

## **Fentons to Create a 50-foot Sundae**

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*Written by Dorothy Vriend*

Fentons Creamery owner Scott Whidden knows how to stay cool under pressure. Fifteen to 20 organizations ask him and the Piedmont Avenue ice cream institution to support their causes each week.

"If we have a cause that people are passionate about, then it's fun to have them do their thing and talk about it and interact with the public," Whidden said.

The shop will soon be active at Children's Fairyland in Oakland during Fentons Ice Cream Weekend. At 1:30 p.m. tomorrow and Sunday, kids (and adults) can help build a 50-foot-long ice cream sundae, said Fairyland Director C. J. Hirschfield.

Fentons staff will heap scoops of ice cream into a 50-foot trough -- and the kids can add the toppings.

"They are going to ladle on the chocolate sauce, splash on the nuts and whip cream," Whidden said. "Then they eat the sundae they just built."

In July, Fentons held a carnival in the shop's parking lot to celebrate its 110th anniversary. The event included balloon making, face painting, clowns, a raffle and the chance to hop into an Oakland fire truck.

Along with related T-shirt sales and other support, the creamery raised about \$2,500 for Children's Fairyland, Whidden said.

Whidden, a third-generation Oakland resident, said promoting the community is an important aim for Fentons.

If you read the small print on the menu, you'll find a 25 percent Hero's Discount for firefighters, police officers and paramedics who come to the shop in uniform.

Fentons staff also is working to support Oakland Firefighters Random Acts, a non-profit corporation that provides funds and resources to firefighters for random acts of kindness during emergency calls and similar community efforts.

"One of the projects we want to work on is to obtain an old fire engine to use as a parade rig at city events and possibly install a freezer where we can partner with Fentons to pass out ice cream to kids," said Cindy Chin, secretary treasurer of Oakland Firefighters Random Acts. If the group gets the fire engine, members will be looking for sponsors to help renovate it.

A plan is in the works for an October fund-raiser at Fentons for Random Acts, Whidden said. He hopes firefighters will wait on tables to help boost the proceeds Fentons can extend to the group.

Whidden estimates that Fentons staff has helped plan more than 300 fund-raisers for Saint Vincent's Day Home in Oakland, the East Bay/Tri-Valley SPCA and other organizations.

Fentons will also be giving away treats like ice cream and free root beer floats at the Oakland Museum of California's member appreciation day -- Sept. 12 -- and at the Junior Center of Art and Science 50th anniversary celebration -- Sept. 18 -- on the shores of Lake Merritt.

The shop also offers customers a 10 percent discount if they bring in a Children's Fairyland key and if they wear Oakland A's colors on a game day.

"We like to say we believe in this city. We think this is important." Whidden said.