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## Amish Acres Arts & Crafts Festival Celebrates 55 years!

NAPPANEE, IN- July 7, 2017 - The 55<sup>TH</sup> annual Amish Acres Arts & Crafts Festival will be held Thursday through Sunday, August 3 - August 6, 2017 on the grounds of Amish Acres, an 80 acre historic Amish farm listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It is one of the longest running festivals dedicated to arts and crafts in the nation.

The festival is selected by "The Culture Trip" as one of Indiana's 10 Summer Events and Festivals "You Shouldn't Miss" in 2017, solidifying the festival's standing in the top echelon of America's festivals dedicated to the creative arts. The Culture Trip is a London based one-stop, global website, showcasing the best of art, food, culture and travel for every country in the world. Amish Acres Arts & Crafts Festival joins nine other Hoosier events for the summer of 2017 with seven of the 10 events residing in Indianapolis including the Indiana State Fair and Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's Marsh Symphony.

The festival passed its golden jubilee in 2012 and is now set to celebrate its 55<sup>th</sup> emerald anniversary. The year and number 55 are both significant; In 55 BC Rome built Pompey's Theater and 55 AD when the apostle Paul wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians. In numerology 55 is a master number that rises to a higher spiritual plane than single digit numbers. It resonates with the seed of innovation and the freedom of new paths, both spot on descriptive of the artists and craftsmen who have made the trek to Nappanee for five and a half decades to bring their art and inspiration to the festival's admiring throng.

The event brings to this northern Indiana historic farm a marketplace filled with the creations of artists and artisans from every corner of the country with nearly 300 juried artists/crafters from 200 cities and 30 states. Visitors from across the state and beyond numbering almost 60,000, many representing third generations, descend on the farm annually for the celebration. It includes entertainment on four stages throughout the day, strolling musicians, folk singers, bluegrass music, and more. Live Broadway musical theatre in repertory, *Plain and Fancy*, and *Guys and Dolls* will be performed on the Joseph Stein Stage in The Round Barn Theatre for a combined total of six performances. In addition, selections of songs from *Guys & Dolls* will be

performed on the festival grounds Thursday and Friday. Festive food will be served including pulled-pork, soft-serve ice cream, fried vegetables, donkey ears, and more.

\$5,000 in Artist Cash Prizes and \$2,000 in Amish Acres Products and Services to be given away to festival visitors will total \$7,000 in prizes throughout the four days. Visitors may also register to win the handmade Smid Log Cabin Quilt that will be given away on New Year's Eve. The quilt was made in honor of the 1854 Smid Log Cabin that was home to the only Mennonites who migrated from the Netherlands to the United States and now serves as the Amish Acres Soda Shop & Fudgery.

\$5,000 in cash prizes will be awarded by professional judges from the hundreds of entries in the competition tent, including two \$1,000 Best of Show awards in two and three dimensional categories and for total booth presentation as voted on by visitors. Drawings for visitor giveaways include theatre and overnight getaway packages; wagon rides; guided tours; and The Best of Show collection is on permanent display in the Arts & Crafts Best of Show Blue Ribbon Museum located in the Barn Loft Wine Room of Amish Acres Restaurant.

Judging for the winners of \$5,000 in cash prizes has moved from a competition tent to the marketplace. The judges will systematically search through the booths in each aisle, interacting with the exhibitors, while seeking the best of the best in six categories. Winner's ribbons, including the two \$1,000 purchase prizes, will be presented to the winning artists and craftsmen to proudly display along with their pieces in their booths throughout the festival. For the first time visitors will have the opportunity to view the winning pieces in the context of each artist's and craftsmen's body of work.

The fourth generation of the founding family is now involved in the festival's planning and production. Richard Pletcher, founder of the festival and Amish Acres, remains CEO and Jennifer Pletcher Wysong is the festival director. The event started as a clothes line show in downtown Nappanee during sidewalk days in 1962. Amish Acres was created and grew out of the demand from the early festival's visitors for Amish related experiences and products.

Festival hours are Thursday-Saturday (August 3-6) 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday (August 6) from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission price is \$7.00 for adults, \$6.00 for seniors (60 & older), and students 12 – 17; active military and children under age 12 are free. Parking is free with several parking areas and six entrances for visitors' convenience.

Amish Acres is located on U.S. Highway 6, one mile west of downtown Nappanee. Pre-event tickets and four-day passes can be purchased online. For more information on Amish Acres, the Arts and Crafts Festival, and The Round Barn Theatre visit [AmishAcres.com](http://AmishAcres.com)