

Arts and Crafts Exhibition and Contest

National Powwow XIX

July 11th, 2026

Contest Guidelines and Procedures

1. To best highlight the talent, expertise, and artistry present at National Powwow XIX, the committee will host two contests. Participants may enter into the:

- I. National Powwow XIX Craft Contest** – Items eligible for the National Powwow XIX Craft Contest are those that involve traditional techniques, have a functional purpose, are made to be worn or used, and emphasize craftsmanship. These items include, but are not limited to: beadwork, quillwork, silverwork, fingerweaving, bustles, fans, mirror boards, roaches, breastplates, bandoliers, cradle boards, ribbon skirts, ribbon work, shawls, quilts, parfleches, cedar boxes, and baskets. Judging criteria for this contest will include workmanship, use of materials, functionality, technique, and creativity in design. Final determinations for item eligibility will be made by National Powwow XIX Arts and Crafts Event Coordinators.
- II. National Powwow XIX Art Contest** – Items eligible for the National Powwow XIX Art Contest are those that are primarily non-functional, and were created to be decorative, expressive, or conceptual. These items include, but are not limited to: ledger art, photography, sculptures, charcoal drawings, pen and ink illustrations, etchings, engravings, carvings, wall hangings, and paintings of a Native American focus or theme. Judging criteria for this contest will include originality, composition, artistic technique, and execution. Final determinations for item eligibility will be made by National Powwow XIX Arts and Crafts Event Coordinators.

2. For both the Craft Contest and the Art Contest, participants will self-determine which division they will compete in based on a personal assessment of their experience and expertise. For each contest, the divisions will be:

- I. Youth** – Participants under 18 years of age
- II. Novice** – Participants over 18 years of age, and less than 5 years of experience
- III. Intermediate** – Participants over 18 years of age, and 5 to 10 years of experience
- IV. Advanced** – Participants over 18 years of age, and more than 10 years of experience
- V. Professional** – Participants over 18 years of age who make and sell art or craft items for profit as a business

3. While participants are welcome to compete in both the Craft Contest and Art Contest, no single item can be entered into both contests. If a participant chooses to enter both the Craft Contest and the Art Contest, they must obtain two separate Competition Packets and complete one packet per contest.
4. The Craft Contest and the Art Contest will occur concurrently in the Hendricks County Fairground Exposition Hall on Saturday July 11th, 2026, as follows:
 - I. 8:00am to 8:30am** – Participants set up their competition displays. All participants must have registration paperwork completed and items displayed by 8:30am to be considered for judging.
 - II. 8:30am to 10:00am** – Judging for both the Craft Contest and the Art Contest. During this time, the Exposition Hall will be closed to the public.
 - III. 10:00am to 12:00pm** – Competition displays are open to the public. Participants are encouraged to leave their competition displays in place until 12:00pm.
5. For both the Craft Contest and the Art Contest, first place division winners will be announced at the Saturday Night Dance Session, as well as the winner of the 17th Les Bircher Memorial Award
6. Specific rules for the National Powwow XIX Craft Contest and National Powwow XIX Art Contest are as follows:

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2. All participants in the National Powwow XIX Crafts Competition must be registered participants of National Powwow XIX. The National Powwow XIX Registrar may be consulted, should it be necessary, to verify participant registration status. No day visitors will be permitted to participate.
3. All participants must obtain a Competition Packet, complete all forms provided, and submit completed forms by 8:30am on July 11th, 2026. While pre-registration is not required, the completion of an electronic pre-registration form prior to National Powwow XIX will be strongly encouraged.
4. In lieu of their name, participants must display the competition number contained in the Competition Packet with their items to ensure anonymity of all participants.
5. Participants will be limited to displaying five (5) items. If several items comprise a "set," the "set" will be considered as one item. Final determinations for which items comprise a "set" will be made by the National Powwow XIX Arts and Crafts Event Coordinators.
6. Display space per participant is limited to 96" x 36". National Powwow will provide tables on a first-come first-served basis. Participants may utilize tablecloths, blankets, stands, or other display accoutrement to help present their work, but must not interfere with the displays of neighboring participants.
7. Participants are responsible for the safety and security of their displayed items. It is recommended that participants not leave their display unattended, excluding 8:30am to 10:00am when the Exhibition Hall is closed for judging. While National Powwow will do its best to protect the displayed items, it assumes no liability for any damage and/or loss that may occur.
8. Items containing components from illegal species are ineligible for competition and cannot be displayed. Items containing such components will be removed. Please check both federal and state regulations to determine if your craft items contain parts of illegal species.
9. Items displayed at previous National Powwows are ineligible for competition and cannot be displayed in the National Powwow XIX Crafts Competition.
10. By registering, participants are giving National Powwow, a nonprofit 501-c-3, permission to use their photo/image, as well as photos/images of their displays, as part of the organization's public relations material.
11. The Les Bircher Memorial Award, sponsored by the American Indianist Society and first awarded at National Powwow III, recognizes an outstanding craftsperson or artist at each National Powwow. For National Powwow XIX, eligibility and selection of the Les Bircher Memorial Award will be as follows:
 - I. **Eligibility:** All participants of the National Powwow XIX Craft Contest and Art Contest, excluding those in the Professional Divisions, will be considered for the Les Bircher Memorial Award.
 - II. **Selection:** At National Powwow XIX, the 17th Les Bircher Memorial Award will be selected by the participants' peers and fellow craftsmen. Selection will be made through anonymous ballots, cast by all participants of the National Powwow XIX Craft Contest and Art Contest, as well as all members of the judging panel. Voting will take place during the open viewing from 10:00am to 12:00pm. The craftsperson who receives the most votes will be awarded the 17th Les Bircher Memorial Award. In the event of a tie, the tie will be broken by the National Powwow XIX Arts and Crafts Event Coordinators and/or the National Powwow XIX Chairman.

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