



BY  
LOUISE  
MATZ



Because one of my five sisters was celebrating a milestone birthday, I was treated to a 4-day celebration located primarily in Cadillac, Michigan. The agenda was loaded with many delightful activities in the area, but the highlight was the blueberry festival in Harrietta, Michigan, “a lovely little community nestled in the hills.”

We are a group of six sisters, four daughters/nieces, one granddaughter and two friends. A big part of the plan was for our group to dress up as blueberries and march in the Harrietta Blueberry Festival Parade. According to instructions from the birthday girl, our costumes began with blowing up blue balloons the night before the festival. We wore blue clothing and tied balloons on to ourselves everywhere. Some of us showed up with unique hats, blue earmuffs, and two showed up with blue hair! Dressed in costume, we headed for Harrietta early Saturday morning to begin our day with a fabulous blueberry pancake breakfast. Afterwards, we took a cursory look at the various booths and headed for the start of the parade. It was scheduled to start at 11:00 a.m. Fueled by the fabulous breakfast and the excitement of the festival atmosphere, we marched as a group, interacting with the spectators along the way. Some of us had noisemakers or a handout. Everyone was festive and happy to see us. Harrietta is a small community and the parade distance was perfect. All the blueberries reached the finish line!

The fun was not over. We found rummage sale treasures, checked out the silent auction, the village hall craft show, and the country market. One of our group competed in the pie eating contest and several from our group participated in the frozen T-shirt contest. And, of course, we stopped at the food booths for a grilled hamburger or hot dog and a blueberry pie or ice cream treat. When our legs began to give out, we enjoyed the music and the food presentation contest under the big tent. It was a terrific day!

If you are looking for a delightful day trip, I would highly recommend this festival. The community is very friendly and welcoming. In addition to the above activities, there is a place nearby for u-pick blueberries. Another visit nearby is the Harrietta State Fish Hatchery. Our trip took place in August 2023. It was the 16<sup>th</sup> annual festival for Harrietta. In 2024, the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Blueberry festival is scheduled for the first Saturday in August. At this writing I don't have the details as the brochure has not been printed. However, you can simply search for Harrietta Blueberry Festival 2024 on-line for details.

*Louise is a national award winning writer. She has been writing for Senior Perspectives for over 15 years. She enjoys family time, reading, traveling, biking, golf, pickleball and mahjonn. She and her husband spent over 20 years enjoying bow hunting for deer in the Upper Peninsula, hunting turkeys, and fishing in the Florida Keys. She is currently re-inventing her life as she lost her husband of 62 years in November of 2023.*



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