

Festival keeps artist coming back

By JOE PINCHOT Herald Staff Writer

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HERMITAGE . Now that Leanne Ekis has a store, Sugar Magnolia in Sharon, to sell her tie-dyed merchandise, she no longer does festivals and craft shows.

Except for the Hermitage Arts Festival.

Just like going there, she said of the festival that runs from noon to 9 p.m. Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday in Rodney White Olympic Park, 800 N. Hermitage Road.

%always have a good time . even when we get rained on,+Ekis said. %just enjoy the people. They have good food and good music. Its nice to get out of the store.+

Ekis has been attending the festival for about six of its 14 years, usually setting up with her artist friends Michele Kienast, who fashions computer-generated art; Michelle Beiber, who creates jewelry and gourmet dog treats; and Stacey Keating, who makes natural and organic soaps.

%Theres sort of a community at the festival,+Ekis said. %We help each other other, support each other.+

Ekis makes everything from shoes to underwear with psychedelic designs. She will be joined by about 40 other artists who create paintings, jewelry, pottery, clothing and other items.

Five bands will play . five on Saturday and three on Sunday . and demonstrations will include Susan Dexter weaving and Anytime Fitness presenting a %boot camp workout.+

Childrens activities will include Chalk on the Walk, an art contest, on Saturday, and make-and-take crafts each day. Pet Fest, with pets dressed as super heroes, is set for 1 p.m. Sunday.

Ten food vendors will serve up kettle korn to haluski, and the YMCA will sponsor a 5K run Sunday.

If you didnt get enough fireworks over the Fourth of July holiday, they go off at 9:30 p.m. Saturday at the festival.

Info: www.hermitage.net or the festival's Facebook page.