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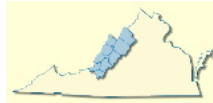
For Immediate Release
October 23, 2007

Contact: Stephen Clerico, 434-978-4109, network@ArtisansCenterOfVirginia.org

HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA — Craft Gathering Planned

The third in a series of informal gatherings for craftspeople, craft stores and festival owners is scheduled for Monday, November 12, 2007 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at the Massanutten Regional Library located at 174 South Main Street in Harrisonburg. The gathering will be hosted by the *Arts Council of the Valley*. Participants will learn first hand about a new state funded project called the *Alleghany Craft Network*.

The *Alleghany Craft Network* is compiling an online directory concerning craft made in Alleghany, Augusta, Bath, Botetourt, Craig, Highland, Roanoke, Rockbridge and Rockingham counties.



Kai Degner, Executive Director of the *Arts Council of the Valley* in Harrisonburg says, "*The central Shenandoah Valley, including Rockingham County, has a rich tradition of high quality art produced by local craft artisans. The Arts Council is eager to introduce local artisans to the resources available through the Alleghany Craft Network.*" R.S.V.P. is recommended. Please contact Kai Degner at 540-801-8779, or director@valleyarts.org if you plan to attend.

The *Artisans Center of Virginia* in Waynesboro is sponsor of the project thanks to a grant from the Virginia *Department of Housing and Community Development*. Project coordinator Stephen Clerico, says, "*Recent gatherings in Alleghany County and Highland County over the past month indicate there is growing interest in the project. We are planning to conduct gatherings like this throughout our nine county region to ensure we identify everyone possible.*"

Clerico, a former furniture craftsman says, "*A free directory listing is a great opportunity for participants to benefit from the Artisans Center's established web site that already attracts thousands of visitors each month. Being listed in the directory is easy and fast. The Network is not an organization; there are no membership dues involved. The Network directory simply promotes awareness of craft made in the nine rural counties. We hope to increase travel within the project area. A free listing is just one more way for your work to become visible to new customers.*"

Michael Dowell, Executive Director of the *Artisans Center of Virginia*, will be available during the gathering. Mr. Dowell brings a unique perspective due to his years of ensuring that an awareness of Virginia craft reaches an ever-widening audience. Clerico and Dowell will also speak about the project's special exhibition and business conference planed for 2008. Attendees are encouraged to come prepared with business cards for informal networking after the formal presentation. Those unable to attend can obtain complete details about the grant project by visiting www.artisanscenterofvirginia.org/network or calling 877-508-6069.

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