LIGHTS, CAMERA, OCONEE



'Elbow Grease' invades Ram Cat Alley

BY CARLOS GALARZA-VEVE
THE JOURNAL

SENECA — Clear blue skies on a warm mid-afternoon autumn day covered Ram Cat Alley Wednesday — and Amanda Ensley of Walhalla was enjoying every minute of it.

Ensley, 25, arrived early with her daughter for the shooting of a scene for the movie Elbow Grease that stars Burt Reynolds.

Ensley said her daughter, 3-year-old Hannah Fowler, was chosen to be an extra in the scene at Ram Cat.

"I sent them a picture of Hannah and they contacted me to come in today," Ensley said.

Ensley said her 6-year-old niece, Madison Chavis of Westminster, also got picked.

"They're having fun," Ensley said. "Hannah's been playing with another little girl who's in the scene."

For the movie crew, actors, extras and the curious public, it was a picture-perfect day.

Sonya Marie Haggan, a Greenville artist who designs clothes, was one of many vendors who lined both sides of Ram Cat Alley with tents to showcase their items.

"I was called to be part of the scene with the other vendors," Haggan

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The production crew of the movie Elbow Grease starring Burt Reynolds uses Ram Cat Alley as a set Wednesday. The street was filled with vendors, extras and curious bystanders.

ELBOW GREASE: 'It's a blessing'

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said. "During lunch time, people came through to see what was going on. I was able to sell a few things."

For the record, Burt Reynolds was not in the crowd. That was OK with 29-year-old Catessa Campbell, who has never heard of the man. She had dropped by to Crystal's Hairport around the corner from Ram Cat, and was curious to see so many mingling about on a Wednesday.

"I was just trying to figure out what was going on," Campbell said.

A stage was set up at one end of Ram Cat with seats in front. It looked like a concert was about to take place.

Bronson "Hollywood" Hawthorne, a hairstylist at Cuttin Up Barber Shop on Ram Cat, loved to see all the action taking place. Hollywood, as he's known around town, managed to get cast in a scene of the movie.

"They're going to be shooting a scene here at the barbershop (today)," he said. "We have to be here before 6:30 in the morning."

Hawthorne keeps a clipping of a photo at the barbershop of when he appeared with the morning news anchors on the local FOX TV network. He enjoys the limelight "Elbow Grease" has brought to town.

"It's a blessing for the community and great for business," he said.

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Welcome to the 15th annual Guppie County Fall Festival — the fictional setting on Ram Cat Alley that looks very similar to Senecafest.