

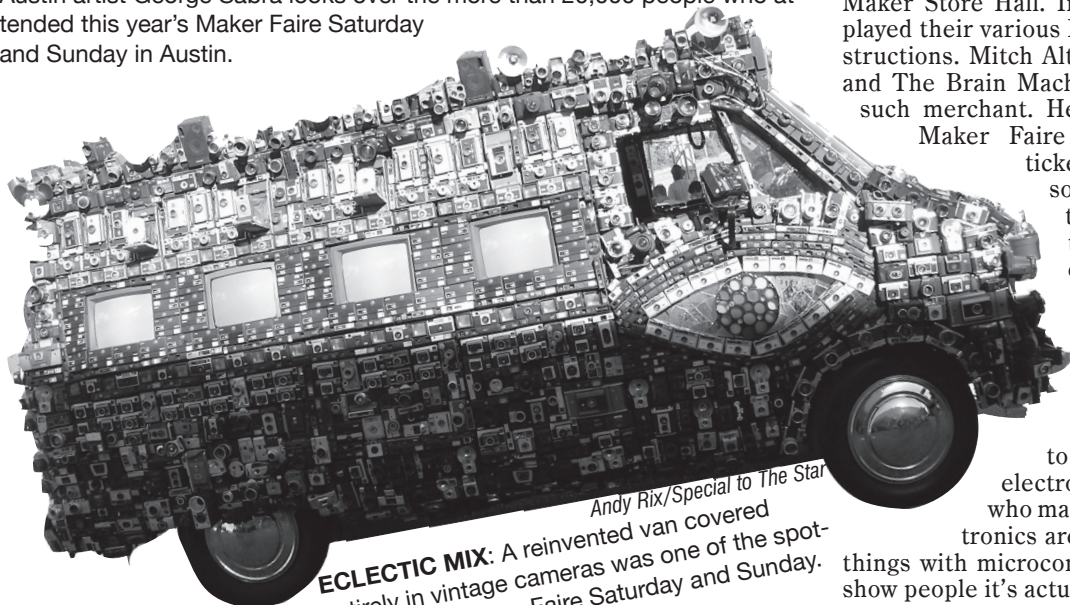
Carnival Ride — Carrie Underwood
Elect the Dead — Serj Tankian
Raising Sand — Robert Plant and Alison Krauss

Meet the Robinsons (G) — Daniel Hansen, Jordan Fry
Mr. Brooks (R) — Kevin Costner, Demi Moore
Home of the Brave (R) — Samuel L. Jackson, Jessica Biel



Andy Rix/Special to The Star

COLLOSAL CREATION: A 30-foot wooden Phoenician statue made by Austin artist George Sabra looks over the more than 20,000 people who attended this year's Maker Faire Saturday and Sunday in Austin.



Andy Rix/Special to The Star

ECLECTIC MIX: A reinvented van covered entirely in vintage cameras was one of the spotlights at the Maker Faire Saturday and Sunday.

Maker Faire creates in Austin

By Bill Rix
Opinions Editor

If you make it, they will come. And come they did. More than 20,000 attended Maker Faire Austin Saturday and Sunday at the Travis County Expo Center. Custom cars, homemade bicycles and a menagerie of do-it-yourself crafts, electronics and machines dotted the landscape. The fall day was abuzz with men and women gushing over creations indoors and out, pointing at so-and-so in awe while a 30-foot, wooden Phoenician statue wielding a hammer, courtesy of Austin artist George Sabra, overlooked the exposition.

One popular area to convene was Maker Store Hall. Inside, vendors displayed their various DIY wares and constructions. Mitch Altman of TV-B-Gone and The Brain Machine fame was one such merchant. He split his time at Maker Faire between helping ticket-holders learn soldering and electronics basics and teaching about microcontrollers.

"A lot of people are kind of afraid to make anything," Altman said. "A lot of people are afraid to make things with electronics, and people who make things with electronics are often afraid to do things with microcontrollers. I actually show people it's actually very easy to do all of these things, and fun." Fun was the impetus behind many

inventors' projects, but Altman brings a therapeutic bend to his endeavors, most notably The Brain Machine.

This device is reminiscent of the X-ray specs once available in the backs of comic books, but instead of not doing anything at all, it pulses light via LEDs — headphones aren't required, but greatly help the experience along — in a rhythmic pattern designed to sync with brainwaves to provide a relaxing, invigorating experience.

"I want to make it really fun to have people try meditating," Altman said, "because people too often in our culture don't have a moment to self reflect, and you see the results of that all around us."

The action wasn't confined to the exhibit halls, however. Much of the excitement was had outside where makers and crafters displayed their bicycle and automobile creations. A particular creation was an old van covered completely in vintage cameras — Vivitars, Canons, Polaroids and Minoltas adhered in a shiny exhibition of DIY ingenuity and quirky creativity.

