

# AN EVENT FOR THE WHOLE TOWN

## STONE HARBOR'S FARMERS' MARKET

By Josh Kinney

Every Sunday this summer, 300 to 500 people are expected to pass through the Stone Harbor Farmers' Market on 97<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenues. They can be seen swarming just below the 132-foot water tower from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., gathering the freshest produce for the week ahead at the shore.

After spending some time visiting Europe a few years ago, Anne and Karl Wannan were inspired by an idea they decided to take with them to Stone Harbor, one they thought would be well-accepted among the community and the vacationers. So far, that's proving true.

"Throughout Europe there are these wonderful little farmers' markets," says Anne Wannan, who four years ago directed the project after a suggestion from local chef and restaurant owner Lucas Marteca.

Four summers later, every vendor at the Stone Harbor Farmers' Market has returned, bringing with them their best commodities. There are 10 in all, serving the community with their own personal delicious homemade goods.

There are three fresh-produce stands, fresh seafood and cut flowers. Baker Sue Totino sells fresh homemade sweet breads, cakes and jellies made from scratch with no preservatives from her licensed S&S Kitchen in Rosenhayn. College English Literature major Harry Gale sells what's perfect for all good writers and beach readers: fair-trade fresh-roasted organic coffee beans from places like Colombia, Nicaragua and Mexico. Various vendors also offer cheese, homemade honeys, salsas and homespun apple sauce.

Starting small, "It's really grown tremendously," Wannan says. "It's like an event for the whole town," and one all of Stone Harbor can look forward to every week this summer until Sept. 4. Every Sunday, Anne and her husband volunteer at the marketplace, helping to set up and organize the vendors as well as meeting people and building relationships with customers and merchants. She tries to keep things local from



*Pictured is Judy Cowan, the owner of Conover's Produce Stand and Market with one of her employees. Cowan brings fresh New Jersey produce to sell at Stone Harbor's Farmers' Market every Sunday throughout the summer.*

Cape May County so not to dilute the loyal vendors' profit and so customers who enjoy the summer market can receive the freshest produce and goods at reasonable prices.

Wannan looks forward to meeting up with the vendors again after a long season apart. "We part ways the Sunday before Labor Day, but we reunite when the market starts back up," she says. Although they correspond over the year, there's nothing quite like show time when they're all on display together, offering the best of their goods in one place at the seashore.

The mission of the market is to provide a venue for farmers to come and connect with the area's residents, vacationers and visitors who happen to drop by, as well as with the local restaurant owners looking for new goods and recipes.

"The market itself is the event," says Wannan. Be sure to check out the weekly "event!"

Josh Kinney, a journalism and creative writing double major at Asbury University in Kentucky, is a native of the Philadelphia area. He spends his summers at the Jersey Shore. Throughout high school and college he has worked with agencies such as Invisible Children to help children in Africa. He hopes to have some of his novels published.

