

A Weekend of Art & Wine at Deep Creek Lake

Written by: **Paula Yudelevit**

*I*n Garrett County, September is synonymous with autumn's magnificent colors and bountiful harvest. It's a wonderful time to visit the Maryland mountains and enjoy its breathtaking scenery and crisp fresh air. Now there's another reason to spend a fall weekend here. The second annual **Deep Creek Lake Art & Wine Festival, September 8-10, 2006**, features beautifully handcrafted works by local and regional artisans, wine tasting from Maryland and national wineries, live music, children's activities, wine-pairing dinners, and more. In its inaugural year, the festival exceeded all expectations in attendance and fundraising, with close to 1,000 visitors and raising over \$35,000.

Benefiting the American Red Cross, Western Potomac Chapter, last year's proceeds from the festival helped raise the much-needed money this chapter was responsible for in the aftermath of the country's disastrous hurricanes in addition to supporting programs in Garrett County.

The festival weekend begins Friday evening, September 8 with special menu selections at local participating restaurants. Guests may choose from specially designed wine-pairing dinners to customized gourmet picnic dinners. Restaurants may feature a speaker from a winery from Maryland, California, or anywhere in between, and along with a delicious five to eight course dinner, introduce guests to the winery's varietals.

The weekend continues on Saturday, September 9, from noon until 7:00 pm at the Garrett County Fairgrounds with artists, wineries, kid's activities, silent auction, entertainment and lots of fun. Over thirty professional artisans and craftsmen will display and sell their art, from handcrafted jewelry and wood carvings to oil paintings and alpaca hair sweaters and accessories. These juried artists represent the region's quality of workmanship and unique artistry. "I am so looking forward to the Art & Wine Festival again this year," said Julie S. Turrentine, of Snowbird Creations, creating fused glass art and jewelry. "I hope it will become an annual event for years to come."

Wine lovers will not be disappointed at Saturday's festival. National distributors and Maryland wineries will offer samplings of a variety of wines to satisfy even the most discriminating taste buds. If you like what you taste, head on over to the retail shop located on festival grounds and pick up a bottle or a case. It's all for sale with net proceeds donated to the Red Cross. Ken Korando, Chief Bottle Washer (as he calls himself) of Maryland's Solomons Island Winery has already marked his calendar for the 2006 event. "Our winery has participated in wine festivals all over Maryland and I must tell you that this was one of the best

organized and well run events I have experienced. We plan to bring twice as much as the past event since we ran out of several varietals." Plus visitors who frequent the Deep Creek Lake area will have the opportunity to chat with locals who are elevated to a new status for the afternoon as they become the festival's "celebrity pourers." Mayor of Oakland, Asa McCain truly enjoyed his new job. "Congratulations are extended to an outstanding event. It was very sophisticated and was unprecedented in our county."

Kids will enjoy the festival as well as adults. In addition to face painting, carriage rides, duck-bobbing and a whole lot more, children can take their turn at painting a huge mural designed by artist Lynn Macy.

Rounding out the afternoon is live entertainment by local and regional musicians and a silent auction that features donated wines, wine accessories, art and children's gifts.

The weekend will end with area restaurants offering special brunches. The Savage River Lodge will feature Maryland wines as part of their Sunday brunch, which begins at 1:00 pm.

Visitors will especially appreciate the Art & Wine Festival lodging packages offered by participating hotels, B&B's and resort rental agencies. The packages include entrance to the Art & Wine Festival and ten wine tasting/attraction tickets, Friday night wine dinner gift certificates at participating restaurants and discounted lodging rates. For more information, guests may call (888) 387-5237 or visit the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce website at www.garrettchamber.com.

