

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

NORTH CAROLINA Blueberry FESTIVAL

June 15, 2013

**A DECADE
OF MEMORIES**

A RETROSPECTIVE IN PICTURES AND RECIPES

A boost for Burgaw

GROWING POPULARITY OF BLUEBERRY
GOOD FOR PENDER COUNTY TOWN

PLUS: ■ Festival FAQs
■ Winning recipes
■ Why we love blueberries

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WELCOME

Dear Festivalgoers,

Thank you for the opportunity to welcome you to the 10th annual North Carolina Blueberry Festival in historic Burgaw. Over the last decade, the Blueberry Festival has grown into a major event for Pender County, attracting families and merchants from across the region. 30,000 people will visit Burgaw to attend this year's Festival. This represents not only an important yearly economic boost for local businesses, but also a force for good for Pender County and surrounding areas. This year the Blueberry Festival is expected to award around \$20,000 in scholarships to outstanding high school seniors from the blueberry-producing counties of southeastern North Carolina (Bladen, Duplin, New Hanover, Pender, and Sampson).

The blueberry industry is a major economic driver – adding \$70 million to the local economy annually – and, moreover, a positive impact on the whole world. Blueberries are widely hailed as an effective health food, full of vitamins and nutrients that make people healthier. As Americans continue to lead healthier lives, blueberries will only increase in popularity; this, in turn, will increase their positive impact on our local communities. This festival serves to raise the profile of this celebrated berry and the people who grow them. This recognition is deserved as their contribution to the region is significant. Additionally, a big “thank you” is in order for the organizers and community leaders who come together every year to make the Festival a great success. Thank you for everything you have done to promote this valuable industry over the last 10 years.

Best regards,

Sen. Bill Rabon

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR:

- ✦ The Antique Show & Sale will be located on the outside dock of the train depot. There will also be a model train event at the depot.
- ✦ The BBQ Cookoff is sanctioned by the N.C. Pork Council (www.ncpork.org)
- ✦ Don't miss: Visit from Ronald McDonald, three NASCAR cars, including the Nationwide car and a NASCAR simulator.
- ✦ New this year: Blueberry Belles
- ✦ Recipe Books: Recipe books, which come in binder form, are available the day of the festival. This year's book, which costs \$30, includes recipes from 2004 through 2011. Just missing a year? Each year's recipes can be purchased separately for \$5 per year.



FESTIVAL INFORMATION

NO PETS

The North Carolina Blueberry Festival Association has instituted and enforces a no pet policy.

PARKING

Parking will be available at Pender Landing Shopping Center, located at the intersection of U.S. 117 and 53, as well as at the Pender County Government Complex, 801 S. Walker St. Trolleys will run every 10 to 15 minutes to transport festival-goers. Downtown parking will also be available on Dickerson Street, along the railroad right-of-ways, north and south of the Historic Burgaw Train Depot.

HANDICAP PARKING

Available at the corner of Fremont and South Walker streets.

BLUEBERRY RECIPE CONTEST RULES

The North Carolina Blueberry Festival Association and StarNews Media will be hosting the 10th annual North Carolina Blueberry Festival Recipe Contest. The contest will be held June 14 at the Burgaw Community Building 102 E. Wilmington St. The competition is sponsored by StarNews Media with cash prizes.

The contest will be divided into six categories – Appetizers & Salads; Biscuits, Muffins, Breads & Scones; Cobblers, Crisps, Pies & Puddings; Cakes, Cookies, Candy & Pastries; Miscellaneous (Non-Alcoholic Beverages, Entrees, Sauces, Jams & Jellies, Pancakes, etc.); Youth (ages 9-15).

For complete rules, visit ncblueberryfestival.com and click on “Applications.” Details: Ken Blevins, (910) 262-6632.

2013 FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

FRIDAY

Recipe Contest, BBQ Contest

11 a.m. - BBQ Cookoff, BBQ sales, blueberry sales, until 8 p.m.

12 p.m. - Recipe contest @ Burgaw Community Building

SATURDAY

Festival

7:15 a.m. - Tour de Blueberry ride check-in

7:30 a.m. - 5K run/walk

8:30 a.m. - Tour de Blueberry ride begins

9 a.m. - Vendors open, Car Show, Antique Show & Sale

9 a.m. - The Gospel Lites

10 a.m. - Opening Ceremony

11 a.m. - Steve Owens & Summertime Band

11:45 a.m. - Appearance and magic show By Ronald McDonald

2 p.m. - Appearance and magic show By Ronald McDonald

3 p.m. - Spare Change Band

6 p.m. - The Band of OZ

9 p.m. - Festival closes

2012



LEMON BLUEBERRY SHORTCAKES

Wyatt Potter, Burgaw

2012 Best of the Best winner

Shortcakes

- 3 tablespoons sweetened lemonade drink mix
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 6 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons poppy seeds
- 1-1/2 teaspoons grated lemon peel
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup cold butter, cubed
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/2 cup unsweetened blueberries
- Confectioners' sugar



In a large bowl, combine the flour, lemonade drink mix, sugar, baking powder, poppy seeds, lemon peel and salt. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Whisk egg and cream, stir into dry ingredients until moistened. Stir in blueberries.

Turn onto a lightly floured surface; knead 8-10 times. Pat into a 3/4-inch thickness, cut with a floured 3 inch star shaped cutter.

Place 2 inches apart on a greased baking sheet. Bake at 400 degrees for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown around the edges.

