

Flea market granted new lease on life

By JONDI GUMZ

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The Santa Cruz Flea Market will continue to operate in its current location through March 2010.

Michael Paul, president of Goodwill Industries of Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties, which operates the flea market, made the announcement Monday.

Goodwill notified the Santa Cruz Medical Foundation, now a part of the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, that Goodwill would exercise its option to extend the lease for a second year.

"The community, SCMF and

Goodwill will benefit greatly by keeping the market open for at least one more year," Paul said.

The flea market, at 2260 Soquel Drive in Santa Cruz, operates every Friday, Saturday and Sunday, weather permitting, attracting 350 vendors.

The medical group purchased the property known as the Skyview Drive-In in November 2007 as a future site for doctors' offices, and the weekend flea market closed. After an outcry by flea market aficionados, the medical group negotiated a deal with Goodwill and the flea market reopened March 1.

It's unclear what will hap-

pen when the lease agreement expires in 2010. Flea market supporters had initially sought another site in the count.

"Sutter may be five years out from developing this property," said newly seated Capitola City Councilman Dennis Norton. "This will give a number of years of life to the flea at Skyview."

He said the county fairgrounds would welcome the flea market although he considers the Watsonville location too far away for most people.

"It would be good at Harvey West or possibly Cabrillo (College) but nowhere else has the required parking," he said.

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MIKE ALPERIN,

FLEA MARKET SUPPORTER

Ben Lomond resident Mike Alperin, who lobbied to keep the flea market open, welcomed the Sutter announcement.

"We want to stay here as long as we can," he said. "Everyone knows it's time to tighten their

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belt. The flea market can help a lot of people do that."

"The extension of our arrangement will be of great benefit to the community on many levels," said Dr. Larry deGhetaldi, president of the Santa Cruz division of Palo Alto Medical Foundation, a Sutter Health affiliate. "It will allow us to continue making our full \$275,000 contribution to Healthy Kids of Santa Cruz County, an organization that plays a vital role in the health of children in our community, at a time when access to children's health insurance is declining."

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