

GASTON ALIVE

MAGAZINE

HOME | GARDEN | STYLE | FUN | FOOD | HAPPENINGS

It's Party Time At Hogzilla NC BBQ!

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Spring & Summer Fun In Downtown Belmont!

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September 18**



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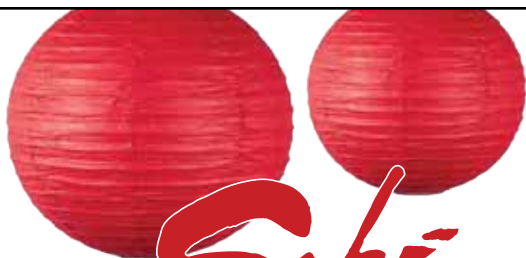
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FROM THE PUBLISHER

It's the day after UNC lost to Villanova, and the skies are still a brilliant Carolina blue this morning. Both the Panthers and the Tar Heels came so close this year, but it wasn't to be. But I am still happy to live in a state that is so competitive-it's a lot of fun! And as they say, there is always next year...

As we had announced earlier, the planned development by Lincoln Harris between the airport and the Catawba River is making news. It will be a 1300 acre development on par with SouthPark and Ballantyne...eventually. Although not in Gaston County, it is immediately adjacent, so it will be interesting to see how that growth impacts us.

It's springtime in the Carolinas, and that means lots of outdoor fun and festivals coming up-be sure to check out what's happening in Belmont on page 10.

As always, please support your neighbors that own local businesses. They add a lot to the character and vibrancy of our area.

Happy spring!

David

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BANGZ SALON & SPA
CELEBRATES EARTH DAY



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on the **cover**



Pictured this month are Mark and Jo Magda of Hogzilla NC BBQ. Photo taken on site at their commercial kitchen in Gastonia, see related story page 6. Photo by Rick Hairhcox, cover graphic design by David James.

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GA|4|16

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MARK & JO MAGDA SAY IT'S

Party Time!

By David Hamrick



We caught up recently with Mark and Jo Magda, owners of Hogzilla NC BBQ.

GA: Your food is great! How did you get started in the BBQ business?

Mark: Thank you, we appreciate the compliment.

We had been backyard BBQ grilling for years. While living in Upstate NY our next door neighbor asked if my wife & I could cook a whole hog for the NY State Troopers and their families. We took on the challenge and the event was a huge success. This has become an annual event and deemed the name of the HOGZILLA Pig Roast. In 2008 my wife & I relocated from upstate NY to the Gaston County, NC area. We decided to enter an amateur BBQ competition in Belmont in 2011 and won Peoples Choice for pulled pork. Needless to say this fueled the fire. From there we have enjoyed competing at KCBS and BBQ cook off events and have perfected our BBQ recipes and have been awarded several category winnings.

GA: You have a gorgeous new kitchen here...

Mark: Thank you. We had been receiving numerous requests to cater events but without a certified kitchen to work out of there would be no catering. So one day after walking into our two car garage, in which we could park no cars, we had the idea to convert it into a commercial kitchen. After a year and a half of work and permitting we now have a NC Health Department certified commercial kitchen and BBQ Pit.



GA: What kinds of events do you cater?

Mark: We cater any event from a backyard party, weddings, rehearsal dinner, graduation parties, sporting event, corporate gatherings or any special event. We offer on site cooking to bring that BBQ cooking experience to our clients. Nothing like having one of our cookers on site for an event to smell the great BBQ flavors in the air.



GA: Your menu is a little different...

Mark: We offer competition style southern BBQ items with a twist of family recipes handed down, not typically found in the region, such as our house made sausages: Texas, House Blend Fennel and Jalapeno & Cheese. Add to that our kielbasa: Polska and House Blend. We also make home made pierogies: potato & cheese and Farmer cheese filled, sautéed in butter and onions.



These are a great compliment to our BBQ Dinosaur bones (HUGE Beef ribs) seasoned with a special rub and slow cooked to fall off the bone tenderness. Our signature award winning HOG Log is also a unique item that is packed full of flavor combining beef, pulled pork, and smoked cheeses all rolled into one dish.

