The Journal 11/3/2009

'Experience Oconee' with tourism video

BY CARLOS GALARZA
THE JOURNAL



PHOTO COURTESY OF GBA PRODUCTIONS

GBA production crew members shoot footage of two anglers casting line on Lake Jocassee for the tourism video "Experience Oconee." The video premiers Thursday evening at Duke World of Energy.

SENECA — Los Angeles transplant Bill Koepnick has discovered more about Oconee County in the past few months than in the three years he's lived here.

A multiple Emmy Award-winning creator of sound effects for cartoons, Koepnick said he "escaped from LA" and now appreciates the totally different pace life has to offer in his new surroundings.

The new surroundings include playing drums for The Shawn James Band, whose other members includes Daytona, Fla., transplants Shawn James and James Amber.

Koepnick has learned more about Oconee in recent months than some do in a lifetime by tagging along with Bette and Gene Borman, of GBA Productions, during the filming of "Experience Oconee." The tourism video, which showcases the county's breathtaking natural beauty, colorful events and one-of-a kind natural attractions, will be shown free to the public at Duke World of Energy on Thursday evening.

Although the premier is free, people are asked to RSVP and indicate which showing (5:45, 6:15 or 6:45) by calling the Oconee County Chamber of Commerce at (864) 882-2097.

James, who added her lyrics and vocals to a song included at the end of the video, was mesmerized by the sights and sounds of Oconee during a sneak preview of Experience Oconee hosted by the Bormans at their Lake Keowee home on Monday.

James said the 12-minute video moves quickly with footage from the lakes, parks, Chattooga River, water sports, camping, sports events, dining spots and scenes from the Apple Festival, Hillbilly Days, Oktoberfest and other events.

Gene Borman said final product was edited from 60 hours of footage.

Bette Borman said the effort drew on local talent. She said Linda Walker, a Keowee Elementary School kindergarten teacher, narrates the video. Walker routinely captivates her students by reading to them using different voices.

"I think the video shows the beauty of Oconee, and it'll help bring people here," Bette Borman said.

IF YOU GO

What: Premier of tourism video "Experience Oconee"
When: 5:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday
Where: Duke World of Energy, 7812 Rochester Highway, Seneca
Cost: Free, with refreshments and popcorn provided

The video is sanctioned by the Oconee County Chamber of Commerce, Mountain Lakes Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Oconee County Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department, and will be used as a marketing tool to attract visitors and business to the county. The production also was funded by grants and support from corporate sponsors.

The video will be included on a DVD along with "Oconee: Land Beside the Waters," a 20-minute heritage video produced last year, and "The Great Canoe Rescue," an eight-minute video produced for the Oconee Heritage Center.

The combined DVD will be available in mid-December and can be purchased for $5 from the Chamber, PRT or the Heritage Center. Copies also will be available at county libraries.

carlos@dailyjm.com | (864) 882-2375



PHOTO COURTESY OF GBA PRODUCTIONS

Gene Borman follows two kayakers downstream on the Chattooga River with his camera during the filming of "Experience Oconee." The tourism video debuts at Duke World of Energy on Thursday.