

Farmers market lures kids with fun

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MERIDEN — As people picked from a selection of corn, peppers, fresh bread, apples, tomatoes, and more at the farmers market Saturday morning, dozens of children with their faces painted ran around holding balloons. Families were enjoying Kid's Fun Day at the Meriden Farmers Market at Cedar Park. Many children had their faces painted as Ninja Turtles, Spiderman, and princesses. Lines for the face painting and bouncing house grew and grew as the morning went on.

When it was finally her turn to get painted, 8-year-old Halie Secret, of Meriden, sat in the chair across from Joanne Salerno of Putting On the Ritz in Wolcott. Halie was excited.

"Can I get something on my arm?" she asked.

"We can do flowers, or butterflies or rainbows," said Salerno.

"Actually can I do my face?" Halie said.

Once she decided, Halie finished with a crown from one of the characters in the popular Disney movie "Frozen."

"She loves having fun and playing in the bouncy house," said Halie's mother, Nicole Secret.

Secret mentioned that earlier in the day Halie picked out two basil plants at the market to take home. One of the plants she plans to cook with and other she will have fun with.

At the Working Bees Family Garden booth, owner Charito Coriano said the morning was very busy.

"I sold out of all my cilantro," she said. "I had to go home and get more."

Coriano offered many herbs, including cilantro, mint, and a mix called "sofrito" that all came from the garden on Lilly Lane. Sofrito is a mix of cilantro, sweet peppers, onions, green peppers, and garlic often used for spices. She said her son, Brandon Coriano, helped her packaged all the sofrito.

Cecilia Beltran, of Meriden, came to the farmers market to pick up some fruits and vegetables, but not before buying her son, Javier Aguirre, a sword balloon. Javier, 3, swung the green balloon around as his friend Joshua Romero, 3, also of Meriden, chomped on an apple. As children enjoyed activities while adults shopped, a DJ played fun songs for the families. The "YMCA" theme song played loudly, then "The Chicken Song," followed by "Shout." The event was sponsored by the Meriden YMCA and the Meriden Board of Education.

Meanwhile, at the bounce house, 5-year-old Ethan Ricciardi of Meriden hopped off the bounce house and sat on the ground to have his grandmother, Janice Ricciardi, help put on his sneakers.

"We saw the sign" said Melissa Ricciardi, Ethan's mom. "So we decided to check it out."

The Meriden Farmers Market is located on the corner of State and Park streets and runs every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. until Oct. 25.



