

Mac & Cheese for a Good Cause

Written by Editor

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Wayne & Jill Blau started the Mac & Cheese Cook-off in 2008 with some friends when they lived in Marlton, NJ as a friendly competition between a small group of people that all thought they made the best mac & cheese.

After moving to Beaufort in July 2009 they wanted to create the Southern Division Mac & Cheese Cook-off and had their first competition in May 2012 at their home on St. Helena Island. It was limited to 30 guests and 12 entries. Dr. Dan Ripley of Beaufort won the Cheese Grater with his secret recipe that had the guests talking about it for weeks.

The following year Wayne & Jill decided to change the Mac & Cheese Cook-off into a fundraiser to benefit the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation in honor of Wayne's son Travis, who has the disease. The event is held in conjunction with the national CF Walk-a-Thon. The event was held on the second floor above Island Podiatry in Celadon and again Dr. Dan Ripley took the award with his incredible lobster mac & cheese that was in honor of the bombing victims of the Boston Marathon.

Last year's event was also held above Island Podiatry and had a great turnout and the best tasting dishes in the 3 years. It was the first time restaurants were invited to compete as

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well as recognizing the best displayed dish. Southern Graces and Wined It Up both of Beaufort entered awesome dishes. Southern Graces entered a traditional southern dish while Wined It Up went for the most unique with their rabbit mac & cheese. Dr. Dan Ripley won for the third time with his bacon mac & cheese. Gooey mac & cheese flowing from gourds was so creative it got Cassie Johnson the award for best display. (see above)

As the competition and popularity continues to grow, the cook-off has been moved to Southern Graces' Soiree 706 Craven Street Beaufort. Southern Graces has been an invaluable resource for the competition and its growth. Soiree holds a maximum of 100 people and they're hoping they can get the fire department there to issue a citation for exceeding the limit.

The 4th Annual Mac & Cheese Cook-Off to benefit the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation is Sunday April 26 from 3 – 6 pm at Southern Graces Soiree in Beaufort. If you're interested in entering a dish or finding out more information you can contact Wayne Blau @ 843-694-3380.