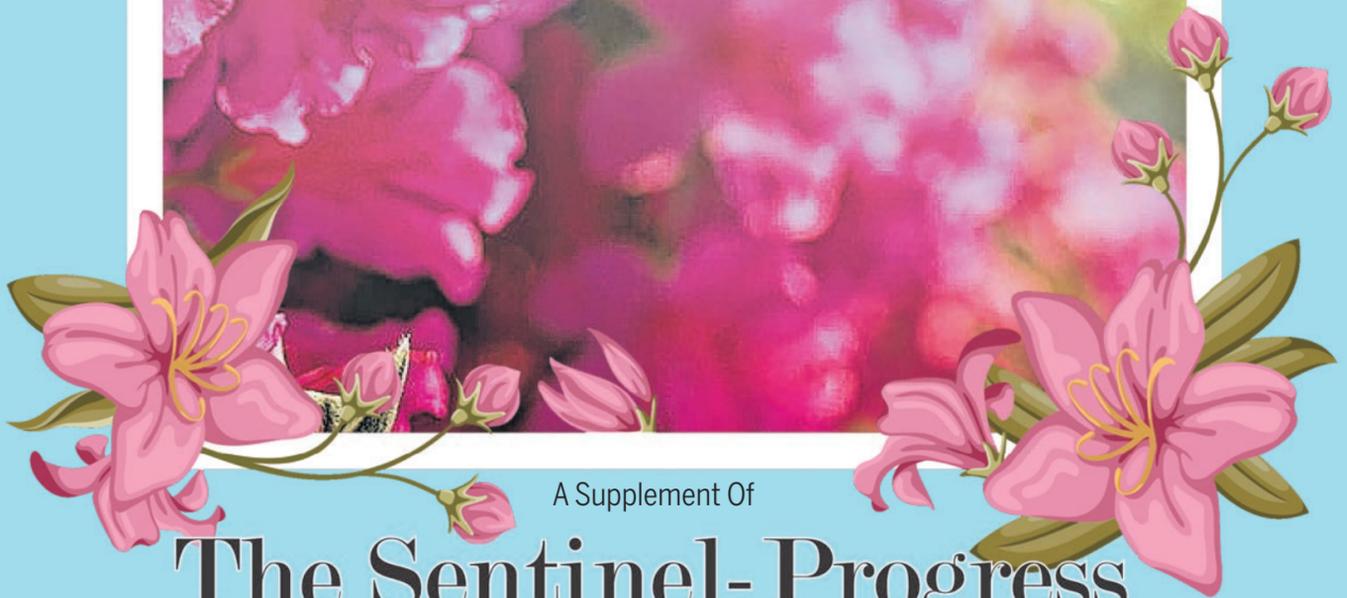




2018

Azalea Festival



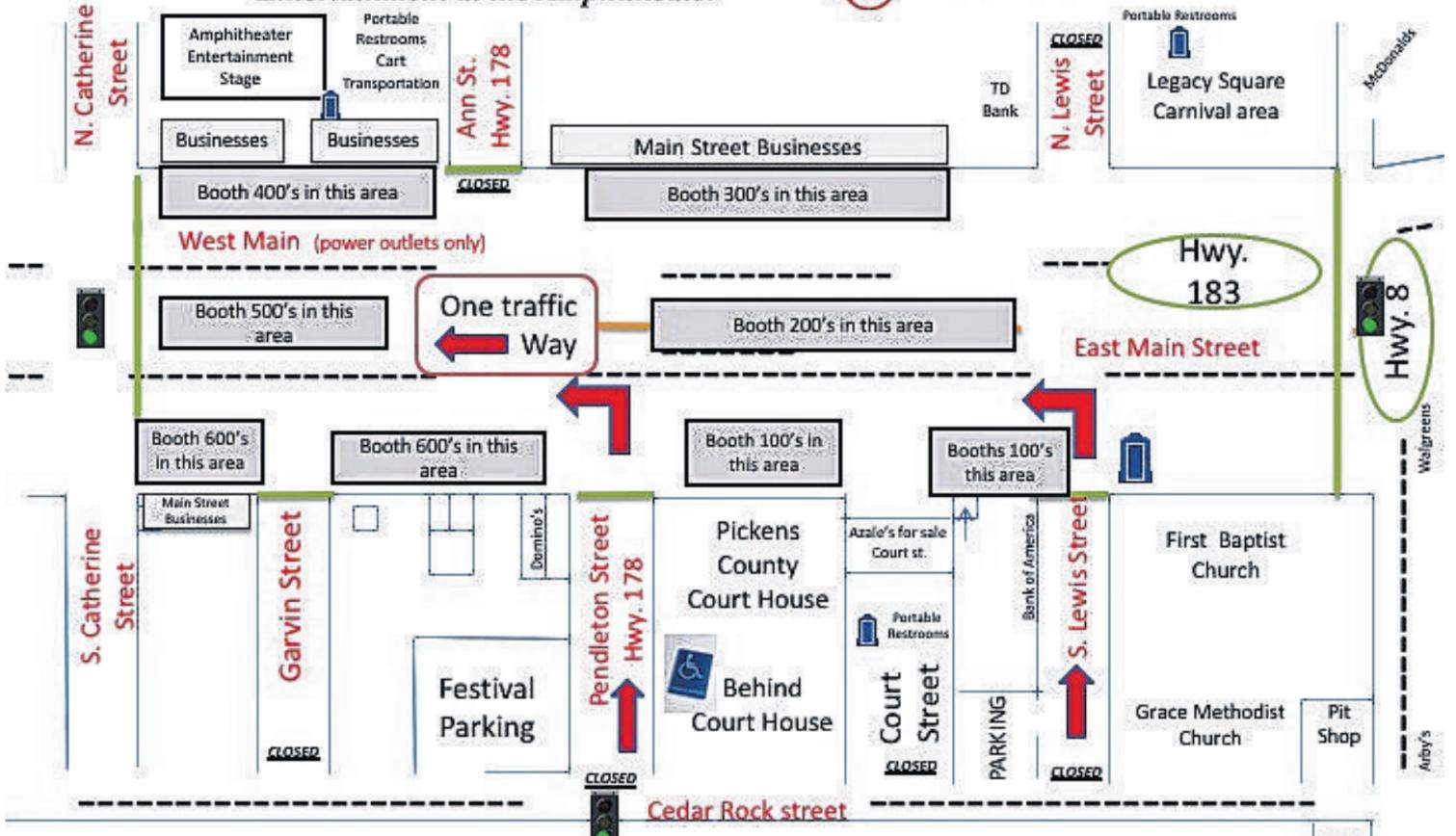
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2018 AZALEA FESTIVAL Entertainment at the Amphitheater

NO SMOKING EVENT!



Booths - 100's, 200's, & 300's will need to travel onto Cedar Rock Street then ENTER at South Lewis Street on to Main Street. When you finish unloading, you will need to EXIT at Hwy 178 (Pendleton Street) just past Court House.

