



GREAT BBQ, GREAT BLUES, GREAT FUN - ALL FOR A GREAT CAUSE

BY BRENDA C. MCCASKILL (BRENDA@ABOUTGREATERCINNATI.COM)
PHOTOS BY ABOUTGREATERCINNATI.COM

The month of May signals the start of festival season across Greater Cincinnati. Among the area's festival favorites is the Buckeye BBQ Fest.

What began as the Buckeye BBQ Bash in 2012, has grown into the Buckeye BBQ Fest and is garnering a growing reputation for great BBQ, great blues, and great fun to support great causes. The event raises funds for charitable causes supported by the Rotary Club of West Chester/Liberty including Big Brothers Big Sisters of Butler County, National Alliance on Mental Illness, One Way Farm, RASKALS (Random Acts of Simple Kindness Affecting Local Seniors) Program, and Shared Harvest Food Bank.

Set against a backdrop of blues, brews, and fun for all ages including inflatable bouncy rides and a 12 animal petting zoo for kids in the Kids Zone, the Buckeye BBQ Fest 2015, the signature fundraiser for the Rotary Club of West Chester/Liberty, had festival goers describing the two day event as "a blast", "a wonderful event", and "a great time". Despite intermittent rain showers, crowds congregated in The Square at Union Centre in downtown West Chester (OH) May 15th – 16th for a family-friendly experience.



Despite intermittent showers, people came out for Buckeye BBQ Fest 2015 for great BBQ, great blues, and great fun—all to support a great cause.

(Photo | AboutGreaterCincinnati.com)

The weekend of good times, which was anticipated to draw a reported attendance of 10,000 — 12,500, attracted people from across the region. With bring your own lawn chairs scattered about, as well as a variety of merchants and vendors selling their wares, and a non-competitive classic car show (the car show was a new feature this year), the Buckeye BBQ Fest showcased the love of BBQ (at least 14 of the 50+ vendors were all about barbecue!), and other delights for sale and tantalizing the senses.

Once again, the Buckeye BBQ Fest teamed up with the Cincinnati Blues Society to showcase great live blues bands from around the country. Spectators listened, tapped their feet, swayed, and grooved to ten blues acts that performed over the two day event including The Stacy Mitchhart Band, The Noah Wotherpoon Band, Leroy Ellington Blues Band, Tempted Souls, and Cheryl Renee – The Goddess of Blues.

"There aren't many opportunities for our children to experience live music up close." Byron Walton tells

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GREAT BBQ, GREAT BLUES, & GREAT FUN - ALL FOR A GREAT CAUSE (CONT'D)

The 12 animal petting zoo attracted all ages at Buckeye BBQ Fest 2015.

(Photo | AboutGreaterCincinnati.com)



AboutGreaterCincinnati.com. “It was cool to see the kids out there getting their groove on!” Walton plays trumpet for The SoulFixers, a local blues band that also performed on stage a live set of their original songs including a tribute to blues legend B. B. King during the Buckeye BBQ Fest.

For the third year, the Buckeye BBQ Fest was also a Kansas City Barbeque Society (KCBS) sanctioned competition. A stop on the professional KCBS BBQ circuit, there were 36 competitive BBQ teams from Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania setup on “Pit Row” competing in preparation of pork, ribs, brisket, and chicken.

The teams without a doubt were into barbecue and took it seriously. Judged by KCBS certified judges on food taste, appearance, and texture, teams were vying for a Buckeye BBQ Fest 2015 KCBS win of up to \$7,000 in prize money and the Ohio State BBQ Championship title which includes a chance to compete in the Jack Daniels World BBQ Competition - the “World Series” of BBQ.

At Buckeye BBQ Fest 2015, scoring a rare and impressive win total of over 700 points combined over the four meat categories, Pappy Q, a competitive team from Elk Creek, Kentucky, was named the Grand Champion first place overall winner, and took home the Ohio State BBQ Championship title. Pappy Q scored

701.7372 points (a perfect overall score is 720 points!) and also garnered recognition in the KCBS 700 Club — the best of the best.

Scoring 697.1316 points, Velvet Smoke BBQ, a competitive team from Cincinnati metro whose BBQ you can find year round in Findlay Market in Over-the-Rhine and was also among the festival BBQ vendors, was the Reserve Grand Champion second place overall winner.

Greater Cincinnati/metro area competing teams included Blue Dog BBQ from Mason, Buckeye BBQ from Troy, Historic BBQ from Lebanon, and Sweets & Meats BBQ from Anderson Township.

Festival goers voted their favorite too. Those who purchased tickets to vote sampled and awarded the coveted People’s Choice Award, a non-sanctioned KCBS competition and bragging rights for the best pulled pork, to Mountain William BBQ from Florence, KY.

With this year (click [here](#) to see more photos) in the record books, time to set sights on and get tastebuds ready for Buckeye BBQ Fest 2016. Great BBQ, great blues, and great fun to support great causes set for the third weekend in May 2016!

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