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A CHANGE OF SCENERY

Duck Fest organizers ready to test new waters

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“THIS NEW LOCATION IS HANDICAPPED-ACCESSIBLE AND THERE IS TONS OF PARKING.”

KIM MUELLER
NAVARRO EDUCATION FOUNDATION

SEGUIN — Walnut Branch will be overrun with little rubber duckies on May 21.

While the ducks may not be quacking, the audience will be standing on the banks cheering their racers on to victory during the Navarro Education Foundation’s 5th Annual Duck Fest.

NEF President Kim Mueller said even though the event is more than a month away, the organization has already had a great start in getting the fundraiser going.

“Our sponsor drive this year was up 25 percent from last year,” she said. “The deadline to sponsor and be recognized on the T-shirt was last week, but we are not going to turn away sponsorships. If anybody still would like to be a sponsor of Duck Fest they are more than welcome.”

The event was started five years ago to raise money for the educators within the Navarro District to bring new innovations into the schools to encourage students with hands-on programs.

Since its inception, the event has outgrown its original racing location on Geronimo Creek at Highway 123 just north of Geronimo.

“The location where we had the festival before started to have problems with the growth of the event,” Mueller said. “One of many things included (at Walnut

Springs) is parking and safety railing. This new location is handicapped-accessible and there is tons of parking.”

Guests will be watching from the banks or surrounding sidewalks as the ducks float through Walnut Springs Park.

During last year’s event, nearly 3,000 ducks floated down the creek and Mueller said she is hoping to see more go this year.

“Last year we sold 2,900 ducks,” she said. “So far, this year we have 3,500 racing ducks looking for sponsors and we will most likely be ordering more before the festival.”

Prizes will be awarded to the sponsors of the first 30 ducks across the finish line, Mueller said.

“Prizes range from a \$1,000 gift card to gas cards, restaurant gift card and gift certificates to theme parks in the surrounding area,” she said.

There are multiple packages for duck adoptions, Mueller said.

With the Golden Duck package at \$500, adopters will receive 100 racing ducks, two T-shirts, a duck hat, and a

couple souvenir ducks.

The V.I.D. — Very Important Duck — at \$200 receives 40 ducks, two T-shirts, a duck hat and a couple of souvenir ducks.

For \$100 sponsors can get the Quack Pack and receive 20 ducks, one T-shirt and two souvenir ducks.

There is also the Kids Pack for \$25, where adopters receive four ducks and two souvenir ducks. Individual ducks may be purchased for \$5 a piece.

“We will be selling racing ducks and cookbooks. We will also be selling ducks on site that kids will be able to decorate,” Mueller said. “The T-shirt is very festive and colorful and will be available for \$15.”

Kicking off the event will be the annual 5K run/walk at Navarro High School starting at 8 a.m., with registration beginning at 7 a.m.

The pre-registration deadline is May 19. Cost to signup early is \$20 per person or \$60 for a family of four, which includes shirts for each participant, Mueller said.

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Registration on the day of the event will be \$25.

Following the race, the event will move into the heart of Seguin where a Zydeco band will provide free entertainment starting at noon, Mueller said.

"The band we have will be a Cajun/New Orleans-style band," she said adding that will not be the only taste of New Orleans guest can experience. "We had a load of boudin — rice stuffed sausage — that was donated."

Before and after the race there will be a good amount of activities going on, Mueller said.

"We'll have games with free prizes, the band and other activities, and then the duck drop will be at 1 p.m.," she said. "The band will play until 3 p.m. when Duck Fest will start to wrap up."

For more information email nef2009@aol.com or check out the Navarro Education Foundation website at www.nisd.us/foundation.