



PHOTOS BY CORY SHAFFER/SUN NEWS

The "ribbers" at this year's Strongsville City Club Rib Burnoff were the same as last year's, including Armadillo's Barbecue, which Phil Christie said made their way from Atlanta. "All the way from Hot-ianta. We like to come up and feed y'all," he said.

Pork promenade for a purpose

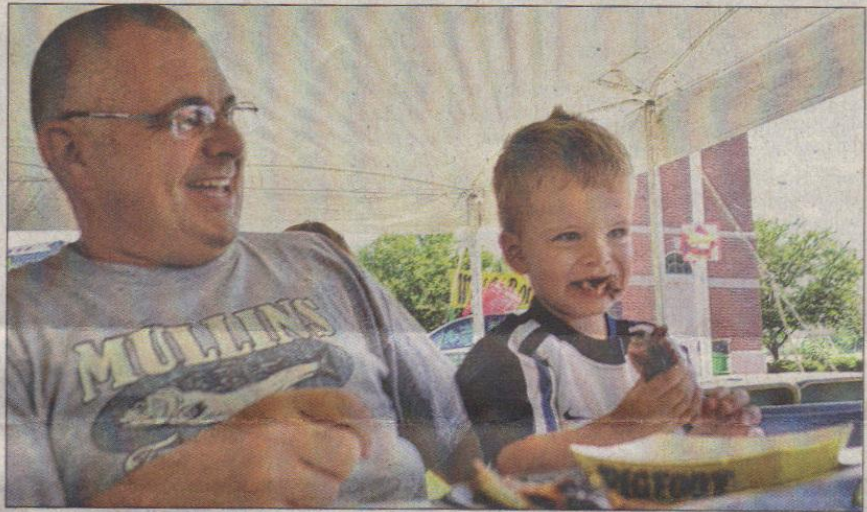
Burnoff a lip smacking, bone licking good way to start summer

By Cory Shaffer
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For one weekend, Strongsville became the pork capital of Northeast Ohio.

From June 20-22, the Strongsville City Club hosted its 27th annual Rib Burnoff, uniting rib makers and takers over some of the most tender, juicy slabs of pig around.

Taking a lap around the Strongsville Commons, in the shadows of the towering rib stands boasting banners of the ribber's past successes, the sights are as intriguing as the smell of sweet and spicy barbecue sauce percolating in the city's center.



Even Ryan Marantides, 2, of Strongsville, knows a good rib when he sees one. He and his grandpa, Jay Mullins, enjoyed some barbecue from Pigfoot on the opening night of the Strongsville City Club's 27th annual Rib Burnoff.

Phil Christie, who was working two slabs of ribs on the open grill next to ordering window at Armadillo's Barbecue, was providing some of his own entertainment.

"Those are gonna fall off the bone," he hollered as he flipped and basted the ribs kissed by flames.

Ribbers like Christie added to the entertainment of the festival, which already

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boasted a bill including Dr. Mo, Funkology and Midnite Groove.

But when it comes to ribs, there can only be so many winners.

Strongsville City Club President Terry Toth announced the winners in each category

June 22, the event's final day.

There were awards for best ribs and best sauce in two categories: people's choice, as voted on by burnoff-goers, and the culinary judges, as decided by Chef Chris Olszewski from Polaris Career and Technical Center.

When the results were in, two ribbers stole the show.

Annual medal winner Old Carolina Barbecue Company, who this year just opened a sit-down restaurant on Pearl Road, captured first place in the culinary category for best ribs, and was runner up for the people's choice for best ribs.

Another ribber who's no

stranger to capturing brass is Texas Pit, from Willis, Texas. This year they claimed the two first-place trophies: people's choice for best ribs and the culinary prize for best sauce.

Rounding out the winners were Desperados, which took the people's choice for best sauce, and Sgt. Oinks, which was runner up for best ribs in the culinary judges category.

The event serves as the major fundraising event for the Strongsville City Club.

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When voting for best ribs and sauce concluded, two ribbers double-dipped: Above, Representatives of Old Carolina Barbecue Company accept their awards for runner up for best ribs in the People's Choice category and for best ribs in the culinary category; and Texas Pit Barbecue, from Willis, Texas, took home two first place awards: People's Choice for best ribs and in the culinary category for best sauce. They are shown with Strongsville City Club president Terry Toth, right, and member Gary Mundson.



The Rib Burnoff draws thousands of people to Strongsville Commons each year. The event opened at 4 p.m. June 20, and by 5:30 p.m. seats in one of the two eating tents were hard to come by. Strongsville City Club's volunteer force keeps the tents spotless.

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The Strongsville Rib Burnoff also offers children some inflatables to burn off some of the sugar from the lemonade or funnel cakes that are also available. Jaylen Darden, 4, of Broadview Heights, conquers the Space Walk of Strongsville inflatable obstacle course.

