

# The Superior Sun

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# **Superior serves as new home for the soap box derby**

### By J. Peter Armenta

Residents living near Main Street may have heard the sound of a bowling ball rolling down the street. The low, but loud rumbling moved down the road, followed by the smell of burning brakes.

No, it was not another semi truck losing its brakes again, but the sound and smell of Soap Box Derby Cars speeding down the main drag.

As of November 2003, Superior has become Arizona's new home for the All American Soap Box Derby. The Phoenix Soap Box Derby Club, which ran the Derby in Superior at the 2000 Apache Leap Mountain Festival, had problems sustaining the club. The club experienced diminishing interest in the sport and was slowly running out of places to hold the event. Last year's run was held in Phoenix, near the Arcadia area, amidst numerous complaints from local businesses and low fan turnout.

Facing a possible dissolving of the club, the group approached Superior residents Jack and Yvonne Kube, longtime Soap Box Derby enthusiasts. Holding the 2000 Derby in Superior made the choice easy for the club as they felt Superior's Main Street was the ideal location for the event. The Kube's jumped at the chance to bring a positive activity to the Superior area. In November, the Phoenix Soap Box Derby became known as the Central Arizona Soap Box Derby Club and named Superior the new home of the Arizona All American Soap Box Derby.

This Saturday and Sunday was the first event for the club as the club introduced 14 new competitors from the Superior area to the sport of Soap Box racing. Drivers also came from

the Valley area, Tucson, San Diego and Colorado to compete in the weekend's activities.

Each driver was required to build his or her own car from a kit, with the assistance of adults. Each competitor, ranging from ages 8-17, can build one of three cars: Stock, Super Stock or Masters, depending on size and weight. Each driver is randomly seeded into a bracket and was guaranteed four losses before being eliminated.

Each driver would race in a lane moving at speeds of up to 30 mph. The contestants would then have the cars moved back up to "pit row" at the top of Main Street and switch wheels and swap lanes with their competitor. The same pair would race again and the total "differential time" (length of time the winning racer would have to wait for his opponent to finish) would determine the winner for the heat.

The 36 competitors took to the Main Street track to show off their hard work in friendly competition. The inexperience of the Superior drivers was visible on their first runs as they had looks of shock and exhilaration as they zoomed down the street. After the first few runs their nerves settled and they got down to business.

All day Saturday, into the night and on Sunday afternoon they raced. The Superior racers went up against their more experienced competitors, not as rivals, but as friends. During down time many were caught talking together, sharing stories and even snacks. They would tour Main Street enjoying the multiple food and game venues, all provided by local youth groups and churches. Although they

wanted to win, it was never a priority. The looks on their faces showed they enjoyed being there.

At the end of each evening awards were presented to everyone. "Although larger trophies are given to first, second and third place winners," said coordinator Yvonne Kube, "everyone gets an award...everyone has put in so much hard work, no one is a loser."

Central Arizona racers, despite their inexperience, were successful. Saturday, Superior youth Mario Lopez took second in the stock division. His feats were followed by third place winner Damion Vidal. Susanna Villalobos and Kathleen Lucas took seventh and eighth place, respectively.

Kearny youth A.J. Carter won fourth place on Saturday in the Super Stock division.

On Sunday, the club's winning way continued. Superior's Hector Aparicio took third place in the Masters Division and Scottsdale resident Michael Bridges took third in the Stock Division. On his second run, Vidal took fourth. Adam Guzman took seventh and Katherine Lucas took eighth.

The Kube's were very pleased with the event. "This has been great. The focus has turned from the negative and bad things that have plagued Superior. Instead, we are accentuating the positive," said Yvonne. "All the athletes have worked hard to get where they are. All the volunteers worked their tails off for nothing more than a 'thank you.' I am so happy to see something positive happen in Superior!"

The event, which drew over 350 spectators and athletes to downtown Superior, would not have been possible without the support of so many in Superior or the weekend's sponsors: Amparo "Ampy" Gomez, Arizona Public Service, Arizona Dreams Builders, Boyce Thompson Arboretum, Basha's, Central Arizona Association of Governments, Town Manager Roy Chavez, U. S. Department of Homeland Security, Ted Eminowicz, Farmer's Market, Friends for a New Beginning, the Richard Green family, the Rick Hetler family, OMYA Arizona Inc., Jake

Reany, Resolution Copper, Save Money Market, Superior High School, SHS Bible Club, Superior Fire and Police Departments, Superior Rotary Club and Town Clerk Rita Wentzel.

