

# The Mountain Press

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Tuesday



Rachel Osborn/The Mountain Press

Fragrances were a popular buy at last weekend's Norton show. Over 450 exhibitors from 26 different states sold everything from apparel and jewelry to accessories, decorations and toys during the event.

## Norton show draws crowd to Gatlinburg

BY RACHEL OSBORN

Staff Writer

**GATLINBURG** — Holiday shoppers could buy everything from ladies' men's and children's apparel; jewelry; accessories; fragrances; toys; candles and gourmet food during last weekend's 24th annual Norton Show at the Gatlinburg Convention Center.

Every inch of the building was packed with shoppers, eager to find the perfect gift.

The hallways and exhibit spaces were filled with vendors looking to make a hefty profit.

"This show has all the possibilities for shopping, from diamonds to sheets," said Debbie Winstead with German Roasted Nuts. "It's great for Christmas shopping."

Started by Tom and Linda Norton in 1987, the Norton Shows have turned into a full-blown shopping treasure trove. Four times a year

— March, June, September and November — over 450 exhibitors completely canvass the convention center. During the three-day show, over 20,000 people will filter through the building.

"You'll see customers come out with loads of merchandise," Tom Norton said. "Then they'll come back on Monday and buy more."

The Nortons rent out the

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## NORTON: Show successful

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entire convention center, selling booth spaces to exhibitors from 26 different states. Norton estimates that 60 percent of their vendors are regulars.

"We look forward to seeing all the regular people every year," he said. "They take the same booth spaces four times a year."

One of these regular attendees was Eileen Kross with Top of the Line Designs.

"I've been doing the show for 15 years," she said. "The first day is always wonderful. So far it's been great. I'm sure by the end of the (weekend) I won't be disappointed."

Another returner was Ohio resident Deborah Marchand, selling merchandise from her company, Scarves Galore.

"I've done this show for a couple of years now," she said. "It's an awesome show. I love it. The people are great. There's good business, good promoters and awesome customers. It's a good show and a beautiful area. That's why I come back year after year."

"We're really busy here (at my booth). It's gone well so far."

Scarves, purses, jewelry and fragrances seemed to be the weekend's hot tickets, with shoppers purchasing them by the

bag-full.

Though Jackie Farmer of Powell, was looking for holiday gifts, she couldn't help purchase some items for herself too.

"I purchased jewelry and jewelry cleaner," she said. "I'm looking at UT clothes and necklaces for family members, friends and coworkers. (The show is) great, but crowded. There's a good variety of vendors."

Barbara Buchanan made the trip from North Carolina, in search of deals on jewelry and holiday decorations. By mid-Saturday she'd already purchased "a good mixture of stuff."

"There's (almost) too much to see," she said. "It's awesome. This is one place you can splurge on yourself and get a bargain. Moms don't usually do that much."

"I'm doing Christmas shopping for family and friends. I like being able to find things people would actually like and use. I'm having a great time."

With around 10,000 people shopping on Saturday morning and afternoon, it seems the first day of the show was a success.

"It's a lot of work," Norton said, "but we look forward to having them."

rosborn@themountainpress.com

The Norton Shows Facebook is "rocking" with so many positive comments and vibes from The Norton Shows, November 12 - 14, 2011. Elvis and Santa were hugely popular as well as the 31 new exhibitors. Our loyal exhibitors who've participated in our shows for years were fabulous and took care of all their buyers' needs. We thank each of you. Following is a quote from a very happy buyer...I have not asked her permission to use her quote from facebook so I'm omitting her name. However, you can view it yourself on facebook. My Patron's get so excited they can't wait till Monday when I return and they can shop. Last year I bought extra everything and sold out in 2 days! We are going to be busy busy getting al the goodies for the Christmas Sale... WHoo HOOO Love Shopping the Norton Show!! Go to website and facebook and print photos free!.