Make the filling while the shortbread is baking

Filling

- 12 oz. softened cream cheese
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup sweetened lemonade drink mix
- 1/2 cup unsweetened blueberries

In a small bowl, combine cream cheese, sugar and lemonade drink mix until smooth. Gently fold in blueberries.

To assemble: Split the cakes in half. Place the cake bottoms on dessert plates, top each bottom layer with the cream cheese filling and then replace the shortcake tops. Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar and garnish.



There's something at the festival for everyone. That's what makes it such an outstanding family event."

Pete Cowan, Burgaw Mayor



2011



“ It has opened Burgaw up to the world. It has opened it up to everybody to show how charming it is.”

*Martin Beach,
festival chair*



BLUE-TICK HOUND PUPPIES

Madison Eichorn, Burgaw

2011 Best of the Best winner

2 cups house of Autry Hush Puppy mix (without onions)

1 cup water

2 tablespoons sugar

1-½ teaspoons vanilla

1 cup chopped blueberries

Oil for frying

Powdered sugar



Combine hush puppy mix and sugar in large bowl. Add water and vanilla, mixing well. Stir in blueberries and let rest 5 minutes. Heat oil until it is 375 degrees. Drop puppies by teaspoonful into hot grease and fry 3 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from grease and drain on paper towels. Sprinkle with powdered sugar.

Optional dip for puppies: Combine 1 cup powdered sugar, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla, and 1-2 tablespoons water until desired thickness is reached. Refrigerate until ready to serve.



2010



During the seventh Blueberry Festival, the Burgaw United Methodist Church sold Blueberry Tea.

BLUEBERRY SUGAR CAKE

Amos Lanier, Burgaw

2010 Best of the Best winner



- 2 cans crescent rolls
- 1 (8 oz.) block cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- ½ teaspoon almond extract
- 1/3 cup water
- 1-1/2 cups blueberries
- ½ cup sugar
- 1-1/2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 3 tablespoons water
- 1 stick butter
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

Butter a 9-by-13-inch baking pan. Press one can of crescent rolls in bottom of pan, making sure to press seams together and filling in bottom of pan. Mix cream cheese, almond extract and confectioners' sugar. Spread on crescent rolls in pan. Make blueberry filling by simmering 1/3 cup water and blueberries for 3 minutes. Combine sugar, cornstarch and 3 tablespoons water. Add to boiling berries. Continue to boil for 1 minute. Spread over cream cheese layer. Roll out second can of crescent rolls on floured surface, sealing all seams. Place over blueberry mixture. Melt butter and pour over rolls. Combine brown sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle on top. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Note: This recipe won first place in the "Youth" category and also won the first "Best of the Best" award.



Matt Bell of Spare Change performs at the festival.

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2009



I love to bake – so I’ll have lots of blueberries to bake with.”

Betsy Jorgensen, while she pulled a wagon containing four boxes

BLUEBERRY STUFFED CHICKEN BREASTS

Rich Augi, Burgaw

8 boneless chicken breasts	1 cup blueberries
1 package ranch seasoning mix	8-ounce package cream cheese
Salt and pepper to taste	2 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, minced	3 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup white wine	1 cup chicken broth
8 slices deli ham	1 cup blueberries for garnish
2 eggs, lightly beaten	1 cup flour



Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Mix cream cheese and ranch dressing mix in a bowl, add 1 cup blueberries. Divide cream cheese/blueberry mixture into eight small logs, refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Pound chicken breasts between two pieces of waxed paper until 1/4-inch thick. Place chicken on a cutting board, top with a piece of ham. Place a cream cheese/blueberry log on top of the ham. Roll the chicken from the end with the cream cheese/blueberry log to the other end and secure with toothpicks. Repeat. Place the lightly beaten eggs in one bowl, and in two separate bowls place 1/2 cup flour in each. Dredge chicken rolls in flour, then dip in egg and dredge in the other bowl of flour. Repeat. In an ovenproof pan (cast-iron preferred), heat the olive oil over medium high heat. Add the onions and garlic when the oil is hot and saute the onions until soft, about 5 minutes. Add chicken rolls in the pan. Brown on all sides, about 2 minutes per side. After all sides have browned, put the entire pan into the heated oven and cook for 20 minutes at 400 degrees. Remove pan from oven, and remove chicken from pan. Place pan on stove and heat over medium high heat. Add wine and cook until reduced by one half. Add chicken broth and cook until hot. Remove the onions and garlic from sauce. Serve chicken topped with sauce, garnish with 1 cup blueberries.



2008



Lisa Shively (from left), Rick Sloan and Freda Butner judge pies and pastries during the 2008 recipe contest.

“It’s a great festival for Eastern North Carolina. It’s a wholesome festival; it’s a family festival.”

Martin Beach, festival co-chair

SHRIMP AND GREENS WITH BLUEBERRY VINAIGRETTE

Susan Price, Wilmington

1-1/2 cups blueberries, cleaned and dried	1 pound medium-sized N.C. shrimp, peeled and deveined
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar	2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 tablespoons honey	1/2 teaspoon sugar
Juice of 1 lemon	3/4 teaspoon kosher salt (1/2 and 1/4 used separately)
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil	1 (5-oz.) bag spring mix, whole leaf baby salad greens
2/3 cup sliced almonds	



