

s back, baby...

EA'S NATIONAL

Rib Cook-Off

by Mimi Vanderhaven

Memorial Day Weekend at
Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds in Berea!

Over the past seven years, residents from all over Northeastern Ohio have come to Berea to enjoy Memorial Day Weekend's annual symbolic summer kick-off -- *Berea's National Rib Cook-Off*. This cook-off has established itself as one of the premier events in the area, and is accomplished through the tireless work of the Berea City Club Inc. and local volunteers. Next weekend will mark the festival's eighth year at the Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds. The exact dates to remember are May 26th through the 29th, 2006.

Berea's National Rib Cook-Off draws area and national rib teams to compete for first, second and third place in a variety of areas: Best Ribs, Best Sauce and People's Choice Awards.

One of the key advantages of the event is *free parking every day, all day at the fairgrounds*. Admission is free all day on Friday and Monday, and just \$5 on both Saturday and Sunday. The event is a tremendous bargain, especially when compared to other options available over Memorial Day Weekend. Berea's National Rib

Produced by The Berea City Club, Inc.

Sponsors:

The Cleveland Coca-Cola Bottling Company

Cleveland's Harley Davidson Sales Co.

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Key Bank

MGD

Mike's Hard Lemonade

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by Candyce Skeen-Traci

Texas Pit (above) is among the more than one dozen ribbers battling it out at the Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds over Memorial Day Weekend. (Below) Friday Night's "Bike Night" returns this year.



by Candyce Skeen-Traci



This year's entertainment includes (left to right) *Ted Riser & the Marshall Band, The Stokes Brothers, Cruisin' (Ron Howard), Johnny Cash Tribute Band, Logan Wells, Alex Bevans Band* and more.

Cook-Off is all about the ribs and it's the signature event for Berea's City Club. Their hard work is not just a weekend happening; it's a year-long event to all of its volunteer organizers. The Berea City Club's mission statement reads "To promote positive civic interests for the betterment of The City of Berea." Perhaps unknown to many Berea residents, the Berea City Club is a not-for-profit organization contributing proceeds generated by its fundraising projects back to the community. In fact, since the founding of the Berea City Club Inc. in late 1998, these business and community leaders have donated over \$230,000 in proceeds from their events to the City of Berea projects and local organizations. Those helped by the Berea City Club Inc. range from churches to pageants, to Kiwanis and sports teams, to Polaris and school booster organizations, and includes Berea Welfare and Options for Families, to arts and Scouts.

Its primary fundraiser remains next weekend's gala -- the 8th Annual Berea's National Rib Cook-Off. And this year's event has many exciting new additions, plus some of the standards that everyone has come to love. Again there will be more than a dozen Rib Teams competing all weekend long to satisfy your appetite for ribs, serving up some of the nation's best ribs and sauce. Other traditional fair foods will be available including strawberry crepes, cotton candy and pierogies.

The Children's Activity Area will feature a Super-Slide, Kiddie-Bouncer, Jousting area and the ever-popular Rock-Climbing Wall.

For the adults -- in addition to the fabulous ribs, and a variety of foods and beverages -- look for Mechanical Bull Rides (Mimi guarantees he can throw you!), a Classic Car Show, and the 2nd

Annual Bike Night which has been expanded to allow motorcycles to park inside the main gate all weekend long.

All Day Friday admission is free and Friday Night will be the aforementioned "Bike Night" sponsored by Cleveland's Harley-Davidson Sales Co. Bikers are invited to bring their bikes right inside Gate 5 and park next to the midway so they can enjoy the entertainment and fabulous food while their "rides" are close by with security looking on.



by Candoyce Skeen-Tract

With more than one dozen rib teams competing,

Berea's National Rib Cook-off is the area's best value. Plus, save an extra \$1 with the coupon on Mimi's front cover.

Arrive on a motorcycle throughout the entire weekend (at the Gate 5 entrance only -- off Bagley Road) and you'll be admitted free even on Saturday and Sunday when regular admission is \$5 and be directed to the special parking area on the midway.

Friday boasts great entertainment with *Armstrong Bearcat Band, Ted Riser & the Marshall Band* and the fantastic *Rebeats* all taking the main stage. All the entertainment is free all weekend with Cook-Off admission. Find it on the Main

Stage, sponsored by Key Bank, MGD and Miller Lite.

Saturday's festivities include the always popular Miss Berea Princess competition beginning when the Cook-Off opens at 11 a.m. Saturday's entertainment includes *Woodshed Mercy, Haywire*, Cleveland and Berea Rib-favorite *Logan Wells* and the *Robert Jeffrey Band*. Admission on Saturday and Sunday is just \$5 and children 12 and under are admitted free.

Sunday features the Classic Car Show all day long and a fantastic line-up on the Main Stage. *The Clayton Brothers and the Stokes Brothers* start off the day, a couple of favorites of the Rib Cook-Off organizers. Those acts are followed by a new show to the fairgrounds and one you just don't want to miss: *Terry Lee Goffee Country* and the *Johnny Cash Tribute Band* hit the main stage at 6 p.m. for two hours of the "Man in Black." The evening is capped off with another local favorite, the *Cleveland Boys*. Sunday afternoon the judging takes place for Best Ribs, Best Sauce and the People's Choice. Remember, your vote counts so come with an appetite and see how well your taste test does against all of the other voters and judges.

Monday (Memorial Day) features another of the organizers' favorites, *Cruisin'*, kicking things off at 1 p.m. until 4 p.m.; and the weekend headliner who always makes for a memorable Memorial Day, Cleveland favorite *Alex Bevans Band* on stage from 5-7 p.m. Rib awards are announced and handed out on Monday, and the hot band *Yearbook* wraps up the fun on Monday evening.

For a complete schedule of events at Berea's National Rib Cook-off, see the adjacent sidebar. Or for more information call Berea's National Rib Cook-Off Hotline at 440-234-5181.

by Candoyce Skeen-Tract



Berea's National Rib Cook-off at the Cuyahoga Fairgrounds May 26-29 is expected to draw over

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