'Action!'

Seneca ready for filming of Burt Reynolds movie

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2013

BY CARLOS GALARZA-VEVE
THE JOURNAL

SENECA — The buzz is getting louder on the street as word spreads that filming of a movie starring Hollywood legend Burt Reynolds will begin next week.

Jeff Lunsford, co-owner of Hometown Food Store, 106 N. Walnut St., said Thursday he is as excited as anyone.

Production crews have already scouted his store, where they are scheduled to shoot a scene for "Elbow Grease" on Oct. 5.



Lunsford

"They've been in and out of here for 10 days lining up shots," Lunsford said.

Lunsford said he doesn't know whether Burt Reynolds will be involved in the scene at the store.

"I'm sure he'll draw a crowd if he's in here," Lunsford said.

The possibility that

SEE MOVIE, PAGE A5

MOVIE: 'The crews get in town Monday'

FROM PAGE A1

a crowd might show up to get a glimpse of what's going on is not lost on the Seneca Police Department.

Police Chief John Covington handed the job of monitoring events that attract crowds in town to Lt. Brian Sheriff.

The new assignment is keeping Sheriff busy. He's been working closely with the production crew on all the "when and where," he said.

"The crews get in town Monday," Sheriff said. "They'll be shooting some six to eight scenes in different downtown areas. It'll all be done in about a week's time."

Sheriff said he would have an officer available during the shooting of scenes in the downtown area, and more men could be assigned, if needed.

Riley Johnson, Seneca's events coordinator who is more familiar handling things such as Jazz on the Alley, races, concerts and Dixie Boys baseball, is treading in new territory with the shooting of the movie downtown.

"It's very fluid," Johnson said. "Things are changing all the time with schedules."



CARLOS GALARZA-VEVE | THE JOURNAL

Hometown Foods cashier Janie Swaney said she's been told a scene from the Burt Reynolds movie "Elbow Grease" will be shot at the checkout counter. An old cash register will be brought in for the scene.

Johnson appears to be sure on one thing for now. He said the film crew would be shooting all day at Ram Cat Alley on Oct. 7.

Mayor Dan Alexander expressed his excitement as well. He's hoping he'll have the opportunity to meet Reynolds.

"It's exciting and it's a great thing for the city," Alexander said. "I've been told (Reynolds) will be in some of the scenes next week."

Lunsford said customers at Hometown Foods have been talking about the movie since they saw his brother-in-law Mark Rogers, the store's co-owner, interviewed on TV by the Fox News affiliate out of Greenville.

The grocer first heard about a scene from a Burt Reynolds movie being shot inside the store from Johnson. At first, he thought Johnson was pulling his leg.

"I thought he was joking," Lunsford said.

Lunsford realized it was no joke when Jason Shirley, the writer and director of "Elbow Grease," stopped by to talk to him about the film. Lunsford said the first thing he wanted to know was whether it was going to be a family movie. If it wasn't, he didn't want any part of it. He was convinced that the romantic-comedy film would fit the family-friendly bill.

"(Shirley) said he wanted a scene in a grocery store because he has memories of a Winn-Dixie store when he was growing up," Lunsford said. "His eyes lit up when we told him our store was once a Winn-Dixie."

Lunsford said that aside from the scenes to be shot inside the store, he's been told that the filmmaker is planning a shoot outside the store on Oct. 8.

carlos@upstatetoday.com | (864) 973-6686