



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 8, 2006

### CONTACT:

Shelly Angers, Northern Forest Center  
603-229-0679 x109  
sangers@northernforest.org

George Gay , Businesses for the Northern Forest  
802-253-8227  
ggay@nfainfo.org

## Local Artisans and Craft Producers Get Creative for the Fall Tourist Season

Each fall, visitors come to the Northern Forest to see our world-renowned foliage. The region is currently ramping up for this annual influx of tourists, and local artisans, craftspeople and others involved in the tourist industry are not sitting back and waiting for tourist dollars to find them. They are creating events, exhibiting in unexpected places and finding other innovative ways to bring these visitors to their doors.

A sample of events across the region includes:

Bethel, Maine's Harvest Festival and Chowdah Cook-off on September 16 will include more than pie tasting and a "best of the best" chowder competition; local artisans will also be demonstrating their skills and selling items at the Arts & Crafts market.

Barre, Vermont's Studio Place Arts is hosting the 2nd Annual Ride for Art, also on September 16. The event connects bike-touring enthusiasts both to art created at studios of local artists, who host refreshment breaks, and to spectacular autumn scenery in central Vermont.

In Saranac Lake, New York, the season's final Third Thursday Gallery Walk, a village-wide arts event, takes place from 4:30-7pm on September 21. Tours are self-guided and allow visitors to view professional artwork in a variety of gallery settings and venues, hear musicians perform at several outdoor locations and experience a vibrant and festive arts event.

And on October 17, the Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN) will celebrate the opening of its Small Works Gallery at its shop in Bethlehem, NH. The event also serves as the local launch of *HandMade in the Northern Forest: A guide to fine art and craft traditions in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York*, a new guidebook that showcases the wide variety and high quality of the region's artists and craft providers.

-more-

*HandMade in the Northern Forest* is another tool artisans and craftspeople are using to generate tourist business. The guidebook lists 365 artisans and craftspeople, galleries, craft marketplaces, special attractions, restaurants and historic inns, organized into 13 driving tours throughout the four-state Northern Forest region. Colorful maps of each route guide tourists on their way while giving them a sense of the unique places they are visiting. Underscoring the importance of heritage in the Northern Forest, each chapter includes a cultural heritage profile, sidebar articles and interesting “tidbits” about locations along the way.

*HandMade in the Northern Forest* also has a website, [www.HandMadeInTheNorthernForest.com](http://www.HandMadeInTheNorthernForest.com), which tourists can use to research the type of businesses that most interest them. For maximum ease-of-use, the site features a directory that can be sorted by business type, name, location and business website.

Two nonprofit organizations, the Northern Forest Center and Businesses for the Northern Forest, published *HandMade in the Northern Forest* with the support of a region-wide steering committee that included members from both the arts and business sectors.

“People who make their living as artists and craftspeople in the Northern Forest consistently show that they are also creative when it comes to marketing their businesses,” said Stephen D. Blackmer, president of the Northern Forest Center. “The Center is pleased to be able to assist them with tools like *HandMade in the Northern Forest*.”

“Tourists from all over the world love to visit the Northern Forest and experience our breathtaking foliage season,” said George Gay, acting director of Businesses for the Northern Forest. “Along with their photos and memories, they also like to take home beautiful handcrafted works to remember their visit. *HandMade in the Northern Forest* helps them find the perfect item to commemorate their time spent here.”

*HandMade in the Northern Forest* received funding from following foundations and programs: the USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant program, the John Merck Fund, the National Endowment for the Arts, Great Bay Foundation, Northern New Hampshire Foundation, Maine Community Foundation and the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts.

*HandMade in the Northern Forest* retails for \$19.95 and is available from participating businesses, bookstores, Amazon.com and through Enfield Publishing & Distribution, (603) 632-7377.

The **Northern Forest Center** was founded in 1997 to mobilize people to build healthy communities, economies and ecosystems by working together across the Northern Forest region. The Center believes that by building partnerships and working together, people and organizations can attract the resources, build the capacity, and take the actions needed to establish the Northern Forest as a model for living sustainably and well in a rural, forested place.

**Businesses for the Northern Forest** works to strengthen long-term business opportunities in the Northern Forest by helping businesses to work together to improve the financial, social and environmental well being of the region.

###

**NOTE TO EDITORS:** If you would like electronic files of *HandMade in the Northern Forest*'s cover or of any of its pages, please contact Shelly Angers, Northern Forest Center, 603-229-0679 x109, [sangers@northernforest.org](mailto:sangers@northernforest.org). Review copies of the book are also available.