

TRAVEL

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IRIS SANDERSON JONES

Cherries blossom into big business

By Iris Sanderson Jones
special writer

Tom Kern came through the door in a tie patterned with red cherries. Sue Olson followed in a dress red with cherries. Then there was Sue Judson, wearing a cherry-covered blouse over a cherry-covered skirt.

"They must all shop at the same place," somebody said.

If you saw this sartorial splendor flitting around the metro Detroit area recently, you caught it all on Judson. Nobody told her when she graduated from Southfield High School, that she would spend her adult days doing this.

Judson custom designs and sews clothes sold in Detroit, Chicago and west Michigan. She is also a volunteer for the National Cherry Festival, which launches its annual craziness July 6 and ends with the world's only Milk Carton Regatta on July 13.

Judson grew up in Southfield but spent her summers with her parents and grandparents at Torch Lake, so she was already part of the northern Michigan scenery when her husband Charles accepted a job in the Traverse City area.

Judson has childhood memories of cherries, but even her creative mind could not have imagined the forms that cherries take in west Michigan these days.

At the Taste of Cherries noon to 4 p.m. July 6, the menu will include cherry mustard, cherry jam, cherry barbecue sauce, cherry pepper jelly and cherry salad dressings, just to name a few.

Cherries are serious business in the Midwest. Ask the folks at the Cherry Marketing Institute (CMI) in Okemos, who represent more than 1,500 cherry growers in Michigan, Wisconsin and Utah. Utah?

Ask them what they do and Jane Baker will tell you that CMI works with researchers and professors to create "new applications for cherries to meet the changing demands of consumers and industry."

They are also promoting sales in markets as far away as Japan and Taiwan, but anybody who attends the National Cherry Festival knows how far they will go to put cherries on the table: cherry cordials, cherry fudge, cherry butter, cherry pasta.

Serious business will take you through cherry orchards and industry products, but the festival is definitely aimed at those who like to have fun.

If you thought midwesterners only went crazy in the winter, you have never attended a Traverse City Bon-Ann, held this year on Tuesday, July 9, or joined the Cherry Pie Eating Contest, July 8 and 12.

Mark Renard of Livonia, who has a summer home in the Traverse City area, describes it: "the contestants have their hands tied behind their backs when they lean over and put their faces in the cherry pie. When they come up again their eyebrows are full of cherry pie filling."

Wear your oldest T-shirt; cherry stains do not come out easily.

Beach Volleyball, the city's biggest beach party, begins at 9 a.m. July 6. The National Cherry Festival Bon-Ann starts at 9 a.m. July 7. You can go fly a kite either day at Grand Traverse Resort.

Adult Fun Night begins at 6 p.m. July 8 with the piñata-splitting contest. The big event for adults however is the Power Lounging, described as being "idle with vigor." You know.

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Photo by MICKY JONES

A cherry march in the National Cherry Festival parade in Traverse City. The festival begins July 6 and ends July 13.

To be in Denmark on July 4

Danes mark U.S. holiday

By Joy Schlesben Lewis
special writer

AALBORG, DENMARK — Raise the flag, sing the Anthem, light the fireworks. Hurray for the red, white and blue, independence and freedom. It's the Fourth of July — in Denmark.

For 79 years, except during two world wars, this small Scandinavian country of five million has celebrated our national birthday at Rebild, the country's only national park, and in Aalborg, a lively city 15 miles from the park.

At Rebild, flags from the two nations are everywhere. Some Danes wear the Stars and Stripes like a cloak, draping it elegantly down their backs. Others make American flags in the red, white and blue. Many sport hats decorated with American and Danish flags. State flags from across the United States line the walk leading down to the park's natural amphitheater.

Applause surges to the highest hilltop when the Danish ambassador to the United States and the U.S. ambassador to Denmark deliver eloquent greetings from the queen of Denmark and the president of the United States. A U.S. Air Force band marches in dress whites, pompon girls lead a California high school band, Danes sing "Home on the Range" and others in their western dress come from Aalborg, not Texas.

Visiting Americans look on amazed. This isn't their nation's capital or "our town." This is Denmark — land of Hans Christian Andersen, Hamlet's castle, of a flag affectionately called "Dannebrog." So why all the hoopla over the Yankees' Fourth — 4,000 miles across the Atlantic from the White House?