Directions for vinaigrette: Combine 1/2 cup of blueberries, balsamic vinegar, honey, lemon juice, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper into a blender. Blend mixture until smooth. While blender is mixing, slowly add olive oil in a steady stream until vinaigrette is completely combined. Store vinaigrette in a glass container and in refrigerator until ready to serve. To toast almonds: Preheat an 8-inch non-stick skillet to medium-low heat. Add almonds to pan. Toast almonds for about 6 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove almonds from pan and allow them to cool completely before adding to salad. **Pan-searing shrimp:** Place cleaned shrimp into a bowl and toss with sugar, 1/2 teaspoon of the salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Heat 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil in a 12-inch non-stick skillet until oil begins to smoke. Place 1/2 of the shrimp in a single layer into hot skillet. Cook shrimp for about 1-1/2 minutes or until edges start to turn pink. Turn each shrimp over and cook for about another 1-1/2 minutes or until entire shrimp turns pink. Transfer cooked shrimp to a plate to cool. Repeat pan-searing cooking process with the other half of shrimp and oil. Allow shrimp to completely cool before adding to salad. **To assemble salad:** Place salad greens on a large platter. Top greens with shrimp, almonds and remaining 1 cup of blueberries. Drizzle vinaigrette over salad just before serving. Use as much vinaigrette to suit your personal taste.

Tip: The vinaigrette, almonds and shrimp can be prepared up to a day in advance. Store vinaigrette and shrimp in refrigerator. The almonds should be stored in an airtight container at room temperature. For an extra cool salad on a hot summer day, place salad platter in freezer for 30 minutes prior to serving.

2007

BLUEBERRY SALSA

Dorothy Mills, Burgaw

- 1 cup blueberries
 - 1 cup diced cantaloupe
 - 1 cup diced watermelon
 - 1 cup peeled, seeded and diced cucumber
 - 4 large tomatoes, seeded and diced (about 2-1/2 cups)
 - 1/2 cup chopped red onion
 - 1/4 cup fresh lime juice
 - 3 tablespoons fresh cilantro
 - 1 jalapeno pepper, minced (about 2 tablespoons)
 - 1/2-1 teaspoon salt
 - 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- Mix all ingredients together and chill for 1 hour before serving. Serve with fish or any grilled meat. Tortilla chips could be used for an appetizer.



“

I just don't have enough blueberries to sell this year, which is disappointing because we did pretty good last year. We sold everything we had within hours of being at the festival.”

***Al Newberry of Newberry's Blueberries,
after a late frost wrecked the local crop***

2006

RED, WHITE AND BLUE SLAW

Ann Mendenhall, Burgaw

1 pound coarsely chopped cabbage (green and purple)
1 pint blueberries
1/2 cup chopped nuts

Dressing:

1/2 cup plain yogurt
1/2 cup orange juice
1 teaspoon red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon celery seed
1/2 teaspoon mustard seed
1/2 teaspoon salt



Combine dressing ingredients in zip lock gallon bag. Seal bag and squeeze bag to mix ingredients. Add cabbage, blueberries and nuts. Seal bag and squeeze bag to mix ingredients. Place in bowl and serve immediately. If making slaw more than 1 hour in advance of meal, reserve blueberries and nuts to be added at serving time. Slaw may be kept refrigerated in a sealed bag up to 24 hours.



“ I probably eat blueberries six or seven days a week, all year long. I don't get tired of them. I remember that, as a kid, they were soft and squishy. The new varieties are really good. They have a firmer texture. They're sweeter. They have improved flavor.”

Susie Newberry

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2005



Alexis Holzberger samples some blueberries during the 2005 festival.

BLUEBERRY AND TORTELLINI FRUIT SALAD

Jean O'Neal, Wendell

Dressing:
1/2 cup poppy seed dressing



Salad:
1 (9-oz.) package three-cheese tortellini
1 cup fresh blueberries
1 cup sliced, fresh strawberries
1 (11-oz) can mandarin oranges, drained
3/4 cup green grapes
1/4 cup sliced almonds
Cook pasta according to directions on package. In large bowl add pasta and salad ingredients. Pour dressing over and toss lightly. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

“That’s what you’re supposed to do at a blueberry festival, is sell blueberries. That’s the first thing I did, was start looking for blueberries.”

Joyce Dupalevich

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2004

FROZEN BLUEBERRY LEMONADE SQUARES

Lauren Lanier, Burgaw

- 18 squares honey-flavored graham crackers
- 1/3 cup margarine or butter
- 1 quart frozen vanilla yogurt, softened
- 1 (6-oz.) can lemonade concentrate, thawed
- 2 cups fresh blueberries
- Cool Whip

Mix graham cracker crumbs and margarine; press on bottom of 9-inch square pan. Blend frozen yogurt and lemonade concentrate in large bowl with an electric mixer on medium speed until well blended. Stir blueberries into yogurt and lemonade mixture. Spread on crust. Freeze 4 hours or until firm. Spread Cool Whip on top after freezing. Top with 3-4 blueberries. Cut into squares and enjoy.



Martin Stahlschmidt carries in the North Carolina Blueberry Festival banner during the first festival.

“

We did more than double the number of sales we had ever done. I became a believer. They turned me around, because you can't argue with the numbers.”