Booths - 400's, 500's, & 600's will need to travel onto Cedar Rock Street and ENTER at Hwy 178 (Pendleton Street). When you finish unloading, you will need to EXIT at Garvin Street.

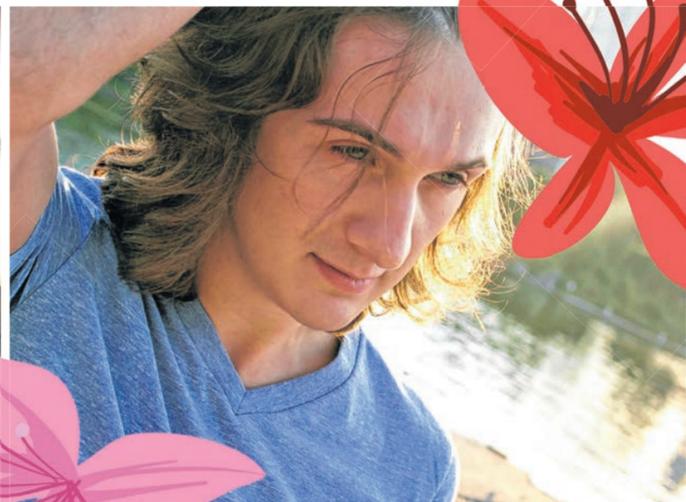
Map information

- Portable Restrooms
- Street Names in **RED**
- Hwy. in **GREEN** circle
- Booth sections in **BLACK** box
- Barricades / end of festival area