GA: What menu items are the most popular?

Mark: One of our most requested item is Jo's two time winning Pulled Pork Brunswick Stew. Our collards are highly requested as well and receive numerous compliments. Beef Brisket is always popular as we feature two style briskets being our competition brisket and authentic Texas style brisket. Our 7-hour baked beans, Mac & Cheese, and Cole Slaw are always favorites. Dessert wise banana pudding is popular, but our southern style bread pudding with whiskey sauce is a huge favorite.

GA: What size events do you cater?

Mark: We cater to any event and customize our menu to meet your specific needs. We will cater to events as small as 15 and up.

GA: What is the coolest event you have catered so far?

Mark: I would have to say the event we catered in Asheville, NC. The challenge here was to prepare the food (10 briskets & 31 racks of ribs) + fixins and travel two hours to serve. It was an awesome event and certainly cool to set up a 22' buffet and have so many happy faces and compliments.

MENU

SOUPS and STEWS

Pulled Pork Brunswick Stew

Autumn Beef Brisket Brunswick Stew

New England Clam Chowder

Chicken Noodle Soup

ENTREES

Pulled Pork

Bone In Pork shoulder slow roasted over Hickory, glazed with our HOG sauce for a nice bark, served with your choice of BBQ sauce

Baby-back Ribs

Dry Rubbed Baby-back ribs glazed with our HOG-Sauce and finished on the smoker

Saint Louis Ribs

Dry Rubbed St Louis Ribs glazed with our HOG-Sauce and finished on the smoker

Beef Brisket

Angus Beef Brisket flat and point cuts served sliced with burnt ends

Dinosaur Bones

Huge beef ribs with a basil garlic rub slow cooked to fall off the bone perfection

Competition Chicken

Your choice of Chicken, whole, half, split fryer, or parts served with HOG-Sauce slow smoked over hickory

Brine Cured Grilled Chicken

Split Fryers brined in soy based season salt mixture cooked over an open charcoal grill (can be grilled on site)

Marlene's Chicken

Split fryers marinated in a soy based and herb seasoned marinade grilled over charcoal (typically grilled on site)

HOG-Ham Log

Italian seasoned Ground beef meat loaf stuffed with smoked ham and mozzarella cheese

HOG Log

Seasoned Ground beef meat loaf stuffed with smoked pulled pork and smoked cheese

Chicken Wings

Deep fried or smoked served with our award winning wing sauce or choice of sauce (Hot, Mild, Garlic & Butter, or your choice of BBQ sauce listed on back) (Typically fried on site)

Sausages

Texas • Jalapeno & Cheese • House Blend Fennel • House Blend Polish Kielbasa • Polska Kielbasa

SAUCES

HOG-Sauce

Competition BBQ sauce, sweet, savory and rich with deep flavors

NC Vinegar Sauce

North Carolina vinegar based sauce but with sweet and tangy finish - great on the pulled pork

DESSERTS

Bread Pudding

Southern baked bread pudding with cinnamon, raisins, toasted pecans served with a whiskey bourbon sauce

Banana Pudding

Vanilla wafers and homemade vanilla cream with a meringue topping

BEVERAGES

Soft Drinks

Soda and soft drinks of choice

Iced Tea

Sweet or Un-sweet tea

Bottled Water

Deer Park bottled Spring water

FIXINS

7 hour Baked Beans

Baked beans seasoned and cured with molasses and a dry rub slow cooked for 7 hours on the smoker

Collards

Tender Southern collards with a BBQ flare of vinegar, smoked bacon, and seasonings

Cole Slaw

Fresh Cole slaw with a seasoned vinegar and sugar based dressing

Fresh Green Salad

Served with your choice of salad dressings (Italian, Blue Cheese, Ranch, Balsamic, or Vinegar & Oil)

Bacon Lima Bean Bake

Grandma Harris's recipe sweet and savory Lima beans topped with fresh smoked bacon from the pit

