



Press Release

Toms River Business Improvement District
218 Main St., Toms River NJ 08753

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Media Contact: Jody Alessandrine or Arleen Read
Tel : (732) 341-8738

The 24th Annual New Jersey State Chili & Salsa Cook-off in Downtown Toms River Takes Top Spot in OceanHappening.com Survey

TOMS RIVER, NJ - Downtown Toms River's annual production of the New Jersey State Chili & Salas Cook-off, Presented by Circle Hyundai of Shrewsbury took top prize, winning OceanHappening.com's 2013 survey for Best Family Event. The Chili & Salsa Cook-off also was a finalist in the online publication's Foodie Event and Outdoor Event categories.

The cook-off involves two competitions—the International Chili Society (ICS) and the People's Choice. The ICS judges three separate categories—red chili, chili verde, and salsa. Former ICS Champions are ISC judges. The winner each year qualifies for the ISC World Competition in October each year. Last month, "the worlds" took place in Palm Springs, CA. The NJ competition's People's Choice winners are selected by the attendees who purchase tasting kits and sampled the nearly 50 contestants' offerings!

While Downtown Toms River has secured many corporate sponsors to support the myriad of special events it produces annually, 2013 was the first year there was a "title sponsor" for this event— Circle Hyundai of Shrewsbury. When the partnership was announced in March, Blaise Scibetta, Circle's General Sales Manager noted, "Circle Hyundai is proud to be the title sponsor of the New Jersey Chill & Salsa Cook-off and a partnering sponsor for all 2013 Downtown Toms River events. Having grown-up in Ocean County, I realize that these events are a vital part of not just Toms River's economy, but the entire Ocean County economy. Plus, a lot of my staff are from Toms River or the surrounding towns, which is a nice thing for them to see-- that your employer wants to be part of something that benefits your community," added Mr. Scibetta.

In 2012, the 23rd Annual New Jersey State Chili & Salsa Cook-off was a finalist in OceanHappening.com's Summer Event category competition.

The 2014 edition will be the 25th Annual production of the event in Downtown Toms River. "The event itself pre-dates the establishment of the special (business) improvement district which was instituted by state statute and municipal ordinance in 2002," said the Executive Director of the Toms River Business Development Corporation, Jody Alessandrine. The 501 (C) (3) corporation administers the district branded as Downtown Toms River. "We expect to go the extra mile in producing next year's Chili & Salsa Cook-off to celebrate its Silver Anniversary, he added. The 2013 edition featured the most number of contestants, despite the sluggish economy.

(Photo included: L to R, Arleen Read, Marketing Director, Toms River Business Development Corporation; JoAnn Juralewicz, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Toms River Business Development Corporation and owner of Simply Skin Day Spa; and Mark Retacco, OceanHappening.com)

The 2013 Downtown Toms River Partnering Sponsors include: XFINITY, New Jersey Natural Gas, United Water of Toms River, JCP&L, Circle Hyundai of Shrewsbury, Morgan Stanley (Toms River Office), Shore Community Bank, WJRZ-FM, WRAT-FM, The Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Stop & Shop, Foods Galore, Home Turf Yard & Home Maintenance, and Home Depot.

For more information about the International Chili Society's world championship, please visit <http://www.worldschampionshipchili.com/media.html>

And for more information about Downtown Toms River— it's menu of special events and the Downtown Gift Card Program, visit www.downtownomsriver.com, or call 732-341-8738.

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