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Better Than Ever, the Bellevue Festival of the Arts Returns for its 22nd Year in July 2006!

Popular Annual Arts Festival Returns July 28 - 30, 2006

Bellevue, Wash. February 24, 2006 – Each year at the height of summer, it's one of the Eastside's most anticipated events, and now it returns for its 22nd straight year: **The Bellevue Festival of the Arts** (www.Bellevuefest.org). Held just across Lake Washington from Seattle, and simultaneously with two other local arts festivals, the Bellevue Festival of the Arts attracts hundreds of artists and more than a quarter-million attendees each year. The Festival features unique, beautiful and affordable offerings from hundreds of the nation's most talented craftspeople, artists, and artisans, as well as superb music, food and drink. This year's festival takes place from **July 28 – 30, 2006**, as always in the convenient and easy to find Cost Plus Parking Lot (across from Bellevue Square).

2006 FACTS AT A GLANCE:

What: The Bellevue Festival of the Arts
When: July 28 - 30, 2006
Hours: Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Price: Free!
Website: www.Bellevuefest.org

Held under the clear blue skies of the Northwest summer, The Bellevue Festival of the Arts showcases works by a superb and diverse assortment of some of the best artists from around the Northwest, as well as nationally recognized participants from across the U.S. and Canada. The event marks one of the Eastside's most exciting annual cultural events, offering a superb array of lovely, finely crafted items of every description, including jewelry, photography, textiles, glass, fine art, woodwork, pottery, sculpture, and much more – as well as the chance to meet the gifted artists who create them.

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And of course, as always, the event also features a wide array of tasty treats from some of the Northwest's most popular food and beverage providers. There's also live music to please almost any taste, with appearances by several popular local bands and musical groups. It's the perfect celebration for old and young alike.

After 22 years, the Bellevue Festival of the Arts remains one of the most highly praised juried arts and crafts fairs nationwide, and is consistently rated by *The Artfair Sourcebook* as one of the best arts fairs in the country.

Giving Back to the Community

But the Festival isn't just an event for the community's enjoyment – it also gives back. For years, the Bellevue Festival of the Arts has remained a loyal and vital supporter of the Eastside community, and in 2006 continues its tradition of distributing its net proceeds back to local Seattle and Bellevue causes and organizations, including: Shelters, Food Banks, Community Centers, Health Care Clinics, and Youth Programs.

Past beneficiaries include seven local shelters (including **New Beginnings** and **Seattle Emergency Housing**), six food banks including the **Pike Market Downtown Food Bank** and **Teen Feed**, three community centers including **The Seattle Indian Center**, four health-care organizations (including **Overlake Hospital** and **The Lifelong AIDS Alliance**) and seven youth programs, including **The Bellevue Schools Foundation** and **Heart and Soul**.

Even better, as members of a larger 'global community,' the Bellevue Festival of the Arts also continues to contribute international donations to worthy causes worldwide, as well. The Festival donates each year to **Solar Cookers International**, an organization that teaches the building and use of alternative solar box cookers as a way to reduce environmental devastation and deforestation throughout the world. The festival also gives to **SNDT**, a women's

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university in Mumbai, India which works with villages in Gujarat state. This rural development program organizes activities in the fields of education, health, skill training, awareness and income generation as well as legal aid. It has also assisted women to form their own cooperative "Kalyani".

But its efforts go even further: The Festival also benefits the **American Indian College Fund** as well as **Ashesi University** in Ghana, West Africa. Ashesi University is a subsidiary of Ashesi University Foundation (www.ashesi.org), and is a pioneer of liberal arts undergraduate education in scholarship, leadership and citizenship. Their mission is to train a new generation of ethical and entrepreneurial leaders in Africa, and to cultivate within its students the values of lifelong learning, concern for others and the courage to think in a bold and enterprising way.

And Transportation's a Snap!

As always, area transportation to the Festival is a snap, as the Metro will be running free shuttle buses between the Festival and the South Kirkland, Houghton Park, and South Bellevue Park and Ride lots every 15 minutes, making regular stops along Bellevue Way. Paid parking (at approximately \$1-\$2 per car, although prices may vary by location) will also be available in many of Bellevue's downtown buildings as well, along with Bike Corral parking options available as well.

FOR THE PUBLIC: For more information, please visit www.Bellevuefest.org on the web, or call **(206) 363-2048**.

FOR REPORTERS ONLY: For more PR information on the Bellevue Festival of the Arts 2006, or for background information, photos or images, please contact publicist **Angela Mitchell**, at **(904) 982-8043** or Paramitch@aol.com. Or for quotes about the Festival itself (or its 22nd Anniversary in the area!) please contact **Ann Sutherland** of the Craft Cooperative of the Northwest, at **(206) 363-2048**. (**NOTE:** For your convenience, useful images and logos can be found on the page to follow.)

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The Festival of the Arts 2006 – Logos & Images

