

MOUNTAINEER WEEK

Arts & Crafts Fair brings local artisans back

BY CASSIDY ROARK
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This year’s Arts & Crafts Fair, part of West Virginia University’s Mountaineer Week, will be a celebration of Appalachian craftsmanship. Held at the Mountainlair today through Sunday, the fair features the work of over 70 talented artisans selected by a jury. These creators, many of whom hail from West Virginia, offer a wide range of handmade items from pottery and jewelry to wooden furniture and handwoven textiles. The event provides an opportunity for both locals and visitors to connect with the region’s rich cultural heritage while supporting talented artisans from the area.

Three artists shared their excitement and insights into what makes the arts and crafts fair so special, not only as a chance to sell their work but also as an

occasion to reconnect with old friends and the community.

For Larry Kay, a longtime WVU employee and native of Fairmont, the Arts & Crafts Fair is a “homecoming” of sorts. After retiring from WVU Dining Services, Kay started his own small business, producing five varieties of honey mustard sauces, including unique flavors like Sriracha, horseradish and even a Carolina Reaper-infused “Insane Heat” sauce. This marks his return to the fair for the second time.

“Mountaineer Week is really special to me,” said Kay. “I worked with the university for over 30 years, so this show feels like a reunion. I love seeing old colleagues and friends. It’s also great to see people come out and try the sauces – I give out free samples so they can find their favorite.”

Kay’s sauces are homemade and he is excited to showcase

them to the Morgantown crowd once again.

“I’ve had a great response in the past, and I even sold out during my first show,” he said, adding that he will be on hand all weekend unless he runs out of product.

For Morgantown native Angie Tarala, the Arts & Crafts Fair is a long-standing tradition. As a WVU alumna, she fondly remembers attending the show with her mother when she was younger, despite her reluctance at the time. Now, as a stained glass artist, Tarala brings her own work to the show, including West Virginia-themed pieces and her signature gold and blue items, perfect for Mountaineer fans.

“This show is always a highlight for me,” said Tarala, who also features Christmas ornaments and sun catchers in her booth. “It’s a chance to see old friends and customers who

come back every year. I especially love meeting people who’ve graduated from WVU or who live in the area. It feels like a real community event.”

Tarala’s work is made with glass sourced from West Virginia based glass manufacturers, which she noted makes her work unique to the area.

“I like to use locally made materials to keep things as close to home as possible,” she explained.

In addition to her love of craft, Tarala also enjoys the opportunity to reconnect with her roots. “This is a special time for me to come back and be part of Mountaineer Week. I’m proud to be an alum,” she added, though she joked that having a home football game on the same weekend means she’ll have to miss the game this year.

Doug Roca, a former Morgantown resident now living

in Pennsylvania, is thrilled to be back in the area for the fair. Roca, who specializes in a mix of West Virginia-themed art, pop culture prints and nostalgic posters, has built a loyal following of fans who appreciate his work. His West Virginia prints, especially those featuring local and WVU inspired art are always a hit at the show.

“Even though we’ve moved back to Philadelphia, I try to make room in my schedule for this show,” he said. “I love coming back to Morgantown, seeing friends, and meeting new people. It’s always so great to connect with the local community.”

The Arts & Craft Fair will run from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. today and Saturday, and from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday. The Quilt Show, located in Elizabeth Moore Hall, will also be open to the public during these times. Admission is free for both events.

PHOTO FRIDAY



Submitted photo

Jodi Watson shared this photo of a regal-looking hawk making a visit to her front yard maple tree recently. To show off your photography chops in our Photo Friday feature, send a high-resolution digital image to DPNNews@dominionpost.com. Include your name and information about the photo, including where and when it was taken.

MOM’S CORNER

Make Hot Chocolate Rice Krispies Treats with your kids

Now that the colder weather is among us, it is time to start thinking about ways to keep the kids occupied in the house. One of my favorite things to do in fall and winter is bake and try new recipes and I recently found a new one I think my whole family will love.

Rice Krispies treats have always been a fun snack to make with the kids, but now I have found a season-



ANN BURNS

al flavor to add to my repertoire: Hot Chocolate Rice Krispies Treats. This holiday dessert would pair perfectly with a warm

mug of hot cocoa.

The recipe calls for salt, vanilla extract, hot cocoa mix, Cocoa Krispies, chocolate chips and marshmallows. You’ll also need to line a 9x13-inch baking dish with parchment paper and cooking spray.

First thing you will do is melt 8 cups of mini marshmallows and 1/2 cup of hot cocoa powder mix in a large pot. Then you will add 9 cups of

Cocoa Krispies, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract and 2 more cups of mini marshmallows and stir until the cereal is evenly coated. Transfer the mixture to the baking dish. Put another piece of parchment to put on top of the treats and gently press the mixture into the pan. For the last step, sprinkle chocolate chips on top. Allow the treats to cool for about 20 minutes before removing

them from the pan and slices into pieces.

These treats won’t last long in my house, but they can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for up to three days.

Ann Burns is a Morgantown native, raising two young children with her husband, Drake. She writes weekly columns for The Dominion Post. Contact her at Columns@DominionPost.com

CREATIVITY

WVU, Marshall join a drug prevention effort

BY JIM BISSETT
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Let’s go, Mountaineers. We are Marshall.

Two of the Mountain State’s marquee universities are now on the same team.

WVU and Marshall are linking up to launch a new drug prevention spin-off effort through GameChanger, the outreach program that does the same for elementary, middle and high schools across the region.

The latest overture is called “One State, One Vision,” and GameChanger’s founder Joe Boczek said it will make for the most far-reaching work yet in the full-time job of keeping young people away from ill-gotten drugs – be they through prescriptions from a doctor or dealers on the street.

There were plenty of pills from both avenues circulating into the hills and hollows in 2018, the year Boczek launched GameChanger. By then, he had almost lost someone he loved to the scourge of drug abuse.

By then, the nation knew West Virginia had a drug problem.

That was around the same time a Columbia University public health dean and researcher tagged West Virginia “the epicenter of the opioid crisis,” during her Capitol Hill testimony on the issue.

Which is a life-or-death label the Mountain State, and the rest of Appalachia, can well do without, Boczek said.

Gov. Jim Justice seconded that.

Justice is leaving Charleston for Washington, D.C., a city of monuments, having just been elected to the senate.

Washington’s signature architecture is also an apt descriptor for the latest addition to the GameChanger toolbox, the governor said.

“For our two major universities to team with GameChanger in a program supported by our West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services and state’s prevention partners is monumental,” he continued.

It’s a “clear message,” Justice said, “that West Virginia will not stand down to deadly drugs and vaping in our schools and communities.”

Gordon Gee and Brad D. Smith, presidents of WVU and Marshall, respectively, said their two campuses can bring lots of resources in a now-shared mission.

SEE EFFORT, A-6

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