

# Blue Angels, Dockdogs come to Cherry Festival

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TRAVERSE CITY— All of the familiar events will return for the 78th Annual National Cherry Festival, with several new attractions rounding out the week.

The Festival Air Show featuring the U.S. Navy Blue Angels will return this year with their crowd-pleasing maneuvers over west Grand Traverse Bay. Several local

and national pilots will also showcase their aerobatic stunts.

"People should definitely go and enjoy it," said current Cherry Queen Kelly Plucinski. "It's amazing to see. These guys have so much trust to do those maneuvers."

The show will take place July 3-4 at 12:30 p.m.

New to the Cherry Festival, the Midtown Center Boardman River

Canoe Race will feature team and solo racers competing for the win on July 3-4 at 9:30 a.m.

Many other beachside and water activities will take place, including the return of the popular Kiteboarding demonstration, which will be held near the West End Beach volleyball courts from 1-7 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Dogs from all over the country will flock to the Dockdogs Big Air Competition, which pits canine versus canine to see which will jump the farthest into the bay. The competition will take place July 3-4 from 10 a.m.-noon and 4-6 p.m.

Dockdogs became popular on ESPN, and this year marks its first Cherry Festival appearance.

While at the beach, spectators can enjoy cherry-inspired cuisine at the Open Space.

"Everyone loves the food," Plucinski said. "You can't go wrong. And it opens people's eyes to all the different ways to eat cherries."

The Taste of Cherries



Record-Eagle file photo

The Blue Angels last performed at the Cherry Festival in 2002. This year, they can be seen July 3 and 4.

Food Fair kicks off the week's food events on July 4 from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Favorites such as the Cherry pie eating contest and the Cherry Pit Spit competition will be held throughout the week.

Every evening during the festival, live music will be performed by a variety of entertainers. Big Bad Voo Doo Daddy will hit the Bayside Entertainment Stage Saturday night with the sounds of jazz and

swing.

Other featured acts throughout the week include the country flavor of Asleep at the Wheel, Beatles memorial band 1964 The Tribute, and rock and roll icon Eddie Money.

"Big Bad Voo Doo Daddy puts on a great show," Plucinski said. "And country bands are always fun. We have a great concert series. There's something for every generation."

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Two-person and four-person volleyball tournaments will be held during the festival.