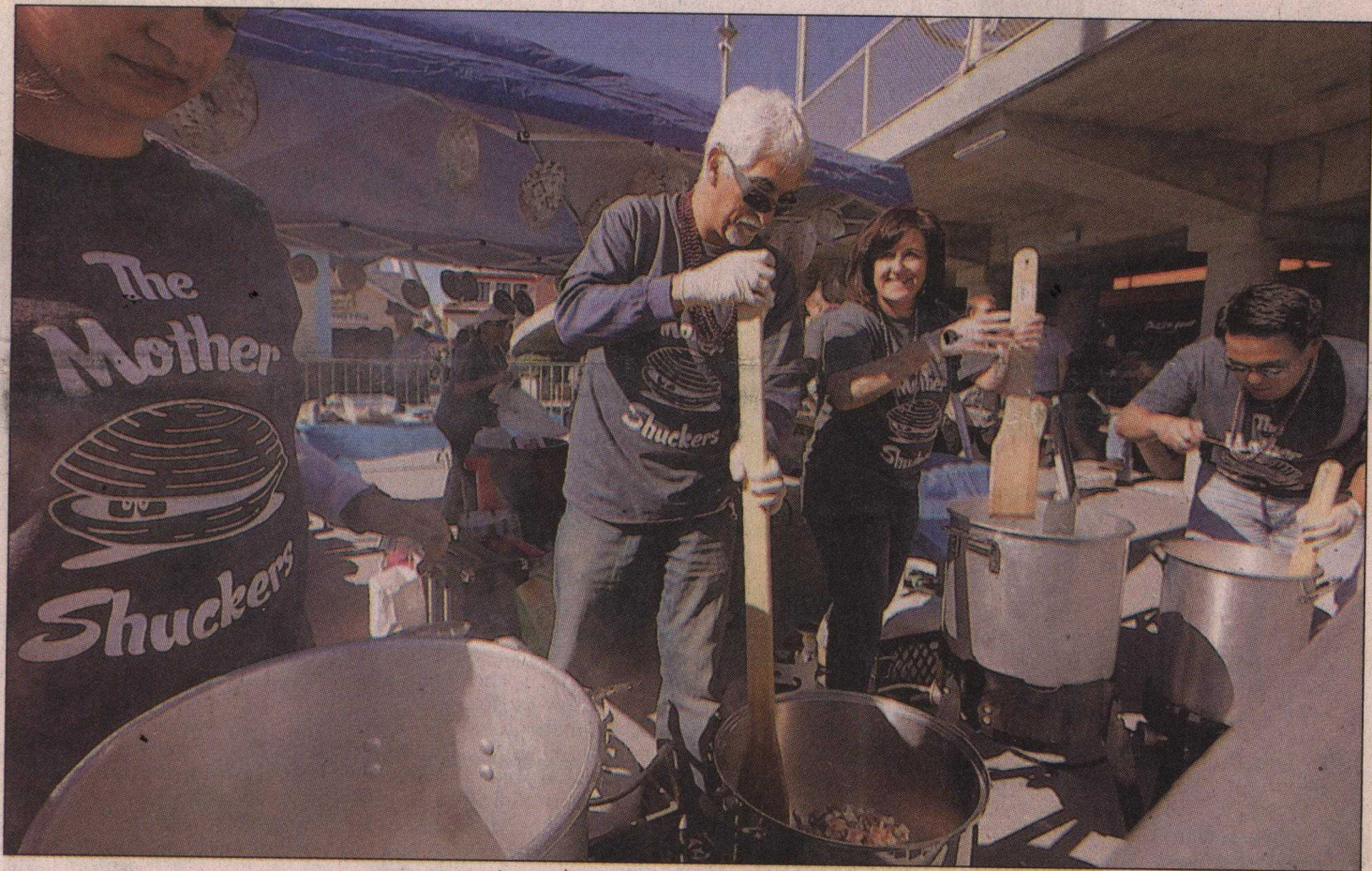


# It's chow(der) time



JON WEIAND/SENTINEL

Celeste Donatini, from left, Felipe Guillen, Liz Donatini, and Doug Nakatani of 'The Mother Shuckers' tend to the components of their chowder at the Clam Chowder Cook-Off at the Boardwalk on Saturday.

Competition brings professional, amateur chefs to Boardwalk

By CALVIN MEN

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## ON THE NET

To see video from the clam chowder cook-off, visit [santacruzsentinel.com](http://santacruzsentinel.com) and click on this story.

