

Clemson area prepares for inaugural

BY GREG OLIVER
THE JOURNAL

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 2012

Blues Fest

CLEMSON — Clemson resident Vince Jackson has been working hard the past year, making his dream of bringing a blues event to the city a reality.

On Thursday night, Jackson's dream will come true when the four-day celebration officially kicks off with a ticketed VIP reception/Blues art exhibit at The Arts Center. The sold out event will feature Mac Arnold and Plate Full O'Blues, as well as the unveiling of Painting The Blues art exhibit to benefit The Arts Center and artists.

The remaining Nothin' But the Blues Fest events are free. Friday will feature a Littlejohn Soul Food Fish Fry from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Littlejohn Community Center on S.C. 93, an evening at the Red Minnow Dinner Club in Central, featuring the Paula Harris Band from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. and an open mic session. From 7 p.m. until midnight, downtown venues will feature bands — including Sarah Mac Band, at Moe Joe's Coffee Company and Robbie Ducey Band, from Augusta, Ga., at Backstreets in Clemson.

On Saturday, Chick Willis, Frankie's Blues Mission and Clemson's own Hoodoo Hounds perform from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Patrick Square; Chick Willis at

Jackson, who authored a book about Blues artists that once performed at the Littlejohn Grill, said he is very pleased with the response received for the inaugural event.

"We've engaged a lot of businesses in the community and there's a lot of excitement," he said. "People are hungry for live music in this area and looking for venues, so we're getting a lot of response."

Clemson University's University Inn, and Frankie's Blues Mission at the ESSO Club will both perform beginning at 9 p.m.

From 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday, the four-day celebration concludes with a traditional Blues and Spiritual Singing at the

Clemson African-American Museum auditorium, at 212 Butler St. Groups featured are Jennifer Fortson and FREE, from Georgia; United Gospel Harmonizers, from Liberty; William Acker from Center of Faith and Dan Morton, both from Pendleton;

New Holly Light Missionary Baptist Church Gospel Choir and The United House of Prayer Brass Band.

"We're very excited about this line-up," Jackson said. "We have an All-Star line-up of performers."



FILE PHOTO

Nothin' But the Blues Fest, a four-day celebration of the blues featured in various Clemson area venues, is the brainchild of Clemson resident Vince Jackson.

State Sen. Thomas Alexander, R-Walhalla, and state Sen. Larry Martin, R-Pickens, recently sponsored a Senate bill proclaiming April as "Blues Month" and will formally present the resolution to Jackson Thursday night. The city of Clemson has

issued a proclamation honoring Horace and Gertrude Littlejohn for their contribution to music.

Jackson said his goals are to preserve the history of the blues, promote businesses in the Clemson area and ensure future generations understand Ameri-

ca's unique brand of music and have fun at the same time.

Patrick Square will serve as the presenting sponsor and the city of Clemson and Clemson Area Chamber of Commerce are partial sponsors for the event.

For information, contact Jackson at (864) 650-0585 or log on to www.clemsonbluesfest.com.