Vendor Drop In (outside)
Next to Dr Spearman's Office
Near the Pickens County Court House on Court st.
(Sat. morning 7:00am - 9:00am)



Brady Smith



Zac Stiltner

2018 AZALEA FESTIVAL ART WINNER



Artist Hayley Brown

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Hayley Brown, a Sophomore at Pickens High School (PHS) is the fifteen-year-old daughter of David and Erica Brown. With her passion of art, she hopes to finish her high school career in the Visual Arts program at the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities. After high school she plans to attend Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD).

Entertainment Schedule



FRI., APRIL 20

- 6:30 p.m. Sweet Potato Pie Kids
- 7:45 p.m. Ole #4
- 9 p.m. The Jake Bartley Band



SAT., APRIL 21

- 10:00 a.m. Opening Ceremony (Courthouse)
Posting of Colors – Boys Scouts Troop 51
National Anthem – Angela Seaborn
Welcome – Pickens' Mayor David Owens
Announcements – Pickens Azalea Festival Board

10:30 a.m. Local Church Choir TBA

12 p.m. Pet Pageant

1 p.m. Zack Stiltner

2 p.m. Brady Smith

3 p.m. Midday Break (load in for evening show)

5:30 p.m. John Tibbs (featured artist from God's Not Dead 2)

6:45 p.m. Benton Blount (America's Got Talent Finalist)

8 p.m. Mac Powell (Third Day's Lead Singer)

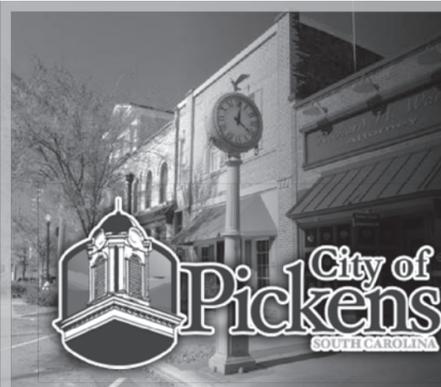
Times are subject to change and all entertainers will perform at the Downtown Pickens Amphitheater.



Mac Powell



John Tibbs



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*We look forward to seeing
you again soon.*



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History of Azalea Festival

PICKENS -- Spring, with its warming days encouraging trees to bud and flowers to grace the landscape, is always a reason to celebrate -- and Pickens takes full advantage of the opportunity.

A 1989 brochure promoting the city's annual festival said it best with the words "When the azaleas are blooming in Pickens, South Carolina, the little town celebrates!"

And having fun in a family-oriented atmosphere is exactly what they do during the Azalea Festival, which occurs each year in April.

Hosted by local and area civic-minded organizations, the Azalea Festival resembles a large family reunion for Pickens County residents, and it gives people who have been away far too long the chance to return for a visit with old friends while strolling the streets of Pickens that are filled with artists offering a variety of their work and crafts, local organizations handing out important information on a series of topics, and an assortment of food that will entice even the pickiest of eaters.

The Azalea Festival also calls to people who have never been fortunate enough to actually live in Pickens County, beckoning them to share for a moment the pleasures local people enjoy each day.

The Azalea Festival had its beginnings in the spring of 1983 as a small, juried show called the Mountain Arts & Crafts Show and organized by the Pickens Civitan Club was held in the north end of Pickens.

Later, in 1983, the then current Chamber of Commerce President and Pickens Civitan Club founder, Ruth Swayingham Hinkle, had the vision to convince the Civitans to move the show to downtown and invite other non-profit groups to participate. Hinkle told of her vision at the annual Chamber banquet, "I see many different organizations having activities on closed off streets and parking lots all over town," she said.

By enlisting the support of the Chamber as sponsor, the first Pickens Festival was held in 1984 with the Civitan Arts & Crafts Show, the Junior Assembly providing lemonade, the Jaycees, donuts and the Chamber giving out information.