Kale Salad

Fresh Kale, Fennel, Dried Cranberries served with a refreshing lemon dressing

Mac N' Cheese

Creamy three cheese baked Mac N' Cheese

Pierogies

Passed down family recipe for home made pierogies with several choices of fillings:

Fillings

Traditional potato, cheese & green onion filling served with sauteed butter & onions

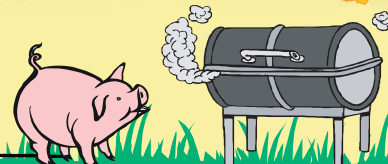
Farmers cheese filling served with sauteed butter & onions

Triple P - Pulled Pork Pierogie filling served with HOG - sauce and sauteed onions

Burlap Corn on the Cob

Sweet corn in the husk, wrapped with burlap and slow steamed over an open fire served with melted butter

HOGZILLA NC BBQ



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A simple. reliable. smart home

David Hamrick

Imagine coming home after a long day at work to find your home warmly lit. The shades have been drawn, and the temperature is perfect, just how you like it. Your home has prepared itself for you so you can immediately start enjoying a relaxing evening. All you had to do is arrive.

Home automation technology allows you to control things like lighting, temperature, window coverings and other home functions all with the touch of a button. This technology is a luxury, and until recently, it was not something the average home owner could afford. "Budget Blinds and Lutron have made home automation affordable and easy to use" says Kirby Crotts, owner of Budget Blinds in Gaston County for 13 years. "Normally when you look at home automation with window coverings it is very expensive. For most homeowners it's not really an option. Now it is."

Lutron's Smart Home is a simple home automation system that allows you to control your window coverings, lighting, and thermostat with the touch of a button. You can control it with a remote or wall control, or with the Lutron Smart Home app. If you have an iPhone, you can control the system with voice commands.

"Before, I would chuckle when a customer would ask me for those magic shades that would close when you



Kirby Crotts

verbally command them to. Now it's here! Just ask your friend Siri to draw the window shades or dim the lights" said Crotts.

The system is programmed to recognize your smart device as you approach your home, and it will set your preferred home ambience before you even walk through the door.

"Budget Blinds works with both the natural and artificial lighting part of your Home Smart system. Having automated window coverings will make you want to never live without them" said Crotts. "You can set your window coverings to your time zone so they will rise and lower according to daylight hours. People use this system to set their shades to come up at a certain time in the morning, and use the natural light to wake them instead of an obtrusive alarm."

Having smart shades can also enhance your homes security. You can set them to raise and lower at appropriate times when you are on vacation, making it appear as though someone is at home. Plus, your Smart Home System can be operated from virtually anywhere in the world.

The Lutron cellular and roller shades are cordless, making them safe for children and pets. They're made from sustainable material and are energy efficient. The shades are operated by a battery that lasts up to five years and is nearly soundless. You will barely hear that your window coverings are moving. Automated shades will be

set to move at the same speed, so all window coverings lower or raise evenly, and rest at the same level.

"These features are so luxurious to have in your home. I compare to having a smart phone. We didn't have smart phones years ago and didn't know what we were missing, but now that we have them and use them so much, we see how technology benefits our daily lives, we can't imagine going back to not having them" said Crotts. "Home automation is the same thing. It's not something you think you need at first, but once you have it life at home feels so pleasant and you'll be so grateful you did it."

The Lutron technology leads the industry. Not only was the company the first to invent the light dimmer in the 1950's, they have invented hundreds of lighting control devices and systems and have led innovations in window shade technology using both wireless and wired systems to control both daylight and electric light. "People love this technology. It is accessible, convenient, easy to use, and can really add value to your home life" shared Crotts.

For more information on Budget Blinds and Lutron Smart Home integrated home automation systems, call 704-864-8778, or visit www.budgetblinds.com/southgastonia.

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other wireless devices won't interfere.