Johnny Westbrook, owner of Burgaw Antiqueplace and vocal critic before first festival

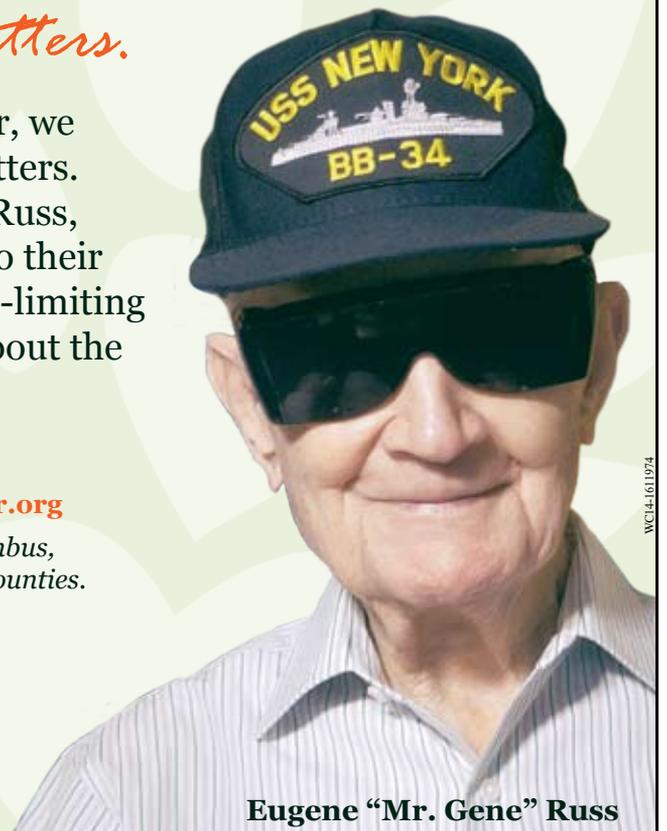
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IT TOOK A VILLAGE TO MAKE THIS FESTIVAL

The whole thing started with former Pender County tourism director Katherine Adams.

According to former Burgaw town manager Martin Beach, Adams thought Pender County needed an event, a celebration to bring the community together. And what better to celebrate than the county's distinctive crop, the blueberry?

"Of course, we started without any money," Beach said.

Still, a few movers and shakers banded together: future Burgaw Mayor Pete Cowan, Wayne Batten of the Cooperative Extension Service, Burgaw antiques dealer John Westbrook and more.

To raise money, organizers threw a pork chop dinner (with blueberry cobbler for dessert). To raise some more money, they threw a pancake breakfast. To save money, they hired the same bands from the N.C. Seafood Festival up in Morehead City, who were going to be in the area at the same time.

Thus, in 2004, began the first N.C. Blueberry Festival in Burgaw. "We were expecting, maybe, 1,000 people," recalled Beach, who served a term as festival chairman. But many more showed up for the family friendly event.

Churches soon learned they could raise funds by selling muffins, pies and cobbler – anything as long as blueberries were an ingredient. (Blueberry slush punch was an early hit.) Early on, the Pender High School athletic boosters began staging a barbecue cookoff. An essay contest, offering scholarships to local high school students, was a feature

What began as a small, dedicated group intent on celebrating Pender County and its signature crop, has become an extravaganza

By Ben Steelman



from the start.

As the years passed, more features were added, such as the classic car show on the town square. The annual 5K run and walk were added in the festival's third year. Children's rides were added in 2011.

According to Mayor Cowan, it wouldn't be possible without volunteers. "Without the volunteers, the festival wouldn't be possible," Cowan said. "They're what make it successful."

Today, Batten noted, the annual June festival attracts more than 30,000 visitors to Burgaw and pumps an estimated \$1.3 million into the local economy. In 2012, the N.C. Association of Festivals and Events voted the N.C. Blueberry Festival its "Event of the Year."

"It exceeds our expectations," Cowan said of the festival. "We underestimated our visitors' interest in local festivals." And Cowan notes, it's no longer a local festival. "We get visitors from all over the state, from other states. And that has had a tremendous impact on our ability to award scholarships and has created a venue for our nonprofits to raise funds."

Blueberries grow throughout North America, and thrive in Southeastern North Carolina, but it took some time for them to become the cash-crop here they are today

By Ben Steelman



Young roots, strong roots

Today, blueberries are North Carolina's most valuable fruit crop – and since 2001, by act of the General Assembly, they've been the Tar Heel State's official berry. (Legislators hedged a bit, also recognizing the strawberry as North Carolina's official RED berry.)

With an annual crop of around 28.5 million pounds, North Carolina ranks sixth in the nation in blueberry production, accounting for more than 9 percent of the nation's blueberry supply.

Commercial blueberry farming did not begin in the state, however, until the depths of the Great Depression – and it

began in Pender County, home of the N.C. Blueberry Festival. For all that, we should be grateful to Harold Graham Huntington of Cooperstown, N.Y.

Born in Montclair, N.J., in 1897, Huntington grew up in Brooklyn, attended Dartmouth College and served as a biplane pilot in World War I. Before the U.S. entered the Great War, he developed a passion for agriculture while training girls to work as “farm cadets,” replacing farmhands who were joining the Army.

Back from the War, Huntington worked as a janitor in a New Jersey mental hospital to save money to buy a farm. His first experiment, growing lettuce and

celery at a Florida “muck farm,” didn't pan out.

Then, back in New Lisbon, N.J., he became a disciple of Elizabeth White, who had developed the “highbush” blueberry. He also worked with Dr. Fred Colville of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The highbush variety, which was easier to harvest, opened the way for commercial blueberry growing.

Huntington bought a small farm in New Jersey and developed a means of mass-rooting his cuttings in raised beds. At this point, Huntington and his father, Frederick Wolcott Huntington, began scouting land farther south where

they could produce a crop that would ripen earlier than in New Jersey.

Interviewing locals, they found land in Pender County where wild blueberries grew abundantly.

Off Beattys Bridge Road outside Atkinson, they discovered a 40-acre bog called "Shakey Bay" – supposedly because you could jump on one side of it and someone on the other side could feel the vibrations.

