

HOLTVILLE – The Imperial County 4-H All-Stars Club stirred things up with some “Spooky Adventures on the Farm” Saturday morning at the Farm Smart facility located at the UC Desert Research & Extension Center during the group’s first Halloween carnival event.

“This is our first year that we’ve held this event,” said Shanna Abatti. “The All-Stars 4-H Ambassadors who represent the county locally and at state level decided to increase STEM awareness (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) for younger youth ages five to eight.”

The carnival featured 16 fun and educational stations including glow in the dark slime, till the soil and plant a pumpkin, stir up a healthy pumpkin pie in a glass snack, hop on the wagon for a hayride of good times, and find the way through a six-foot high corn maze.

“We have over 60 youth leaders between the ages of 11-19 running the 16 different stations,” explained Abatti. “The stations are geared up to some area of STEM. You’ll see pumpkin painting, which helps the art part of the STEM, we have a belching station that teaches kids about how gas and air are released from their stomachs, we have a monster lab, and we have the spooky circuit station that is really dynamic, because it sparks the spirit of science and technology into the youth so they can see that it’s more than just a lab experiment, it’s creating something that lights up on paper. It’s pretty cool.”

Dressed in Halloween costumes, hundreds of kids enjoyed carving pumpkins such as six-year-old twins Lisette & Lanette Rojo who were accompanied by their mother, Stephanie Rojo.

“I think it’s pretty cool,” said Rojo, of Torrance. “It’s a nice get-together for the kids and families to experience different arts and crafts for Halloween. I’m not sure if they have 4-H clubs in LA County, but I am definitely going to look into it.”

Two-year-old Andrew Kelly, who was accompanied by his father, Kevin, was amazed when he created a “Witches Brew” utilizing distilled vinegar, baking soda and food coloring which caused a chemical reaction and made foam.

“We’ve already filled up a five-gallon bucket of witches brew,” said Ana Dhaliwal, a booth volunteer. “Kids make between one to two ounces each, so you can imagine how many kids have come through here. This is definitely a way to teach kids about science.”

“With this event we are hoping to attract more youth to get involved in 4-H Clubs as well as offering them some fun,” said Abatti.

All those who attended also enjoyed hot dogs, snow cones, lemonade, chips and other treats.

“This event was put on by the youth — from the registration table to the booths and choosing the food,” said Abatti. “This is definitely a youth-led and youth-run program.”