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For more information, call 704-864-8778 or visit www.budgetblinds.com/southgastonia

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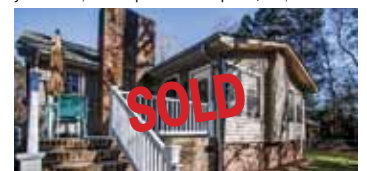
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FUN IN DOWNTOWN BELMONT!

CaroMontCriterium

Springtime in Belmont is a beautiful and exciting time in the city! Locals and visitors alike enjoy the springtime weather while strolling down Main Street admiring the blooming cherry blossoms amid the backdrop of our historic downtown. Springtime in Belmont is not just about beauty, it's also about the excitement this season brings. Spring introduces many exciting annual events within our historic downtown showcasing our community's historic and active lifestyle. The fourth annual CaroMont Health Criterium is scheduled for Sunday, May 1st, where once again speeding cyclists will pedal in high-speed large packs through the streets of the historic downtown. As it did last year, the event will feature amateur and top professional men and women in cycling. The course on narrow downtown streets features six tight turns and a monster hill to the finish line! The CaroMont Health Criterium in Downtown Belmont is the 2nd stop in the week long bicycle racing series called USA CRITS Speed Week starting in Charlotte on April 30th and ending in Athens, GA on May 7th.



The CaroMont Health Criterium begins at noon on Sunday, May 1st, with amateur races first up. There will be men's and women's amateur races throughout the afternoon. Many of these amateur races will feature cyclists from Belmont and around Gaston County. Local elementary children will even have the opportunity to ride two laps on the 2/3 mile route through downtown, complete with the Tindol Subaru pace car leading them and the public address announcer cheering them on. The event concludes with a women's professional race and a men's professional race.

"We are excited to bring the CaroMont Criterium back to our community again this year in partnership with City of Belmont and the Downtown Belmont Development Association," said Doug Lockett, President and CEO at CaroMont Health. "Racers

and fans from across the region will roll in for a fun day of activities and healthy competition and it gives us a chance to showcase our beautiful, historic downtown Belmont."

The event also features a BMX exhibition, Kids Zone, music and more. The Kids Zone will have popular inflatables for children to enjoy. Families can take advantage of the CaroMont Health Wellness Village, an experiential learning experience that promotes tips for living a healthy lifestyle, on Catawba Street.

The CaroMont Health Criterium will bring the energy of hundreds of cyclists and thousands of spectators to downtown Belmont on a Sunday afternoon that would otherwise be a quiet spring day. More information about the event is available at www.BelmontCrit.org.



FridayNightLive!

Dust off your dancing shoes! Belmont's signature downtown concert series returns for its 10th season! "Friday Night Live", sponsored by the Belmont Merchant Association, will return every other Friday night from May 6th through August 26th. The free concerts are from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. featuring popular Carolina beach music bands and local DJ Johnny B. This is a free, family-friendly event that attracts both local residents and out of town visitors upwards of 25,000 annual attendees. Be sure to bring your blanket or lawn chair and enjoy our local food and beverage vendors amid the laughter and sounds of this fun summer concert series.



GaribaldiFest



Celebrate the arrival of spring at our annual – GaribaldiFest on Saturday May 21st at Stowe Park and Main Street from 11 p.m.-5 p.m. This free family friendly event features over 75 vendors of arts and crafts, food, children's activities, music, and more. Many of our city's local non-profit organizations will be featured at the event sharing information about their work in the community. Bring your family to enjoy music, food, and fun in historic downtown Belmont!



BelmontCruise-In



Belmont Cruise-In April - September
The Keystone Kops are looking forward to another great year for the Belmont Classic Car Show kicking off on April 6th and running through September. This fun event is every Wednesday night from 6 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. located adjacent to Glenway Pub behind Friends Sport Bar & Grill. Admission to the public is free and everyone is welcome. This Classic Car Show is a fantastic experience for all. D.J. Johnny B will be at the event providing music for all patrons attending. The car selection is diverse with stock, modified, street rods, Corvettes and many others. There is a 50/50 raffle benefiting Shriners Hospitals for Children, door prizes, music, and more! Contact Don Deese at ddeese48@yahoo.com for more information and pictures.