They wound up purchasing the bog – and a total of 1,640 acres between Atkinson and Ivanhoe – from Will Corbett in 1927. According to Elizabeth Pippin of the Carolina Blueberry Association, the price was \$1 per acre, since the bogland was considered worthless. Then began the long process of clearing fields and planting cuttings.

Unfortunately, canker virus began to prey on Huntington's blueberry cuttings, so he contacted N.C. State College in Raleigh (now N.C. State University) to set up experimental

stations. Eventually, these led to the development of two local blueberry varieties, the Wolcott (named for Huntington's father) and the Murphy (named for a local grower), which were canker resistant. These varieties, according to John Huntington, saved North Carolina blueberry farming.

The N.C. Department of Agriculture dates Huntington's first truly successful crop from 1936. Not long afterward, a second grower, Gale Harrison, relocated from New Jersey and bought more local land. (By now, the price was up to \$7 per acre.) Soon, pickers were being hired from surrounding towns and driven to the field on flatbed trucks. (By the 1950s, farmers substituted school buses, out of use during the summer.)

At first, the crop was shipped out by rail from Atkinson and marketed through a New Jersey cooperative. The Carolina Blueberry Association, the state's oldest farmer-owned cooperative, was founded in 1941.

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VOLUNTEERS

Anyone can **volunteer** to pitch in at the popular **North Carolina Blueberry Festival**, which celebrates its 10th year on June 15 in **Burgaw**.

You don't have to be a native to the soils of the five counties that provide the nourishment for the **blueberry** crops – Duplin, Brunswick, New Hanover, **Pender** and Sampson. And you don't have to remember picking them as child, either as a supplement to your allowance or bolstering the family budget.

And you don't have to have pleasant memories of the aroma from grandmother's warm **blueberry** pie or the colorful inclusion of **blueberries** in a summer salad.

But it sure doesn't hurt to be a home-grown **blueberry** aficionado.

According to Olivia Dawson, **festival** coordinator, about **160 volunteers** last year participated in single events, shifts or even all day.

This year, the **festival** expects to have around the same number of **volunteers**.

“They are what helps make this event work and take place,” Dawson said.

Here's how some of the **volunteers** for this year's **festival** show their pride:



Ray and Bird Bost

"We're greater than 60" • Run the beer tent • Reside near Burgaw



HOMETOWN: Ray is from Upstate New York, and Bird is from Wisconsin Rapids, Wis.

CURRENT JOBS: Bird is retired from Naval Hospital, Camp Lejeune; Ray retired from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

WHAT IS YOUR VOLUNTEER POSITION, AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU VOLUNTEERED? We host and co-chair the beer tent. And this will be our fourth year.

WHY DO YOU VOLUNTEER? Running the beer tent is a challenge, and the tent is next to the bandstand – good music.

WHEN DID YOU FIRST TASTE A BLUEBERRY? We both remember picking blueberries as kids: pick one eat one, pick one, slap a mosquito, put one in the pail.

FAVORITE WAY TO ENJOY BLUEBERRIES: Eat them cold by the hand full.

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE COME TO THE FESTIVAL? Incredible people watching, great music, dancing, good vendor food, goodies, crafts. To join in on the 5K run or the bike race.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL? The music!

SHOULD BURGAW BE RENAMED BLUEBERRY, N.C.? Maybe Mayberry No. 2

Kristin Wells

26 • Chair of arts/crafts • Lives in Williard



HOMETOWN AND HIGH SCHOOL: Burgaw and Harrells Christian Academy

CURRENT JOB: Customer service representative with the Town of Burgaw

WHAT IS YOUR VOLUNTEER POSITION? Chairman of the Arts/Crafts Committee and designer for the NC Blueberry Festival annual T-shirt for the past nine years (children shirts and/or adult shirts each year) including this year's 10th anniversary (design coming soon).

WHY VOLUNTEER: Enjoy spending my extra time with other volunteers being involved with exciting events, planning and creating new and fun ideas...the Blueberry Festival is a perfect example of that.

FAVORITE WAY TO ENJOY BLUEBERRIES: Love my homemade blueberry pecan pie!

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE COME TO THE FESTIVAL?

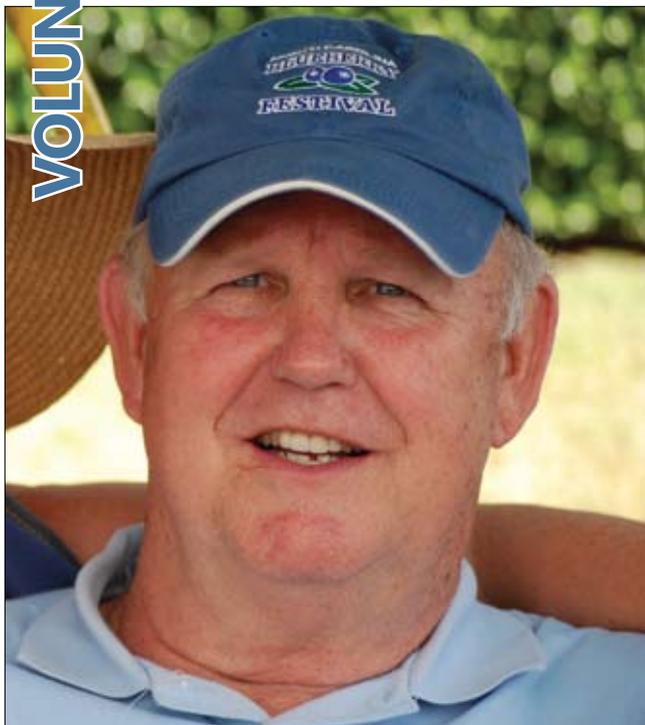
Blueberries are grown all over Pender County, as well as surrounding counties, and Burgaw seems to be right in the middle, the heart of blueberry land in southeastern N.C. Our wonderful, small-town, friendly atmosphere is the perfect place for all ages to come and enjoy a variety of 100-plus arts and crafts vendors, lots of food, music, and, of course, blueberries.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL? I don't have a "favorite" - I enjoy it all, from reviewing arts/crafts vendor applications beginning in March to the music at sunset on festival day in June - it's all fun and exciting.