Other volunteers also made the weekend possible: Friends for a New Beginning, Billy, Chella and Joanne Preciado, Mila Besich Lira, Roy

Chavez, Gail Flores, Superior Police and Fire and volunteers from Superior High School.

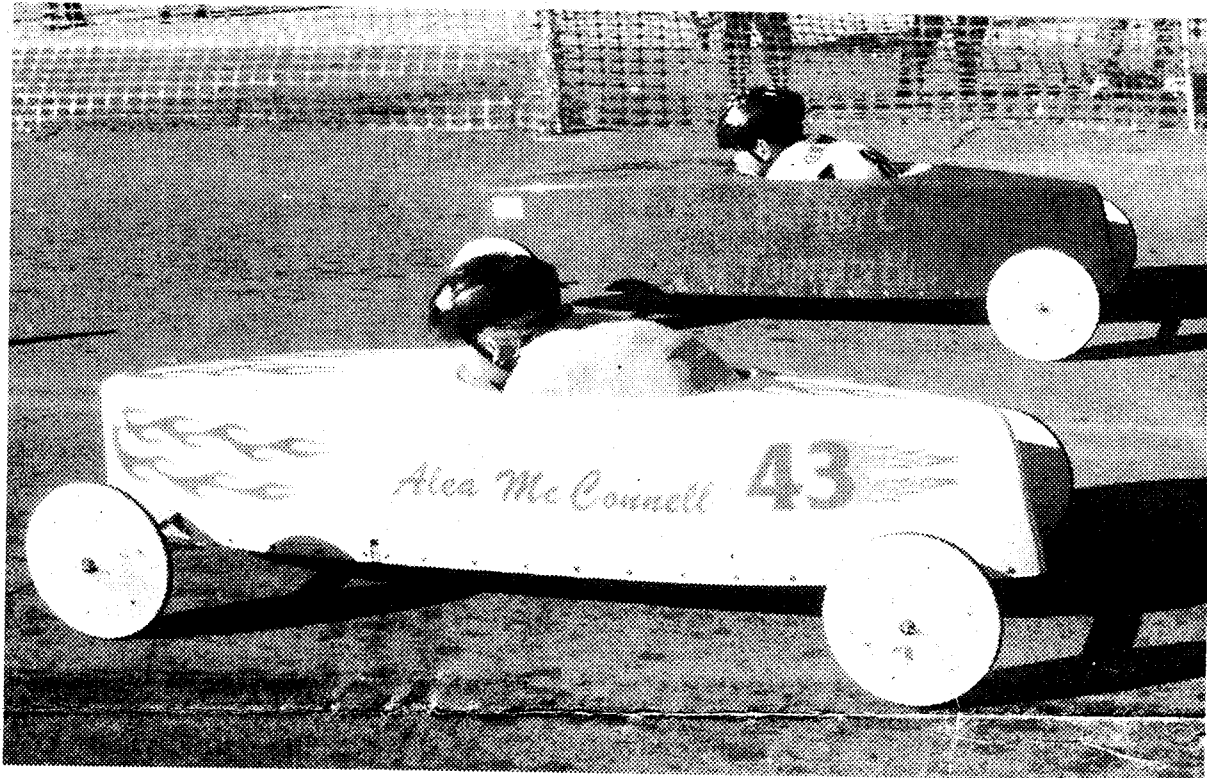
The event was a warm up for the Arizona Championships, which is tentatively planned for Memorial Day weekend, in downtown Superior.

**Volunteers**

Over 40 Superior Junior and Senior High School students, many of them

athletes, took time out of their weekend to volunteer at the Superior Soap Box Derby.

Local residents Billy and Chella Preciado visited the schools and recruited the youth. "We approached them, telling them the work would be hard, but would help them out on college applications or job  
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**Go, Girl . . .**

Even girls got to race in Superior's All American Soap Box Derby rally race. (Armenta photo.)

transport.

The young volunteers carried out their duties, even after many had played tiring games the night before. Many worked from the beginning at 8 a.m., and stayed until 9 p.m. on Saturday and all day on Sunday. Never was a negative word heard, rather, the youth carried out their jobs as cherished duties. More impressive, not one of the volunteers had a break, nor asked for one.

"The (volunteers) were exhausted," said Chella. "My daughter, as well as



**Mastering the art . . .**

Superior resident Hector Aparicio placed third Sunday in the

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**Derby**

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interviews," said Chella. "Community service is all we promised them and they responded. We were so happy!"

