

Gay Activities Marking Rhododendron Festival at Florence

Gala Spectacle to Reach Colorful Climax Sunday

By JANET RAGAN
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FLORENCE — More than 200 gaily clad youngsters depicting imaginative scenes from fairy tales, science fiction stories and their individual dreams trooped through Florence Saturday in the 54th annual Rhododendron Festival's junior parade.

The turnout of youngsters and several thousand spectators despite gloomy, grey skies led members of the Siuslaw Booster Club, the festival's sponsoring organization, to believe that the 1961 celebration would indeed be the biggest and best in the history of this coastal community's annual spectacle.

Heavy clouds threatened to release a downpour upon the celebration that marks the blooming of the Rhododendrons here, but the deluge never came. And the weather forecast for Sunday indicated the festival would continue undampened. Moderate temperatures and clouds—but no rain—were forecast.

The Sunday events will begin at noon with a mammoth parade down Highway 101. Heading the parade will be Carmelita Beck, who was crowned Queen Rhododendra Saturday night, and her royal court of four princesses, Mary Middleton, Leilani Gallo, Marcia Mann and Mary Stone.

Charles LaGranchise, "Uncle Charlie" of television fame, will be grand marshal for the colorful procession, which will include at least nine bands, numerous marching units and many elaborate floats.

Following the parade, spectators will have their choice of four colorful activities.

- A gigantic clam chowder feed on Airport Road. More than 300 gallons of chowder are to be prepared for visitors from 400 pounds of potatoes, 150 pounds of onions, 75 pounds of bacon; 45 gallons of clams, 70 gallons of milk, five pounds of salt and one pound of pepper.

- A water ski show that will feature a ski kite — flying demonstration at Clewax Lake.

- A firemen's water fight just west of the junior high school grounds. The soggy battle actually will be a demonstration drill for up to a half dozen fire departments.

- A carnival that is operating throughout the festival on the junior high school grounds.

The three days of festivities began Friday afternoon when Florence Mayor E. A. Davidson crowned Junior Queen Rhododendra — Bette Hueller. The junior queen and her court of four princesses — Kathy Petersen, Dawn Gilbert, Janice Grosenbach and Karen Saubert — were honored by the parade that highlighted Saturday's activities.

There was more fun and frolic for the youngsters in Saturday's schedule. A variety of games, contests and amusements were provided for the tots as soon as the parade ended.

Serious events too were included. Gov. Mark O. Hatfield dedicated the new \$51,250 Lane County branch office building here before he headed the youngster's parade. He and his wife took time out from meeting the public and from reviewing the young marchers to present a Boy Scout certificate of merit to Bill Bones, who was credited with rescuing a

fellow Scout from a burning tent in March, 1960.

Members of the festival's royal court performed in a talent show before more than 600 spectators Friday night. Saturday night's gala activities included a square dance jamboree and the queen's coronation ball.

Grand prize winner in the junior parade was Gordon Elliott, depicting a giant alarm clock that featured moving hands.

First-place winners were the five children of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Merz, David Atkin, Marcy Mills and Bob Mills, for a "Woman in the Shoe" float; Roland and Doyle Swearingin, for a choo-choo train float; and 19 first graders from Mrs. June McDonald's class at Siuslaw Primary School, for their representation of characters from "Peter Pan."

Second-place awards went to a "Wizard of Oz" float; a "Treasure Island" float; and an airplane float.

Third-place awards went to Scott Read and Dan Boles for a representation of "Ding Dong Bell, Pussy in the Well"; Janice and Dick Graden, Dwight and Darlene Reindl, for "Aladdin and His Lamp"; and Mike and Kathy Anderson, for "Peter Rabbit in Mr. MacGregor's Garden."



CORONATION—Florence Mayor E. A. Davidson crowns four princesses who made up the Rhododendron Festival's junior court. Junior Queen Rhododendra, Bette Hueller, before the



PRESENTATION — Gov. Mark O. Hatfield presents a Boy Scout certificate of merit to Bill Bones, Florence youth credited with rescuing a fellow Scout from a burning tent in March, 1960.

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EUGENE, OREGON, SUNDAY, MAY 21, 1961



