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Take a trip to Market Days

Kristi Kates

Take a trip to Market Days

By Kristi Kates 6/29/09

Up north visitors familiar with Blissfest may also be familiar with the nearby Good Hart Mini-Fair. The Mini-Fair takes place each year, first started in the late 1970s by Good Hart General Store owner Carolyn Sutherland as a means to raise money for the local volunteer fire department.

Sutherland offered the use of her property for the Mini-Fair, and suggested Labor Day weekend for the first occurrence of the event, to coincide with the 1,500 cyclists passing through as part of the DALMAC bike tour. The fair was a hit, and several years later was moved to Keith Lamkin's field, across the street from the store.

"Eventually, the fire department was able to secure their own land up on Robinson Road, and the fair was moved there," Sutherland says.

ARTISAN EXPANSION

Since the early days of the Mini-Fair, Sutherland has pondered hosting a similar smaller-scale, weekly community event at her general store. Now, the idea has been developed by Sutherland's daughter, marketing consultant Ami Woods, is set to debut this June, and has been dubbed Good Hart Market Days.

Sutherland wanted to be able to offer her location and the general store's traffic to area farmers, producers, artists, and artisans so that they can have a free outlet for selling their products. The result? Good Hart Market Days' eclectic vendor roster, which is already proving to offer a little something for everyone.

"Visitors to the market can expect to find an offering of local fruits and vegetables along with locally produced art," Sutherland explains. "Items for sale which have already been confirmed include fruits and vegetables from the Hannah Farm, maple syrup from Harwood Heritage Gold, custom jewelry from Fusion Art, original chainsaw lawn art and hand sewn quilts from the Horn family, and custom toys created by Mary Hramiec's nephew—just to name a few."

GOOD HART, GOOD MUSIC

Blissfest will also be participating in Good Hart Market Days via a little live entertainment; Blissfest Executive Director Jim Gillespie and Blissfest have offered to provide music for Market Days this summer, with Gillespie's own band, Dr. Good Hart's Home Remedy, performing. "The atmosphere is unknown as this is our first year," Sutherland



says. "However, we are very excited about Blissfest's participation, and we look forward to the live music aspect and what that will contribute." The Good Hart General Store will also make available an outdoor barbecue on Saturday afternoons, which will include seasoned chicken on the grill, baked beans, homemade potato salad, and their famous chocolate chip cookies; Market Days t-shirts commemorating the first year of the event will also be sold.

"Vendors participating in at least four of the market days will be noted on the shirts," Sutherland explains. "A portion of every sale will be donated to the R.F.C. Fire Rescue team by the Good Hart General Store in an effort to support their much needed services."

ROAD TO MARKET

Sutherland hopes that the Market Days event will benefit Good Hart and the surrounding communities as well.

"Thousands of visitors travel M-119 every year, and most stop at our store," Sutherland says. "We wanted to be able to utilize that traffic by giving back to the community with an event that would create an even greater destination and would also benefit local farmers and artists. There is no fee to participate, and anyone wishing to be a part of Good Hart Market Days is encouraged to visit our website or call us for additional information on participating; we are still welcoming vendors, and hope that everyone will take this opportunity to use the market as an outlet for sale of their products."

"With local goods, live music, and a beautiful location, this is going to be a great event," she continues. "I can't think of a better Saturday afternoon—get in the car, drive north, stop and enjoy some music and the vendor offerings, and proceed on for dinner, perhaps at Legs Inn. That's a perfect northern Michigan day, and we hope that everyone will experience it."

Good Hart Market Days will be held every Saturday until August 15 (no event July 4), from 2-5 p.m. at the Good Hart General Store. Good Hart is located along M-119, 14 miles north of Harbor Springs and 7 miles south of Cross Village. For additional info, visit www.goodhartstore.com or call 231-526-7661.

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