

## Seniors have full week of NCF activity options

By **KIMBERLY WARREN**  
Record-Eagle staff writer

According to Webster, a senior is an elder. Patti DeAgostino's definition is a little different.

"Seniors are people who have come to a point in their lives when they can really enjoy being older and wiser," she said, "though most of the events are for those 55 and older."

Whichever definition is used, the National Cherry Festival has seniors covered.

DeAgostino is a spokeswoman for the Grand Traverse Pavilions and has worked closely with the National Cherry Festival to plan a fun-filled week for senior citizens. The Grand Traverse Pavilions, along with Traverse City Light and Power, are the sponsors of

this year's activities.

"It's our mission to take care of our elderly residents," said DeAgostino. "So we readily stepped forward to help. We're really proud to be one of the sponsors along with Traverse City Light and Power."

In some past years, the senior activities had been confined to one day. The events this year will span the whole week.

"It started out as Senior Day, which is traditionally the Friday," said DeAgostino. "Then we saw so many opportunities with the previous festivals that we began to branch out for the rest of the week. Friday is still Seniors' Day, but we've carried out the activities for the week — it's been so popular."

Seniors will find it easy to find something to do: there is a large slate of events

planned.

The week will start off at 9 a.m. on Monday, July 8 with the Very Cherry Distinguished Senior Breakfast. Past National Cherry Festival presidents will prepare the breakfast at the Elks Lodge.

Area businesses and senior centers in Grand Traverse, Benzie, Kalkaska, Antrim and Leelanau nominated seniors for the Distinguished Senior Citizen Award.

"We have so many seniors in this community who go unrecognized," DeAgostino said. "It's a great way to start off the week."

Two new events have been added this year: Picnic with Grandparents on Tuesday, July 9, and the SENIOR Prom on Wednesday, July 10.

"The grandparents' picnic is intergenerational," said DeAgostino. "We encouraged it so that grandparents, families and kids could get involved. At the Pavilions, our focus is that children and older adults come together to spend time and tell stories and share their lives. As a child, your grandma and grandpa are so special in your life — we really encourage that."

Picnic with Grandparents will begin at noon on Tuesday at the Civic Center picnic area.

Seniors are encouraged to make the prom much like the real thing, said Jeannine LaPointe, director of senior activities.

"We're asking women to dress up in their prom dresses and the men to wear suit coats," she said. "We're really pushing this event. It's going to be great."

The Senior Prom will be at 7 p.m. on Wednesday at the Traverse City Elks Lodge.

Seniors can also find their



**Events for seniors are scheduled throughout National Cherry Festival week, but the biggest day is Friday, July 12. That's Seniors' Day, which boasts a long list of activities for older adults.**

niche by enjoying some of the returning events to the National Cherry Festival.

On Tuesday, a pinochle tournament and bingo games will be held at the Senior Center. Wednesday features both a tennis and shuffleboard tournament — also at the Senior Center. The horseshoes will fly on Thursday for those interested in competing in the tournament at the Senior Center. Also on Thursday — for those who want to knock down some pins — is a bowling tournament at Timberlanes.

Friday is Seniors' Day at the National Cherry Festival, with a long list of events available for seniors. It is seniors' golf day at Bay Meadows Golf Course — don't forget to call in advance. For those who just want to relax, trained therapists will be offering massages at no charge for those 55 and older. Massages are first come, first served at the

Senior Center. Finally, the day will end with a euchre tournament, also at the Senior Center. Prizes and refreshments will be offered. There will also be tours of the historic cottages and the rest of the Grand Traverse Commons Area.

"We have tours of the cottages. They have been very popular the last couple of years," said DeAgostino. "We have large groups of people come over and look at the cottages, the grounds and possibly Building 50. We'll have all three of the cottages completed soon."

DeAgostino said the new Aquatic Wellness Center at the Grand Traverse Pavilions will also be unveiled.

"It is the first of its kind north of Grand Rapids," she said. "It offers therapy for older adults in a deep, warm-water aquatic pool."

Whether taking tours, playing euchre or getting a massage, the National Cherry Festival offers a little something for everyone.

"Seniors have given so much to our community for so many years, and instead of feeling excluded, we want them to be included in the fun," said LaPointe.

DeAgostino suggested that seniors interested in participating should pick up a schedule of events.

"I want to remind folks to pick up the schedules because there's stuff going on all week long," she said. There's something for everyone.

Events will go on as scheduled, and neither wind nor rain will keep the seniors' activities from happening said DeAgostino.

"Hopefully the weather will hold up," she said. "But if not, we'll wear our boots, gloves and hats — it is Michigan weather, after all."

## NCF is fun for kids of all ages

By **SARAH CHUBY**  
Record-Eagle staff writer

They may have to go to bed early and they may not be able to watch "R"-rated movies, but the National Cherry Festival is trying to make it up to kids by creating kids-only events.

The festival offers children's events for nearly every age all week long, and most of them are free, said Children's Events Director Lani Bathje.

