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9
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Front Range Showcase celebrates its Sweet 16

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The Front Range Showcase welcomed thousands to the Douglas County Events Center over the weekend, where area businesses took advantage of the opportunity to share their products with residents in and around Castle Rock.

The "showcase is hosted each year by the Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce, which this year set up booths for 107 vendors who took advantage of the one-stop shopping opportunity.

The Front Range Showcase business expo ran for two days March 20 and 21 with free cake for visitors in celebration of its 16th event. Sweet 16 was the event theme, with cake courtesy of Distinctive Furniture and Dream Pastries.

Touch-A-Truck made its second appearance at the showcase, with more than 20 trucks, including a fire truck, a Schwann's delivery truck, complete with free food samples, and a mobile Army me-

chanic's truck.

The feature gave kids the chance to get up close and personal with motorized vehicles they rarely otherwise see. Touch-A-Truck was a welcome addition to the event, said Robin Slutsky, event manager.

"I think it went very well," Slutsky said. "The vendors were pleased with the set-up and the positive public response to what they are representing."

This year's showcase featured the Explorer program's drunken driving obstacle course, Boy Scout Troop 780, which handed out free water and took care of trash pick up and a plethora of live entertainment.

The venue featured live music from the Castle Rock Orchestra Jazz Quartet, the Crawdads, a Castle Rock Cajun southern rock band, and the Douglas County High School Choir.

Area businesses got creative with demonstrations and freebies for visitors, including an interactive feature at the Sport Clips booth.

Owner Susan Thayer runs

the Sport Clips at Founders Boulevard and Interstate 25. Working with a suggestion from her husband, Thayer awarded a free haircut to every visitor who threw a "strike" on the bowling game.

By noon Saturday she had handed out 17 free haircuts.

"We made a lot of new clients this weekend," she said.

In keeping with the Sweet 16 theme, chamber sponsors handed out "birthday" cake to visitors, courtesy of Distinctive Furniture and Dream Pastries.

Complimentary food samples proved the draw among the more popular booths, including tastes from Qdoba's Mexican Grill, the Black-eyed Pea, Skadoodles Baked Goods and Chick-fil-A.

Title sponsors of the event included CoWest Insurance Group and Pinnacle Assurance.

For more information about the chamber and for a list of upcoming events, visit the Web site at www.castle-rock.org.

