

# Community News

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COMMUNITY NEWS



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## Cleaning the community



(L-R) Rhiannon Stocco, Hashim and Tanaesza Russell cleaning up some chopped wood to help improve one senior's yard

### Community News photo by Ebba Liguori

by Ebba Liguori

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In cooperation with Pemberton Township Recreation Department, St. Ann Church sponsored the Youth Community Outreach in the township.

Everyday at 9 a.m., the students gathered at St. Ann Church to travel to their destinations throughout the township. Among the many areas the youths visited were Bayberry Beach and Park, Turtle Log area, the Clubhouse

Road Triangle and other spots in the Browns Mills area. They collected and bagged trash and were amazed at the accumulation of debris at each location.

The projects were organized and planned by adults Father Edwin Mathias, Sue Winters, Mike Pinto, and Paula Kosko, Township Recreation Director.

Assisting in logistics and supervision were Anita Pugliese, Brett and JoAnne Lehr, Mary Douglas, and Sean Carney Sr.

Assisting at various locations were township public works employees for supervision and heavy lifting.

Students participating in the community cleanup and painting were Hashim and Tanaesza Russell, Rhiannon Stocco, Melania, Joseph, and Robert Pugliese, Jacob Saville, Alyssa and Breia Lehr, and Maryrose Rude.

Additional students who helped  
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## Nearly 7,500 flock to blueberry fest at Whitesbog Village

by Adam Tait III

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**BROWNS MILLS** — The 28th annual Whitesbog Blueberry Festival June 25 was a huge success: an estimated 7,500 people attended the fete, drawn by the food, attractions, history, the pleasant weather, and by the historic fruit itself.

Those drawn to the 10 a.m. opening reported the long lines of traffic to enter actually took about 30 minutes to clear, but once inside, it's difficult to believe that anyone could have had anything other a wonderful time.

There was, of course, an almost infinite variety of everything: food, colorful items to purchase, interesting history lessons, an inflated tent for the kids to jump in and wear themselves out on, music and "green" groups, hoping to sign you up to help preserve this pristine area, which without heavy volunteer effort, could quickly and easily fade away.

There were photo and art exhibits, both breathtaking in their beauty.

But everywhere, it was the blueberry. They were in pies, strudel, cheese-cakes, ice cream, boxes, to pick and on bushes avail-

able to buy and plant.

Jersey history buffs had to be in heaven. There were so many fascinating lectures, you had to pick and choose which to attend. Two standouts were Whitesbog Village Restorations — Before and After, by John Joyce, chair of the Whitesbog Building and Landscape Committee and Double Trouble State Park, also a company town, with a sawmill and cranberry sorting and packing house.

Other featured lectures were on Jersey Vultures, the Lenape Indians, the carnivorous pitcher plants and fire ecology along with many others.

There were six musical groups, playing and singing, one each hour. The Long Hill String Band, featured old-time fiddle music.

They were followed by Home Cookin', also featuring old-timey music and Clan Suibhne, repeating a visit from last year, with their melodic Celtic music.

Just after Long Hill played, there was an official welcome by Pemberton Township Councilman Rick Prickett, who does double duty as  
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## Blueberry from front

President of the Whitesbog Preservation Trust President.

Prickett pointed out that 2011 is the centennial of the development of the commercial blueberry, developed in the partnership of Miss Elizabeth White and Dr. Fredrick Coville of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Special events will mark this partnership over the next six years, Prickett said.

Prickett then introduced the 12 contestants to the children's pie-eating contest (blueberry, of course).

Can any pie actually exceed the mess made by the heralded blueberry? The contestants stood over a table, their hands behind them, then dove in. It was all over in two or three minutes, with six winners picked, all with blue-purple mouths, cheeks and even foreheads.

The six happy winners were awarded certificates. They were Christopher, 6; Andrew, Allison, and Hunter, all 11; another Andrew, 9, and Tommy, 8. Allison was the lone girl winner.

Also joining the festivities around the picnic areas was the Jersey Devil. Joshua Ruup, 15, was doing yeoman work in a heavy, frightening suit with mask and long, white claws. A few of the pre-schoolers were really

frightened by the suit until being calmed by their parents.

The crafters along the midway also drew huge crowds. Foodwise, there were the usual burgers, cheeseburgers and dogs. But there were also fish and chips, sausage sandwiches, funnel cakes and a variety of sodas. Plenty of icy bottled water, too.

Seating in the picnic grove was always at a premium, but informality reigned and we all shoved together tightly and good naturedly.

About half of the exhibitors displayed the normal costume jewelry and t-shirts, but about every other tent was selling something really out of the ordinary. There was hand-made pottery, large, heavy and very attractive. There were home-made desserts, candles and soaps, art and dog treats. There were also signs with children's names on them.

You might think these would be ho-hum, but they were anything but. The signs were almost one-by-two feet. The names, hundreds of them, with all kinds of variations, were lettered in various plaid colors and patterns.

There were bronze sculptures of animals and, for the second year, originally from Bolivia, and now the Washington, D.C. area, Julio Cazon, proprietor of Itumiray, featuring CDs with modern renditions of music by the

ancient Incas of that area.

The Green Groups were out in huge numbers and included The Whitesbog Preservation Trust, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Brendan T. Byrne State Forest, Pinelands Institute for Natural and Environmental Studies, N.J. Division of Parks and Forestry, N.J. Forest fire Service, Burlco Citizens Corps (five volunteer groups), Pemberton Twp. Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Rancocas Conservancy, the Rancocas Nature Center, the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP), a Lyme Disease tent, and the Pinelands Preservation Alliance.

John Courtney, of the Rancocas Nature Center, said prospective volunteers were never turned away. Gabrielle, 8, came up and listened, resplendent in a pink t-shirt with a white elephant on it her dad had drawn. What a shame if the Pinelands aren't around for her and her children in 20 years.

On the way out, I again see the Jersey Devil.

"How are you holding out, Josh?" I ask.

"I'm not Josh, I'm Tyler."

Good move. All that activity in the summer heat could be too much for one person.

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