

A way to go Fourth

Holiday celebrated in style

By DAN WHITE
Sentinel staff writer

APTOS — Floats, tailgate parties and the 'World's Ugliest Dog' rounded out 'the world's shortest parade' in Aptos Tuesday, drawing hordes of people along Soquel Drive.

And in nearby Santa Cruz, the city's celebration was a spirited, family-oriented day at Harvey West Park, with no alcohol but plenty of dancing, face painting, booths and food.

Unlike the more traditional Watsonville parade, the Aptos event featured people carrying signs with messages ranging from 'ban assault weapons' to 'Newt, invest in people,' and 'no offshore drilling.'

"What is all this?" one man grumbled to a friend, who turned to him and replied, "What did you expect here?"

Aptos's parade also featured the antics of the Beach Chair Drill Ensemble, a group of tropical-shirt-wearing precision performers, one with a rainbow wig. "The most challenging move is the head twirl," said Eileen Rodriguez, who put the lawn chair on her head and twirled it. "That's really tough. Your chair can fall off."

Aptos's parade also featured Mai Tai, who won the title of 'World's Ugliest Dog' at a 1994 contest in Petaluma. Mai Tai is a batlike creature with translucent ears who danced for dog biscuits and gave out paw print autographs.

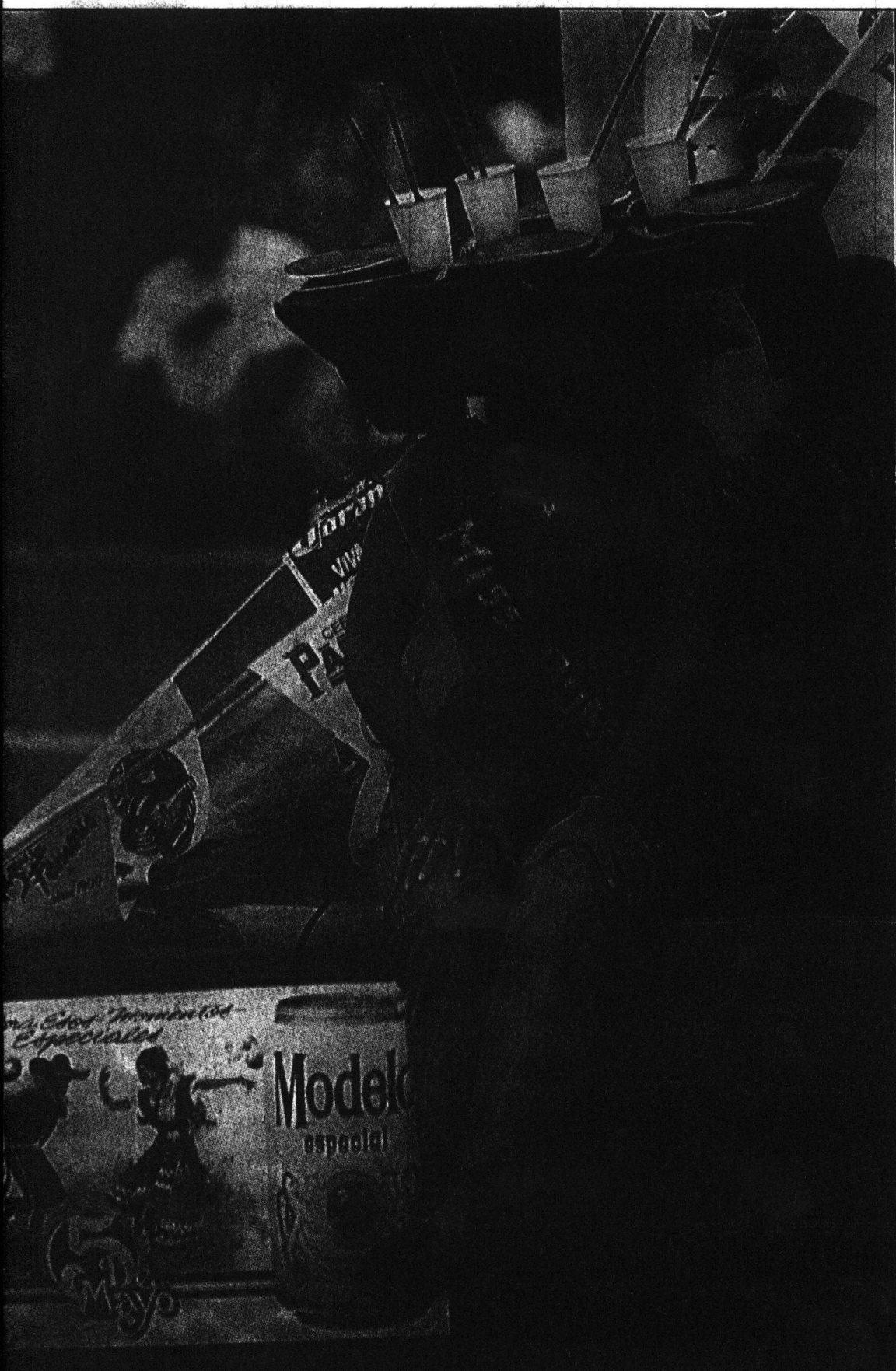
Mai Tai was dressed up like a sheep, and owner Doris Beezley of Sunnyvale showed up dressed as Little Bo Peep. "She's just unique," she said, describing her dog. "Everybody's crazy about her."

