

Crescent City parade floats honored

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Shortly after Crescent City's annual Fourth of July Parade wrapped up, the winners were announced.

Frank's Heating & Refrigeration took first place with a small convoy of floats, while their crowd-pleasing penguin mascot beat the streets.

Redwood National and State Parks took second place, while Fog Bank Clothing came in third.

Those three entries topped the list of 94 judged entries that went along with about 17 dignitaries resulting in more than 100 floats this year.

Serving as judges this year were Cindy Vosburg, the incoming executive director of the Crescent City Chamber of Commerce; Larry Timpe, Bicoastal Media's station manager; and David Jeffcoat, circulation manager of the Del Norte Triplicate.

Although each of the judges had seen their share of Fourth of July Parades in Crescent City, Vosburg said it was their first time sitting on the main stage at the south side of the 3rd and H Street intersection.

They sat next to announcers Eric Dremann, the marketing manager at Lucky 7 Casino, and Crescent City Mayor Blake Inscore.

"I have to say that I felt very fortunate and honored to be able to be a judge," said Vosburg, "to be in the center of everything and to see the delight and the joy that it brings to both the spectators and the entries in the parade.

"I'm a sap, okay? So that just warmed my heart. It set the tone for the whole day."

Jeffcoat said being a parade judge helped him better appreciate the hours of hard work put in by each of the entrants.

"Being with the judges was the first time that I was really able to pay attention to each one, and to see how creative everyone was with their floats," Jeffcoat said.

"It was hard to rank all of those floats, there were so many good ones out there. They are all winners, in my opinion.

"The hardest thing was to actually choose the top three.

"It was a great crowd in the streets and a great turnout," said Jeffcoat. "I can't remember a better parade."

How were the top floats actually chosen?

"This year, we were judging on the three categories: creativity, theme, and originality," Vosburg said. "We ranked them by the three different categories and gave them either a 1, a 2, or a 3.

"Then they add up the scores from all three judges and that is what determined the winners."

When the scores were tallied, Frank's Heating & Refrigeration was on top.

"They did an amazing job," Vosburg said. "They had multiple entries and it just seemed to go on and on and on. They even had their penguin walking with them, which was wonderful entertainment."

Jeffcoat agreed that the mascot really seemed to excite the crowd, helping to push Frank's over the top.

"The penguin even came through twice," Jeffcoat said. "He snuck back in the parade and came back through. The kids really enjoyed that, so that is really what caught our attention."

The Redwood National and State Parks float included a picturesque camping scene with a tent, a camper roasting a marshmallow, and a stuffed black bear.

"They had so much creativity and originality to their float," Vosburg said. "It was just delightful."

Fog Bank Clothing's float included a surprise visitor who helped them earn a prize as well.

"It was such a surprise, when they went by, when Bigfoot popped out of the back of their pickup. The crowd just went wild with that," Vosburg said.

Among the parade's winning features were Grand Marshals Jane and Baird Rumiano.

"They came through in that beautiful convertible with Kevin Hartwick and they were followed by all those milk trucks," Vosburg said. "All of us up on stage got choked up over that."

She said the judges enjoyed seeing all the cars with Redwood Cruisers, and the Crescent City Car Club, which was back in the parade after a year off last year.

"We enjoyed seeing all of the different cars come through, and the pride of ownership with each of them," Vosburg said. "As judges, we understand it can be a little difficult to decorate the muscle cars, because you don't want to put too much on them and mess up your paint job."

"The same goes for the fire engines and emergency vehicles. But we saw a lot of creativity that the various fire departments, city workers and law enforcement used in decorating."

This year's parade was the second year for the quiet zone, located on K Street. Vosburg said it looks like that addition is here to stay.

In the quiet zone, parade entrants took a break from honking horns, blasting sirens, loud music, or shooting off black-powder rifles.

"It's the importance of making sure that we have a small block so that people with sensory sensitivity are able to enjoy the parade," said Vosburg.

"That includes veterans affected by gunfire, people with special needs, and some people with dogs."