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### **53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Albemarle Craftsman's Fair, Oct. 28-30, Features Heritage Crafts, Teaching Demonstrations and Affordable Prices** *Make a weekend of it in Elizabeth City, NC*

(Elizabeth City, N.C., Oct. 12, 2011) -- More than 60 craftsmen from North Carolina and Virginia will bring their tools, knowledge and wares to the [53rd Annual Albemarle Craftsman's Fair](#) Oct. 28-30 at the Knobbs Creek Recreation Center in Elizabeth City, N.C.

Sponsored by the Albemarle Craftsman's Guild, the fair features artisans who demonstrate and sell traditional crafts that range from quilting and fiber arts to pottery, jewelry and woodwork. Working to preserve and perpetuate heritage crafts, Guild members pride themselves on using creative approaches to advance their crafts.

"We use modern tools and up-to-date designs, but the items are still traditional crafts," said Albemarle Craftsman's Fair Chairwoman Lisa Winslow. "For example, you'll find the most beautiful jewelry in 10 different forms, but still using a traditional craft. Or you'll see furniture making, which is a traditional craft, but in modern designs."

Exhibits will include boat replicas, custom fishing rods and hand-tied flies; clothing, pocketbooks, leatherwork and silk scarves; glass and wire jewelry; stained glass, baskets, dolls and more. A hallmark of the fair is the requirement that participants give demonstrations, Winslow said.

"We have people weaving on looms, people using scroll saws and carving, people working on pottery wheels. Our guild is a sharing organization. We enjoy

the teaching aspect because it continues the tradition of these crafts and hands them down to the next generation. That's important to us."

Long-time Guild member Faytie Johnston, who was involved with the fair at its inception, echoed that sentiment, noting that Guild members "are very free with information about their crafts. They don't feel threatened with other people picking up their ideas. They don't restrict photographs. We're more of a demonstration fair than any other fair I've attended."

Many craftsmen return to the fair each year, and many participate alongside family members. For example, 102-year-old Emily Harrell exhibits and demonstrates Armenian needlelace making, and she has passed the craft down to her daughter and granddaughter.

"Very seldom do you find this kind of atmosphere," said Johnston. "It's like another family."

Although in college now, Johnston's own granddaughter began exhibiting at the Fair as a 10-year-old, making stool bottoms with her grandfather.

This year's fair features several new Guild members, including new woodworkers who make wooden toys, jewelry boxes and other objects, and a new weaver whose work includes jackets and clothing. The Guild encourages all participants to create new designs and unique products to show at the Fair each year. A [preview of participants](#) is available on the fair's website, along with photographs and [videos](#) in which craftsman demonstrate their methods.

All exhibitors are Guild members whose work has been screened and accepted by the Guild prior to membership. In addition to the high quality of works in the show, Winslow stressed the wide range of prices and affordability. "We have lots of items for under \$10. They're great for teachers' gifts and gifts for people who care about quality and craftsmanship. When you buy someone a unique handcrafted gift, they'll know you put a lot of thought into it."

Food and refreshments at the Fair will be provided by Chef Andy Montero from the popular Elizabeth City restaurant [Montero's](#) and will include items ranging from lasagna to salads to pot pie.

Winslow said, “People often need more than one day to see the entire show because they spend so much time talking to the craftsmen and watching the demonstrations.”

A \$4 weekend pass provides access for the entire three-day event, and visitors may select and [book accommodations online](#) at [www.DiscoverElizabethCity.com](http://www.DiscoverElizabethCity.com). The fall is a great time to enjoy attractions, shops and restaurants along the city’s historic Downtown Waterfront, wine tasting events in neighboring Weeksville or a hike at the nearby Dismal Swamp State Park.

The Knobbs Creek Recreation Center is located at 200 Ward Street in Elizabeth City. Weekend passes for the fair are \$4 for general admission, \$3 for seniors and students. Hours are Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For details about the fair, go to [www.albemarlecraftsmansfair.com](http://www.albemarlecraftsmansfair.com), or call (252) 338-3954 or (252) 562-5441.

### **About Elizabeth City**

Elizabeth City is located in Northeastern North Carolina on the Intracoastal Waterway, halfway between Virginia Beach and the Outer Banks. Known as the “Harbor of Hospitality®,” the city has six National Register Historic Districts and is home to the Museum of the Albemarle, The Center at Arts of the Albemarle, Port Discover Hands-on Science Center and the nation’s largest [U.S. Coast Guard](#) base. Nature-based travelers are drawn to the area’s proximity to Dismal Swamp and the abundance of outdoor recreational offerings. For additional information, call Elizabeth City Area Convention & Visitors Bureau at 1-866-ECity-4U (1-866-324-8948) or (252) 335-5330. Visit [www.DiscoverElizabethCity.com](http://www.DiscoverElizabethCity.com)



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