

Coastal Living

Sip and Sea Weekend

BY REBECCA JONES
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-TIMES

Giving is not just about making donations, it is about making a difference. The annual Beaufort Wine and Food Festival, which was first established in 2004, started as a weekend event and was held in the streets of downtown Beaufort. It has since donated over \$740,000 for local non-profits. To them, it is all about making a difference in the community.

Brooke Cash and Kristen Prescott are the new co-executive directors. Cash said, "I got involved with this organization last February. The organization was in a state of transition, after postponing its second large-scale event. I had an extensive background in community work and fundraising." Prescott said, "Our family relocated to Carteret County during the COVID pandemic last summer. I was furloughed from working in the event industry and wanted to see where my skill set would be best suited in the community. Innovative planning and creative thinking have been a key component to revitalizing what Beaufort Wine and Food has been able to accomplish during such a difficult year."

Beaufort Wine and Food is back with an amazing weekend line-up of events. On Oct. 7-10 they will host the first-ever Sip and Sea Weekend. After witnessing the difficulties that the local hospitality industry and food providers have endured during the uncertain times of Covid-19, they decided to make the events a celebration of all things local to Carteret County. They will be highlighting the wonderful work from our land and sea farmers, local chefs and restaurants, and our own unique Down-East culinary practices- all while sipping great wine.

They could not be more excited about the beneficiaries. After careful consideration, they have selected four community organizations to benefit from the festival efforts.

Dining on the Docks will benefit the Carteret County Public Schools Foundation. Money raised from the evening will be earmarked to fund the resources needed for a tutoring program, targeted to students that have significant gaps in learning due to classroom time missed after Hurricane Florence and during Covid-19.

Sip and Shop will benefit The Maritime Museum in Beaufort. Money raised at the fashion show will be earmarked to help fund a commercial fishing exhibit planned for the museum. This exhibit will enhance the experience of guests visiting the museum as well as raise awareness for the history of our prosperous fishing roots and the food and work stability it has provided to the county.

A Shuckin' Good Time will



SCHEDULE

■ Thursday, October 7: 5:30-9:30 p.m.

— Dining on the Docks

Featuring six talented chefs, craft cocktails, fine wine pairings and an unforgettable setting. Join them for a five-course dinner and cocktail hour on Beaufort's scenic waterfront.

Tickets: \$150; VIP Table: \$2,000 (seats up to 10); 200 Guest Event

■ Friday, October 8 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

— Sip and Shop Fashion Show

The fashion event of the season featuring the latest trends, signature cocktails, delicious appetizers and an exciting shopping experience!

Tickets: \$50; Front Row Ticket: \$60; 150 Guest Event

■ Saturday, October 9 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

— A Shuckin' Good Time

Experience a one-of-a-kind seafood event, featuring local oyster, shrimp and clam farmers paired with the best Chefs in town! Spirit tastings, local artisans and live music will set the scene while overlooking the views of a down east waterfront oasis.

Tickets: \$100; VIP Early Access: \$125 (entry at 1:00 p.m.); 250 Guest Event

■ Sunday, October 10

11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

— Blues, Bubbles, & Brunch

Featuring the talented Michael Lee behind acclaimed M Sushi, M Kokko, and M Tempura. Chef Lee will bring his big city taste to the town of Beaufort.

Don't miss this event that will bring local seafood to a new level. Tickets: \$125; VIP Table: \$1,500 (seats up to 10); 200 Guest Event

benefit the Aquaculture Technology Program at Carteret Community College. The money will directly fund equipment that supports instruction. This program gives valuable skills to support our region's growing fisher-

ies opportunities. Graduates of the program go on to start oyster farms, make profitable fisheries careers, and obtain jobs that support our local waterways.

Blues, Bubbles, and Brunch will benefit

the Broad Street Clinic. Money raised from this event will be earmarked for heart rate monitors the organization desperately needs. These heart rate monitors will allow patients to be monitored by tele-med.

Lukens Cemetery earns its place in Carteret County history

It appears that Tom Tosto was one of the fellows who looked after things at the old Lukens Cemetery on the eastern side of the South River, once the little village of Lukens was abandoned in the mid-1940s.

Tosto's home was just across the river on the western banks in the small community of South River.

He had a barge that would carry friends and relatives over to the cemetery to pay their respects. There are at least 163 gravesites there. The gravedigger and the corpse could ride along, too.

Tosto was 90 when he died in

2015. The obituary notice stated that "he was instrumental in getting the deed to Lukens Cemetery and in getting Carteret County to take ownership of that property."

The late Dollie C. Carraway, a South River historian, said in 1987, Weyerhaeuser Company deeded 2.5 acres, including the cemetery, to the county, so the cemetery could be maintained and preserved. Interestingly, Carraway said the original name of the graveyard was Buzzard's Bay Cemetery. (She died in August 2021 at age 93.)

In 2010, at the annual Lukens Cemetery Picnic, organized by Tosto, he shared a story about a man from Pamlico County who once asked what he'd have to do to be buried there in the Lukens Cemetery? Tosto waited a beat

and then said, "I told him...all you have to do is die."

Tosto took his own advice. He was buried in the family plot at Lukens Cemetery next to his wife, Bertha Mae Pittman Tosto, who died in 1997 at age 70.

In compiling his "Listening to History" series for The (Raleigh) News & Observer in 2006, historian Dr. David S. Cecelski interviewed Dennis Ipock of Newport. Ipock was a famous gravedigger for a local funeral home. He dug graves for nearly 30 years, using a set of hand tools.

Ipock told all about going to Lukens Cemetery: "You've got to go there by boat (because there are no public roads). They had a big, open barge. They would put on my tent, shovels and everything and take me over there. They would

leave me over there all day."

"The first time I was there, they said, 'Now, Mr. Ipock, you watch out for the bears.' But it's the prettiest place you've ever been."

Carraway was the author of "South River: A Local History From Turnagain Bay to Adams Creek" (1994). She devoted an entire chapter to Lukens and documented all the tombstones in Lukens Cemetery. The oldest marker memorializes Bedee (Obedience) Pittman, who died in 1810 at age 23.

In 2013, a private hunting lodge in Lukens, the State of North Carolina, the U.S. Marine Corps and the N.C. Coastal Land Trust entered into a formal agreement that was deemed as "a monumental accord."

The hunting club's 678-acre

tract, in a sense, wraps around the old cemetery. Basically, the club's land faces the Neuse River and lies between South River and Brown's Creek. Owners granted "development rights" to the land trust.

This arrangement benefits the Marine Corps in its efforts to control air space between Air Station Cherry Point at Havelock and the Piney Island Bombing Range at the northeastern tip of Carteret County.

Carteret County News-Times staff writer Brad Rich reported: "All are pleased because everybody wins."

"The landowners will get to keep hunting and fishing. Irises get to keep blooming, and the creatures, including alligators... bears and the turkeys...get to keep wandering," Rich wrote.



MIKE WAGONER