Walking the grounds, one notices the wide spectrum of ages present at the expo. Families push baby carriages past the *CRAFT* section while old men shuffle by on canes, ogling the demonstrations and otherworldly creations displayed all around.

"That's the fun thing about *MAKE* — it's as interesting to 7-year-olds as it is to 70-year-olds," said Mark Ballard, vice president of The Rosen Group, which provided public relations for Maker Faire.

"The payoff for me is seeing all the kids. You live in a society where these kids are just stuck on couches playing

video games for days and years on end," Ballard said. "It shows them it's something unconventional, and you never know how many future engineers, scientists and rocket builders these sort of events will inspire."

Ballard said the capital city is a perfect match for Maker Faire.

"The arts community is strong in Austin. This is as weird event as I've ever been to, so it just seemed like a natural fit between the community at the vibe."

While it is of yet unconfirmed, Ballard said Austin is a likely candidate for a subsequent Maker Faire.

MAKE didn't come to the Faire alone. Sister publication *CRAFT*, under the umbrella of O'Reilly Media as well, represented with demonstrations ranging from sewing classes with state-of-the-art machines to wild, crocheted creations, just in time for Halloween. While *CRAFT* mainly emphasizes the low-tech aspect of the DIY mindset, the results are no less stunning or useful. Groups clustered around buckets of knitting needles, anxious for their turn to be shown how to weave their own fuzzy, anthropomorphic creatures and swarmed around the miniature press area where crafters gave live demonstrations of some of the newer, more cutting-edge designs soon to be seen in *CRAFT*. Polybagged back issues of both *CRAFT* and *MAKE* were available at Maker Store Hall, as well as other like-minded publications' issues.

The two-day event drew more than expected, according to Ballard, and he said he looks forward to other Maker Faires across the country.

MAKE and company will land next on May 3 and 4, 2008, in San Mateo, Calif.

Community comes out for Red Ribbon Week

By Jaime Kilpatrick
Senior Features Reporter

Red Ribbon Week got a running start Saturday.

In the early morning hours, more than 200 runners and walkers attended the seventh-annual 1K Family Run/Walk at River Ridge Park just north of San Marcos.

The Hays Caldwell Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse sponsored the event.

The run begins the 2007 Red Ribbon Week. The week runs Saturday to Friday in schools throughout Hays County.

Patti Wenk, Prevention Resource Center coordinator of the council, said the event is held as a fundraiser for the center. However, she said the primary reason for Red Ribbon Week is to raise awareness in the community about drug and alcohol abuse.

"We want to get the message out to different age groups and socio-economic backgrounds," Wenk said.

The Red Ribbon run was co-sponsored by the San Marcos Runner's Club and the city of San Marcos Parks and Recreation Department.

The Hays County Juvenile Justice Center's drill team participated in the event and followed the runners for the first lap of the 5K run.

Kevin Medina, educational specialist at the council and Texas State alumna, cheered runners on at the finish line.

Medina said he counsels students in local schools about drug and alcohol abuse prevention.

Local law enforcement officials volunteered at the event, including San Marcos police department officer and K-9 handler Donald Lee.

"It's important for officers to participate (in Red Ribbon Week) so students see law enforcement in a different light in the community," Lee said.

Lee and other law enforcement agents handed out medals to students who crossed the finish line in the 1K.

The 1K was completed by 145 registered runners. A total of 82 runners completed the 5K.

David Alexander of the San Marcos Runner's Club announced the winners.

Trophies were awarded in eight age categories and for best male and female overall

completion times.

Runners came from as far as Killeen to participate in the day's activities.

Students from Kyle Elementary won a pizza party for having the most students participating in the event.

The theme for this year's Red Ribbon Week is "Drug Free. My Choice for Life."

Red Ribbon Week began in response to the 1985 murder of Drug Enforcement agent Enrique Camarena by drug traffickers.

According to the council, Camarena had been investigating a multibillion-dollar drug scam in which he suspected officers of the Mexican army, police and government.

As he was leaving his office, five men appeared and shoved Camarena into a car.

His body was found a month later in a shallow grave.

Camarena's family wore red ribbons at his funeral as a sign of respect for his belief that one person can make a difference in eliminating the damaging effects of drug use.

The first Red Ribbon campaign was organized in 1988 by the National Family Partnership, according to the Drug and Alcohol Administration Web site.

All the world's a stage ...

The Austin Circle of Theaters announced the winners of the 2006-2007 B. Iden Payne Awards Sunday. The following productions were honored:

Outstanding Production of a Play for Youth
The Page and the Caterpillar — Second Youth Family Theatre

Outstanding Production of Music Theater
The Rocky Horror Show — Zachary Scott Theatre Center

Outstanding Production of a Comedy
Present Laughter — Zachary Scott Theatre Center

Outstanding Production of a Drama
The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia? — Different Stages



Congratulations to Spencer Millsap, *The University Star* Photo Editor, and Susan Ranch, Trends Columnist and Features Reporter, on winning first and second place in the Study Abroad Photo Contest.

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