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Fair Harbor's Pine Walk Fair

By Laura Schmidt

This Fourth of July, Fair Harbor celebrated its 43rd annual Pine Walk Fair, one of the longest running craft fairs on Fire Island.

Despite thick cloud coverage and high chance of rain in the late afternoon, this year's fair was a success. People from all over the island came into town to view and purchase unique crafts sold by vendors with international reputations.

No one knows this fair better than Fire Island native and member of the Fair Harbor Community Association Helen Kornblau, who has been in charge of choosing vendors for the event for over three decades.

"The fair started with three very artistic people who lived on the top of Pine Walk," said Kornblau. "They took things they made and decided they'd like to put a table out and they attracted a lot of people."

According to Kornblau, within the next few years the fair had become so popular they "were finally thrown off Pine Walk and put on the dock" due to fire code reasons established by the Fire Island Fire Department. Although location has changed, the original name has always been kept the same after all these years.

Today, there is space for 25 vendors, local and visiting, selling handmade jewelry, organic scrubs and lotions, original photography, oil paintings, glass plates and platters, clothing and

so much more.

Jane Sklar and Max Cartagena are two of the many vendors who spent their fourth year selling original artwork and photography. The two met in high school then became reacquainted at a reunion years later and have been collaborating since. They create stunning, warped and colorful versions of digital photography with a 12-year-old laptop.

"Everything you see is one of a kind, we don't mass-produce," said Cartagena.

"It's all digital manipulation of our original photography," he added.

Sklar, a Cornell University graduate, has won more than ten prestigious awards for her original work, including first place for "best mixed media" at this years

Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit.

Patricia Robbins, owner of Sea Blossom, is another seasoned vendor who makes "handmade soaps specializing in nautical designs."

"I've been coming here for more than 12 years and it's always great," says Robbins. "This year is particularly great because the beach weather isn't so perfect so more people are interested in shopping."

The fair takes place every year on the Saturday closest to the Fourth of July. Good food and better people are what makes this fair a must-see event every summer and rain or shine the Pine Walk Fair is pure family fun and will be enjoyed for many years to come.