The fun begins on Saturday, July 6, with a Big Wheel race at 10:30 a.m. at the Horizon Outlet Center. Registration is at 9:30 a.m.

On Sunday, June 7, F&M Park will be the site for the Junior Arts and Crafts program from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m.

"We will bring everything that the kids will need," Bathje said. "It is strictly hands-on. They shouldn't bring anything. We want them to come and create different things."

Four children's events are scheduled for Monday, July 8, beginning with The Putt n' Pizza from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Pebblebrook Fun Park. Up to 80 children can participate in each of four sessions open to kids ages 5-14. Prizes are awarded through random drawings. Sign-up for the event begins at 8:30 a.m.

## Duck race fills bill for fun Thursday, July 11

By **SARAH CHUBY**  
Record-Eagle staff writer

Rub-a-dub-dub time to put the ducks in the...Boardman River. Quackers and Waddles have an opportunity to go bill-to-bill in the 15th Annual American Lung Association of Michigan's Rubber Duck Race at 4 p.m. July 11.

The race will begin at Union Street Bridge and the ducks will end their voyage in the vicinity of the Chamber of Commerce building, Sandy Piotrowski, American Lung Association programs specialist said.

Pre-race activities begin at 3:30 p.m. with the judging of the ducks, she said.

There are 13 areas that ducks are judged upon.

"The 'Ducker'ation categories include: Jock Duck, Festive Feathered Friend, Best Dressed Duck, Wackiest Quaker, Disco Duck and Dorkiest Duck," she said.

Ducks can be purchased at Northwestern Banks in Downtown Traverse City, Acme, 5300 US 31; the branch on Garfield Street, 465 S. Garfield; and the Chum's Corners branch, which is inside Prevo's, for \$5 each or three for \$12.

And during the festival week, they will be available in front of the American Lung Association of Michigan office, 153 1/2 E. Front St.

Ribbons, prizes or trophies

Next up are a Bubble Gum Blow contest from 10 a.m. to noon (registration begins at 9:30 a.m.) and Turtle Races at 1 p.m. Both events are at F&M Park.

Bathje said the turtles are placed in the middle of a circle, and whichever turtle crosses the line first is the winner. There are three heats to the event, with prizes awarded for each.

"Kids need to bring their turtles, or they can use a loaner that we borrowed from Clinch Park Zoo," she said.

One of the festival's favorite events — The Sara Lee Bakery Pie Eating Contest — also takes place on Monday, July 8, at 10 a.m. The contest repeats at 1 p.m. Wednesday, July 10, and from 1 to 3 p.m. Friday, July 12.

On Tuesday, July 9, F&M Park hosts the Pet Show from 10 a.m. until noon.

Bathje said the event is unlike traditional pet shows.

"We have different categories, like most unusual pet, which could be anything from snakes to guinea pigs to ferrets," she said. Other categories are best dressed, pet and owner look-alike, and ugliest mutt. There's even a fattest cat category, where felines are weighed, and a "famous pair" contest in which two dogs or cats are dressed up as a bride and

will be awarded to the fastest of the rubber duck racers.

"First and second place winners will each take home a giant mountain bike from Brooks Wheel. Third place will receive a Koss portable CD player," Piotrowski said.

Local businesses can purchase corporate racers for a \$100 donation at the American Lung Association Office. The "big wig" duck is a life-size mallard decoy and they enter the Annual Corporate Duck Race, which also begins at 4 p.m. July



groom or other "couple." New this year is the Grandparents Picnic from noon to 2 p.m. Tuesday, July 9.

Bathje said grandparents can bring their grandchildren, ages 12 and under, to the Civic Center for a picnic-style lunch and games.

On Wednesday, July 10, from 10 a.m. until noon, kids ages 5 to 10 can test out their bicycle skills on the Bicycle Rodeo obstacle course.

Participants should bring their own bikes and helmets. Registrations is at 9:30 a.m. Wednesday.

Cherry Kids Town Fun Night is Wednesday, July 10, from 4 to 8 p.m. at F&M Park.

"We'll have entertainers of every sort," Bathje said. "There will be magicians, jugglers, the Puppet Adventures traveling pup-

Kid's activities begin on Saturday, July 6, with the Big Wheel race at 10:30 a.m.

F&M Park. Another favorite event, the Sand Sculpture Contest, will be held Friday, July 12, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

In the individual category, 3- to 5-year-olds build from 9 to 9:45 a.m., 6- to 8-year-olds build from 9:15 to 10 a.m., and 9- to 12-year-olds build from 10:15 to 11:15 a.m.

In the groups category, 3- to 12-year-olds build from 10:30 a.m. until noon, and family groups and individuals ages 13 and up build from 12:30 to 4 p.m.

Registration is 15 minutes before every category and only items found on the beach — with the exception of food coloring — may be used in the contest.

Children's events wrap up with a Youth Chalk Art Contest Friday, July 12, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Festival Open Space. Kids ages 5 to 12 are eligible to participate in the event; chalk is provided.

Big Boy Restaurant sponsors the children's events.

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