

BURL. ED. TIMES 7/1/01

# Beating the heat



BCT staff photo/JOHN JABLONOWSKI

Two-year-old Austin Cochrane of Pemberton Borough cools off with a water-spraying fan yesterday at the 18th annual Whitesbog Blueberry Festival in Pemberton Township. Yesterday's high temperature reached 94 degrees, and today's high is expected to be 92 with thunderstorms likely.

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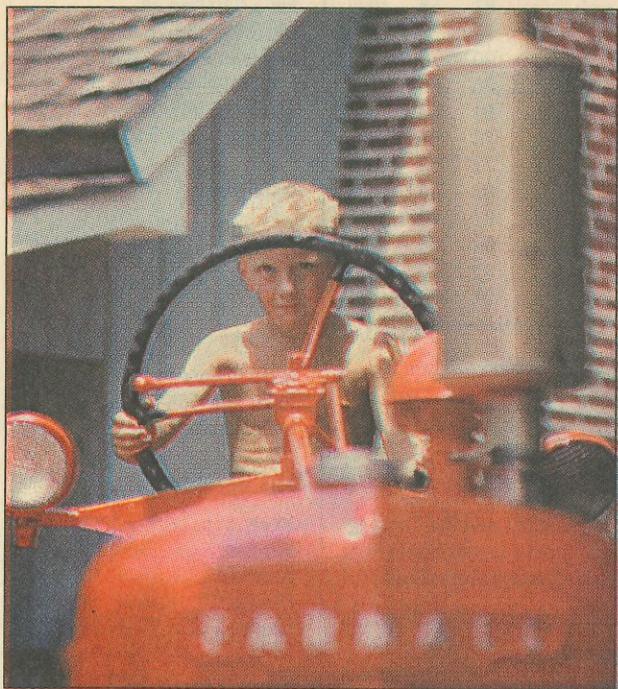
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TIMES 7/1/01

## IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Bill Anderson Jr., 7, looks like he's ready to head for the fields as he tries out the driver's seat of a 1942 Farmall tractor at yesterday's 18th annual Blueberry Festival at Whitesbog Village. Story, A3.

Staff photo by Mark Sherman



Inside

Business .....	D1	Community .....	AA6	Movies .....
Books .....	AA3	Crossword .....	BB4	Nation & W
Commentary .....	A13	Health & Science .....	AA5	Obituaries .

# Blueberries abound in Whitesbog

By DONNA McARDLE  
Special to The Times

PEMBERTON TOWNSHIP — "This was my first time here," said Browns Mills resident Gale Selecky as she trudged to her car on the abandoned crop dusting airfield at Whitesbog yesterday.

With the dry white sand kicking up a cloud around her feet she added: "I enjoyed it while I was here, but boy, was it ungodly hot!"

Yesterday's extreme heat was the backdrop for the 18th annual Whitesbog Blueberry Festival. An overflow crowd of early visitors filled the parking.

While a long line of cars waited to enter the event, visitors packed wagons pulled by tractors to nearby fields to pick a fresh pint of delectable blueberries, whose American cultivation traces its roots to Whitesbog and the work of Elizabeth C. White.

Although the weather was uncomfortable, spirits remained high, even while waiting for the shuttle buses to transport people to the festival.

"This is our first time here," said Bruce and Elaine Keyser of Landsdale, Pa. "We always follow the New Jersey calendar of events and pick an event to do on the weekend."

Vendors with shade canopies drew visitors who admired a variety of crafts for sale. Nature photographer Jim Kinney and glass blower Carolyn Marsh were among the artisans who displayed their work.

Tracey Sunderland, Bonnie Nichols and Linda Durek were on hand from the Rutgers Cooperative Extension

of Burlington County. The master gardeners fielded numerous questions about plants and problems.

"We had people ask about deer resistant plants, tree galls and over-irrigating junipers," said Sunderland. "We offer all the information we can."

While Home Cookin' entertained the crowds under a large awning, 12-year-old Jodi Gfell of Browns Mills was busy enjoying some blueberry cheesecake with her sister Olivia and cousin Emily Grimes. The 3-year-old Emily's choice for a blueberry temptation was muffins, which she and her mom agreed were delicious.

Three-year old Paul Mazzella of Hamilton tried his luck tossing sewn blueberry bean bags into a target.

Danielle Ross, 5, of Ocean Gate, sat patiently while volunteer Rosemary Fajger transformed the youngster into a beautiful blue butterfly with carefully applied face paint.

"I love doing this," Fajger said.

Les Rotberg had his share of children gathered around. A staff member at Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge, he was displaying

Clack, a screech owl with an injured wing the refuge rescued about four years ago. "He's nonreleasable," said Rotberg, "so we use him as an educational animal."

Earlier, the refuge released a great blue heron into a nearby pond.



Staff photos by Mark Sherman

Danielle Ross, 5, of Toms River shows off the butterfly painted on her face at the annual Whitesbog Blueberry Festival.



Crowds mill around the historic grounds of Whitesbog Village at yesterday's Blueberry Festival.

Volunteers for the Whitesbog Preservation Trust did a brisk business selling blueberry preserves and this year's T-shirt, proclaiming Whitesbog the "Birthplace of the Blueberry."

"We are selling a lot today," said volunteer Elizabeth Hill. "All the proceeds go to help in the restoration of the village."