positive event for the city of Watsonville," said City Manager Steve Salomon.

Vice Mayor Betty Bodeda said the event was an economic boost for Watsonville and "it's sad that it has been taken away."

Beach Street Revival started in Santa Cruz in 1977. The annual production attracted thousands each year who cruised in their pre-1972 cars along Beach Street in front of the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. The nostalgia included a car show, music, dances and more recently, events for the entire family.

When the two-day event was in Santa Cruz, it created problems with cruisers and alcohol, police said. Ocean and Beach streets were frequently gridlocked on the event's annual Cruise Night.



Hugh Dealy
and Rick
Martine
clown
around
with
oversized
yo-yos for
the 1988
Beach
Street
Revival in
Santa Cruz.

Bill Lovejoy/
Sentinel file

Petersen moved to the fairgrounds four years ago after the city of Santa Cruz demanded that Beach Street Revival organizers pay \$3,000 for police time. A 1989 ordinance required the reimbursement of city costs for special events.

But Petersen never paid the bill, saying it was wrong. The billing dispute is still unresolved.

The city billed him \$2,100 for admissions tax and commercial fees for using San Lorenzo Park, Petersen said.

By Petersen's calculations, the city

overcharged him and owes him close to \$2,000 from the event six years ago.

Steve Ando of the Santa Cruz Finance Department said the bill was correct. The city's calculations were based on figures provided by Petersen. Ando said the city is still interested in working toward resolving the dispute.

Petersen wants to bring Beach Street back to its Santa Cruz birthplace, but the city will not issue a special events permit until the financial dispute is resolved, he said.