

Souvenir Pavilion offers cherry mementos

BY SARAH HENRY
Record-Eagle staff writer

Whether it's a simple T-shirt or cherry garb you seek, the National Cherry Festival Souvenir Pavilion is the place to be.

"Everything is very cherry in our tent," said Mark Jensen, owner of JenTees in Traverse City.

Jensen has been the official souvenir vendor of the National Cherry Festival for eight years.

Tourists and natives to Traverse City can poke around and browse the pavilion from 10 a.m. until 11 p.m. every day of the Festival.

Each year, the commemorative National Cherry Festival print that adorns everything from T-shirts to ALLTEL

phone cards will also be available printed on an afghan, available only at the Souvenir Pavilion or JenTees.

Jensen said the afghans are extremely limited in number; in fact many have sold already.

Another hot item is the third in a series of Cherry Festival teddy bears, called Cherry Beary.

"She's all red, and she has a cute little straw hat and a plaid bow along the neck and the year embroidered on her," Jensen said.

Cherry Beary's predecessors, the 2002 Libearty and the 2001 Grand Paw sold quickly, so Jensen warns collectors to come early.

Jensen has erred away from the days when souvenir shops sold only a one size fits all T-shirt. The pavilion now sells

many different styles of shirts and sweatshirts, such as tank tops and spaghetti strap tops, especially for women and juniors.

The pavilion also features many other gift items, such as hats, cherry scented candles and potpourri, cherry jewelry, letter openers, ornaments, coffee mugs, glassware and more.

Jensen said prices range from about \$1.50 for a key-chain to \$60 for the special commemorative afghan, and all taxes are included.

"We've got very family-friendly prices," he said.

Out of towners can even have their souvenirs shipped home, Jensen said. The United States Postal Service Shipping Center will be located at the Farm Market tent at the Open Space.



Record-Eagle/John L. Russell

Just some of the items that will be available at the National Cherry Festival Souvenir Pavilion.

Jensen mans the pavilion each day, aided by the volunteers of the Festival's Community Share groups.

"We try to make it a fun week," Jensen said. "But come early. We won't have much left by the second weekend."

'Cherry Home Companion' cookbook back for a second helping

BY SARAH HENRY
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That traditional staple — cherry pie — is still a perennial favorite, but there's more cherry recipe competition than ever before.

Patty LaNoue Stearns knows the fruit has more potential than just being filling between two slabs of crust.

In her cookbook, the Cherry Home Companion, released

in 2002, cherries play a dominant role in enhancing pork, marinades, salsas, drinks, sauces, chutneys, salads and even Thai dishes.

Don't worry, Stearns didn't forget the folks with a sweet tooth. The book is chock full of both traditional and new mouthwatering cherry confections and desserts.

"The lions' share is from celebrated Michigan chefs," said Stearns. "They contributed to

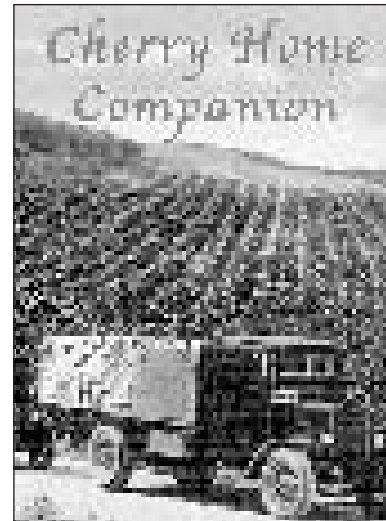
this book and so did the top food writers in the country. I strong-armed all my pals."

Stearns will be available to sign her book on opening day of the Festival and on days that follow at the Open Space.

The book costs \$29.95, and has a convenient lay-flat binding to provide relief for cooks used to weighting down their cookbooks with cans, bowls and other kitchen knick-knacks.

It doesn't provide just recipes, either. Anyone who leafs through Stearns' book will find information on different types of cherries, cherry etiquette, history, songs, postcards and more.

After last year's low cherry crop, Stearns said this year should be good by all accounts and is ready to share her cherry knowledge. "It's just full of a lot of cherry cheer," she said.



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Family Oasis

Visitors to the National Cherry Festival with little ones in tow can seek rest and relaxation at the Country Fresh Family Oasis.

The Oasis tent, located in the center of the Open Space provides a secluded, quiet area in the midst of all the Cherry Festival activity.

Parents are welcome to come prop up their feet and rest, or change and feed their young children.

Extra diaper supplies and wipes will be available, as well as rocking chairs, changing stations and a private breast feeding area.

The Oasis, is open from 10 a.m. until 11 p.m. for the duration of the festival.