

Pizarro: After 50 years, San Jose Flea Market seems to be growing in value

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When the Bumb family received an award Thursday night at the San Jose Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce's Legends and Leaders dinner, it capped off an amazing year for the owners of the San Jose Flea Market.

Of course, this is the 50th anniversary for the open-air market on Berryessa Road, which has up to 1,500 sellers on weekends and countless buyers. It's hard to believe that just a few years ago there was serious talk about moving the flea market or even shutting it down.

And if you haven't been there in a while, you might be stunned by how the sprawling market has kept up with the times. The food choices alone -- taquerias, pizza, barbecue, burgers -- are a far cry from what I remember when I used to go there as a kid in the 1980s.

Of course, professional vendors are there alongside the mom-and-pop garage sale types during the market's open days -- Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

But there's also now a bustling farmers market near the big pavilion, and even the Health Trust is out this weekend with its 9th Open Air Health Fair. Volunteers will be there today from noon to 5 p.m. to provide health education activities and screenings.

Brian Bumb represented his family Thursday night in accepting the award, which recognized their constant efforts to fight for the rights of small business. No surprise. After all, the San Jose Flea Market probably has more small businesses on its 120 acres than anywhere else in Silicon Valley.

DARLING ANNIVERSARY: Anne Darling Elementary School in East San Jose will celebrate its 80th anniversary Saturday.

The party for students, faculty, alumni and community members will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on campus at 333 N. 33rd St. The Duarte Santos Media Center will be rededicated, and memorials to staff members Mary Drumm and Peter Bejarano will be relocated there. A campaign also will be launched to raise \$10,000 to restore the school's 80-year-old sundial, created by artist Jo Mora.

Of course, there'll be food and music, as well as videos and skits on the school's history. Admission is \$2 (or \$8 for a group of five), and that money goes toward paying for the event, as well as providing scholarships to send fifth-grade students to science camp.

And if you're wondering, Anne Darling was the deputy superintendent of city schools for 29 years before she died in 1928.

CANCER FIGHTERS: The San Jose Rep plans to donate a portion of ticket sales from Thursday's performance of "Secret Order" to the Valley Medical Center Foundation. The funds will be used to provide free breast health screenings for women at the Sobrato Cancer Center.

Appropriately, "Secret Order" is a biomedical thriller about researchers racing to find a cure for cancer.

That same Thursday night, Latinas Contra Cancer is having an open house from 6 to 9 p.m. at 255 N. Market St., Suite 175, in San Jose. There will be music, appetizers, wine and mixed-media art on display to commemorate Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

SUCCESS: Speaking of the VMC Foundation, more than 300 people attended its fifth annual gala Oct. 2 at the luxurious Sunnyridge Estate in Los Gatos owned by Cindy and Dave Lazares.

The evening of wine, dinner and dancing raised approximately \$200,000 for Santa Clara Valley Medical Center.

BOW WOWED: Humane Society Silicon Valley's eighth annual "Walk 'n' Wag" walk-a-thon sure had a lot of tails wagging Oct. 2.

More than 750 walkers and 350 dogs came to the event at the Humane Society's Animal Community Center in Milpitas and raised more than \$135,000 for the Humane Society's homeless animals, programs and services.

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