

Antonelli begonias come to Alladin



J.D. Hillard/Register-Pajaronian

Alladin Nursery proprietors Dora and Gustavo Beyer (from left) pose with Michael Breneman, Linda Dennis and David Bobbitt, owners of Antonelli Begonia Gardens, amid a dazzling array of begonias at a celebration Saturday of the Corralitos nursery's establishment as the exclusive retail outlet for Antonelli begonias.

Local nursery to be only outlet in the country for special flowers

By J.D. HILLARD
OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

CORRALITOS — Gardening stores carry an inherent excitement. The rows and rows of inches-tall plants at Alladin

Nursery burst with nascent potential, each a promise of something big and beautiful in your home.

The Corralitos gardening store expanded that promise Saturday with the

grand opening of its explosively colorful selection of begonias and fuchsias from Antonelli Brother's Begonia Gardens.

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Following a fire last year that destroyed some of the flower grower's Capitola greenhouses, the company ceased bricks-and-mortar retail operations, opting to focus instead on its catalog business. Unless you wanted to submit an order through the seasonal mail-order business, your last access to the begonias that established Santa Cruz County as a begonia capital was cut off. Until Alladin began selling the flowers this weekend.

With a lively jazz band in one end of the nursery and a bright classical quartet at the other end, Alladin drew numerous curious visitors and flower enthusiasts to view the rows of new begonias in its shade structure. Visitors enjoyed fruit and coffee set out by owner Gustavo Beyer as they viewed the vast variety of brightly colored blossoms.

Beyer was enthusiastic about the brilliant addition to his store. He still can't believe that his nursery was chosen as the only business in the country to sell Antonelli begonias directly to the public, he said.

"It's a great honor to have them here," he said.

David Bobbitt, owner of Antonelli, was on hand along with his parents, Linda and Dennis Bobbitt, to offer begonia growing advice and to answer questions.

Alladin is an "awesome" nursery, David Bobbitt said.

"We always thought this might be the place," he said.

Ultimately Linda Bobbitt steered the company toward Alladin. Every time she visited the nursery, she had noted its cleanliness and the consistently good condition of the plants.

"I just had this feeling about what a nice place this would be to have our begonias," Linda Bobbitt said.

Along with the begonias, Alladin sells fuchsias from Michael's Fuchsias Galore. Michael Breneman, a long-time employee of Antonelli, has taken over the Antonelli fuchsia business and offers 1,000 varieties of the delicately hanging flowers.

Alladin Nursery is located at 2905 Freedom Blvd.