

Chocolate Festival Proves Sweet; Raises Thousands For Charity

People lined up for chocolate on Second Street last Saturday and in the process helped raise nearly \$5,000 for a good cause.

The third annual Belmont Shore Chocolate Festival doubled as a fundraiser for the Tori Miller Busch Ovarian Cancer Fund. Busch had been the executive director of the Belmont Shore Business Association (BSBA), which puts on this and other promotional events on the street, when she succumbed to ovarian cancer last year.

Thousands of people came down to Second Street Saturday to get a chocolate treat from the more than 20 establishments participating in the festival. For every \$15 coupon book they bought — the coupons were exchanged for the cocoa concoctions — \$5 went to the fund.

In addition to the chocolate sampling, the festival included two contests, a pie-eating contest for children and a homemade desserts contest.

Three young individuals were the fastest eaters of the chocolate crême pies donated by Rossmoor Pastries. They were Katie Valdez, 5, for the 5-8 age category; Taylor Brutsche, 12, for the 9-12 age category; and

Nick Hrebian, 14, for the 13-16 age category.

Thirty at-home bakers submitted desserts for the homemade dessert contest.

In the end, only six were named winners. They were Lori Jark, whose Heart of Chocolate won for most creative cake and best cake in the cake category; Karen Dahlke for best tasting cake; Catherine Morley, whose Wowie Brownie swept the cook-

ie/brownie category winning best tasting, most creative and best brownie; Stefanie Kelly for best tasting in the unique category for her Shmookie Bar; John Walters, most creating in the unique category; and Melissa McCabe, whose Break My Heart Tri-Chocolate Toffee won best in show in the unique category.

Tasked with selecting the winners were Belmont Shore resi-

dents Jillian Chandler and Bill Lorbeer, Third District Councilman Gary DeLong, Rossmoor Pastries owner Charlie Feder, Nancy Foster (Mayor Bob Foster's wife), *Press-Telegram* columnist Tim Grobaty, *Gazette* restaurant writer Larry Hill, Charter Media producer Meghan Garvey, and BSBA Executive Director Brooke Kennard.

—Amy Bentley-Smith

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