

FESTIVALS ON THE LOOP

Five Celebrations

By Claude Milot

At this time of year folks who live in the Albemarle Loop area act like hibernating bears emerging from their dens. To shake off the slumber of winter they get ready to celebrate the arrival of spring in festivals taking place all around the Albemarle Sound. Loopers should plan to attend one or more on their northward migration. Here are the top five.

Riverbash in Hertford on May 3-5. Dock at the Hertford Bay Marina where three days of fun begin. This festival has something for everyone: games and rides for the kids, a muscle car and motorcycle show, speed boat demonstrations, Gospel singing, a fish fry, and a Church Street Block Party jazz concert starring Ellis Dyson & The Shambles. If gardening is your thing, have someone give you a ride to the Master Gardeners' Show at the Recreational Center on May 3rd.

Bluegrass Island Festival in Manteo, May 15-18. Every year this four-day event is one of the best bluegrass parties in the country. Famous bands will come from all over to entertain bluegrass music lovers in Manteo's Roanoke Island Festival Park, a superb setting by the water and only a short ride from Shallowbag Bay Marina. Many days sell out, so make your reservations early on line at www.bluegrassisland.com/2019-tickets. For more information email BluegrassCircle@gmail.com.

Music and Water Festival in Edenton, May 17-18. Loopers who dock in Edenton Harbor won't have far to go to enjoy the party in Colonial Park right by the harbor. The festival features live entertainment, arts & crafts and food vendors, and a wooden boat exhibit. Loopers can also visit the historic Roanoke Lighthouse nearby or take a tour of Edenton's historic district. There is something to enjoy for everyone in "The South's Prettiest Small Town."

Potato Festival in Elizabeth City, May 17-19. This three-day event celebrates one of North Carolina's largest crops with the National Potato Peeling Contest and the Little Miss Tater Tot Pageant. But it offers much more, including live music from the main stage all three days, midway rides, and even a U.S. Coast Guard Search and Rescue demonstration. Both the Pelican Marina and Elizabeth City's Mariners' Wharf are within walking distance. And don't pass up the free French Fries.

NC Black Bear Festival in Plymouth, June 1-2. Situated between two wildlife refuges and Pettigrew State Park, the quiet town of Plymouth on the Roanoke River comes roaring to life on this popular weekend festival that celebrates the black bear. Tie up at Plymouth Landing Marina to enjoy events such as a 5K "Run with the Bears," storytelling, live music, and food and crafts vendors. Check out the classic car show and

the wooden boat show, and visit Bear-Ology in the Creation Wildlife Museum—and the live bears, of course.