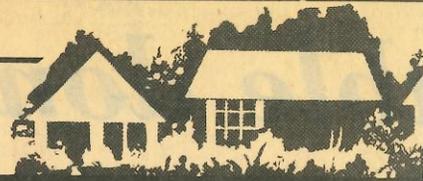
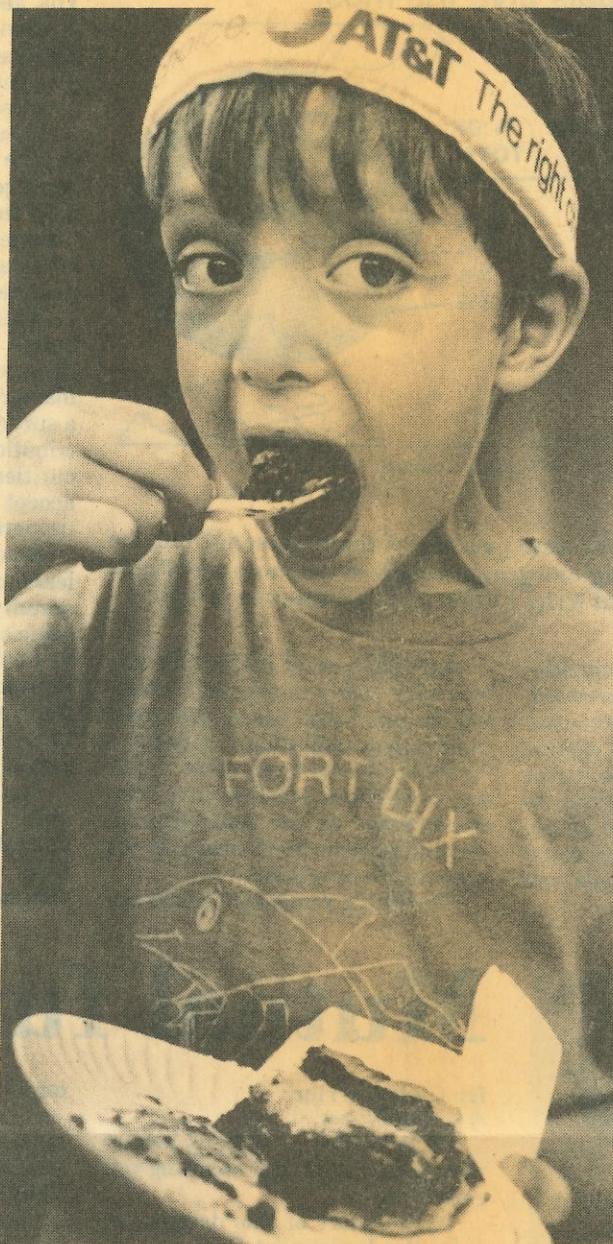