BANGZ SALON IS MOVING AHEAD BY GIVING BACK AVEDA EARTHMONTH2016



So much has changed over the past eight years since we moved to our Main Avenue location. Downtown has changed and we've seen many businesses come and go, but we have managed to stay the course and remain successful, even experiencing growth. We can honestly say we owe much of that success to our loyal guests. Bangz is blessed to serve the BEST guests in the greater Gaston County area.

Since we last spoke we have added some experienced talent to our team, including a licensed esthetician. We now have an in-house educator who helps us to stay sharp on our skills and current trends in the industry. Aveda has introduced several new hair and skin care lines and has revamped their color

line as well. Aveda is known for its botanically and organically derived products. All of our products harness the goodness of pure plant and flower essences to deliver great results at a very competitive price point.

As an Aveda Concept Salon, Bangz is different from other salons because of our attention to our guests from the moment they walk through our door to the moment they leave us. Our philosophy emphasizes the overall wellness of our guests. If you've never experienced an Aveda salon, you can expect to be greeted with a friendly smile and a warm cup of Aveda Comforting Tea or a glass of infused water. You will receive a thorough consultation with one of our stylists followed by a relaxing scalp massage at the shampoo bowl and a complimentary neck and shoulder massage with your choice of any of our Aveda Composition oils. You will leave feeling refreshed, renewed, and looking as fabulous as you feel.

We love Aveda not only because of the well known products and aromas, but because of their mission. Aveda is much more than a company. They are a culture of awareness and responsibility to each other and the world we live in. They are careful to source their ingredients responsibly and take great care to ensure that when they purchase their ingredients that they give back to those communities and encourage sustainability.





The Aveda mission is simple, "To care for the world we live in, from the products we make to the ways in which we give back to society. At Aveda, we strive to set an example for environmental leadership not just in the world of beauty, but around the world."

Another major way Aveda gives back is by partnering with salons across the globe to raise money during Earth Month to provide clean drinking water throughout the world. Did you know that every 90 seconds a child dies from a lack of clean drinking water? This is a startling statistic, but just 10 years ago when Aveda started their clean water initiative that number was an astonishing 15 seconds. We are making a difference, and we won't stop until that number is ZERO. To date, Aveda has raised \$38 million towards this mission. Aveda is committed to clean water on both local and global levels. A portion of the money raised by each salon goes towards local clean water efforts. This year we have chosen to donate to the Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation, a local non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to keep our precious Catawba River clean. They are also involved in community outreach and education. They teach children the science of water by taking them out on the river, retrieving samples, and educating them about various wildlife and flora in and along the river.

Bangz will be participating in Aveda's Annual Global Cut-a-thon on Monday, April 18th from 12-8pm. All of the proceeds from haircuts and waxing services that day will go towards reaching our goal of \$3,000.00 for clean water. We would like to thank the local businesses in and around the downtown area who have graciously donated items to be auctioned. Please visit our website or social media pages for more details on Earth Month and how you can contribute!

To say that Aveda is passionate about natural products and the environment is an understatement. It is a way of life, and one that we at Bangz are extremely proud to be part of.



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Mark Your Calendar...

Mount Holly Springfest 2016

April 30th-5K/10K Run

May 2nd-Golf Tournament

May 3rd-Senior Dinner

May 4th-Kids Fest

May 5th-Community Dinner
And Awards Banquet

May 6th-Movies In The Park

May 7th-Springfest

Questions?

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Cheri Love Springfest Coordinator:
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Haithcox Photography
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704.922.7696
wrhphoto@aol.com

www.rickhaithcox.com

HAITHCOX PHOTOGRAPHY

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- ☐ Install smoke detectors
- ☐ Paint living room
- ☐ Caulk around tub
- ☐ Install crown molding
- ☐ Repair wood on deck
- ☐ Install backsplash
- ☐ Hang mirror in hallway
- ☐ Clean and repair gutters
- ☐ Replace weatherstripping

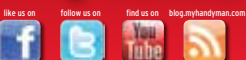


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