

County puts its best on display



Jason Rearick / The Citizen

Tanya Warren with Bass Pro Shop checks Becca Emmerich's plate to see if she would like the dish as Kathryn Veillette looks on at the Mahogany Table booth Wednesday afternoon during the Tour Cayuga Showcase at the Emerson Park pavilion.

Exhibitors draw crowds to Emerson Park pavilion

LOUISE HOFFMAN BROACH
The Citizen

OWASCO — The Emerson Park pavilion Wednesday became a mecca for tourists, offering them the opportunity at TourCayuga to see all that the county has to offer for recreation, the arts, history, dining and shopping.

TourCayuga was sponsored by the county's tourism office and the Downtown Auburn Business Partnership. Although there was a downtown flavor, many of the exhibitors represented the far ends of the county, from Moravia to Fair Haven.

The purpose of the event, which also gave special recognition to several tourism-related enterprises, "is to honor and showcase Cayuga County attractions and tourism-related businesses."

This is the first year there have been 40 exhibitors, enough to fill both rooms at the Emerson Park Pavilion. Last year, the first year of the promotion, just one room was used.

Those attending were given plenty of free items, from wine-



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Betty Lewis, of Auburn's Historical and Cultural Sites Commission, signs off on Owen and Logan Bradney's passport. Once the passport is signed off by every booth, it can be entered in a raffle to win an assortment of prizes including a mountain bike. The Bradney family is up from Lakeland, Fla., visiting family.



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...ipp, right, and Dia Dearstynne perform as part of the New
...nce Ensemble for the TourCayuga Showcase.

County exhibits its wares

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glasses to tote bags, posters, maps and literature to help remind them of what the county has to offer.

Sherri Nicolosi, retail tour manager for Onondaga Coach, based in Sennett, brought information about the charter tour company, hoping to interest attendees in participating in some trips.

Last year, Gail Wichers came to the event as a spectator. This year, she had a table promoting her Wicher Garden Bed and Breakfast on Dunning Avenue.

The Auburn Holiday Inn and the Microtel Inn & Suites had tables as well.

It was also the first year that the Old Erie Restaurant in Weed-

sport had a presence at the event. Restaurant Manager Brian

Potter was giving out samples of strawberry-rhubarb cobbler, one of the restaurant's dessert specialties, and touting the regional menu.

The restaurant, on North Seneca Street, features venison and rabbit, and has recently expanded its wine list.

Potter said Old Erie decided to participate to increase the restaurant's visibility, particularly with people from within Cayuga County.

In the summer, Potter said, nearly 90 percent of the restaurant business comes from tourists traveling the New York State Thruway.

An hour into the event, Dale Parker of King Ferry Winery said winery staff had already poured 150 glasses. He said the turnout was good last year, but it was outstanding this time

around.

A member of the county's Tourism Board, Parker said he was heartened by the full rooms and the interest expressed in the attractions.

He said the timing was perfect. The event, which ran from 4 to 8 p.m., was in time to catch the matinee crowd leaving the Merry-Go-Round production of "Mame," as well as theater-goers coming in for the evening performance.

Parker said it was important to bring the Merry-Go-Round crowd in because many of them are tourists who are not familiar with what the county may have to offer beyond the theater.

The Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District was at TourCayuga for the first time. Jenna Hicks brought promo-

tional materials for the River Otter Tour program CCWCD runs each summer on the Seneca River.

On Mondays and Saturdays, tours are conducted on a pontoon boat that leaves from a marina in Weedsport.

The boat is also used for tours of Little Sodus Bay on the Fourth of July and Labor Day weekends in Fair Haven.

Hicks said CCSWCD has had success booking boat tours through the interest that was generated from the TourCayuga booklet.

Dancers from the New York Institute of Dance and Education gave three performances on the patio of the pavilion.

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