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Amish Acres Arts & Crafts Festival adds Dori Crane's name to its Best of Show Prize

NAPPANEE, IN- July 24, 2017 – Beginning with this year's Arts & Crafts Festival's awards, the two dimensional purchase prize will be known as the Dori Crane Best of Show Prize. The 2017 festival judges Justin Barfield and Lucas Korte, both art professors at the University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana will have the honor of choosing the first Dori Crane award to its winner. Mrs. Crane, who passed away July 2, 2017, was in 2012 inducted into the festival's hall of fame on its 50th anniversary year. Over \$250,000 in cash prizes have been awarded over the last fifty four years. The most coveted prizes are two \$1,000 purchase prizes. Previous winning pieces are on display in an art gallery located in the Barn Loft at Amish Acres.

In 1962 when the first Pletcher's Village Art show began as a sidewalk art display, founder Richard Pletcher approached Dori Crane to assist in finding art works to display on clothes lines strung in front of Pletcher Furniture Village. Because of a de-emphasis of art in the local school rooms, Dori had begun teaching art classes in her home's basement. The popularity of her classes led her to begin a summer art program for children for the city's park department's summer events. The classes took place at the West Side Park pavilion. Dori was assisted by South Bend watercolorist Joseph Wrobel. She embraced the opportunity to have her students' works shown in public and provided the majority of the paintings for the first show. Many were of red barns that her students had painted at the same time.

"Without Dori's expertise to kick start the event, the arts & crafts festival would have never been possible," said founder Richard Pletcher, "She envisioned the event's format that is still followed today."

As the festival grew Dori's involvement increased as she became the primary art consultant for the event; her daughters, Kathy and Cheryl, became equally engaged in making the event grow each year of their involvement. The show evolved over the next nine years into a festival with artists and craftsmen manning their own booths squeezed up and down the alleys of Nappanee. In 1971 the festival, which had outgrown the downtown, was moved to Amish Acres where it continued to grow into its current format that includes 300 artists and craftsmen who exhibit their wares in a marketplace atmosphere around the historic farm's pond and has been nationally recognized as one of American's Top 100 Events by the American Bus Association.