

http://www.heraldstandard.com/gcm/news/local_news/no-rain-on-rain-day/article_13d40aee-ffe3-5695-b4b3-72d53a781c36.html

<

PREVIOUS

Greene County Fair returns with jam-packed schedule

>

No rain on Rain Day

By Jon Stevens, for the Greene County Messenger Aug 5, 2016



Bryn Patton, 2016 Miss Rain Day, is all smiles while enjoying the Rain Day festivities on July 29 in downtown Waynesburg. (Photo by Brett Spitzsnogle)

Bu

WAYNESBURG — It was a hot, sunny day last Friday, not what the Rain Day Festival organizers were hoping for on Waynesburg’s annual July 29 weather-themed event.

While festival goers were keeping an eye to the sky, they also were enjoying a variety of entertainment on stage in front of the courthouse throughout the day while consuming what vendors had to offer in the way of delicious food and thirst-quenching beverages.

The hundreds of people who packed High Street throughout the day may have been disappointed they were not able to celebrate the primary reason for the festival. For only the 29th time out of the past 143 years, it did not rain.

And that meant Waynesburg Borough Mayor Duncan Berryman lost his hat bet to the West Greene Lady Pioneers softball team, and the Rain Day Special Events Commission lost its bet with A.J. Dereume, a member of the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club Inner Circle.

The Rain Day festival is an important part of Waynesburg community history, a tradition going back to the first bets made in Byron Daly's drug store with a farmer who claimed it always rained on his birthday, July 29.

The tradition was kept alive by John Daly, son of Byron, known as the Rain Day Prophet, until it was officially given over to the Special Events Commission. The Special Events Commission has organized Rain Day and kept the Hat Bet alive since 1979.

Athena Bowman, a member of the Special Events Commission, said Punxsutawney Phil, a darn good weather prognosticator in his own right, made an appearance with Dereume; but she said the animal was pretty docile because of the heat, or because it was just too content to gloat.

"We received a lot of positive feedback from people pleased with the events," she said.

Dereume, also known as "The Rainmaker," drew good crowds wherever he went.

"He seemed to appeal to people of all age groups," Bowman said.

Bowman also said the American Judo Hapkido drew big crowds when it performed, and the main headliner group, disco-inspired "Dancing Queen," had people doing just that, "dancing in the streets."

Making her official debut as the 2016 Miss Rain Day was Bryn Patton. The recently crowned Waynesburg Central High School student was busy fulfilling such "royal" duties as judging the umbrella contest and handing out prizes for various contests, including best decorated window and

Baby Rain Day.

By late afternoon, as she mingled with the crowd and talked with people, it was rather obvious that she was having the time of her life.

There were numerous booths ranging from political committees and businesses to non-profit groups distributing free literature about their respective services and vendors selling items such as jewelry and candles.

In addition to the fun and festivities, there were quite a few winners announced for various competitions and contests held throughout the day.

Winners of the Baby Rain Day competition were: King, Aaron Renner, son of Meghan and Jason Renner of Crucible; Queen, Bexley Humble, daughter of Jess and John Humble of Waynesburg; Prince, Cale John-Vester Hugo, son of Shayna Hugo and John Seamon of Waynesburg; and Princess, Kaylee Rose Scott, daughter of Brittany and Zachary Scott of Graysville.

Aaron Renner also won the best decorated baby rain day can.

Participants were asked to bring a decorated umbrella in a Rain Day theme to be judged.

First place went to Johni Yeager, who received a \$100 prize. There were no second or third-place winners.

The first-place award for the Rain Day window-decorating contest went to Ruff Creek Crafts & Antiques. They will receive the coveted Golden Watering Can for one year for their efforts. Winning second place and \$25 was 5Kidz Kandy and third place and \$25 went to the Artbeat Gallery. Honorable mention went to Ben McMillen Photography.

Also presented on Rain Day was the Jack McCracken Award. According to Waynesburg Borough representatives, the award is named in honor of Jack McCracken for his efforts as a humanitarian, civic leader and role model, a man who “served God, his family and his community with integrity and an open heart,” according to information provided by the borough. McCracken passed away in 2009.

The award is presented each Rain Day to an individual or business that best exemplifies the positive attributes that Jack McCracken stood for, borough representatives said.

This year's award was presented on Rain Day to Sister Audrey Quinn and Sister Sue Fazzini.