

Hogs n Hens for Hope not short on food and entertainment

Anne Hunter
Staff writer

KENANSVILLE — Cool temperatures and cloudy skies started off the Hogs n Hens for Hope Barbecue Cook-off and Festival on Saturday, October 17 at the Duplin County Events Center.

While crowds weren't as strong as organizers had hoped, the festival provided the newly formed North Carolina chapter of the Lazarex Foundation, Inc. with a good fundraising start.

Around noon, the sun came out just in time to announce the barbecue pork and chicken cook-off winners. Barbecue pork and chicken were popular items.

Approximately 30 motorcycle riders took off at 11:00 a.m. headed to Jacksonville and onto Topsail Beach before returning to Kenansville. One of the highlights of the day was the live chainsaw carving by Marlin Miller, brother of Mike Miller from Wallace.

Winners of the cook-off were announced and presented their winnings on stage at noon.

Michael Shane Herring and his team, "My Sweet Hog Cookin Team," won first place in the Hogs n Hens for Hope Festival cook-off on Saturday, October 17 at Duplin County Events Center. The second place winner was Timmy Evans and the Wells Pork & Beef, Inc.

team. Third place winner was Joey Burgette and his "Rainbow of Hope" team.

Winners of first place in the barbecue chicken contest was Linwood Sutton and his Daddy Rabbits. The second place winners were Conrad Reimer and The 3 Stooges while Bill

Carone and the Team of Warsaw Chevrolet won third place.

Steed Jones of Kenansville and Lem Miller of Wallace showed their skills in duck and goose calling by Allen Bliven. Jones has competed at the state level and will be attending the nationals next year. Miller has

plans to compete at the state level.

In addition, there were rides and more rides and activities for children including a costume parade and Trick or Treat. A silent and live auction provided entertainment for the adults.

"My husband, Bobby, is really going to be happy to have his wife back," Erin Miller Van Gorder stated. "He just does not know that in about a week we will begin working on next year's festival. We just need to look at when we want to hold it. There is so much going on this time of year."

Van Gorder's husband, Mike Miller, was diagnosed with

pancreatic cancer in 2003. Her family searched for options that could buy Miller some time and found a clinical trial treatment. He was treated and lived long enough for his youngest daughter to remember him. At the time he was diagnosed, his daughter was four and he lived for 18 months.

Van Gorder is chair for the first North Carolina chapter of Lazarex that was formed this past spring. Her sister, Dana Dornsife, is president of the Lazarex Cancer Foundation which is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

All proceeds from the festival will be used by Lazarex to provide financial assistance

to defray the costs associated with participation in FDA clinical trials and to provide resources to fill the gap that exists between when a patient is told they have no more hope and when they are truly done with their journey in life.

The organization helps patients take advantage of medical breakthroughs and it helps patients of all ages and walks of life with all forms of cancer. The organization founders believe that the size of a patient's checkbook should not stand between them and the choices they make or the treatments they need.

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Duplin Times photos/Anne Hunter

Michael Shane Herring and his team, "My Sweet Hog Cookin Team," won first place in the Hogs n Hens for Hope Festival cook-off on Saturday, October 17 at Duplin County Events Center. The cook-off was part of the first festival held by Lazarex. The second place winner was Timmy Evans and the Wells Pork & Beef, Inc. team. Third place winner was Joey Burgette and his "Rainbow of Hope" team. Winners of first place in the barbecue chicken contest was Linwood Sutton and his Daddy Rabbits. The second place winners were Conrad Reimer and The 3 Stooges while Bill Carone and the Team of Warsaw Chevrolet won third place. (L-r): Burgette, Evans and Hemingway.

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