SHOULD BURGAW BE RENAMED BLUEBERRY, N.C.? At least on June 15, when 30,000 visitors are expected? Sure!

Martin Beach

70 • Finance officer • Lives in Burgaw



HOMETOWN AND HIGH SCHOOL: Fairmont and Fairmont High School (Class of 1961)

CURRENT JOB: Retired three times, from the Army, Pamlico County manager, Pender County manager. I also was interim Burgaw town manager.

VOLUNTEERING ROLES? I've volunteered for 10 years, the last two years as finance officer. Have served in every position and on all but three committees. Helped found the festival.

WHY DID YOU BECOME A VOLUNTEER? It helps the town of Burgaw, and the enjoyment of giving back.

FIRST TASTE? 1950, a blueberry cobbler.

WHAT MAKES THE FESTIVAL SPECIAL? Great family event. Most fun you can have for free!

FAVORITE PART? Music

SHOULD BURGAW RENAMED BLUEBERRY, NC? Absolutely not. This is only one day in the great life of Burgaw.

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Sue Cowan

66 • Bake sale and cookbook chair • Lives in Burgaw



HOMETOWN AND HIGH SCHOOL: Burlington and Williams High School

CURRENT JOB: Retired

PREVIOUS BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL VOLUNTEER ROLES: Merchandise chairman, recipe contest chairman, volunteer coordinator, assisted with sponsor's hospitality suite, assisted with volunteer's Thank You dinner, and have worked at every pancake breakfast. Have volunteered since 2003 when we had our first organizational meeting for the first festival in 2004

WHY HAVE YOU VOLUNTEERED: The festival is good for Burgaw and this is my way of helping our town, and one of the reasons I first volunteered was to meet new people.

FAVORITE WAY TO ENJOY BLUEBERRIES: By themselves, or in any and everything.

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE COME TO THE FESTIVAL: A lot to see, a lot to do, a lot to eat, something for the entire family.

FAVORITE PART OF THE FESTIVAL: Early Saturday morning when the vendors are setting up, the first visitors begin to arrive, most of our work is completed, and it's time for the fun to begin.

SHOULD BURGAW BE RENAMED BLUEBERRY, NC: Absolutely not.

Katie Brown

58 • Scholarship chair • Lives in Clinton



HOMETOWN AND HIGH SCHOOL: Chinquapin and East Duplin High School.

CURRENT JOB: Director of customized training and workforce development programs at Sampson Community College

WHY DO YOU VOLUNTEER: Working as a volunteer gives me great pleasure! There is a reward in working & helping others; often times, working in the job that I currently hold comes from the former networking and interaction, which is very advantageous.

WHEN DID YOU FIRST TASTE A BLUEBERRY: Growing up on a farm, my mother prepared three meals on a daily basis. One of her favorite recipes for the dessert was preparing and cooking a blueberry cobbler. My siblings and I could hardly wait for blueberry season. When I was at a very young age, I ate my first blueberry cobbler with vanilla ice cream. What a special delight!

FAVORITE WAY TO ENJOY BLUEBERRIES: My favorite enjoyment is to eat the berries: freshly picked, on garden salads, in cakes, pies & cobblers, in muffins, on cereal, jams/jellies, and blueberry wine.

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE COME TO THE FESTIVAL? Growing up in an agri-business region, I feel that it is very important to support local business/industry. The festival is an occasion for celebrating the fruit of its harvest - a home-grown product from Pender and surrounding counties. It gives the hometown folks an opportunity to showcase its quaint tourist attractions. The festival creates a moment in time to relax and enjoy the fellowship, food, crafts, games and entertainment.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL? I like the unique food and beverage displays.

SHOULD BURGAW BE RENAMED BLUEBERRY, NC? No! The blueberry is a renowned fruit that creates another page in the life of Burgaw and Pender County's history books, but I don't want to forget that Burgaw well represents a diversified workforce. To grow Burgaw, Pender County and North Carolina, it will take the blueberry harvest as well as other cash products to move the economy forward. The Blueberry Festival is an added value and marketable resource to create camaraderie among its citizens of North Carolina and neighboring states.

10. INK

Blueberry ink doesn't last forever. But if you want to do something creative with a child, it's a fun way to spend some time.

7. FROZEN BLUEBERRIES

Want a wholesome, satisfying sweet snack? Freeze some blueberries and eat them by the handful.

6. ANTIOXIDANTS

If you read health magazines, you know that blueberries are classified as a super-food.

9. BLUEBERRY BEER

Manly men feel they must snub their noses at fruity beers. But Wild Blue, at 8 percent alcohol, has some potency.



8. THEY'RE EVERYWHERE

Blueberries thrive in North America, all the way from Florida to Canada.

10 reasons we LOVE

By Mike Voorheis

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5. PANCAKES

If you're out of syrup, add some blueberries to the batter. No syrup needed.

4. RATS

In studies, aging rats on a blueberry extract diet showed improved balance, coordination and short-term memory.



