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Firefighters and other emergency personnel make their way down Main Street during the Eastern New Mexico State Fair parade Monday morning. (Mark Wilson Photo)



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'Fabulous' parade kicks off 87th annual ENMSF

Tuesday, October 06, 2009



Matthew Arco

Police vehicles with lights flashing and fire trucks with sirens blaring were a welcome sight for all to see Monday, as they signaled the beginning of the 87th annual Eastern New Mexico State Fair parade on Main Street.

The streets were lined with spectators for blocks as the parade procession made its way toward the south of town. With about 100 entries making an appearance, there was plenty to see.

"I think it's been a great parade," said Margaret Hillman, who was cheering on the marchers from the sidewalk. "It's fabulous."

Residents young and old gazed at the different sights to behold.

There were youth football and cheerleading teams, schools, local businesses and politicians. Color guards were followed by marching cadets who were heard sounding off cadences — which was drowned out by the tunes of school bands.

When asked what her favorite part of the parade was, 4-year-old parade-goer Alicia Silva responded, "Candy."

Alicia was one of the many young children who would dash out in the street and grab as much candy as their little hands could hold every time local businesses and politicians would toss sweets in the direction of onlookers.

Of course there was plenty to see for the parade's adult attendees, as well.

"I think it's been great. We haven't been disappointed yet," Linda Anaya said. "I think the costumes for art center were great."

Anaya was speaking about the large papier-mache displays done by the Roswell Museum and Art Center, which was this year's parade Grand Champion entry.

The center's theme was based on the 20th century artist Frida Kahlo. She was a Mexican painter known for her self portraits that expressed her agony from a trolley accident, which left her in a state of physical pain.

"We decided to center it around creativity and chose Kahlo," said Caroline Brooks, assistant director for the center and the mastermind behind the parade organizing. "We started planning at the end of August and had construction parties every week."

The center's entry consisted of a giant papier-mache puppet of Kahlo and two smaller bird puppets, which were depictions of the animals often pictured in the late artist's work. The largest puppet took