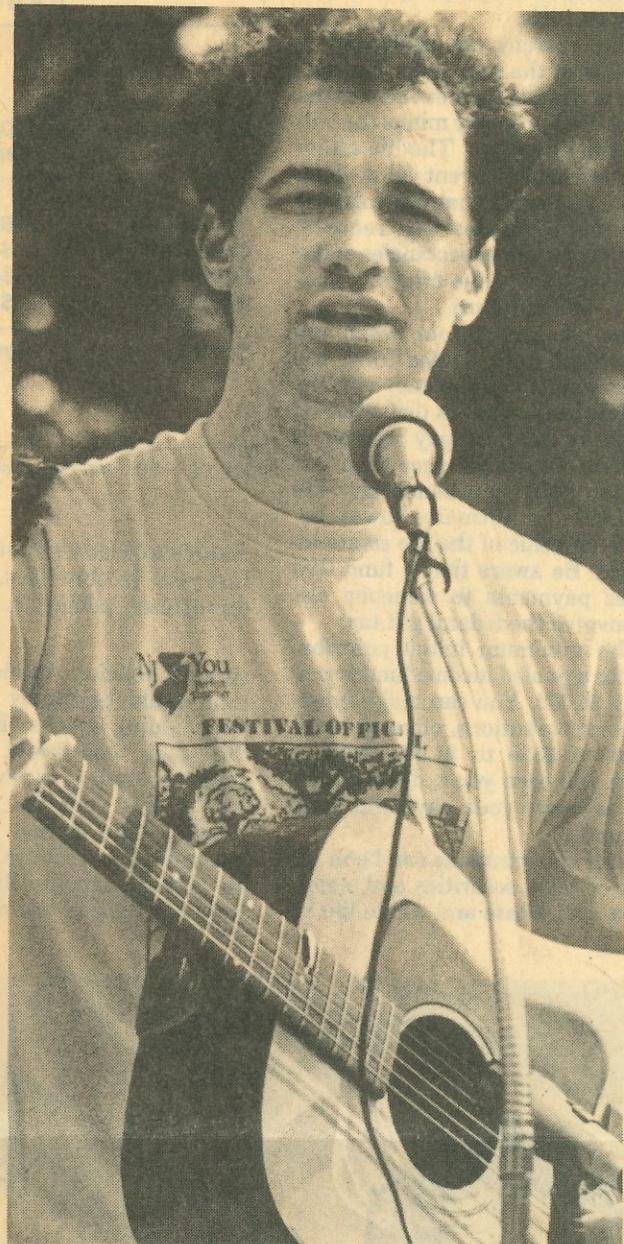
# HOMETOWN NEWS



Whitesbog resident John Joyce stacks crates of blueberries used as prizes at the third annual Whitesbog Blueberry Festival in Pemberton Township yesterday.



Jeremiah Morehouse of Fort Dix displays the fine art of eating blueberry pie.



Dave Orleans, a folksinger and naturalist who lives at Whitesbog, entertains visitors at the festival.

## Whitesbog festival celebrates birth of the 'blues'

By Irene Gianopoulos  
Special to the Times

PEMBERTON TOWNSHIP — The tiny agricultural community of Whitesbog prides itself on being the birthplace of the cultivated blueberry, and the deep blue fruit was very much in evidence yesterday at the third annual blueberry festival.

More than 2,000 people spent the day listening to music, exploring more than 30 craft and food stands and touring the village and surrounding berry fields.

Another 300 persons braved the high humidity and scorching heat to run in a 10-kilometer cross-country race or a 2-mile "fun race." Among them was Chuck Miller of Mount Laurel.

"It was hot and the sand was very tough to run in," said Miller, who placed first in the 10-kilometer race. "On a day like today I truly know I ran as hard as I could."

Winners in each age category received prizes such as luggage, telephones and boxes of blueberries.

Music was provided by folk singer and naturalist David Orleans, who lives in Whitesbog; the Greater Pinelands Dulcimer Society; and Cedar Creek, which entertained the crowd with a blend of bluegrass, folk and country music.

"We all enjoy this type of music and we found that it appeals to all ages. It's very up-tempo," said Steve Woodward of Delran, who plays bass fiddle for the group.

Other members include Lisa Bouchelle of Fairless Hills, Pa., Ed and Karen Dubell of Burlington, John Wilcox of Delran, and Bob Farmer of Delanco.

Among the more popular attractions were the food and craft tables which lined



Asbury Park resident Spencer Young cools off after winning the 2-mile race.

the dirt roads throughout the village. Beekeepers Russ and Joann Spriggs of Jackson sold their own brand of raw blueberry honey and applebutter.

Russ Johnson, president of the Central Jersey Beekeepers Association, described

what it is like to work in close contact with bees.

"The honeybees are not aggressive but very docile. I can work bare-handed all afternoon, going through two dozen hives without getting stung," said Johnson, not-

ing that each hive holds 75,000 bees.

Farther down the road, Dr. Sam Moyer of Medford Lakes was making brooms out of sorghum plants that he developed especially for that purpose. Moyer, who has a doctorate in genetics from the University of Minnesota, grew up in Pennsylvania Dutch country, where the art of broom-making is still practiced.

At the woodcarving stand, 4-year old Justin Cornet was demonstrating a wooden dancing doll to passersby who stopped to chat. Justin's parents, Liz and Peter Cornet of Browns Mills, started to carve as a hobby and began selling their sturdy wooden toys six months ago.

Other tables displayed information from local environmental groups such as the Pine Barrens Coalition and the Brick Township Citizens Against Illegal Dumping, which works to prevent illegal dumping in the Pinelands by reporting violators.

Children's activities included the biggest blueberry race, a spoon race, and blueberry picking and eating contests. The big winner of the day was 13-year-old Dak Hughes of Eastampton, who won the egg toss and the blueberry eating contest.

Throughout the day, members of the Whitesbog Preservation Trust gave guided tours of the cranberry and blueberry fields. Naturalist Ted Gordon described how Elizabeth White, who owned the 3,000-acre plantation, developed the first cultivated blueberry in 1916.

"She had the Pineys bring in the bushes with the biggest blueberries they could find. Not only did she pay for the big bushes, but she named the variety after the collector. All strains of cultivated berries originated in Whitesbog," Gordon said.

Times staff photos by Nancy Rokos