

## *Contestant #7*

### *“What Rain Day Means to Me”*

I must confess, the first Rain Day pageant I attended I slept through. Not because it was boring, but because I was only 13 days old. I was there to support my older sister as she competed for the crown I will soon be competing for. At the time, I of course did not realize how much of an influence the pageant and Rain Day had on the community.

I remember wanting to learn more about how “Rain Day” started. As I did my research, I was surprised to find this all started 135 years ago with an unknown farmer’s birthday. It is amazing to me that 111 of those years it rained. The promise of that potential rainfall would always raise the spirits of most farmers and county residents during a hot, dry summer.

Rain Day itself is talked about not only in the local community, but also worldwide. Family and friends that have relocated have been known to call home to see if it has rained. The local news and radio stations when giving the daily weather report on July 29<sup>th</sup> always ask the question “Will it rain on Rain Day?” So starting at 12:00 am to 11:59 pm the watch is on for those first few drops of rain.

As a young child, with an imagination, walking by the courthouse I would glance up at General Nathaneal Greene whom looked as though he were shaking his fist at the clouds in the sky beckoning for the rain to come. I know most people would like snow for Christmas however, in Greene County, we want rain for Rain Day. Growing up, I always anticipated going to the pageant to see the crowning of the new queen and the enjoyment of the festivities that are held in front of the courthouse.

So, what Rain Day really means to me is a time of celebration and reunion with family and friends. The sound of the music, the aroma of food, the tall ice cold cup of lemonade, colorfully decorated umbrellas, and smiling faces made for a day to forget your troubles. We as a community should say “Thank you” to the many volunteers who throughout the years give of their time to keep our local tradition and history alive.