

July 2010 Newsletter

Hello! This is the Mountain Lakes Convention & Visitors Bureau's monthly e-newsletter. The aim of our newsletter is to keep you informed with what is going on here in the Mountain Lakes Region of South Carolina. Below you will see the who, what, where and when Oconee County has to offer. So read ahead and if you have any questions give us a shout at 1.877.MT.LAKES (1.877.685.2537) or on the web at www.scmountainlakes.com.

Message From the Director

Hope you all enjoyed your Independence Day weekend! I always look forward to our 4th of July southern tradition of firing up the pit and smoking some BBQ, eating ice cold watermelon, churning some home made ice cream (peach is my personal favorite) and then kicking back at night to watch the firework displays. I'd like to say a big "THANK YOU" to the City of Seneca for putting on a fantastic celebratory display that was viewed by thousands.

As the summer heats up, there is no better place be than in the mountains floating down a cool mountain river, boating on a cool mountain lake or picnicking in the cool mist of one of our many breath taking waterfalls. If you are looking for a fun and exciting place to cool off this summer, come see us in the Mountain Lakes region of South Carolina.



We are rapidly approaching our first annual Triple Crown Watercross on Lake Hartwell on Aug. 13 - 15. We are expecting between 150 - 300 of the worlds top jet skiers to compete in this ESPN nationally televised event. For more information [click here](#). To get the most out of this event, plan on a stay and play weekend in Oconee County. Check out this link for local lodging, rafting and zip-lining and don't forget to ask the hotels for the special CVB rate, [Triple Crown Water Cross Flyer](#).

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The CVB, in partnership with Oconee County PRT and the Oconee County Chamber of Commerce have recently completed some commercials that we will be airing in strategic tourism markets. In the mean time, you can view the commercials on [YouTube](#).

I had the opportunity to visit with the SC DNR Wild Life biologist at the Walhalla Fish Hatchery. This is an amazing and historic facility that was created in the 1930's. The hatchery raises brown, brook and rainbow trout for stocking the public waters of South Carolina. Most of the trout are cultured to a catchable size of 9-12" before they are released. Fingerling trout are also produced to enhance the trout fishery. Approximately 500,000 trout are produced and stocked annually by the hatchery. Very large trout (5-15 pounds) are also kept at the Hatchery on display for the public viewing enjoyment. The facility is open to the public and is "generally" open from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM daily (sometimes they have to close or change hours due to inclement weather). For more information [click here](#).

By the way, the drive to the fish hatchery is a phenomenal trip through the mountains and takes you by the Ellicott Rock Wilderness. While I was out there, I made a detour down to the wilderness and hiked for a few miles down the trail that borders the Chattooga River. This is an exceptional trail for easy, scenic, shady walking with quite a few riverside picnic and camping areas.



For details [click here](#).

The Mountain Lakes CVB has negotiated some really good discounted rates at the Best Western, Days Inn and Jameson Inn in Seneca. When you make your reservations, please remember to ask them for the "CVB Discount".

What's going on in the Mountain Lakes region of South Carolina:

Street Dancin'

The Southern Appalachian Gathering presents "Street Dancin'" in Walhalla every Thursday night from July 8 - August 26 beginning at 7:00 PM and lasting till dark-thirty. No partner or experience is necessary. For more information, please call 864-238-3354.

The Battle of Oconee

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Civil War Camp and Battle Re-enactment. July 16 - 18, 2010 Westminster SC. This year is the third annual Battle of Oconee where re-enactors come from all over the Southeast to portray a battle from the Civil War. The Re-enactors set up camp, just as it was done in the 1860's, dress, cook and live like our forefathers did. On Saturday afternoon and Sunday afternoon, there will be a battle re-enactment to demonstrate what it might have been like in days gone by. For more information [click here](#).

Heritage, Arts & Music Festival at Duke Energy's World of Energy

Hands-on art stations for children, quilters, storytelling, music and much more!
Saturday, July 24, 2010 from Noon to 5 p.m.
Art show on display until Friday, August 20
FREE ADMISSION!
For more information [click here](#).

We look forward to your visit!

Kind regards,

Ken Sloan
Executive Director

Oconee County - An irresistible environment for a remarkable experience!



