



Butter & Egg Days Parade Honors Legends of Petaluma

It was more than 150 years ago that General Mariano Vallejo first called Petaluma “a land of enchantment.”

The Spanish general recognized upon first setting eyes on Petaluma that there was something special and undeniably bountiful about this area. More than a century later, the people of Petaluma continuously prosper from a wealth of both land and community resources.

It is in the spirit of Petaluma’s rich history, vitality, and community that The Butter and Egg Days Parade has selected “Legends of Petaluma” as the theme of the 2013 parade.

The Butter & Egg Days Parade is scheduled for Saturday, April 27 -- rain or shine. The parade steps off at noon and is a two-hour event with more than 110 units participating.

The .89-mile parade route through Historic Downtown begins at 4th and D Streets, winds up 4th and Kentucky Streets, turning right onto Washington Street, right again onto Petaluma Boulevard and down the Boulevard to D Street, where it disbands.

A special Kids Parade sponsored by Clover Stornetta begins at 11:30 AM and precedes the two-hour traditional parade. The Clover Kids parade is for pre-school and elementary children and their families. The shortened parade allows young children the opportunity to participate without enduring the nearly mile-long trek of the full parade route. The kids’ parade begins at 4th and D streets and ends after just four blocks at the Kids Area in the A Street Parking Lot.

Butter and Egg Days wouldn’t be complete without the Cutest Chick Contest and the traditional Cow Chip Throwing Contest, which will both occur before the parade. The Cutest Chick Contest starts at 10:15 AM on the Petaluma Egg Farm Cutest Chick Stage on Kentucky Street, midway between Western Avenue and Washington Street outside Copperfield’s Books. The fun and entertaining Cow Chip Throwing Contest begins at 10 AM in front of McNear’s on Petaluma Boulevard.

Surrounding the parade is a festival of arts and crafts, food and fun. Vendor booths

are located on Western Avenue, the A Street Parking Lot, B Street between 4th Street and the Boulevard, and throughout the Theatre District. A stage will be located at the curve from B Street to Second Street, offering continuous music from Noon to 4 PM.

Families will want to visit the Kids Area in the A Street Parking lot where there will be climbing walls, bounce houses and other activities. Pony rides will be offered in the Theatre District at Second and C Streets.

Beer Gardens are on Western Avenue near Kentucky Street and on B Street near the Boulevard from 11 AM to 4 PM. All alcoholic beverages must be consumed inside the Beer Gardens, and violators will be ticketed.

The day starts off with the traditional Petaluma 7-11 Lions Club Breakfast from 8 AM to 11 AM in the Main Street Parking Lot across from Putnam Plaza. More than 35 award winners will be selected from the parade entries, including a Sweepstakes Trophy for best depiction of the theme, Golden Hammer Award for the best float entered by a nonprofit, and The Helen Putnam Trophy for the entry that best depicts Petaluma history. Parade units may use any aspect of Petaluma’s legendary characters, businesses, and even folklore. Judges will evaluate entrants on several criteria, including use of the theme, originality, craftsmanship, and showmanship.



Petalumans of Yesteryear named Grand Marshal

There are Petaluma legends living among us. In the year that Butter & Egg Days honors the “Legends of Petaluma” it is fitting that a group of dedicated and knowledgeable volunteers who have taken on the personas of seven of Petaluma’s most prominent historical legends are honored as the parade’s Grand Marshal.

Known as the Petalumans of Yesteryear, each member of the group has immersed him- or herself in the story and history of an individual who contributed to Petaluma’s evolution into a vital community. The Petalumans of Yesteryear and the characters they portray are as follows: Homer Johnstone: Capt. Thomas F. Baylis; Marshall West: Isaac Wickersham; Susan Coolidge: Clara McNear; Barbara Harden: Ida Belle McNear; Millie King: Addie Atwater; Ron Bausman: Brainerd Jones; Bill Hammerman: William Howard Pepper.

“The honor of being selected as Grand Marshal came as quite a surprise. We are pleased and overwhelmed that the PDA has chosen our small group of volunteers for this recognition,” says Hammerman.

Most of the Petalumans originally became acquainted with their character by serving as a guide for the Petaluma Historical Museum’s Walking Tours. As tour guides, they became more and more knowledgeable about Petaluma’s history and began to identify with the early Petalumans they spoke

about.

“I took Addie Atwater on because she was such a powerful woman at a time when girls were just supposed to grow up to be wives and mothers. I relate to powerful women,” says 90-year-old Millie King, a former teacher and businesswoman.

Ron Bausman, a self-described “architectural fanatic,” found his connection to his character, renowned architect Brainerd Jones, when he discovered that the house he purchased in Petaluma was designed by Jones in 1926. “I started researching him and got hooked. Jones worked in Petaluma from the turn of the century until his death in 1945.

There were decades of huge growth in Petaluma and he was a part of that,” says Bausman.

“We assume a persona, but we have a broader function: to celebrate and inform people about early Petaluma,” says Johnstone.

In addition to their love of history, the Petalumans of Yesteryear demonstrate a flair for the theatrical as they share a personal narrative of history. “We are frustrated thespians. I love taking on this character and having an audience to talk to about her,” says Susan Coolidge.

“We’re available free of charge for any group who wants us to appear,” says Hammerman. “We really enjoy sharing the human element of Petaluma’s past.”

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