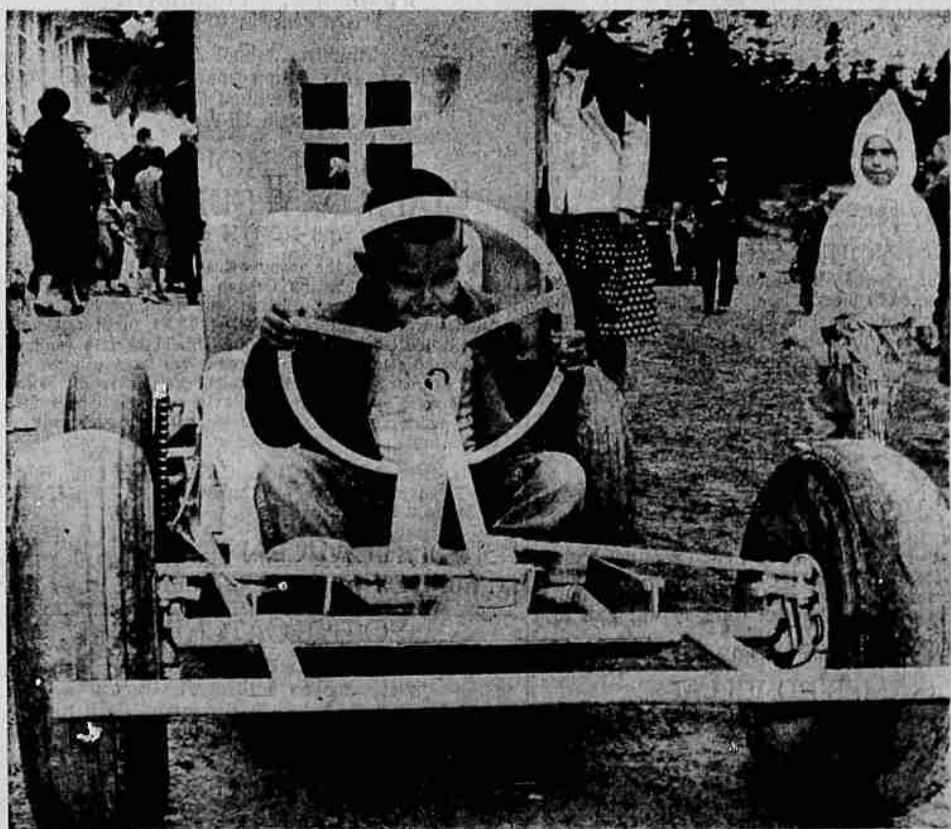
CHARACTERS AND FLOATS — Representing a man from space won a second prize for Shelley Wilson, left, in the celebration's junior parade. Another prize winner



(Register-Guard photos by Grenon and Staubert) was the float shown at the right, which includes Mike and Kathleen Anderson.



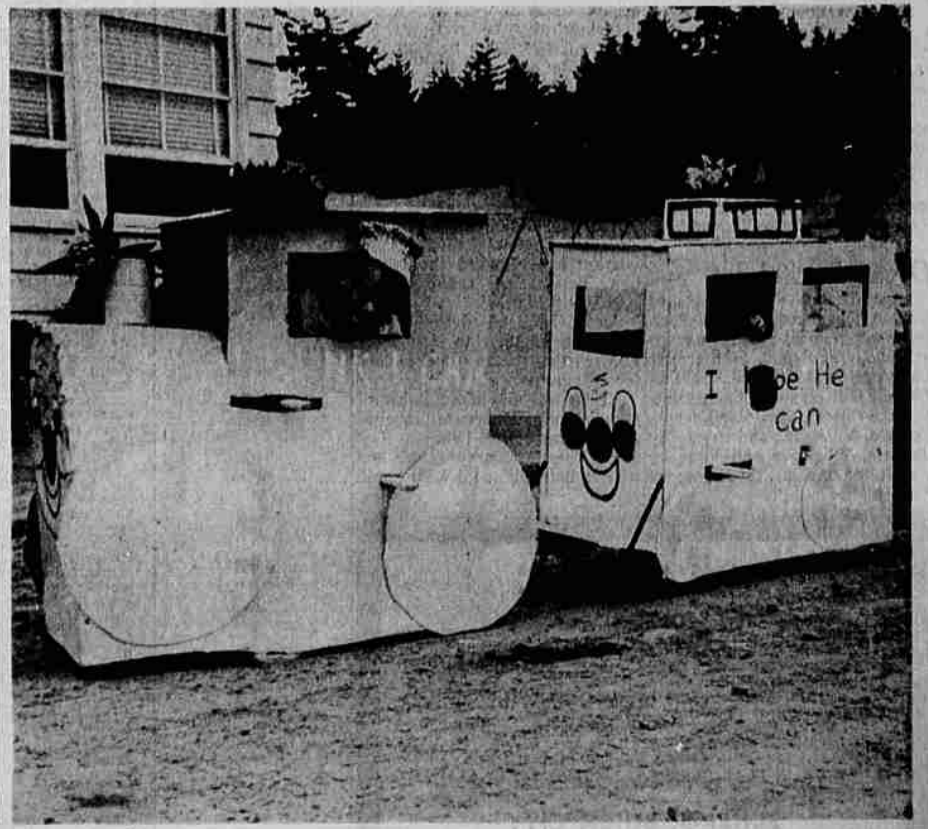
WITCH AND MONSTER CROCODILE — Florence area youngsters donned costumes to depict storybook characters for the Rhododendron Festival's junior parade Saturday. Here, Sandy Hedin represents a witch, while Kenneth Elliott depicts a crocodile.



PARADE PARTICIPANTS AND SPECTATOR — Bobby Mills, left, in his racer, and Roland and Doyle Swearingin, right, in their choo-choo train were among the many colorful entries that attracted throngs of spectators



to line the youngsters' route of march. The gay, imaginative costumes and floats held the rapt attention of Linda



Kezar and her dog, Corky, and several thousand other spectators of all ages.