1. COBBLER

It's the finest of the cobblers, and I've yet to taste a cobbler I didn't love.

3. FESTIVALS

Burgaw isn't the only town that reveres the blueberry. There are festivals in Poplarville, Miss.; Alma, Ga.; Nacogdoches, Texas, and Austerlitz, N.Y., to name a few.

2. NOSTALGIA

My family never picked blueberries, but a pint of fresh blueberries still reminds me of climbing through a briar patch with a bucket to harvest some wild raspberries or blackberries with my dad.

blueberries



Come see us
on Hwy 53 in Burgaw!

PASSION fruit

For Lewis, growing
blueberries
a labor of love

By Adam Wagner

Cal Lewis kicks at the dirt in one of his Rocky Point blueberry farms, turning the sandy top level over to expose the soil beneath. “This soil here is an acidic ... soil. It’s not good for growing strawberries, tobacco, peanuts, corn, cotton or anything else. It’s good for growing blueberries,” Lewis said.

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WC14-101097

Cal Lewis owns and operates American Blueberries, part of Lewis Nursery and Farms Inc., in Rocky Point.

Photo by
Mike Spencer



Blueberries were first planted in North Carolina in 1927 by some growers from New Jersey who wanted to jumpstart their season. By bringing the plants to the South, they were able to start the season about a month earlier. The first successful harvest was in 1936.

With three other blueberry farms totaling 350 acres and 100 acres of strawberry farms — in addition to bell peppers, blackberries and a marketing company — the fruit serves as the foundation of Lewis' produce empire.

Lewis, who grew up nearby and graduated from Burgaw High School, remembered being intrigued by the bulldozers and other construction equipment when the 80-acre field was cleared in the mid-1960s. Always the businessman, he and his cousin found a way to profit from the activity.

"We found Venus flytraps here when we cleared this land and gathered them and sold them," he said. "This road was a dirt

road and we'd put them on our wagons and take them up there and sell them."

Now, Lewis has to work a little harder for his money, arriving at his Rocky Point office at 6 a.m. every morning to catch up on email and paperwork. Then, at about 6:45 a.m., he meets with staff to set the day's priorities. During the harvest season, Lewis has about 500 to 600 employees swarming his fields.

"In December you don't have ripe fruit out here getting pounded by the elements," he said. "When you have a cold front coming in or a rain front coming Saturday, you ask, 'Should I pick this before the rain because the rain will split those berries.' You make those decisions based on the weather every day."

Lewis, who is a third-generation farmer, said he has a greater appreciation for nature's influence on fruit than someone who might have grown up elsewhere.

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“Growing up around a farm I understand the impact Mother Nature has. ... We are dependent on Mother Nature, and we can't control those elements. I understand that, I understand the risk of doing it. That's what goes with the territory,” he said.

Although he has three daughters who helped out on the farm as they grew up, Lewis didn't encourage any of them to stay after they went to college.

“It's 365 and I'm out here at 6 o'clock every morning and I live in town,” he said. “It's a tough way of life, but you gotta grow up in it and have a passion to succeed in it because it's demanding as far as hours and intensity.

“Everyobdy's taking time off fishing, playing golf and I'm here working. I didn't necessarily want my girls tied to that.”

Although he doesn't necessarily want his daughters involved in the business, Lewis is still passionate about what he does, plucking blueberries off the bush as he walks down the rows.

“It's my passion, I love it,” he said. “It's something my granddaddy did and my daddy did, and it's something I've just grown up in and enjoyed and want to carry on.”



Blueberries grow well in moist, well-drained acidic soils.

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WIC Income Guideline Table
Effective April 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013*

Gross Income

Family Unit **	Annual	Monthly	Twice Monthly	Bi-Weekly	Weekly	Hourly*
1	\$20,665	\$1,723	\$862	\$795	\$398	\$9.94
2	\$27,991	\$2,333	\$1,167	\$1,077	\$539	\$13.46
3	\$35,317	\$2,944	\$1,472	\$1,359	\$680	\$16.98
4	\$42,643	\$3,554	\$1,777	\$1,641	\$821	\$20.50
5	\$49,969	\$4,165	\$2,083	\$1,922	\$961	\$24.03
6	\$57,295	\$4,775	\$2,388	\$2,204	\$1,102	\$27.55

Note: A person who currently receives Medicaid, Work First, or Food and Nutrition Services (Food Stamps) automatically meets the income eligibility guidelines for WIC. *185% of the Federal Poverty guidelines per the Federal Register. ** A household (or economic unit) is defined as a person or group of persons, related or non related, who usually (although not necessarily) live together, and whose production of income and consumption of goods or services are related. The income of everyone in the economic unit is counted to determine eligibility.




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giving back • Scholarship program

By Phil Fuhrer

The North Carolina Blueberry Festival is about more than a dollop of vanilla ice cream atop a warm slice of cobbler.

Hosted by Burgaw for the 10th straight year, the festival promotes the interaction of friends and neighbors across five counties: Bladen, Duplin, New Hanover, Pender and Sampson.

There's good eating, food fellowship, and even good scholarship at the event.

Once again, the Blueberry Festival Scholarship Essay Association, funded by area benefactors, will award academic assistance to four high school seniors. The Scholarship Essay Selection Committee was scheduled to award a minimum of \$10,000 at the festival: one \$4,000 scholarship, plus another each for \$3,000,

The festival Scholarship Essay Association awards scholarships to area high school seniors.



\$2,000 and \$1,000 to high school seniors.

