

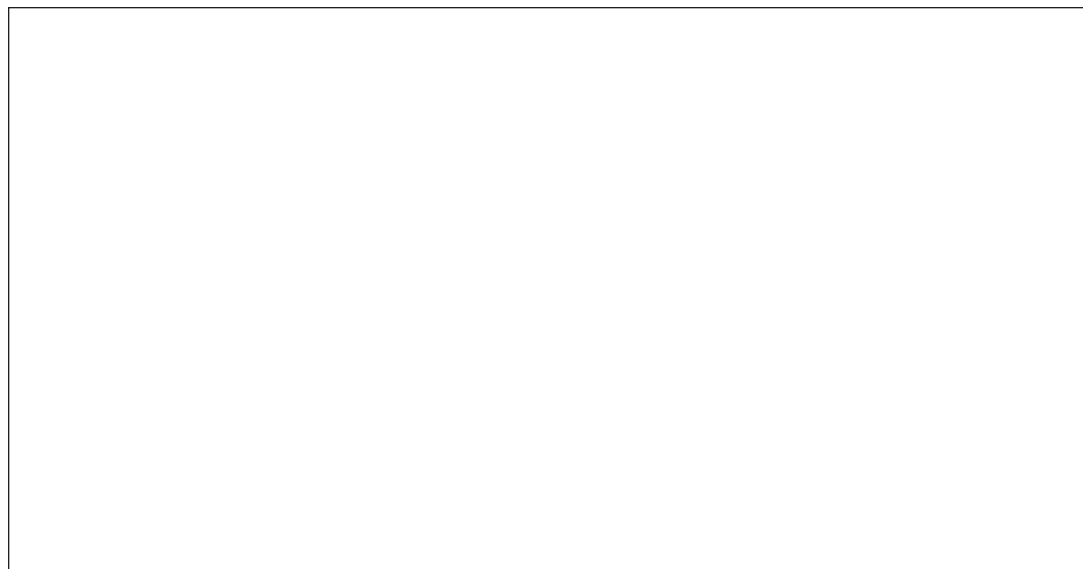
DTE Energy sponsors Cherry Royale Parade

For the third straight year, DTE Energy will sponsor the Cherry Royale Parade during the National Cherry Festival in Traverse City. The parade is one of the largest in the Midwest and features nearly entries.

"DTE Energy is again pleased to be part of the Cherry Festival, and we are excited to partner with the Watershed Center," said Fred Shell, vice president, Corporate and Governmental Affairs.

DTE Energy's float will feature a 38-foot rain garden, complete with native plants that thrive in moist areas. After the parade, the plants will be donated to Hull Park for a rain garden which will be installed in a retention basin near the parking lot.

Member's of DTE Energy's



DTE Energy's Cherry Royale Parade will take place at 11:15 a.m. Saturday, July 10

"Green Team" - a group of employees, retirees, family and friends who work on environmental projects - will help the Watershed Center complete the garden. DTE Energy's float in this

year's parade continues the theme of "Rooted in Your Community," and highlights the company's partnership with the Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay - a private non-profit organization

devoted to the protection and enhancement of Grand Traverse Bay.

"DTE Energy's support of our organization has meant a lot to us, and we are proud to have this great opportuni-

ty to showcase our efforts to protect water quality as their community partner in the Cherry Royale Parade," said Anne Brasie, Executive Director of the Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay.

A second vehicle in DTE Energy's float will unveil a new eco-friendly, 23-foot boat for use by the Grand Traverse Baykeeper. The aluminum-hulled, tugboat-style vessel was specially commissioned by the Watershed Center, and will be christened by Baykeeper John Nelson shortly after the parade.

In addition to partnering with the Watershed Center for the Cherry Festival Parade, the DTE Energy Foundation also recently awarded a \$5,000 grant to the organization for operating support.

Blue Angels wow crowds with high speeds, daring tricks

BY GINA GOODMAN
Record-Eagle staff writer

It comes out of nowhere. You could be window-shopping on Front Street or driving your car down Grandview Parkway, when out of the corner of your eye a flash of blue makes you look up. You watch as a jet soars just a few hundred feet directly over your head. Eerie silence follows, and for a moment you wonder why it didn't make a noise. Then *WHAM!* An almost tangible rush of sound strikes you and your whole body vibrates for an instant. You don't know whether to hit the deck, or just throw your fists up and cheer because once again the U.S. Navy Blue Angels are in town to wow the crowds.

Since the team's first flight demonstration in June 1941, it has showcased naval avia-

tion all over the world. In 1947 the famous Diamond Formation, now considered the Blue Angels' trademark, could be performed with the transition to the Grumman F8F Bearcat. Fighters before that could not carry out some of the later stunts.

"We were flying the Hellcat F6F [in 1946]," said Blue Angels Public Affairs Officer Mike Blankenship. "It was the premiere fighter of that time. But it was a single-engine plane, and couldn't perform the Diamond Formation."

Later, in 1974, the Blue Angels reorganized as the U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron. It redefined it's mission in order to aid Navy recruiting and add support officers.

"The Blue Angels are a representation of the Navy and the Marines," said Ryan

Courtade, a Blue Angels Public Affairs official. "Our purpose is to recruit."

Booths are set up at each venue for people interested in more information on the Navy recruitment program.

Six pilots fly in the demonstrations. There is a seventh pilot who does demos and is also the narrator, said Courtade. The pilots have to go through hundreds of hours of flight practices to be in the in the air shows.

"We start practicing in November in Pensacola," he said. "And we spend two and a half months during the winter training in California."

The Blue Angels currently have 11 jets in the squadron. Jets one through 6 perform in the air show, two others are 2-seat jets, and there are three spares.

Courtade is an air crew-

man in the two seat jet.

"I fly in the back and take [aerial] pictures," he said.

The jets can fly at speeds as slow as 120 mph. The fastest speed, with the F/A 18 jet, can reach just under Mach 2, almost twice the speed of sound or about 1,400 mph. However, those speeds are not reached in demonstrations.

"We don't fly that fast for the shows," Courtade said. "If we did, it would blow out every window in Traverse City. The fastest we fly during the shows is 700 mph. That's just below the sound barrier, and that's during the Sneak Pass."

Since 1946, the team has performed for more than 380 million people. Last year, more than 15 million people attended Blue Angels air shows.

Blankenship said the team's

largest audience has been in Ft. Lauderdale, Fl.

"There are two million people each day, and it's two days long," he said.

He said the Blue Angels team enjoys coming to the Cherry Festival to perform.

"We love it in Traverse City," Blankenship said. "We look forward to it. We get there and take advantage of a couple of days off - we rest and relax, and enjoy the weather."

The Blue Angels will perform during the Festival Air shows July 3 & 4, sponsored by N.M. Toyota Dealers, Yellow Book Yellow Pages, Alltel, Charter High Speed, Kodiak Equipment Co., High Pointe Golf Club and the Outdoor Channel, in cooperation with Sunny 101.9, on July 3-4 at 12:30 p.m. over West Grand Traverse Bay.