

A season to celebrate ice cream

By **LYNDSAY CAYETANA BOUCHAL**

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Sundaes on Sunday: Rainbow sprinkles, crumbled candy toppings, hot fudge oozing down a triple scoop of homemade vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry, finished with a ripe banana, braced on either side, and a maraschino cherry. Nothing says “celebration” quite like ice cream.

According to Cowabunga Ice Cream in Forked River, which was just named the Jersey Shore’s favorite ice cream parlor by NJ.com, more ice cream is sold on Sunday than any other day of the week, and on this Sunday, the cool treat may be purchased more than any other time of year.

In 1984, President Ronald Reagan designated July as National Ice Cream Month and the third Sunday of the month as National Ice Cream Day. This year, the nationally recognized day falls on July 17.

To celebrate the delectable treat, Green Valley Farms on Route 23 in Wantage will throw an ice cream festival July 23 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Green Valley Farms owner Duce Tallamy said the festival will offer build-your-own sundaes with the farm’s top-secret locally made ice cream from a Pennsylvania dairy farm and its fresh, all natural beef brisket and hamburgers.

While Tallamy confesses to be a “chocolate chip mint kind of guy,” the Wantage farm offers 17 different hard ice cream flavors, including Barnyard Gravy, a vanilla and chocolate mix, strawberry shortcake — this month’s special — and the debut of peanut butter crunch yogurt.

Tallamy said this is the

third year Green Valley Farms has offered homemade ice cream. He said his ice cream contains the highest cream content in the county.

“It’s very nice to have (an ice cream stand) on the farm, but it’s dangerous,” Tallamy said.

“It’s my weak spot. ... I try to make sure I hit the ice cream stand before it closes every night.”

Nearly in time for National Ice Cream Day is Lickin’ Llamas, a homemade Italian ice and ice cream parlor in the center of Sussex Borough on Main Street. Lickin’ Llamas owner Kenny Kuzicki said the shop will open by the end of the month, and will feature about 12 flavors of homemade ice cream and eight varieties of homemade Italian ices, produced by the owners of Dairy Swirl, on State Route 94 in Vernon.

Kuzicki said his love of Italian ices led to the inevitable creation of Lickin’ Llamas. As the business grows, he hopes to add more flavors and sugar-free alternatives, and explore different avenues with cakes and soft serve.

“Italian ice reminds me from when I was a kid,” he said.

Kuzicki said he will play around with funky ice cream names and combinations, like “Jersey Shore,” an ice combo filled with green apple, lemon and cherry — the colors of the Italian flag.

To cure any jitters derived from ice cream deprivation on National Ice Cream Day, locally homemade ice cream can be found at all corners of Sussex County and beyond, including shops like Roseline’s Farm & Bakery on County Route 565 in Augusta; Bellevale Farms

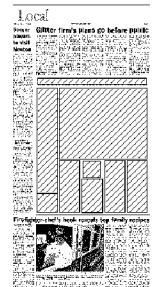
Creamery in Warwick, N.Y.; Jefferson Dairy on State Route 15; Milford Dairy Bar on Hartford Street in Milford, Pa.; Main Street Ice Cream in Hackettstown, which serves Cliff’s Homemade Ice Cream from Ledgewood; Herbie’s Drive-in on U.S. Highway 46 in Great Meadows; and Alpine Creamery in White Deer Plaza in Sparta.

George Kolaitis, owner of Alpine Creamery, said he opened his ice cream business seven years ago after immigrating to the United States in 1989, working with friends and their ice cream enterprises and owning his own Mister Softee ice cream truck. Kolaitis said making ice cream is a family tradition; his children work at Alpine Creamery, and he used to apprentice under his father while living in Greece. There, Kolaitis said, his father used goat milk.

“Years ago, I remember my father would stir it inside a big stone bucket,” he recalled.

Kolaitis also spoke about the rising costs associated with producing quality ice cream products. He said five years ago, he charged \$2.25 for a cone. In his sixth year in business, he was forced to raise prices by a quarter to balance the price hike in ingredients. The creamery owner said the cost of a batch of pistachios has skyrocketed from \$140 to \$300, while a large container of peanut butter rose from \$35 to \$105. This year, Kolaitis had to tack an additional 50 cents on his price tags.

He said, however, while his regulars and other customers complain about the increasing costs of their favorite desserts, they always come back for more.





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Photo by Daniel Free/ New Jersey Herald

George Kolaitis, owner of Alpine Creamery in Sparta, scoops peanut butter as he demonstrates how to make his homemade peanut butter Oreo ice cream Wednesday.