

Berries top menu at Whitesbog fest

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Whether you're looking to enjoy the sights, sounds and crafts of an old-fashioned Pinelands festival or just want to taste the sweetness of fresh picked blueberries, the historic village of Whitesbog's Blueberry Festival is the place to be tomorrow.

The festival turns 23 this year, and will feature displays of country crafts, Pinelands art and photography, folk and country music, and tours of the village and surrounding Pinelands forests.

"Our historic and wagon tours are really beefed up this year," said Theresa Jacks, executive director of the Whitesbog Preservation Trusts which puts on the festival.

Interested in meeting Elizabeth White, the renowned daughter of village cranberry magnate J.J. White who helped U.S.

Department of Agriculture researcher Frederick Coville develop the cultivated blueberry in 1916? Take the "I Just Met Elizabeth White" tour where White and other Whitesbog residents will be portrayed by actors from the Burlington County Historical Society.

Those with more bizarre tastes can learn about the famed Jersey Devil during a walking tour titled "What the Jersey

Devil Eats" hosted by Maria Peter, program coordinator for the Pinelands education courses at Burlington County College.

"What she's done is take descriptions of what the devil supposedly looks like, such as his teeth and hooves, and determine what he likely eats in the Pines," Jacks said.

What to eat at the festival is easy: it's not called the Blueberry

Festival for nothing, and Jacks promised plenty of fresh juicy blues will be available in large quantities. Festivalgoers will be allowed to pick their own blueberries from the fields near the village, purchase pack-

IF YOU GO

23rd Annual Whitesbog Blueberry Festival

Where: Historic Whitesbog Village at Mile Marker 13 on Route 530 in Pemberton Township

When: Tomorrow, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Rain date is Sunday.

Admission: \$7 per car for parking

Information: (609) 893-4646

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BURLINGTON COUNTY

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BCT staff photo/MATT STANLEY

Aiyana Bailey of Maple Shade does a taste test while picking fresh blueberries in a field at Whitesbog Village during last year's blueberry festival in Pemberton Township.

ages of the fruit sold by a county farmer, or sample countless varieties of blueberry foods, including pies, doughnuts, muffins, fritters, sundaes and cheesecake.

Proceeds from the festival go toward the restoration and upkeep of the homes and buildings in the village, which was once America's largest cranberry farm.

Jacks said the Whitesbog Historic Trust recently moved its offices into Suningave, the home of Elizabeth White, and is in the process of transforming it

into a museum and interpretive center.

"We've received a lot of original furniture, which we're putting on display for tours," Jacks said, adding that live music and story-telling performances will also be held in the home and at other locations in the village.

Performers will include the Sugar Sand Ramblers, folk musician and story teller Jim Albertsonm Bad Dogz with Joe Wills and the Conaghan Family.