

What Rain Day Means to Me

Isabelle Tedrow - Contestant #3

When I was a child growing up, Rain Day to me meant a day to look forward to all summer-and even all year, that I knew would be filled with fun. In fact, even now when I smell funnel cakes or hear bands playing, it often makes me think of those hot July days I spent as a child enjoying one of our county's oldest traditions. The Rain Day festival is certainly filled with fun, you'll enjoy all the moments when you're there, but the memories you create and can look back on become even more precious than the fun in the moment. Over the years, Rain Day has come to mean several things to me, it has taught me several lessons-how precious memories are with your family and friends is the first.

During the pandemic, I was in awe of our community. Our community always gathered together every year on Rain Day, but I truly realized the meaning of community during the pandemic. When you look for the good, it isn't hard to find in Greene County. The people of Greene County embodied the definition of community. Rain Day was able to take place, and that is purely due to the efforts of our residents working so hard for their community-for others. Not only did they pull together to provide Rain Day, they did so choosing to make the best of the situation. The true meaning of community is the second lesson Rain Day taught me.

When I was a child I knew soon as I was old enough, I was going to try out for Miss Rain Day. And so I did, and I didn't win. And so I did again, and I didn't win. And so I did again, and I didn't win. But as Nelson Mandela said, "I never lose, I either win or learn." And so, I didn't win-but I didn't lose, I learned. Each summer that I've spent with the Rain Day pageant I not only made precious memories, I learned more about myself. I met people who I might never have met. The more people you meet and get to know especially if they're different than you, makes you better for the experience. Each time I did the pageant I developed skills. I overcame fears. I did things out of my comfort zone, by definition that can make you uncomfortable, but that's because you're growing. Growing is a good thing. I've learned

practice makes improvement-not perfect. I've learned to never give up on myself, and to believe in myself. The truth is, I wouldn't be who I am without all these summers with Rain Day. Each year taught me more, each year made me grow, each experience helped make me who I am. This is the last lesson, I will always be thankful for it, and for all my life it will always be what Rain Day means to me.