Over the next few years the event attracted many more organizations and greatly expanded the gourmet choices to feed the hungry public and some ingenious attractions. For those first years, it was held in May, the Saturday before Mother's Day, and at the same time as the springtime Pickin' in Pickens Bluegrass

Festival, which was held in a pasture north of town.

The Azalea Festival was able to not only borrow entertainers from the bluegrass festival, it was also able to bring in other forms of local entertainment.

In 1987, Jerrie Hixon, who served as the festival coordinator for the event's first nine years, compiled the first self-guided historical tour with about 20 locations. The next year, and every year after, the guide was published in The Pickens Sentinel's Special Section.

As the years passed, more research was done by area historians to add new sites and old photos to the annually published tour. By following the map in the printed tour guide, festival goers can read about each place as they walk by. Open for tours each year are the Hagood-Mauldin House, the Pickens County Art & History Museum and the Hagood Mill.

Cynthia Boney, another long-time festival coordinator who led the festival into the new century, worked lovingly at preserving the history by adding to the tour until it included over 50 locations.

Many are grateful for the support of area businesses in faithfully advertising in the section which comes out each year the Wednesday before the festival to provide the Historical Tour and all the festival highlights for the current year.

In 1988, the Festival date was moved to the third Saturday in April, the peak of the azalea blooming season, and by 1989 the name was officially changed to the Pickens Azalea Festival. Fun activities were planned each year, including parades, stage coach rides, a petting zoo, puppet and magic shows, clowns and organ grinders. Some attractions were brief lived while others became traditions.

In 1990, a very special cake was made to celebrate the 250th birthday of General Andrew Pickens. Connie and June Bowers graciously excepted the challenge to play the parts of the General and his lovely wife, Rebecca, at the party. Anna Simon, a local newspaper reporter, played the part of Brenda Starr who "interviewed" the historic couple at the party, thus starting a favorite tradition.

Since then, many different local couples have accepted the honor to put on the period clothing and be the official greeters of the festival by playing the part of the Revolutionary War hero and his wife.

Through the years, several other traditions have remained strong, including the annual Azalea Festival tee-shirt. Starting in

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1987, every year the Pickens Civitan Club has chosen the artwork depicting a Pickens area landmark.

The first shirt was pale yellow with brown ink, featuring the Hagood Mill drawn by local artist, Mary McDaniel.

Throughout the festival's history, many different colors of shirts have been added and local artists have donated their talents for these shirts that help the community. Most featured places are on the historical tour, such as, historic homes, museums, Chapman's Bridge, the old Pickens school house, the Pickens "Doodle" train engine and even natural landmarks, such as Glassy Mountain and Table Rock Mountain.

Each year, Pickens High School art students are invited to enter original drawings of an azalea flower and one drawing is selected to become the official artwork of the festival. Since 1989, an official U.S. cancellation stamp has been made for the Pickens Azalea Festival Station from the artwork. Letters are received every year from all over the United States requesting the cancellation stamp. In addition, many people visit the post office station at the festival to mail friends and even themselves a card or letter with the collector's stamp. This drawing is also featured on the tee-shirt and in publicity fliers and information.

Many longtime visitors to the festival have tee-shirt collections including all 0 shirts and also the 18 cards with the annual one-day cancellation stamp. In addition, some collectors have compiled posters advertising the event and wonder if they may someday be displayed in the county art museum.

Planning for a festival of this size takes all year. The few that have assumed the task of leadership are greatly appreciated. Although the sponsorship has gone from Chamber to Civitans to the Greater Pickens Chamber of Commerce, the two groups have always worked together to get the fun day accomplished.

In 1992, when Hixon left the lead, the Chamber passed the sponsorship back to the Civitan Club where the energetic work of festival coordinators, Chalma Drake, Michael Chastain and Cynthia Boney brought new and creative ideas.

In 2002 the Greater Pickens Chamber of Commerce was asked to re-adopt sponsorship of the Azalea Festival. Jerri Hixon was asked to lead and revive the structure of the community wide representation of the Azalea Festival Planning Committee. In the summer of 2003, the role of festival coordinator was taken over by the long time community leader and former Jaycee, Russ Gantt.

Under Gantt's leadership, the Festival added Friday evening entertainment and carnival rides in 2004 and was billed for the first time in 2005 as a two-day event, including Friday evening and all day Saturday.

