

Brownstown, Ewing getting artistic with festival

By Jessica Squires

Story appeared on Tribtown.com

First Posted: April 28, 2013 - 10:47 pm

Last Updated: April 28, 2013 - 10:49 pm

Local artists, artisans and musicians took to the streets of Brownstown and Ewing Saturday for the town's first ArtsFest.

The Brownstown/Ewing Main Street sponsored the event, which featured more than 20 booths in locations along Main Street in Brownstown and Spring Street in Ewing. Those booths included displays of art from local artists, and crafts, maple syrup and baked goods from local artisans.

Musicians also performed throughout the day at W.R. Ewing in Ewing and from the steps of the courthouse in Brownstown.

Brownstown/Ewing Main Street member Darlene Butt said the event's goal was to raise money for the depot while highlighting the many things the town has to offer.

"We're helping out our local businesses by supporting them," she said. "We brought in all local artists and we were surprised by how many we have."

Alli Sparks of Brownstown set up a booth for her Funky Junk, handmade accessories made by herself, her mother and her grandmother. She said she has been making accessories and going to craft shows for a year.

"It's a way for us to spend time together," she said.

Sparks said she appreciated being able to participate in an event in her hometown.

"I'm glad Brownstown is getting involved in things," she said. "I think it could be really good."

Rich Swartwood of

Brownstown set up a booth to show off and sell his custom wood turnings.

He said as one of the first festivals of the year, ArtsFest is a good opportunity to cure cabin fever.

"It's a great way to support the community and for others to see what I'm doing," he said.

The Golden Age Gals, a group of women who gather at the Brownstown Senior Center to paint every Wednesday, also had

artwork on display and for sale Saturday. Member Myrna Ratcliff also brought handmade jewelry, painted rocks and bone-shaped pillows.

"I like to create," she said.

Ratcliff said the group is going to keep painting, and she hopes ArtsFest continues in the future to keep offering an outlet for the women to display their creativity.

"We're going to be painting and painting and painting," she said.

Butt said the event is promoting the town by showing visitors everything it has to offer.

"We're introducing a lot of people to just experience a small town," she said. "We hope they get a warm feeling and want to come back."

Butt said she hopes the event continues in the future and continue to grow.

"We want our town to be revived," she said. "I think it has a lot to offer."