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❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ **THE JACK IS BACK** ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

*The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual World Championship of Barbecue*

By Doc Lawrence



LYNCHBURG, TN- For one gorgeous fall weekend, the crowds return each year to this Tennessee village, home to the most famous name in whiskey, to compete for coveted cash prizes and awards. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Jack Daniel's World Championship Barbecue Competition brought in teams from throughout America and as far away as Norway and Germany. This year's top winner, **Smokin' Hoggz BBQ** is based in Abington, Massachusetts, confirming that this style of cooking is indeed America's most popular food.

Far and away the best and most prestigious food competition, it's a deep South declaration that it ain't bragging if you can back it up, "The Jack" as it is called by participants, fans and media, is a genuine competition with stringently enforced rules. Panels of carefully selected judges oversee blind tastings of ribs, pulled pork, chicken, sauces and even desserts (*see photo at right*) submitted by finalists. Scoring is based on appearance, tenderness, taste and other important factors, but in the end, excellence is the deciding difference for choosing a top prize winner.



Hovering over the glorious celebration of smoke, fire, aromas and flavor is the Jack Daniel's Distillery where Mr. Daniel began everything in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It's made today with no deviation from the way it began. Go to any foreign country from Japan to Australia and ask for a glass of Jack Daniel and bet the ranch you'll have a glass of this Tennessee whiskey. Jack Daniel is whiskey's counterpart to Coca-Cola, arguably just as well known. The name and the logo, like Coke, is part of the America's core identity that like rock and roll, jazz and country music, still travels very well.

This is the weekend to spend time with American legends like Coach Johnny Majors, one of the all-time greats of the college gridiron who grew up in Lynchburg, was an All-American at the University of Tennessee, and went on to successfully coach at Pittsburgh and Tennessee. The quintessential Southern gentleman, Majors is a hero here, a Tennessee giant who ranks right alongside native sons like Davy Crockett and Andrew Jackson.

Adding more interest was the visit by Atlanta's renowned folk artist Olivia Thomason who revealed her plans to paint "The Jack" on one of her signature



Original desserts are also judged at "The Jack!"



Sam's Club had a major presence at The Jack. Chattanooga Sam's Club GM (R) introduces representatives of New Zealand Lamb, Bryan Kelly (L) and Christopher Thompson. The New Zealand lamb sold by Cam's Club is a top gourmet item.



Atlanta folk artist Olivia Thomason joins Parish Patch owner David Hazelwood for a good laugh. Hazelwood's country resort is an acclaimed retreat that also features a gourmet restaurant, Cortner Mill located along the mighty Duck River



canvasses. “The interaction here,” she said, “between adults and children combines with the stunning beauty of the countryside, the charm of lovely Lynchburg and the barbecue competition, making this a natural for a new painting.”



## ❧ PARISH PATCH ❧

Not far from the distillery is Parish Patch, the resort farm owned and managed by David and Claudia Hazelwood. This is where I am blessed to sleep and eat during “The Jack” each year. My storehouse of precious memories is enriched by Hazelwood’s amusing anecdotes. A native of Kentucky and a friend of author and PBS superstar Bill Moyers, David Hazelwood has a razor sharp wit, and I rank him as a raconteur of the first order.

Beyond the cattle and horses grazing in the pastures is the Hazelwood’s restaurant, Cortner Mill, a onetime grist mill on the mighty Duck River that serves gourmet meals with a big city wine list. Parish Patch and Cortner Mill offer refuge for the weary traveler, while offering up great country cooking, fine wines, memorable

walks all accompanied with a heap of good-will and exceptional humor.

“The Jack” is Americana, a red, white and blue gathering that we call our own. The area, according to local hospitality official Virginia Bracey, attracts visitors from all over the world. “We have loaded tour buses visit throughout the year,” she said. What attracts them? “Jack Daniel’s,” she replied in an instant.

Leaving this bucolic paradise is never sad knowing that a return trip next year is obligatory. The countryside is nature’s art gallery. The city is a pedestrian paradise. The smiles are omnipresent. And the high quality of the barbecue and Jack Daniel’s Tennessee Whiskey never wavers.

If network television ever hosts a barbecue Super Bowl, it would have to be called “The Jack.”

*SEE NEXT PAGE FOR MORE PHOTOS*

# THE JACK 2011

## “THE WORLD’S BEST BBQ EVENT!”



*The flags of many participating nations fly over “The Jack” in Lynchburg, TN. In this barbecue event, the judging process is thorough and very involved. It is also regulated and professionally supervised. The stakes for participants are very high.*

- (A) Charlotte Wines, a distinguished BBQ judge from Columbus, Ohio, displays the signatures of other judges at the prestigious international competition.
- (B) Portraits of Jack Daniel are all over the event and throughout the village of Lynchburg.
- (C) Silky Sullivan, owner of the world famous pub on Memphis’ Beale Street, is a veteran judge at “The Jack.”
- (D) Judging can be fun and it is always a tasty experience.
- (E) Legendary coach Johnny Majors, a veteran judge and beloved personality at “The Jack,” concentrates on the barbecue selections that are part of the process to determine winners.
- (F) The artwork at “The Jack” is colorful and loaded with humor.



*The judging process is very thorough.*

