

Blueberry fest set for June 24

Jacks said the event draws a large crowd in part because of its folksy nature.

"I think we've tried really hard to stay true to the original concept," she said. "This is a country festival, with handmade crafts, pinelands artists. We often get commercial vendors who want to come out and sell their sunrooms or something, or to give us donations so they can highlight their companies. We always decline. We want this to stay a country festival."

Of course those donors are always welcome to serve as sponsors, helping pay for goods like T-shirts and for the expanding cost of operating the festival, Jacks said. About 100 volunteers from Whitesbog — and countless from the sponsoring organizations — chip in to make the event happen, she said.

The volunteers are amazing.

The blueberry festival — although it highlights blueberries and comes just a week before the start of National Blueberry Month — celebrates more than just the fruits. The event features crafts, Pinelands arts and photography, antique engine displays, a tractor parade, several walking and wagon tours, festival food, children's activities, and agricultural museum, a 1920s workers cottage, native plant sales and access to the historic general store and post office.

As always, there will be blueberry picking, and plenty of blueberry-based goods on hand.

The biggest attrac-

IF YOU GO

■ **WHAT:** 23rd Annual Whitesbog Blueberry Festival

■ **WHEN:** June 24, starting at 10 a.m.

■ **WHERE:** Historic Whitesbog Village, at 120-34 Whitesbog Road in Browns Mills.

■ **COST:** \$7 to park

■ **CONTACT:** 609-893-4646, or visit whitesbog.org for more information.

tion, Jacks said, is easy to identify.

"Everyone loves the music," she said.

Joe Willis of Burlington County's WBZC will host a full day of entertainment, including several bluegrass and folk acts. Among them are the Sugar Sand Ramblers, Medford Station, the Conaghan Family, the Basement Musicians and Bad Dogz. Storyteller Jim Albertson is also on the lineup.

Jacks said attendees should keep in mind the country festival environment when dressing for the event.

"Wear sneakers. Be comfortable. Bring insect repellent," she said.

And be prepared to walk a little from the designated parking area to the Whitesbog grounds, she said.

The event is free to attend, but there is a parking charge of \$7 per carload. The event will continue in typical rain, but in extreme weather will be rescheduled for June 25. Whitesbog is at 120-34 Whitesbog Road in Browns Mills, and can be reached at 609-893-4646. Directions and information about Whitesbog are also available online at www.whitesbog.org.