We're on Facebook, are you?
Check out our page and become a fan!
Mountain Lakes CVB - Oconee County, South Carolina

July 2010 Calendar of Events

[FOR A COMPLETE CALENDAR OF EVENTS CLICK HERE](#)

Partner Focus

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Oconee Heritage Center

Located in Walhalla, South Carolina, the Oconee Heritage Center (OHC) brings history back to life through museum exhibits, educational programs, festivals and much more. The OHC is housed in the historic Tobacco Warehouse (1892) and first opened in 2004.



Visitors explore the history of Native Americans, immigration, railroads, New Deal programs, textile mills, agriculture and much more as it relates to Oconee County. The museum offers a self-guided tour through time of Oconee's history even long before it became a county. Popular exhibits include the dugout canoes being preserved within the museum, a walk-in Stump House Tunnel exhibit and a Depression-era tenant farmer's House. The exhibit space is always changing to showcase different artifacts and to focus on special topics like religion, education, and politics in the area.

Regular programs are held monthly at no charge to guests. The American Girls' Club meets on the first Saturday of each month for a history-themed activity and crafts. The Heritage String Band with Bill and Connie Lowe join us every second Saturday of the month for the Old-Time Music Gathering from 3pm until 5pm. Free movies are shown every third Saturday of the month at 6:30pm during Movie

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Night at the Museum. Film selections include features from cinema's golden age as well as some more modern selections with historic themes. Movies include free popcorn and drinks. Special events are held seasonally such as the annual Newry Folk Festival in June, the Harvest Moon Gala in September, the Heritage Haunt at Halloween, OHC Christmas Traditions, and much more throughout the year.

Due to the urgent need for historic preservation in Oconee County and to serve the blossoming heritage tourism industry, the OHC has plans for extensive growth in the coming years. Construction of the Jake Sluder Heritage Park is underway. The park is located adjacent to the OHC facility in Walhalla and features a memorial brick walkway through a native plant and heirloom garden.

By early 2011 the General Store Museum will be open on Main Street in Westminster. This will be a recreated period general store featuring items from the original England's General Merchandise Store of Westminster. Also, the OHC is working with the Oakway community to restore the historic Center Methodist Church on Highway 24. This historic church property will be available for use by local churches wishing to hold old-time church services and by individuals seeking a rustic wedding venue. The OHC may hold special events there to interpret the county's religious history. Plans have also been made for a living history farmstead in Mountain Rest reflecting Oconee County and Southern Appalachian farming practices of the late mid to late 19th century and early 20th century. Approval from the U.S. Forest Service is pending regarding the future of the proposed Southern Appalachian Farmstead. If approved, this project will begin in late 2010 or early 2011. The newest historic preservation project adopted by the OHC is the Keowee Courier building in downtown Walhalla. This historic structure will be restored and potentially used as a satellite museum location reflecting local news journalism and printing methods. Other projects at the OHC facility in Walhalla include the creation of a reading and research room in the basement of the Walhalla facility. This will accommodate genealogists and local history researchers coming to the area seeking information.



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The OHC is truly a community-supported endeavor and we invite everyone to join the effort by becoming a member, volunteering and donating artifacts. The OHC receives its funding primarily from membership funds, private donations, special events fundraisers and grants. Most of what has been accomplished at the OHC has been done with

volunteer labor within the community. Limited funding from Oconee County Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Department allows the OHC to have 1 full-time director and 1 part-time assistant, which allows more funding to go toward growth and development rather than administrative costs. The OHC is proud to preserve Oconee County's rich heritage and to share it with those who visit this beautiful part of South Carolina. For more information visit

www.oconeeheritagecenter.org or contact the OHC at 638-2224 or by e-mail at info@oconeeheritagecenter.org. The OHC is located on the corner of W.S. Broad Street and Tugalo Street in Walhalla, behind the Bantam Chef.

In The News



CHATTOOGA BELLE FARM U-PICK OPERATION OPEN

Long Creek, S.C., June 18, 2010- The U-Pick operation at Chattooga Belle Farm is now open for the summer. Fresh blackberries are now available for picking yourself or they will be for sale in the farm store.

Other fresh fruit will be available as the summer continues including blueberries, muscadines, and a variety of apples.

The farm store will be open Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. unless there is an event taking place at the barn. Customers may bring their own buckets to pick fruit with, or there will be buckets in the store to use. The farm store also has a variety of South Carolina made products including jams, jellies and relishes. And you can enjoy the amazing view with a refreshing muscadine

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Prices for the U-Pick operation are \$1.50/pint or \$3.00/quart.