Fling likely to attract thousands to Easley

Arts, food, fun set fordowntown

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Easley officially kicks off its 2010 festival season Saturday with the annual Spring Fling downtown, and thousands of people are expected to seek out live music, entertainment, crafts and plenty of food.

The festival is free and promises daylong entertainment, from a children's area with inflatable rides to food and craft vendors.

"The Downtown Business Association puts it on to showcase the downtown area of Easley and to bring people in and let them see how wonderful our little city is and have them (get) accustomed to coming downtown," said Scott Buckhiester, vice president of operations for Dunburks Premier Events and president of Easley's DBA.

He said the seventh annual festival will be held from noon to 7 p.m. but said starting around 8 a.m. there will be 5K and 10K runs as well as biking events, including up to a 62-mile ride and shorter rides.

Buckhiester said the Pickens County YMCA is putting on the 5K and 10K road races as well as the bicycle events, which are tied into the city's bicycle-friendly initiative.

Sam Norris, owner of Uncle Sam's Antiques and treasurer of the DBA, said there are about 50 food and craft vendors signed up and said festival-goers could find everything from jewelry, coins and watercolor prints to barbecue, apple fritters and deep-fried Oreos.

"Owing to the economy that we have now, people are looking for a little something for a diversion and that's not very expensive to come to," Norris said. "They can come downtown and spend as much time as they want, up to like seven hours, and be entertained and eat and purchase things without a whole lot of expense."

He said between 5,000 and 6,000 people came to the event last year, and he hopes to have twice that many this year.

Buckhiester said there will be entertainment on the main stage "just about all day," ending with a concert by Southern Crescent from 4:30 to 7 p.m.

Other entertainment includes dance performances and a local singing group, Double Take.

"We get a lot of people here during our festivals that didn't really know we were here," Buckhiester said. "They didn't know the downtown area actually had merchants and things going on. That's why we do it."