The youth found how hard the work would be. The entire crew worked at

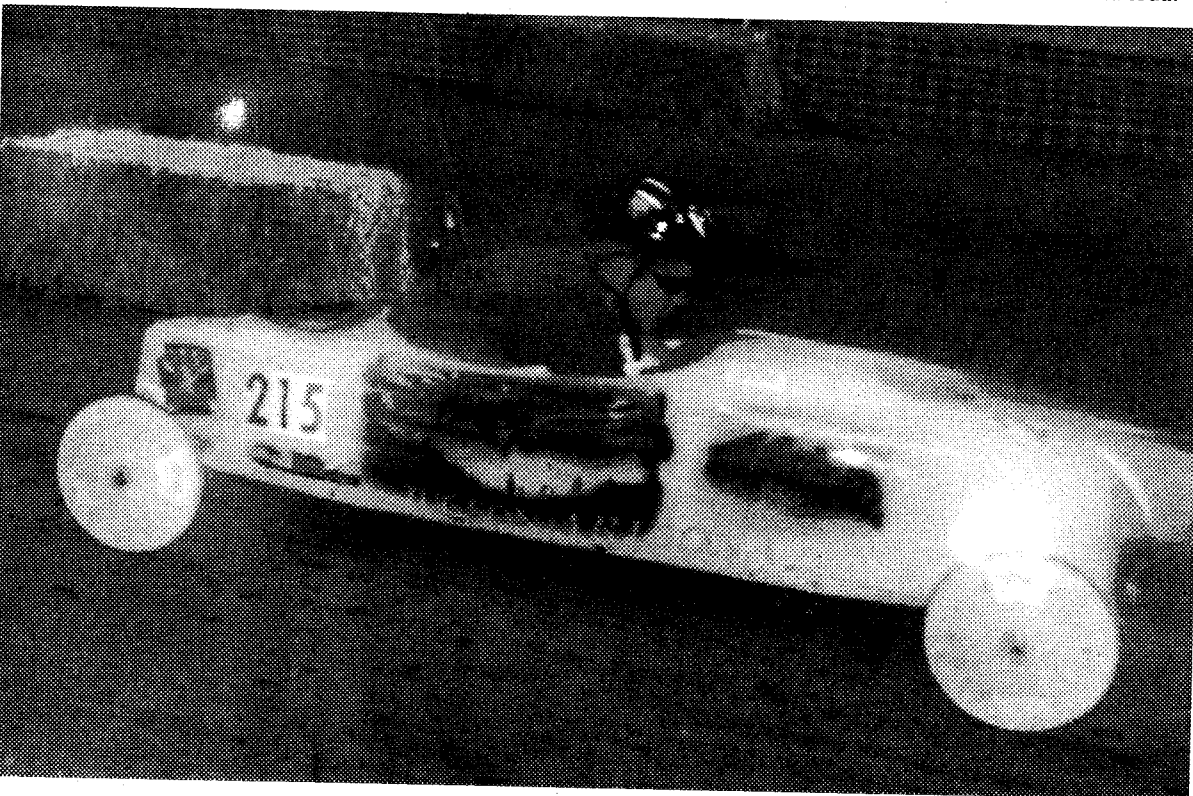
the finish line and along the track, ensuring the safety of the spectators. Especially hard were the workers at the finish line, who were required to assist competitors out of the cars, and load them up onto a trailer for

many of the volunteers went home, and crashed. I was afraid they wouldn't show up for the next day, but all of them showed!"

The Soap Box Derby Club and the Preciado family would like to extend their eternal gratitude to the countless volunteers who assisted with the weekend's event: William Ybarra,

Victoria Daniel, Yolie Daniel, Tayatti Babino, Adam Salinas, Joseph Banda, Ashley Avendano, Josh Cruz, Jaimie Cervantes, Alex Contreras, Amy Lopez, Adriana Pastrano, Daniel Martinez, April Romero, Arturo Silvas, Erica Jimenez, Angel Sandoval, Ruben Ybarra, Jacob Arroyos, James Figueroa, Ashleigh

Cano, Stephanie Armenta, Ricardo Chaidez, Westley Eldredge, Eduardo Lopez, Billy Coronado, Steve Granillo, Payton Murrieta, Mikee Preciado, Suzie Aparicio, Rosalinda Hernandez, Julisa Banda, Chris Miranda, Eric Padilla, Andy Blaine, Andrea Silvas, Brittany Denogean, Juan Diaz, Ysidro Placencia, and Steven Castaneda.