"This initiative is a great opportunity to form friendships and partnerships with benefactors across the five-county region," says Katie Brown, the Director of Customized Training and Workforce Development

Programs at Sampson Community College. "Last year, in fact, benefactors provided \$20,000 for scholarship."

Brown, who grew up in Chinquapin and is in her first year as scholarship chairman, says funding is off this year because of the economy, but

benefactors remain committed to the program.

"We try to stress the application of scholarship associated with the agri-business industry in our area," says Brown. "So many community colleges and universities in our area have wonderful learning opportunities and vocational training in agri-business.

Brown grew up in an agri-business family that farmed tobacco, corn and soybeans. But during the blueberry packing season, she and her sister, as teenagers, were allowed to earn extra money over at the Heath Farms on Cypress Creek Road.

Scholarship would come later at Mount Olive College and Walden University in Minnesota.

Now she's back home volunteering at the festival, promoting economic assistance for good writing.

"It's a wonderful way to touch someone's life," she says.

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plenty of **Green** in those **BLUES**

Growing popularity is good news for N.C. farmers • By Claire Parker

Whether they are on your cereal, in your smoothie or topping a salad, blueberries have become a popular addition to our diets.

Americans have more than doubled their blueberry intake in just 16 years, buying more than 853 million pounds of the superfood, according to a report from the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council.

That is good news for North Carolina farmers, where blueberry production has shown significant increases over the past five years. The Blueberry Council released 2012 numbers showing a 5 percent increase in year-over-year production and the Southern states make up for a quarter of the country's blueberries, with North Carolina, Florida and Georgia leading the way.

"It's been a good time for us," said Cal Lewis, owner of Lewis Nursery & Farms in Rocky Point, where his family grows 350 acres of blueberries. "It's no secret that blueberry consumption has been rising consistently and planting has been rising with that demand."

Lewis credits several factors for the fruit's increasing appeal, including greater availability due to more adaptive plant varieties as well as popularity from being named a superfood.

Many point to research on the health benefits of blueberries for sparking publicity, especially when it was dubbed a superfood in a medical journal in the late 1990s. That has led to the blueberry becoming a celebrity of sorts on TV health segments, magazine features and wellness blogs.

A New York Times blog in January touted the blueberry's ability to possibly reduce heart attacks in women. Deepak Chopra tweeted about blueberries' health benefits in February to his 1.4 million Twitter followers. Dr. Oz often mentions them on his television show and recently recommended blueberries for lowering blood pressure.

So why all the buzz? Blueberries are rich in several nutritional must-haves—fiber, vitamin C, phytonutrients and manganese, according to the Blueberry Council. These



Blueberries were a \$71 million crop for N.C. farmers in 2012.

STARNEWS FILE PHOTO

qualities have been shown to aid heart health, the immune system, bone development, brain health, insulin responses and cancer risk reduction.

Because of the somewhat tricky conditions blueberries require to grow, most Americans got these nutritional benefits from other foods in the past. But with the cultivation of blueberry varieties such as highbush and rabbiteye from California, North Carolina blueberries are more plentiful and easier to distribute to the marketplace.

And with South America producing blueberries from September to April and North Carolina's season running from May through July, the berries are available year-round.

"We have enjoyed great success, and it looks like we have an excellent crop pending," Lewis said. He expects blueberries to be ready for picking around the second to third week in May. And in June, you can celebrate the blueberry at the 10th annual North Carolina Blueberry Festival in Burgaw.

"Blueberries are easy to eat, and the concentration of vitamins and nutrients make them an attractive fruit," Lewis said.

"Plus, adults and children love them."

BY THE NUMBERS

State's top five blueberry-producing

counties:

1. Bladen
2. Pender
3. Sampson
4. Duplin
5. Columbus

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A few of the reasons why blueberries are the healthy berry:

Low in fat

Just 80 calories per cup and virtually no fat.

Full of fiber

A handful helps satisfy recommended daily intake, which keeps you regular, the heart healthy and cholesterol in check.

Packed with vitamin C

One serving delivers almost 25 percent of daily recommendation, which aids collagen formation, helps maintain healthy gums and capillaries and a healthy immune system.

Source: U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council

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5 reasons to come back to Burgaw after the festival

1. History abounds

Historic Downtown Burgaw has a variety of architecture from the 18th and 19th centuries. The buildings currently house retail businesses, coffee shops and restaurants. And visit the Historic Burgaw Train Depot, 115 S. Dickerson St., which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is part of the North Carolina Civil War Trail.

2. Pender County Museum

In 1917, Amos Burton built the home that now serves as the Pender County Museum, 200 W. Bridgers St. The museum depicts the area's history through photographs, documents, furniture, quilts and paintings.

3. Hollywood in Burgaw

See where TV series and movies have filmed including scenes from NBC's "Revolution" and from the feature film "Where the Devil Hides," scheduled to premiere in theaters Oct. 11. Past productions include: "The Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood" and "The Secret Life of Bees."

4. Adventure

Travel the Black and Northeast Cape Fear rivers on guided tours, through Blackwater Kayaking Charters, 30 Bell Williams Road.

5. Relax with a glass of wine

Visit the Bannerman Vineyard and Winery, one of North Carolina's oldest muscadine vineyards. Try a muscadine wine or one of the winery's fruit wines, including strawberry, peach and, of course, blueberry.

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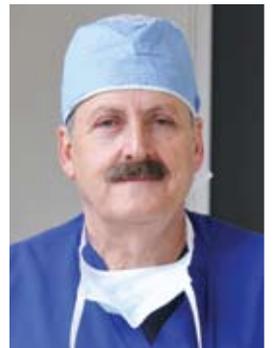
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