Parade focus: farms, future

DAIRY PRINCESS:
Floats in Canton event link healthy economy to agriculture industry

By COREY FRAM
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CANTON — The St. Lawrence County Dairy Princess Parade draws participants from all corners.

The more than 40 entries Saturday included staples such as horses, tractors and hay wagons, but also floats sponsored by nonprofits, grocery stores and the Red Hat society.

"This is just a great event for families," said Kay T. Walton of the Canton Red Hot Hatters. "Look at all the work that's gone on."

The Hatters took third place in the non-commercial category after two first-place showings for most colorful.

"You want attention? Wear red and purple," said Donna A. Webster, the Hatters' queen. "We grow smiles sprinkled with laughter."

When it comes to things grown on a farm, the Canton P&C float had it covered.

"Without our farms, we don't have things to put in the grocery store: milk, eggs, cheese. You'd still have a grocery store, but not the main necessities," said Amber M. Locy, a store clerk.

This year's theme was "Our Farms, Our Future."

The county Housing Council won first place in the non-commercial category for its realistic take on farming. The float carried the famous "Got Milk?" slogan and the improvised "Got Methane?"

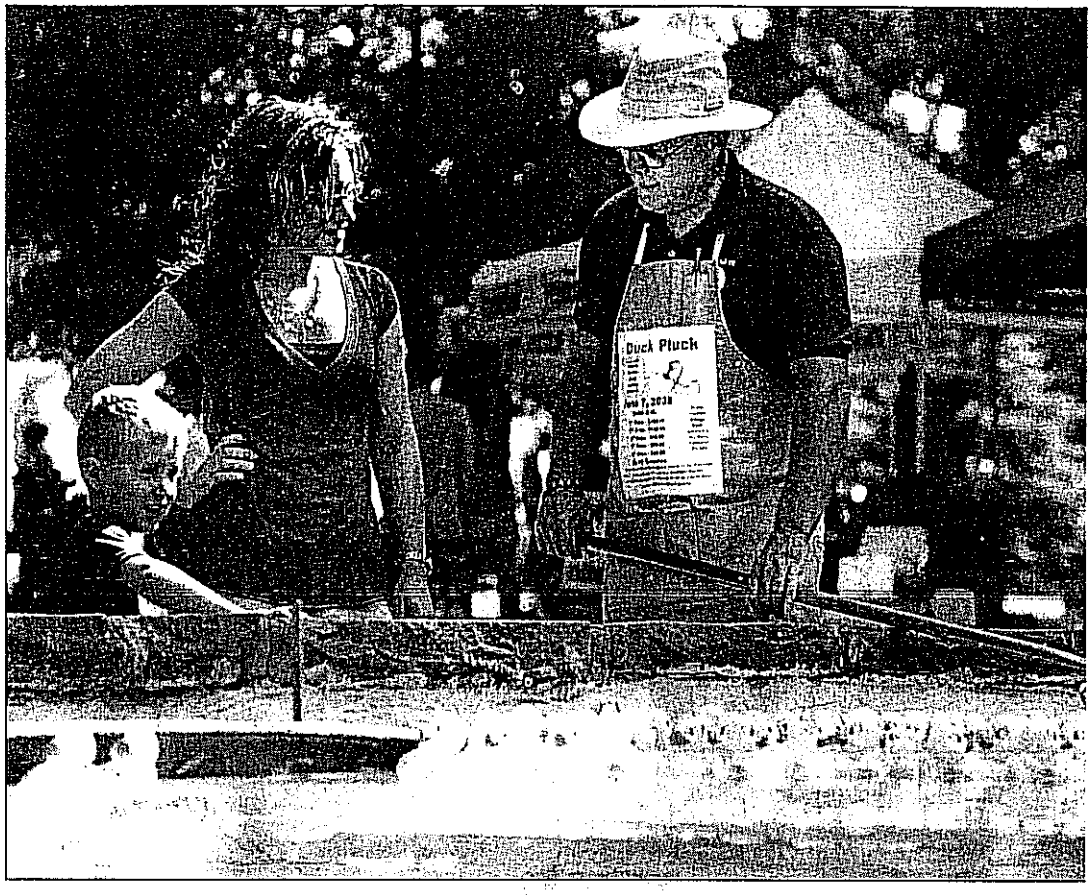
"It's a float that tries to capture all kinds of agriculture products and alternative energies," said Christopher R. Rediehs, Housing Council director. "We have to have a healthy agricultural community to have a healthy economy."

The Housing Council's float was towed by a 1957 Farmall, one of more than a dozen tractors that took the stroll up Main Street. Most of them, however, were more modern John Deere and New Holland models.

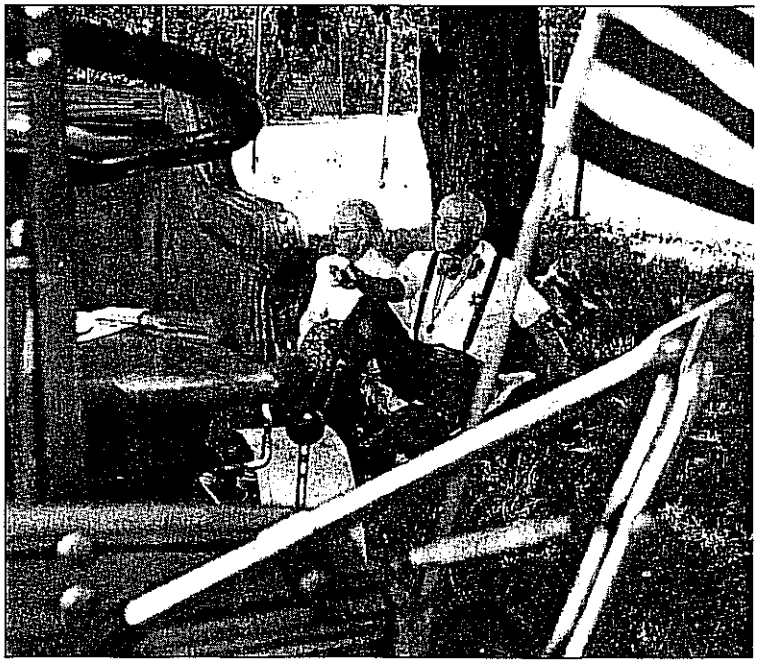
The parade was led by the Dairy Princess court, fire departments and marching bands from around the county. It included Gordon A. and Beverly J. Hartle, the Potsdam couple who dons formal outfits and rides in dozens of parades every year in one of their homemade antique cars.

"I think we've been to more parades than anyone here. I'll be 82 this month and I've been doing it since I was in high school," Mr. Hartle said. "We go from Potsdam, Canton, Norwood, Massena, Ogdensburg, Gouverneur, Hopkinton — we don't really keep track."

Clowns, horse riders and dogs were sprinkled throughout the parade, which marked a kickoff to summer politicking. State Sen. Darrel J. Aubertine, D-Cape Vincent, and Republican challenger David A. Renzi both marched, as did 118th state Assembly l Russell, County l



Tasha M. Bernard, Canton, and son Daniel W. Manor III, 4, talk Saturday with Kiwanis member Rick D. Glidden, Canton, as he sets up for the 'Duck Pluck' during the St. Lawrence Cour ton.



Beverly J. and Gordon A. Hartle, Potsdam, sit next to their homemade antique car the start of the Dairy Princess Parade in Canton.