

### [The Arizona Republic](#)

Coty Dolores Miranda

The Kiwanis Ahwatukee Easter Parade marked a first for the 33rd year event Saturday, but it wasn't one Parade Boss Mike Schmitt welcomed.

It rained for the first time.

Schmitt, marking his 17th year as Parade Boss, scurried around in the early morning rain showers with other Kiwanis volunteer crew, organizing parade entries at the corner of 48th and Warner.

Like the soggy but stalwart marchers and float entries, the Kiwanis were attired in ponchos and rain hats or balancing umbrellas as they helped locate the normally-easy-to-read cardboard line-up signage, now bowed with rain.

"This is the first time in 33 years that the Ahwatukee Easter Parade has been rained on," said Schmitt, who organizes the parade line-up annually.

But it takes more than a spring rain to keep Village residents from enjoying the annual tradition.

The parade stepped off punctually on time, as it does every year under the parade boss' watchful eye. As if on cue, a glimmer of sunshine broke through the leaden skies, raising spirits of hardy spectators standing on glistening sidewalks under a sea of colorful umbrellas.

Schmitt said a few of the expected 75 parade units didn't march due, but the majority went ahead as scheduled.

## Neither wind nor rain stops Ahwatukee Easter Parade

Monday, 13 April 2009

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"No complaints were heard," said Schmitt even though hundreds of participants endured an hour or more of steady rain. "But the Easter Parade must go on - and so it did."

Although the Kiwanis Club of Ahwatukee organizers hadn't faced a rainy parade before, the volunteers rallied, making hasty adjustments.

A make-shift public address booth was set up inside Schmitt's van for this year's parade announcers - Becky Lynn of KMLE-FM and Glenn Teille of Big Brothers Productions . Their cheerful patter kept the crowd laughing and cheering even as pre-parade showers continued.

Grand Marshall Congressman Harry Mitchell got his feet wet but kept his head dry walking with his capacious umbrella at the parade's sidelines while chatting with constituents.

For the first half hour, some entries walked with raincoats, ponchos and umbrellas but sunshine prevailed thereafter.

Even the annual tradition of homemade Easter bonnets made and worn by the Best of Parade winners, the Ahwatukee Service Area Girl Scouts, survived despite the rain.

Troop leader and Service Area Team Parade Coordinator Elida Desmond said 13 participating troops, comprised of 138 local Girl Scouts, were 'troopers' throughout the hour-long line-up wait.

"They make their hats from poster board or newspaper and had to keep them covered as well as they could, so they were all excited when the rain stopped," she said.

The 11 a.m. Kiwanis Spring Fling Carnival start at Ahwatukee Community Center Park had fewer vendors and visitors but enjoyed a sunny day.

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"Our show went on and the kids still had a great time with the Easter egg hunt," said Andi Pettyjohn . "The park was beautiful, the rides continued and it didn't start raining again until we were packing up."