The city of Santa Cruz's celebration at Harvey West Park drew an estimated 700 people at noon but more were expected later in the day.

Anne Burke, parks field crew leader at Harvey West, said the absence of alcohol in the past few years has decreased the crowd but made it more family-oriented. Crowds danced to the rhythms of Tocara and other bands.

Joe Jordan of Santa Cruz cut a

Please see **HOLIDAY**—A2



Dan Coyro/Sentinel

Miss Burrito, a tray of drinks balanced on her head, rides in the Aptos parade Tuesday on the La Tienda Sofias' float.

Holiday celebrations abound

Faryn Schneider gets a cooling splash of water from Carl Rodriguez during Independence Day festivities Tuesday at Harvey West Park in Santa Cruz.



Photos by
Dan Coyro/Sentinel

Continued from Page A1

dramatic figure as he walked through the crowd dressed as a giant earthworm and spoke about the virtues of composting. "Earthworms eat scraps, garbage, and they excrete it as the world's best compost," he said.

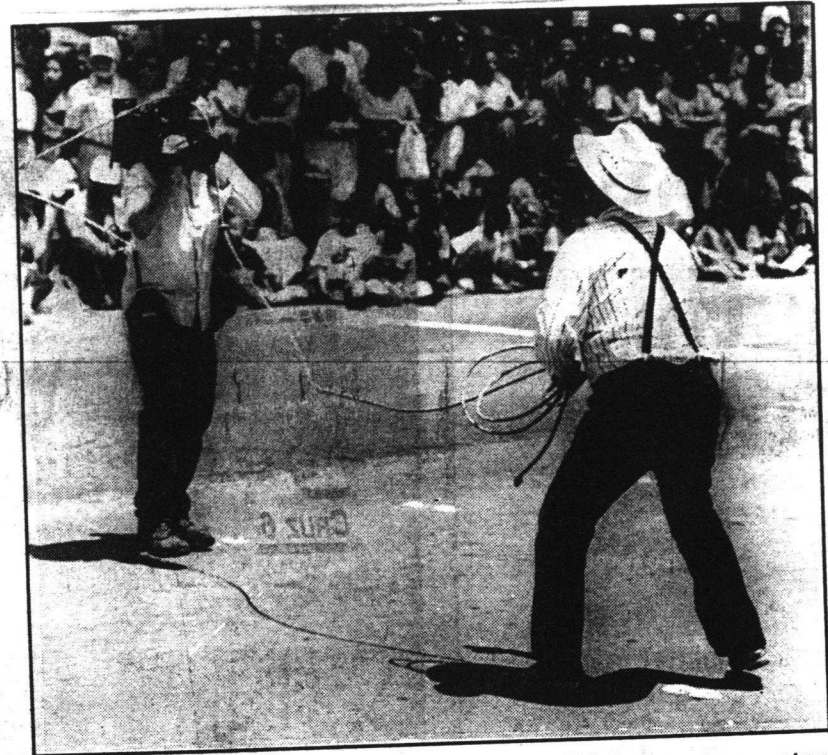
Jordan got into a brief discussion with a young Santa Cruz girl, Maile Ann Collier, who questioned whether he was really a worm. "You're a man," she said. "You're a man in a suit. Men don't eat garbage. They eat food."

Down in south county, a crowd of 2,500 people filled Main Street for the county's biggest Fourth of July celebration, which began with a giant swiveling tank, and ended with armies of dancers, baton twirlers and musicians.

One of several holiday spectacles throughout the day in Santa Cruz County, it boasted over 100 entries, and included David Graham, son of legendary rock promoter Bill Graham, as its grand marshal.

Graham showed up a bit late so the parade started without him. He had to run to catch up to the car that was supposed to be carrying him down Main Street. He estimated that he ran almost a mile.

Assemblyman Peter Frusetta, R-Tres Pinos, also made a scene when he demonstrated his rope tricks while walking with the parade.



