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Clemson kicks off celebration of arts today

BY GREG OLIVER
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CLEMSON — Three days devoted to the arts and local artisans will officially kick off today with the inaugural State of the Arts luncheon from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church parish hall.

Four speakers — Larry Abernathy, mayor of the city of Clemson; Mike Vatalaro, chair of the art department at Clemson University; Ken May, executive director of the South Carolina Arts Commission; and Neal Workman, of Trehel Corporation — will discuss the arts and their importance to economic development.

Registration is still taking place. Interested individuals may call The Arts Center, which is hosting the celebrations, at (864) 633-5051 or e-mail www.explorearts.org.

"This will be a unique opportunity to hear about the successes and challenges the future holds for the arts in South Carolina," said Tommye Hurst, executive director of The Arts Center.

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church is at 193 Old Greenville Highway. Tickets to the luncheon are $15 for members of The Arts Center and $20 for non-members.

The second day of the arts celebration will take place from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Friday when The Arts Center will launch a membership drive with a "Celebration of Members" event.

The event, held at The Arts Center, will feature barbecue, blues and beer. Membership rates are $35 per individual, $50 per family and $40 per artist.

. Membership includes many benefits, including the opportunity to attend the annual appreciation event. Membership and event tickets will be available at The Arts Center.

The inaugural Clemson Festival of ARTS — set from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday at the Catherine Smith Plaza, Edgewood Avenue and Jaycee Park in downtown Clemson — will conclude three days of celebration of the arts.

Among the events scheduled are live performances from artists including Shane Stewart, Betsy Bish, Tony Tidwell and Green Dice, a sidewalk chalk competition, a children's interactive art project, artist demonstrations in painting and pottery, local food and an impromptu jam session.

The Clemson Area Storytellers Guild, scheduled from 10 a.m. to noon, will feature storytelling for all ages.

Tellers scheduled to appear include Billy Boggs, Jared McVay, Matthew Phillips and special guest Erica Waring, Northside Elementary Tattle Tales Youth Storyteller.

Admission is free to the public; parking will be available in the Clemson parking garage with free bus shuttle to the festival.

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