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Park Fete Draws Families

By DAWN M. HENLEY

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There's the pomp and circumstance of a parade, the fun of a carnival for kids, the yummy temptations of food and unique finds at craft booths, but most of all, Park Fete is a special gathering of friends and families.

July 15 and 16, downtown Escalon bustled with that special hometown feel.

"I like coming down to see friends you went to school with. It's fun for the kids," said Escalon resident Rita McDowell about the reasons she's attended the event for so many years. "It's almost like a reunion atmosphere."

Quick thinking by Danny Burtao, partially seen at right, draws this huge bull away from fallen rider Alkea Almeda of Brazil during the fourth of several rides on Saturday at the Dennis Borba Invitational as part of the 2011 Escalon Park Fete. Almeda was not injured. See additional Park Fete photos, Page A2. Ike Dodson/The Times

The Escalon Lions Club once again was the sponsoring organization for the hometown event, with additional corporate support provided by Escalon Premier Brands.

"I don't think anybody from Escalon likes to miss it," added fellow resident Maria Gervase. "And the parade, the parade is always good, too."

Members of the American Legion colorguard led the parade, followed by Legion members on their roaring motorcycles, plus the Escalon High School varsity baseball team as Grand Marshals, Miss Escalon and her court, horse entries, a marching band, and numerous old fashioned cars.



A little boy blows his horn while he proudly marches with the Azores Band of

Following the parade there was a presentation by Powerhouse Dance Studio that drew a large crowd of spectators to the park pavilion. Nearby, there was the Stick Horse Rodeo competition, where the pint-size contestants rode their "bucking stock" out of chutes and then rode the stick horses around the barrels. Phyllis Carvalho served as the "stock contractor" for the Stick Horse Rodeo that was put on by the Escalon Cowboy Church, part of Cowboy Church International (CCI). Dennis Borba sponsored prizes for the youngsters. There was also a crowning of Stick Horse Rodeo royalty. Miss CCI Wild West Cierra Clason crowned two-year-old Ani McDowell as the queen and Balentina Ramirez as the princess.

People also lined up at the food booths that featured choices for sandwiches such as linguica, tri-tip, philly cheesesteak, hot dogs, polish dogs, tacos, and more.

"The food is good," Gervase noted as another reason to attend Park Fete.

Escalon in the Park Fete Parade on July 16. The annual event was sponsored and organized once again by the Escalon

Plus there were the sides like fries, corn on the cob, and chili. Beverages from agua frescas to sweet tea to lemonade were there to quench the thirst of Park Fete revelers and sweet treats like cotton candy and soft serve ice cream were also among the offerings

Lions Club, with corporate sponsorship

from Escalon Premier Brands. Dawn M.

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also among the winners.

At the horseshoe toss competition, 26 teams entered the double-elimination tournament for a chance to win the money in the pot for first and second place.

Teammates Stan Prickett of Oakdale and Bill Santini of Escalon competed for the first time in the Park Fete Horseshoe Tournament. Although they didn't win, the score was 21-16, they were pretty happy about their performance.

"Not bad for a couple greenhorns," Prickett chuckled.

"(We came) to have fun," said Santini who has lived in Escalon all his life. "...Everybody's friendly and it's competitive."

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