

# FOOD FOR THE DELTA



**The BFT Team (from left): Essie Barfield, Earletha Jiles, Dawn Johnson, Carrie Johnson and Alice Harris**

Carrie Johnson doesn't care to be called the *chef de cuisine*, which is what they would call her in Paris, but just "the cook," but regularly for thirty years she has been whipping up lunches that Parisians might drool over.

But she and her merry aides prepare it every day for the discriminating palates of people of the Arkansas Delta, not the Left Bank of Paris. That may be why Best Food in Town - or BFT, as the restaurant is known locally - stayed in business in Marvell through some tough times.

Best Food in Town, which is housed in the headquarters of the Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center, celebrated its 30th birthday October 1, and it was quite a celebration. Mayor Clark Hall and Phillips County Judge Don Gentry issued proclamations declaring the day BFT Day in the city and county. State Representative Chris Richey presented the restaurant a citation from the the Arkansas House of Representatives recognizing the restaurant's contributions to the community and the residents. BFT t-shirts were sold.

Anyone coming near BGACDC around noon is aroused by the aroma of special Southern cuisine - a selection of meats such as fried chicken, pork chops, ribs, catfish, chuck roast, hamburger steak and meat loaf, fresh vegetables (often from BGACDC's garden out back), along with bread pudding, sweet-potato pie, cheesecake or a cobbler of peaches or apples.

The aromas no doubt contribute to BFT's reputation as a good place to get together.

"Whether it is for snack or lunch, the BFT dining room is a community meeting place," Johnson said.

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