

# Arts and crafts at the Festival

BY SARAH HENRY  
Record-Eagle staff writer

To check out cherry-inspired arts and crafts, visit the 11th annual National Cherry Festival Arts and Crafts Show.

Over 300 artists migrate from all corners of the country, including California, New York, Florida and even Hawaii, said Nancy Sundstrom, marketing director for the Downtown Development Authority. The artists will set up camp on Union Street and Grandview Parkway to Eighth Street from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Sunday, July 6.

"We repeatedly hear that they (the artisans) love the fact that the event takes advantage of the great crowds that are already at the festival," Sundstrom said.

Though the fair attracts many from near and far, Sundstrom

said 75 to 80 percent of the artists are from northern Michigan.

She said the artists appreciate the way the event is organized, and that it's a lucrative day in terms of sales due to the tens of thousands of people that border the streets.

"It's a sea of people," Sundstrom said. "A guaranteed crowd, rain or shine."

She said cherry products are always perennial favorites, but that in recent years handmade toys, personalized items for children and bath and body products such as handmade lotions, bath salts and soaps are elbowing their way into the booths.

There has also been an increase in other art forms, such as elements used in culinary endeavors. Homemade dressings and sauces will be

available, many with a cherry theme.

Native American crafts such as pottery and weaving will be available, and of course, an abundance of jewelry can be expected.

Richard Asher, owner of Asher Gallery and Framing downtown said he likes the arts and crafts show because he can showcase his work and advertise at the same time.

"It is hectic, and a lot of people, but it's a nice kickoff day for the festival," he said.

Asher specializes in water-color paintings, using an exaggerated reality technique to create landscapes, cityscapes and vineyard scenes in vibrant colors.

"I paint very realistically, but take exaggerated color, shape and form," Asher said. "I use a limited palette that makes the



Record-Eagle file photo

## The National Cherry Festival Arts and Crafts Show is July 6.

colors really glow."

Out of towners can expect to take home a little taste of northern Michigan with them when they purchase hand crafted furniture made from trees indigenous to the region, Sundstrom said.

And if none of the above mentioned items tickle your fancy, don't overlook unusual items such as stones and mosaic tiles, as well as other forms of yard art.

"It's a bump up from lawn gnomes," Sundstrom said.

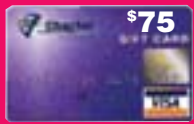


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