Clam Chowder Cook-Off.

The competition had 65 individual clam chowder entries, both the common Boston style

— creamy and white — and the Manhattan style — red and without any dairy.

Dare Arowe, a 24-year-old culinary student at Cabrillo College, was there to help at one of the college's two booths.

"I like to add zing to it and we're going to add some horseradish at the end," she said. "That's how we do it in my house anyways."

The college brought seven people, mostly students, to the com-

petition. While the students are in various parts of their careers, the college is placed into the professional category because many of the students work at the college's restaurant.

It makes sense since they have a slight edge because of their training, Arowe said.

An estimated 10,000 people were expected for the competi-

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# CHOWDER

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tion, said Karley Pope, director of promotions and entertainment at the Boardwalk.

"We've gone through snow and rain on this day and it still brings out a crowd," she said. "But this time we have the beautiful sun so we're expecting a good turnout."

Proceeds go to the Santa Cruz Parks and Recreation Department programs, Pope said. Officials are hoping to raise \$60,000, the amount raised in 2013.

Competitors arrive in the morning and begin ingredient preparation. But stoves can't be lit until 11 a.m. Then it's two hours of intense cooking followed by hours of pitching their chowders to passing patrons, trying to garner votes for the best chowder.

Wes Cline, a 57-year-old from Yuba City, was perusing the booths and was more than excited to be there.

"I'm a seafood nut," Cline said an hour before tasting began. "It's killing me right now smelling this."

His ideal chowder is simple: creamy with salt and pepper.

Cline was clutching several tasting bags filled with plastic cups for sampling the chowders. But he pointed out that they weren't all for him. Cline was with family and were enjoying the Boardwalk in between the cooking and the sampling.

With more than 60 chowders available, Cline wasn't sure how he was going to pick which ones to sample.

"Whichever one smells best when I walk by it," he said.

Gigi Davis attended representing LouLou's Griddle in the Middle, a Monterey restaurant. The team's secret? Love, Davis said.

"Sometimes right before

## CLAM CHOWDER COOK-OFF

### JUDGE'S SELECTION

**PROFESSIONAL BOSTON:** 1. Serritella's Italian Food & Pizza; 2. Team Buttery; 3. Pleasure Pizza Eastside Eatery

**PROFESSIONAL MANHATTAN:** 1. UC Santa Cruz Dining; 2. Bay Area Ice Cream; 3. Pleasure Pizza Eastside Eatery

**INDIVIDUAL BOSTON:** 1. Silence of the Clams; 2. Rack of Clams; 3. Santa Cruz Kids Chowder

**INDIVIDUAL MANHATTAN:** 1. Scalawags; 2. Manhattan Madhatters; 3. Clam Halen

**MOST ORIGINAL:** 1. Clam Rock; 2. Rosie's Clam & Get It; 3. Amish Paradise

### PEOPLE'S CHOICE

**PROFESSIONAL BOSTON:** Ideal Bar & Grill

**PROFESSIONAL MANHATTAN:** UC Santa Cruz Dining

**INDIVIDUAL BOSTON:** 4 Men & a Clam

**INDIVIDUAL MANHATTAN:** Grandma's Clam Digger's

**MOST TASTED:** 1. Rosie's Clam & Get it; 2. Ideal Bar & Grill; 3. 4 Men & a Clam



JON WEIAND/SENTINEL

**Booths and chowder fans crowd the Boardwalk on Saturday for the Clam Chowder Cook-Off.**

we compete, we all stir the pot," Davis said. "We really believe that if we use the freshest ingredients with the most care and most love in our heart, we'll be the best."

Matt Mettalia competed for the sixth year. The secret to his chowder: 30 pounds of whole baby clams.

"You get a nice bite of clam in it," he said.

The clams were prepared beforehand and he said it took 10 people six hours to shuck the clams.

Though he said the atmosphere and meeting the people are a great part of the competition, the team was there for glory.

"We like to win this," he

said with a smile.

Natasha Hession, a native of Ireland who lives in Mountain View, was there to meet a friend.

While this was her first chowder contest, the 39-year-old said she's attended oyster and clam festivals in Ireland.

Hession said she doesn't eat meat and looked for a chowder that didn't use bacon. But she isn't likely to shy away from chowders with clams.

"Oh yeah, loads of clams," she said with a laugh. "No diet today."

Follow Sentinel reporter Calvin Men at Twitter.com/calvinmenetwork