

New event! World champion lumberjacks come to National Cherry Festival

BY GARRET ELLISON
Record-Eagle staff writer

Paul Bunyan would be proud. An adventure into the past with Fred Scheer's world champion lumberjack team will take place at Traverse City Civic Center during the National Cherry Festival.

"It's part of our American heritage," said Scott Williams, an owning partner at Brown Lumber, which is spending about \$15,000 to bring the lumberjack team to the festival.

"We think it's a fun event and a neat thing to watch," Williams said. "We're trying to

add another enjoyable event that the whole family can view at the Cherry Festival."

The lumberjacks will make their debut on Friday, July 8, and Saturday, July 9. The show highlights lumber feats like power sawing with speed carving, log jousting — where the last man on the log wins, a three-event obstacle course using a variety of old-time and modern lumberjack tools, logrolling — a traditional lumberjack event, ax throwing with a target 20 feet away, and springboard chopping — where the lumberjack climbs and chops the same tree.

The nature of some of the events has a certain element of danger involved for the performers.

"When you're cutting things with saws in a speed competition, there always the potential for something to happen," Williams said.

Fred Scheer's team has been a dominant force in lumberjack sports across North America and the world, with shows as far away as Africa and Australia. The team has been featured on ESPN's Great Outdoor Games and ABC's Wide World of Sports.

There are three shows per day: Friday, July 8 at 10 a.m., noon, and 2 p.m. Saturday, July 9 at 2 p.m., 4 p.m., 6 p.m. Each show will last 45 minutes. Admission is \$2 per person and \$6 per family. All proceeds from the ticket sales will benefit the Goodwill Inn of Northern Michigan.

"We're putting the money towards the capital campaign to build a new Inn," said Cecil McNally, executive director of Goodwill Industries of Northern Michigan. "I think it's going to be real interesting. It ties in with our heritage up here."

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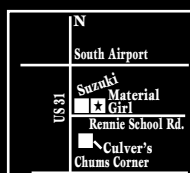
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