

Family fun marches on with parade

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It was hard to tell whether it was sunshine or the expected showers people were trying to escape, as they camped under tents and umbrellas to watch the annual Liberation Day parade yesterday.

The sun blazing overhead almost kept Jennifer Muna, 26, from bringing her godchildren to the parade, but she decided to let them experience the culture she had grown up with as a child.

"It's like a United Nations Day all the time," she said, referring to the melange of ethnicities present alongside Marine Corps Drive. "Some people get culture shock from just seeing the different people."

Muna was one of several adults who had brought their kids to the Liberation Day bash as a means to pass on the traditions of their own childhoods.

Others, such as Iowana Sananap, 49, said they enjoyed activities after the parade because it allowed them to spend quality time with their families. For her, Liberation Day festivities aren't complete without a post-parade potluck dinner on the beach, she said. Sananap looked forward to taking off her shoes and dipping her feet in the water after a full day out in the sun.

Beating the heat

Seated under an umbrella, her 19-year-old daughter, Stayleen, said her favorite part of the parade was the Foremost truck giving out free ice cream. With the temperature rising, many others, such as Ashley Calvo, 20, agreed.

"I love when Foremost gives out the ice cream and when the firetrucks bring water," Calvo said.

Meanwhile, younger children jumped and rushed to the streets to take advantage of the free candy offered by the Army men who greeted the crowds. Younger boys, including Muna's godson, were excited to see them emerge from their larger-than-life trucks.

The march of the Army National Guard members thrilled 14-year-olds Peter Tainatongo and Manuel Bondoc III as well, but they said the most important aspect of Liberation Day for them was time spent with family.

"It's like a family reunion," Bondoc said, although sometimes the



Shower time: Alex Limtiaco, 15, pours water over a carabao owned by Marquin Karetan Carabao Rides & Service during the Liberation Day parade, yesterday. On board the cart was the Storybook Lady Betty Bennett-Lyon.

Photos by Masako Watanabe/Pacific Daily News/mwatanabe@guampdn.com



Above: Domonique Megofna, 6, left, dances with Javier Babauta, 4, while viewing the Liberation Day parade, yesterday, with Javer's brother Jose Babauta, 2, right, and other family members.

Left: Matthew "Matt Matt" Chargualaf, 5, watches the Liberation Day parade through an installation honoring victims of World War II massacres, yesterday. The boy's father, Matthew Chargualaf, and his classmates from the Inarajan High School class of 1996 erected the signs at their canopy. Many family members were affected by the massacres as southern village residents, he said.



PHOTOS ONLINE

▲ For more photos of yesterday's parade, log on to www.guampdn.com

fun is just meeting new people.

'Let's have a party!'

It's the excitement of seeing old friends and welcoming new ones at the "one-day fiesta for the whole island" that draws crowds to the

streets each year, according to 33-year-old Leah Brantley. She said this parade on Guam is unique from those on the mainland because "we take it up a notch with a barbecue and say, 'Let's have a party!'"

Equipped with plenty of water and fruit to keep themselves hydrated, she and her extended family watched the floats go by as they bar-

becued chicken and cooked red rice.

But for Calvo the colorful cultural floats interspersed with commercial ones represent a sign of what's to come rather than a glimpse into the past. She said it's a symbol of Guam's growth over the years.

"It shows where we started, and where we are headed, what we could do," she said.