

BBQ Essentials Finishes With Cook-Off

By TOM WOERNER
Of The Record Staff

Students in Central Carolina Community College's BBQ Essentials class finished nearly two months of learning with a cook-off judged by local volunteers Tuesday night.

Students in the continuing education class led by Chef De-Ven Atkinson awed the panel of judges with an assortment of meats and familiar barbecue side items and of course sauces to go along with them. Plates full of ribs, pulled pork, assorted beef and chicken dishes and many other items made their way down the table of judges.

Each item was ranked on either a scale of 1-10 or 1-20. Meats, side items, sauces, dry rubs and overall presentation of the items were judged. A familiar face, on a team with his wife, took home the first-place prize. Team Burgin, made up of former Harnett County Board of Com-

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Daily Record Photo/Tom Woerner

Jim and Ann Burgin of Angier, shown here, were students in a BBQ Essentials class at Central Carolina Community College and won a cook-off that ended the class. They are shown here preparing marinated slaw that was part of their presentation.

BBQ Essentials

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missioners Chairman Jim Burgin and his wife, Ann, received the first-place prize for their combination plate that included beef roast, with a handmade rub, marinated slaw and a savory recipe for barbecued brussell sprouts.

"We had a lot of fun with it," Mr. Burgin said. "We learned a lot."

He said he would like to see other people take part in classes.

"Every person in Harnett County should take a class at Central Carolina Community College," Mr. Burgin said. "They have so many different things you can learn."

In addition to cooking classes, Mr. Burgin has also taken a small engine repair class at the school.

The Burgins were among 10 students who took part in the BBQ Essentials class.

Mr. Atkinson said there is a maximum of 12 students each time the class is offered. This has been the second offering in Harnett County and the first at the CCCC/Dunn Center.

Students have spent more than two hours each Tuesday since February taking part in the class. It lasts six weeks each time it is offered.

Mr. Atkinson said every aspect of the barbecue craft was covered in the course that included the fundamentals of meat cuts, classic knife-cutting skills, dry heat cooking and of course the preparation of barbecue. He said students got unique instruction on specialty skills such as making bread from scratch and developing homemade mayonaise. Subjects such as food safety and basic clean-up skills were also taught as part of the class.

"We tried to cover all the essentials if we could," Mr. Atkinson said. "All the students did a good job."

Another familiar face was former Dunn restaurant owner Doug Heath. He was also taking part to further hone his skills.

"I thought it would be good, and it was," Mr. Heath said.

Mr. Heath and his family are the former owner of Heath's Steakhouse and Captain's Kitchen in Dunn.

Student Dennis Christman joined the class for another reason. He has recently moved to the area from northern Washington.

"I thought taking the class



Daily Record Photos/Tom Woerner

A plate of fall-off-the-bone tangy and juicy ribs prepared by a BBQ Essentials graduate. The continuing ed program through CCCC will return this fall. Dates will be announced.

would be a good way to meet people and I really enjoyed it," Mr. Christman said.

Steve Delaney also said entertainment was his main reason for taking the class.

"The closest thing I have done to working in the culinary industry is when I worked at McDonald's," Mr. Delaney said. "I just enjoy cooking."

Tanisha Rouse was one of the judges in the event. She, and her co-judges, had difficult decisions to make.

"I think the favorite thing I had

was macaroni and cheese made with pimento cheese," Ms. Rouse said.

She said it was the beef recipe of Team Burgin that pushed the team over the top.

"All the teams did so good, but Team Burgin was definitely one of the best," she said.

Other judges were Brad and Annette Schlitz, who graduated from the school's first BBQ Academy and own Grills, Accessories and More in Sanford; Kathryn Horrell, a graduating senior in the CCCC Hospitality and Culinary Arts Program; Tanisha Rouse, STARS coordinator for Johnston-Lee-Harnett Community Action; and *Daily Record* reporter Tom Woerner.

The school will offer the next BBQ Essentials course this fall. A date has not been set. There will be a Culinary Essentials class beginning May 16 to June 1. In the Culinary Essential Class, students will learn basic knife skills, cooking techniques, cheese making and menu planning focused on local ingredients. Anyone who wants more information on class schedules, can go to www.cccc.edu.