

NCF introduces Festival Concierge service

By LORI HALL STEELE
Special to the Record-Eagle

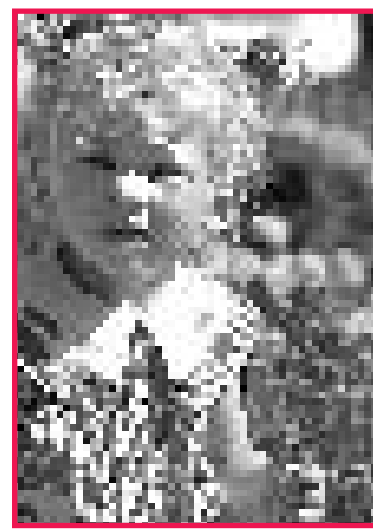
For years, folks have been coming to the Cherry Festival's Information Tent and asking: Where's a great place for a fish dinner? How can I get on the Nauticat? When is the water slide open? "We didn't know the answers," said Mary Marois, information booth director. "We're all about telling people about the festival." Enter the Festival Concierge. For the first time this year, the festival is partnering with All About Traverse, a Traverse City reservations and information center, to help with all those questions and more.

"They will act like a concierge, and they will make restaurant reservations, hotel reservations, arrange balloon rides, wine tours, rent bikes, just about anything that a typical hotel concierge will do to make arrangements for someone, they will do," Marois said. "Part of their role is going to be to encourage people to visit Traverse City at other times than Cherry Festival. We're not just about Cherry Festival." Employees will staff the booth during festival hours. Maps and brochures about area restaurants, lodging and recreation activities will be available. The concierge can arrange tours of wineries and the Sleeping Bear National Park's

Hot air balloon rides are just one of the many activities that can be planned through the Festival Concierge. sand dunes and make reservations for everything from tee times to tall ship and catamaran rides to horseback riding, scuba diving and charter fishing. Employees will point visitors toward local shops — things they might otherwise overlook, like the cherry pies at Grand Traverse Pie Co. — and make reservations for cabins, homes, cottages, hotels and resorts. "People really want that local flair, what makes us unique to this area," said Jeff Geiger, president of All About Traverse.



"People really are looking for an overview of the area, what to do, where to go, and we try to help them with that. It's one-stop shopping."

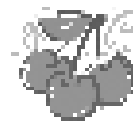


Family Oasis offers parents and children a place to take time out from the festivities.

Cherry Memories

"As the festival was coming to a close, I caught sight of a family. The mom had one kid over her shoulder and the dad had two in his arms. All of the kids were asleep, and even though the parents were bushed, you could just tell it had been a spectacular day for everyone. But their happiness seemed so thick, you could have cut it with a knife. I have a lot of great memories of the Cherry Festival, but that one truly stands out."

Jim Ellis, radio personality at WKLT



Family Oasis provides needed relief

Families looking for respite need look no more. The National Cherry Festival offers the Family Oasis for parents looking for a place to relax. The Country Fresh Family Oasis is open daily from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. and is located in the center of the Festival Open Space. Other family care amenities include sectioned-off areas for parents to change, feed and rest with their infants and young children. There are changing stations, rocking chairs and private breastfeeding areas. Supplies such as wipes and diapers are also available. Besides the Family Oasis, the Open Space offers other tents and areas for family fun. Check out the CenturyTel Festival Information/Concierge and Message Center for more details.

Record-Eagle photo book receives warm response

Woven into the history of the Grand Traverse region are its families and their lives. One year ago, the Traverse City Record-Eagle launched its community history project, "Grand Traverse - Reflections Along the Bay," a pictorial history of the Grand Traverse region. The intention was to document the history of the region through photos taken by or in the possession of the members of the community — from Northport and Torch Lake to Buckley, from Frankfort across to Rapid City.

Response to the project has been incredible. Hundreds of members of the community came forward to share their family photos and stories. Historical societies, genealogical organizations and heritage groups were willing to share their wealth of resources. As a result, last October the newspaper was able to publish a hard-bound, black-and-white edition which includes more than 300 photos. The photos feature a range of scenes, from wedding fiddlers in 1912 to girl bands of the 1930s to scenes at the family cabin in the 1960s. At the book's launch celebration, Record-Eagle publisher Zeke Fleet noted that "this community history project helps to document nearly-forgotten stories of how the region has grown over the years."

Contributor Patti Schaap shared two family photos: one of relative Ozro Dillingham behind the front desk of the Park Place when he was the night clerk in the 1950s, and one of the Central Lake band of 1915. Schaap said, "This project is exciting because it delves into the history of not only Traverse City, but of the whole community. I think it just makes us feel closer to our ancestors. Years ago, they didn't take photos like we do today. When you find photos like this, you want to preserve them for the history of the community. To be a part of that is exciting."

Of course, the book would not be complete without photos showing historic ties to the cherry industry. Orchard owner Martha Jamieson offered a number of photos from the 1950s and 1960s demonstrating the key role of migrant workers in the booming agricultural economy. A photo spread shows families of Mexican heritage as they work in the orchards and relax with their families.

The book also incorporates a number of photos taken over the years of National Cherry Festival parades. As you thumb through the pages you'll see Gary Eikey's crate race winner of 1954, Fife Lake Cherry Festival royalty Isabelle Voice in 1933, little Betty Eikey Routsong's prize-winning Grand Parade Buggy Competition entry

circa 1935, and the Rotary club entry in the 1928 parade as it makes its way east down Front Street, the opposite of how traffic flows today.

After 17 weeks on local best-seller lists, the book was completely sold out, but requests continued to come in from across the United States. As a result, the Record-Eagle has produced an additional limited run. Books will be available at the Cherry Festival souvenir tent as well as at the Record-Eagle and area bookstores.

Readers have also asked if a second volume will be published, but the paper is just enjoying the success of its current compilation.

For more information on this project, please contact Record-Eagle coordinator Deena Mansour at 933-1402 or e-mail to: dmansour@record-eagle.com.



Photo courtesy of Martha Jamieson

The workers shown here were on the job at Bay Crest Orchards in the 1950s and '60s, owned by Leslie Jamieson. Jamieson worked on a committee spearheaded by William Milliken to set standards for migrant housing and working conditions.

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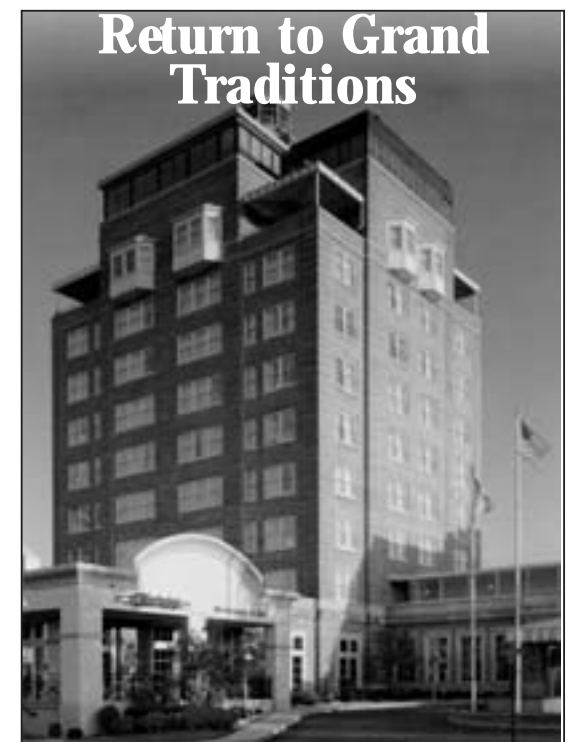
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