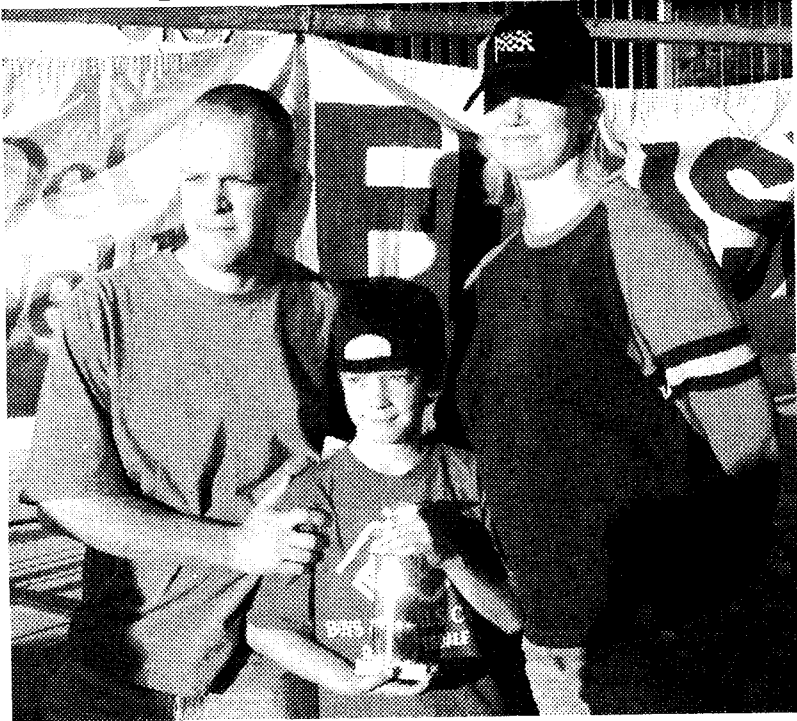
**break . . .**

teeny youth A. J. Carter won fourth place on Saturday in the Super Stock division during the All American Soap Box Derby Rally held in Superior. Carter drove "Arizona Poison" on loan from Superior resident R.L. Green. The car was featured in the 2000 movie "Miracle in Lane 2," starring Frankie Muniz. (Armenta photo.)



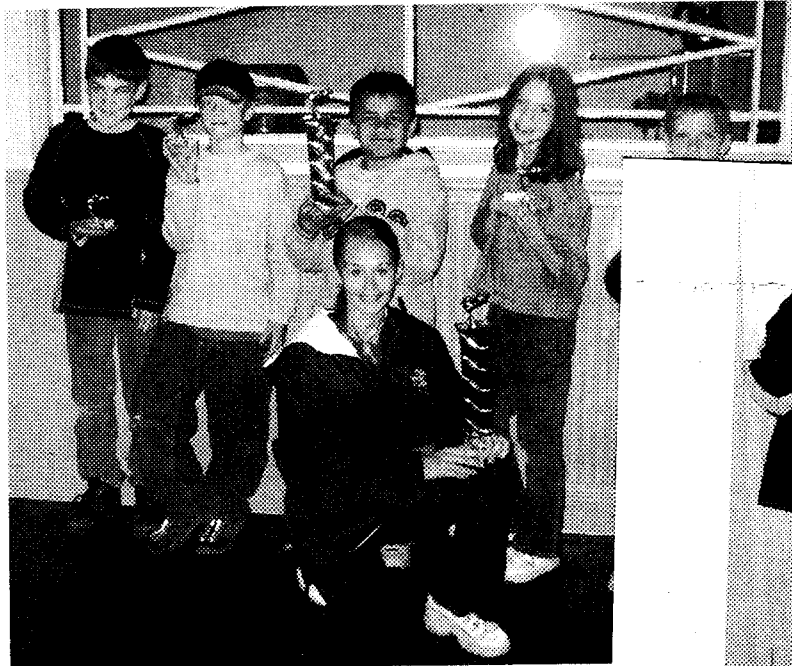
**The true spirit of Superior . . .**

Over 40 Superior Junior-Senior High School students and athletes volunteered their time Saturday and Sunday despite the exhausting work. (Armenta photo.)



**All in the family . . .**

Jack and Yvonne Kube's grandson Michael Bridges (seen here with parents Shane and Layla) placed third in the Stock Car Division Sunday. (Armenta photo.)



**Winners in Saturday's Stock Car Division**



**Winners in Saturday's Super Stock Car Division**

