

Brunswick celebrates 9th annual Smoketown Hootenanny

By NOLAN WILKINSON
nwilkinson@newspost.com

Over a hundred revelers turned out — red beer cups in hand — for Smoketown Brewing Station's 9th annual Hootenanny Block Party in Brunswick on Saturday.

The community event featured a closed off section of Potomac Street in front of Smoketown's building where several bands played live music and street vendors sold barbecue, burgers and more.

"It's a tradition that the original owner started," said Todd Vaughn, one of the brewery's owners.

When Amy Dudrow and Todd Vaughn took over Smoketown in August of 2024, they kept many things the same. They kept the brewer, the beer and the staff, Dudrow said.

They also kept on the tradition of holding a community block party.

"It's a celebration of what the intent was with the brewery — beer, music and good food," Vaughn said.

The brewery, situated in what was once a firehouse, had its large red firehouse doors open for the event.

Musical acts like the Highway Legends, Feehan Brothers, and Fender Ridge played on the outdoor stage.

"We came here to see the Feehan Brothers," said Kurt Siemon, who came with his wife Chris Siemon from Herndon, Va.

John Rodgers, who was



Staff photos by Graham Cullen

Devin Clifford, donning a protective glove, consumes a "One Chip Challenge" chip, the tiebreaker at the end of a spicy chicken wing contest.

staying at a campsite nearby, said he has come to the hootenanny four times, despite living near Annapolis.

"I like the small town experience," he said. "The hootenanny is a good fun time, and I like the beer."

The block party also featured a hot wings challenge with boneless wings which started with six competitors.

All but one ate all of the increasingly hot wings, which were laden with sauces from the celebrity interview YouTube show "Hot Ones."

As a tiebreaker, the five remaining competitors were asked to eat a chip from the



Part of Potomac Street was closed Saturday for a block party held by Smoketown Brewing Station in Brunswick.

notoriously spicy "one-chip challenge." Each package contains a single chip and contestants had to sign a waiver before being allowed to participate.

All but two contestants backed out at that point. Brunswick resident Devin Clifford was the first to finish his, winning the contest.

The event also featured a "stein hoist" contest to see who could hold a large

mug of beer out in front of them for the longest period of time.

Dudrow and Vaughn have changed some of the aesthetics of Smoketown, including new furniture, a new paint job, and the permanent addition of an indoor stage.

"We're prepared to put the best face on the brewery," Dudrow said.

In the future, they also

are looking at more frequently preparing specialty and craft beers.

Dudrow said Smoketown's employees worked hard to help pull the event together.

Brewer Brandon Harmon, who started working at Smoketown in 2023, said he enjoys the community feel of Brunswick.

"It's just fun to see everyone drink the stuff I

make," Harmon said.

Vaughn and Dudrow also said they used the opportunity of the hootenanny to invite Brunswick resident and veterinarian Sue Felter to hold a booth to talk about the Frederick County branch of the Street Dog Coalition, which provides free pet care to unhousted or potentially unhousted people.

"It's about community," Dudrow said.