Food festival plans a sweet anniversary

By Donna Isbell Walker
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St. Francis Fall for Greenville opens Friday in downtown Greenville with a smorgasbord of new components to celebrate its 30th anniversary.

The festival, billed as "A Taste of Our Town," began three decades ago as a one-day event to showcase downtown Greenville, said Chris Robinson, president of the Fall for Greenville board of directors.

After 30 years, it "has now grown into one of the largest three-day festivals in the southeastern region of the country," drawing 150,000 visitors over the course of the event, Robinson said Tuesday.

In keeping with the city's environmental initiative, Greenlink shuttle service will be available free from the Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research to downtown Greenville dur-

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ing the festival, Robinson said.

And for the first time festival guides will available as a mobile app for iPhone and Android, allowing the city to print 100,000 fewer programs, Robinson said.

Forty-three restaurants will take part in St. Francis Fall for Greenville, several for the first time, offering items as exotic as zweibelkuchen, or onion tart, and as familiar as pepperoni pizza. Also making its debut, said Tara Eaker, marketing manager for the city, is the How Sweet It Is dessert competition.

Restaurants taking part in the competition were asked to create a special dessert for the festival, and judges will present an award for the best entry, Eaker said.


Robinson

Another new element is Coppenrath Europe's Bakery Cake Challenge, which will feature competitions by local media and event sponsors, as well as professional and amateur cake decorators.

"The judging will be based on artistic ability and the ability to incorporate the birthday theme into the decorations," Robinson said.

Entertainment will be presented on seven stages, with more than 54 acts, about half from the Upstate.

The Wells Fargo Stage will feature performances by Mac Arnold and Plate Full O' Blues and the Dirty Dozen Brass Band, while the Furman University Jazz & Blues Stage will spotlight such artists as Chocolate Thunder and Gypsy Souls.

As in previous years, a portion of the proceeds will benefit nonprofit groups in the Greenville area.

Last year, Robinson said, Fall for Greenville contributed more than $35,000 to local organizations.

YOU CAN GO

What: St. Francis Fall for Greenville
When: 5 to 11 p.m. Friday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday, and noon to 7 p.m. Sunday
Where: Downtown Greenville
How much: Admission is free; food tickets are available for $5 for a sheet of eight tickets.
Call: 467-2728