Assemblyman Peter Frusetta lassos a TV camera operator Tuesday in the 'Spirit of Watsonville' parade.

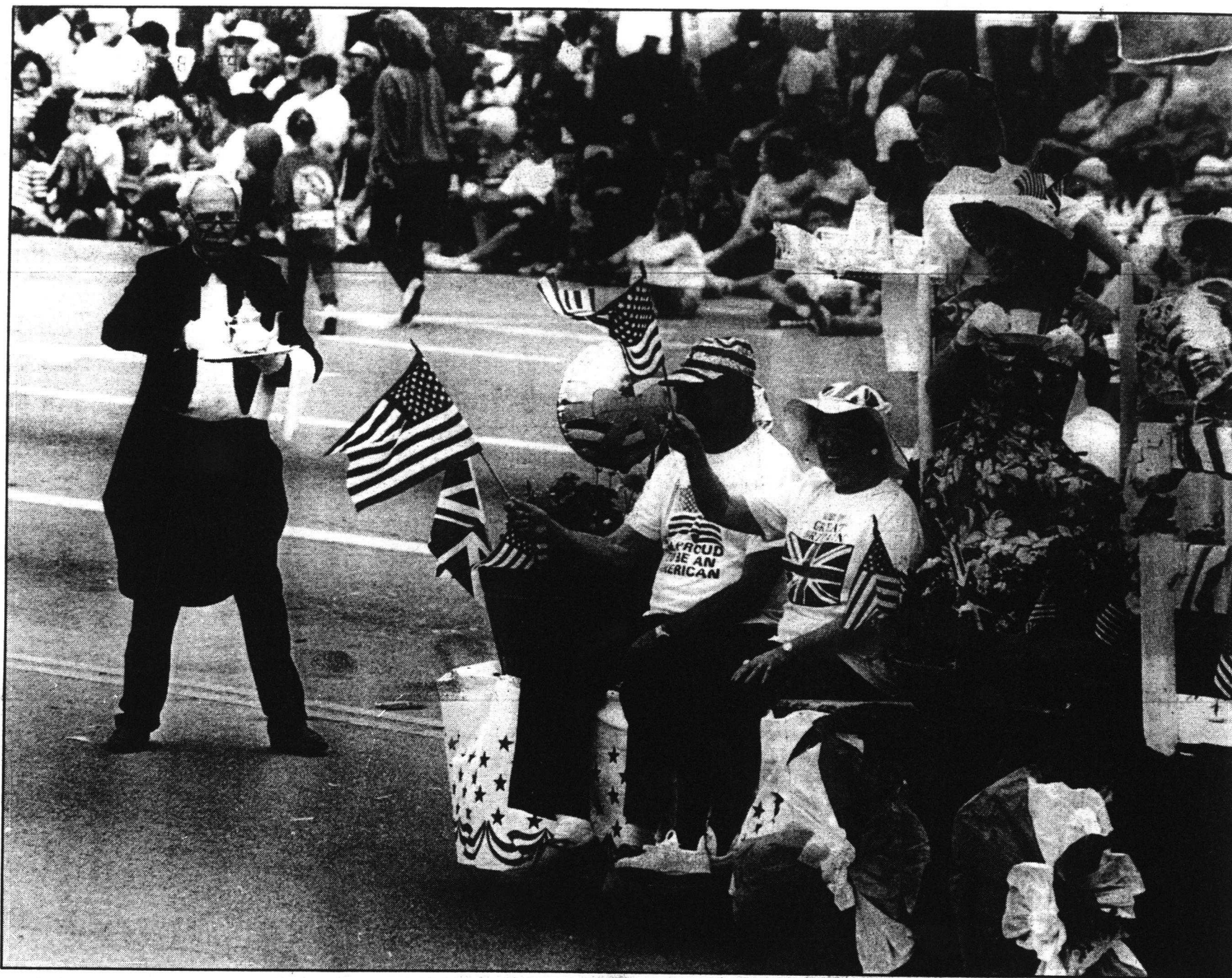
Frusetta, urged by the crowd to show off his skills, was able to lasso a boy who ran across the street.

Another spectacle was the tank which led the procession. It swiveled its long gun and blasted hot exhaust into the crowd. Twisting and turning, it seemed to do a clumsy dance for the people.

Police reported no major prob-

lems in a gathering that emphasized hope and renewal, especially the float dedicated to the recovery of recently flood-ravaged Pajaro.

"Together in Pajaro," read the emblem on the float that featured, appropriately, a large rowboat, with tiny rowboats following it, each with the names of Pajaro streets.



A 'butler' serves a float full of Britons having their afternoon tea at the Independence Day parade Tuesday in Aptos.