

Huntsville celebrates its past, enjoys the present

By JESSE DANOFF
For The Dallas Post

Visitors to the last weekend's Huntsville Days festival got a small taste of what life was like two centuries ago in the little hamlet.

In the 1770s residents of Huntsville, now a section of Jackson Township, would ride down Church Road in wagons heading toward the general store or the post office, both conveniently located at the crossroads where five roads meet.

On Saturday, modern-day residents rode in wagons, only this time the passengers were seated in \$3,000 models equipped with shock absorbers and reflectors, the better to be seen by drivers of horseless carriages.

Huntsville Christian Church sponsored the third annual festival, which in addition to wagon rides featured a fellowship dinner and talent show, ice cream social, games and an apple pie baking contest. On Sunday, a joint worship service and fellowship hour was held with Huntsville Methodist Church.

Pastor Dennis Gray said he thought it was a great opportunity to reach out to the community.

"The program helps people who just moved here to understand the community and the values it is built around," Gray said.

Youth Pastor Fiary Haas also is interested in learning about the area where his church was built. "(Huntsville Days) cele-

brates our heritage. It also gives people something to do, since a lot of children complain that there is nothing to do."

Haas, who was a passenger on one of the wagon rides, enjoyed learning about the area's past. The wagon ride, anchored by two Percherons named Prince and Pat, ran down Mountain Road to the Huntsville Methodist Church, up to the corners and then back to the church. On the ride, tour guide and program organizer Bob Bullock talked extensively about the Huntsville area.

"Use your imagination of what Huntsville was 200 years ago," Bullock advised the riders, "when there were about 300 people living in this immediate area."

Bullock mentioned that Huntsville was once a bustling stop between Plymouth and Harveys Lake that had two hotels, a general store, four schools, a post office, and numerous grist mills.

Huntsville is thought to have had 16 homes built there between 1772 and 1825 when a small footpath was built from Plymouth to the area and traversed frequently by Huntsville's founder, William Levy Hunt. Bullock said the area was in great shape until the invention of steam power, when grist mills near Huntsville Reservoir weren't needed anymore.

"When the grist mills faded so did Huntsville," Bullock said.

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Charlie Hayes, left, and John Hudak, chef at Huntsville Golf Club, tested, tasted and rated entries in the Apple Pie Baking Contest.

Apple Pie Baking Contest winners

Winners of the Apple Pie Baking Contest were:

1st Place - Eleanor Yanalunas
2nd Place - Lavada Riggins

3rd Place - Eleanor Yanalunas

4th Place - Phyllis Bullock
5th Place - Jeff Shimp



Zac Harvey gingerly reached to touch the nose of one of the Percherons that pulled the wagon, as Omeed Firouzi looked on.



Taking a break from badminton, from left: Stephanie Cichoski, Stefani Manzoni and Stevie Kioske.



Billy Kaleta helped get things set up by carrying out a shelf.



Bob Bullock gave wagon riders some insight into the history of Huntsville, the Back Mountain's oldest community.



Yuri Ackerman stripped the kernels off corn cobs to be used as chicken feed.