

Blueberry Festival Special!

It's All About Community — Our Community

by Dianne E. Turner, "Mother Blueberry"

The enthusiasm surrounding this event has been ever-growing since the new theme was introduced last year. Combining the annual *Ellenville Street Fair* with the *Shawangunk Mountain Wild Blueberry and Huckleberry Festival* produced an event attracting people from a wide area. It has given our community a fun and attractive way to showcase our heritage as well as present what we are about today. At the same time we are giving something very special to our community — a day to gather together in fun and the enjoyment of the company of each other.

The newest "jewel" to be added to the Festival venue is *Art at the Festival*, a showcase of local artists and their talents being presented in our treasured **Hunt Memorial Building**. I am so very excited as to the prospects of the good things that can come from this presentation. I can't thank Cragmoor artist Judy Sigunick enough for stepping forward and taking on this important project.

I am also pleased that the *D&H Canal Historical Society* and the *D&H Canal Heritage Corridor Alliance*, enhanced by the presence of the mules from *Denman Farms*, will be participating in a sharing of another cultural aspect of our area.

Marc Fried, author and historian, is once again an integral part of the core history sector of the *Wild Blueberry and Huckleberry Festival*. This festival is his tribute to the Huckleberry Pickers and their cultural contribution to our area. He is adamant that they not be forgotten. He and my festival co-chairperson John Adams have been steadfast in their determination that this festival is not Blueberry in name only... and are major contributors as to why this is a community event and not just another summer street fair.

There will be lots of Blueberry baked goods and other Blueberry items available, both in the cultural area and scattered in booths amongst the vendors on **Canal Street**. Our own world-famous *Cohen's Bakery* is going all out this year with a grand array of Blueberry baked goods and will also do a demonstration for us of Blueberry Pie baking. Many of our community organizations will be participating with Blueberry goodies as a means of raising funds for group projects, so know that you are eating well for all the right reasons!

The street festival will be an array of craftspersons, artisans, vendors of quality merchandise... all proud of what they do. Many of our local civic organizations also participate with booths seeking your support and helping to make you aware just what it is that they offer our community. Our *Ellenville Regional Hospital* participates by putting together a **Health Fair** — and this year the wildly-fun Dunking Booth will be dedicated to the *Save Our Hospital Fund*. (Dunkees are still being recruited. Any volunteers for a truly great cause please call me!)

And, yes the *African American Men's Association* will again be serving up their BBQ chicken, ribs, brisket and corn on the cob; the *United Methodist Church* will be serving their famous sausage & peppers; Gary & Terry of *Lighthouse Deli* will be doing our Chamber Dogs; and, new this year, *Aroma Thyme Bistro* promises us some culinary surprises. This is only a sampling of what you can expect for the day — *Blueberry Festival* food is good!

And, of course, the music. **Liberty Square** will offer a place for your dancing shoes or just a place to "sit and relax for a few." Music adds to the spirit and makes it all fun.

I truly appreciate all of the help I have received this year to help make this year's event even better than what we experienced last year. Even the small things like expressing an idea or sharing a thought can make such a huge difference in the planning and expediting. To my committee members, **Chamber** members, and to those of you in our community that contributed, a heartfelt "Thank you!"


I look forward to seeing you all **Saturday, August 28th** at **Blueberry Festival 2004**. 

Art at the Festival Debuts

Art at the Festival at the **Hunt Memorial Building** at **Liberty Square** will provide visitors with an opportunity to view the works of 25 of some of our finest regional artists. Participating artists work in a variety of styles, media, and subject matter. Committed to the idea of featuring vital and diverse work in Ellenville, coordinator and local Cragmoor artist, Judy Sigunick (*photo, left*)



believes that the "commercial sector and artists ought to find common ground for working together in communities where both are critical forces in community development and living productively side-by-side." Members of the *Ellenville-Wawarsing Chamber of Commerce* approached Sigunick as a part of their vision for Ellenville and the 2004 *Blueberry Festival*.

The grand and spacious **Hunt Memorial** will be home of a one-day exhibition and sale. Included will be a scheduled poetry reading. Adjacent to the exhibition will be a performance stage. Large outdoor sculptures will be placed at the entrance to the exhibition on **Canal St.** 

Festival Volunteers Needed

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Can you spare a little of your time the day of the *Blueberry Festival*? We can use all the help we can get with the array of tasks that need to be performed to make the *Blueberry Festival* a success.

Things need to be done such as putting up the balloons that line our streets that day; assisting vendors in getting to their sites and checking on their needs throughout the day; setting up tables and chairs; assisting with signage placement; parking detail (directing people to the designated parking lots); running errands; answering visitors' questions; attending the Blues Clues children's bounce... anything required to make our great day go a little more smoothly for all.

I am not asking that you give up your entire day — just an hour or so is more than sufficient to ensure that someone else "working the *Festival*" is able to enjoy the day, too. Please stop by or contact me at *WAGS*, **647-4700**, or call Janet at the *Chamber* office, **647-4620**. 