Added to the festivals activities in 2006 was the Pickens Women's Associations 5K Walk/run, now in its 10th year. The 5k is now on the new Doodle Trail in the Pickens area.

In 2009, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Azalea Festival, the event went to three days and for the first time the festival history expanded out to include West Main Street. The annual Azalea Festival was a program book that was published in both local newspapers – The Pickens Sentinel and The Pickens County Courier.

As the years have progressed, the arts and crafts booths have increased to more than 100 participants, and many more civic groups have brought their talents and endless volunteer hours to the event.

The festival has spread out through downtown Pickens – down Main Street, onto Court Street and Lewis Street, on Legacy Square and business parking lots – just as Ruth had envisioned so many years earlier.

Separate areas are set aside for children's activities, entertainment stage, self guided historical tours, and of course, the great variety of food to be enjoyed while dining at tables decorated with bouquets of azaleas.



TV came to the Azalea Festival in 2013 as WSPA-TV channel 7, Spartanburg, SC served as the title sponsor. Two shows "Your Carolina" & Scene On 7 were to broadcast live from the festival on Friday. But due rainy weather had to be move to in indoor studios.

2014 saw the Azalea Festival host its first annual baking contest by Pickens own Francine Bryson. Over 100 entries participated in the event.

As the Azalea Festival begins its 34th year as a family event, the tradition continues as a way for more than 40 civic non-profit community organizations to raise funds for various worthwhile causes. It has been estimated that approximately \$100,000 has been raised over the years to go to local charities through the sale of food and souvenirs.

Yet, as always, no admission fees are charged to anyone wanting to attend the Pickens Azalea Festival and share in an annual tradition that is anticipated year-round by area residents as a way to celebration spring in Pickens.



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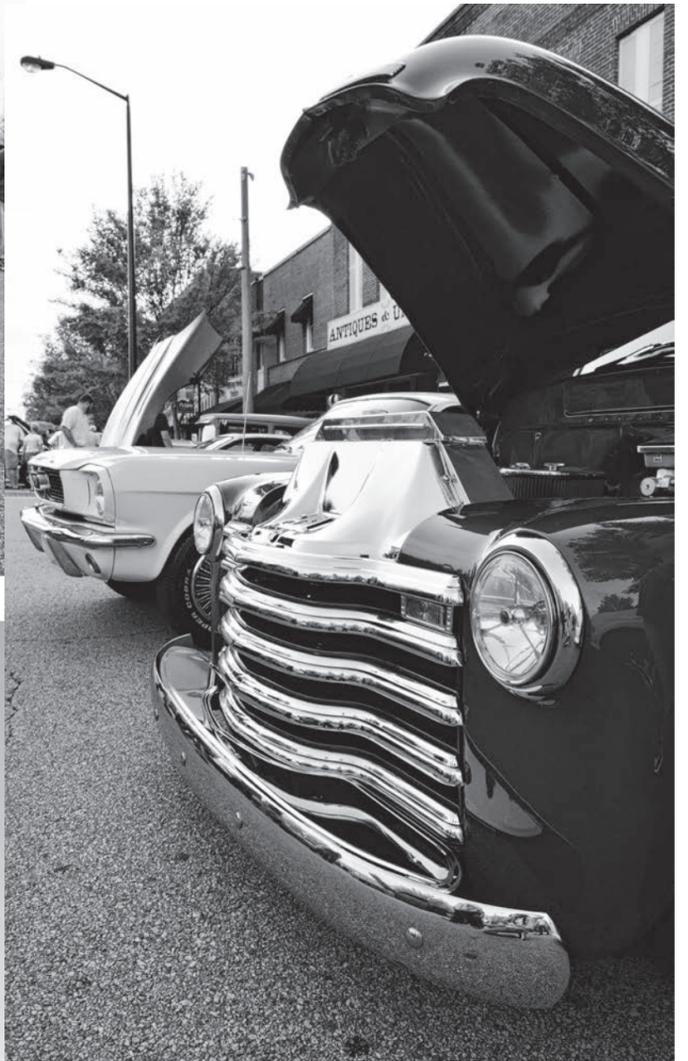
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