The story, which reads like a fairy tale, began 13 decades ago.

From the mid-1800s through the turn of the century, one out of every 10 Danes left for America, "Land of Promise." They did not leave for political reasons, but to find fresh soil, a new economy and a chance to educate their children. Most came to the upper Midwest.

When the Danish-American Society was founded in Chicago in 1912, they bought 200 acres of land near Aalborg, an old port city on the sailboat-dotted Lim Fjord 160 miles northwest of Copenhagen.

This was not just any land but Rebild. Centuries ago, vandals, including Vikings, ravaged the tranquil area of heather and pine woods. By 1812, most of the heather had been sacrificed to the plow.

The society replanted the heather and honored the country of their birth by donating the treasured land to the Danish government, then under the rule of King Christian X. To honor the nation which had welcomed 500,000 Danish immigrants, they made one important stipulation — America's Fourth of July must be celebrated in Rebild every year.

King Christian X agreed. He opened the area as a national park that would stand as a lasting symbol of Danish-American friendship. "The Star-Spangled Banner" is sung only on the Fourth in Rebild, but visitors are reminded of this kinship all through the year. A large Lincoln log cabin, constructed in 1934 as a memorial museum, symbolizes homes built by immigrants in the mid-1800s. Each of America's then 48 states contributed a log.

Rebild's annual gala has featured Americans Walter Cronkite, Carl Warren, Walt Disney, Hubert Humphrey, Raymond Burr, Richard Nixon, Jean Hersholt, Danny Kaye, Ronald Reagan and Dionne Warwick. One of this year's main speakers is Garrison Keillor.

As Old Glory is raised to fly beside the red and white Dannebrog, Danes stand and cheer their approval. Visitors from the United States beam like Olympic gold-medal winners.

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Above, a couple blanket themselves in the red, white and blue as Denmark celebrates its national birthday. At left, the best-loved and liveliest street is Jomfru Anne Gade — "Virgin Ann" in English.



Fun, fireworks on Fourth

America bursts into summer this week with a great explosion of rockets, pinwheels, spirals and other fireworks painting the sky with lights.

The International Freedom Festival lights up the Detroit River through July 4. Both Canada and the United States burst with patriotic color on either side of the river.

The Bay City Fireworks Festival, the largest display in outstate Michigan, will make a big bang July 4 through 6. When you get the stars out of your eyes, consider the Bay City Belle, a 49-passenger boat which is a veritable docked in Wenonah Park and offering daily cruises. There is also the riverwalk and pier with its Victorian gazebo and a new marina.

Toronto is also ablaze with both fireworks and celebration, July 1 to Canada Day.

FIREFWORKS AND CANNON
Fourth of July fireworks will be joined by the boom of cannons at Michigan's Colonial Michilimackinac in Mackinac City and Fort Mackinac on Mackinac Island. Activities will include dozens of costumed voyagers landing at Colonial Michilimackinac in heavy canoes and a patriotic ceremony on the island designating Fort Mackinac's Post Cemetery as a National Cemetery.

The celebration began on June 29 and runs through July 7. Special guests include all active

members of the U.S. armed forces, who will receive free admission to Mackinac State Historic Parks during the holiday period.

The morning of the Fourth about 40 costumed voyagers will paddle three 40-foot canoes under the Mackinac Bridge and head for the sandy beaches at Colonial Michilimackinac. The Canadian canoers are re-enacting the travels of Sir Alexander MacKenzie, a renowned British explorer who journeyed twice through the Straits of Mackinac between 1789 and 1793 and discovered routes to the Arctic and Pacific oceans.

When the canoes touch the beach, gifts will be exchanged and welcomes extended, with costumed interpreters of Colonial-Michilimackinac hosting the voyagers. Then the church bell will peal and all will be invited to an 18th Century French wedding, followed by a celebration dance on the Parade Ground where all are encouraged to join in.

At Fort Mackinac, holiday programming begins the weekend before the Fourth and continues the weekend after. The hunting will be out and special military drills and music will pay tribute to our nation's independence and visiting service men and women.

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Photo by MICKY JONES

