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Residents flock to 13th annual Rubber Ducky Festival in Valencia

By Luke Money
Signal Staff Writer
luke@signalscv.com
661-287-5525
September 26, 2015

Waterfowl play was afoot Saturday in Valencia, as residents flocked to the 13th annual Rubber Ducky Festival.

The annual festival, held this year in Bridgeport Park, is a fundraiser for Samuel Dixon Family Health Centers, Inc. — a nonprofit organization that provides health services in the Santa Clarita Valley.

“We offer health services to the uninsured and under-insured, and that is a need here in the Santa Clarita Valley,” said Gloria Mercado-Fortine, the chairwoman of Samuel Dixon’s board.

Though Saturday’s festival had a number of vendors — as well as a climbing wall and other activities for youngsters — the main attraction, as always, were the ducks.

The thousands of ducks that raced Saturday were “adopted,” with the money paid to do so going to benefit Samuel Dixon.

During each of the races, yellow rubber ducks flew down a watery flume in the park, much to the delight of those watching.

A number of children helped collect the ducks at the end, an exercise that involved a good deal of splashing and playing.

“Unlike a lot of other fundraisers, this is one where you can really bring out the family, have fun and help those who are in need in the Santa Clarita Valley,” said Alan Ferdman, the chairman of Saturday’s event.

Ferdman’s outfit event fit the bill for a chairman. He came decked out in a duck hat, a rubber ducky necklace and sunglasses, and a bright yellow shirt.

After the final duck race, some children used the course as a makeshift slip and slide.

The water from the duck races didn’t go to waste either. As it was pumped out

through a hose, it was used to water the grass of Bridgeport Park, as well as soak a number of children and adults who played under the stream.

While the amount of ducks sold at the event was still being calculated Saturday afternoon, Mercado-Fortine said 3,000 were sold ahead of the event.

“It’s been a very successful event,” she said.

And how does she explain the event’s popularity?

“Everybody loves rubber duckies,” she said, with a laugh.

For more information on Samuel Dixon Family Health Centers, Inc. visit www.sdfhc.org.

Lmoney@signalscv.com

661-287-5525

On Twitter @LukeMMoney

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