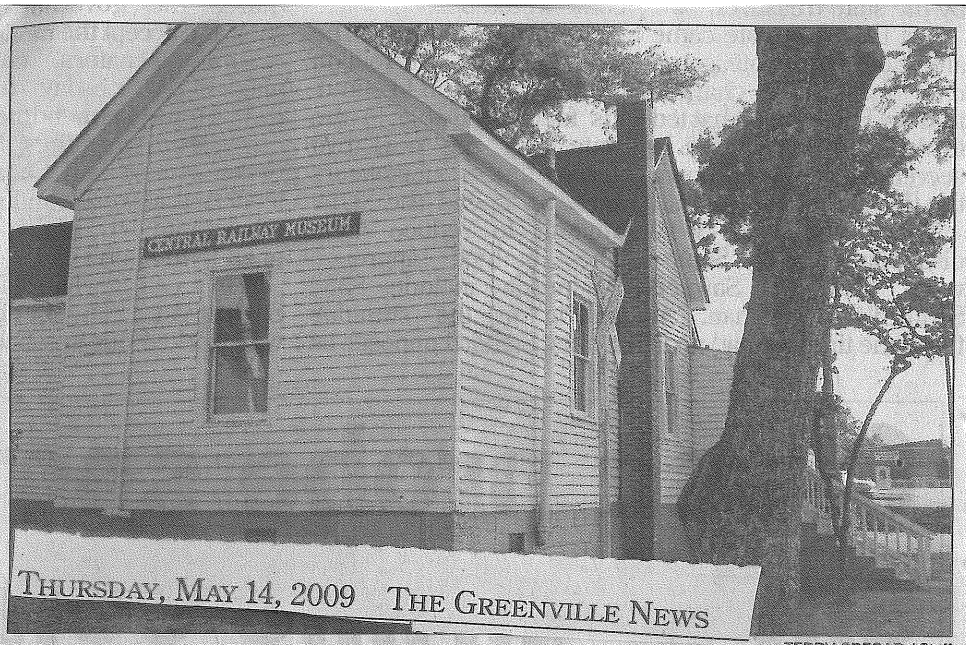


TERRY CREGAR / Staff

A house on Werner Street in Central is now the Central Railway Museum.

It's a festival weekend around Pickens County

Pickens, Central, Easley all have entertaining options

By Julie Howle
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Residents can find an abundance of entertainment options throughout Pickens County this weekend, from festivals with live music and classic cars to events with train displays and fresh produce.

The Blue Ridge Fest will serve up classic cars, plenty of beach music and a chance to support local charities at its 12th annual event Friday and Saturday.

The two-day event in downtown Pickens attracts thousands of people and has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for charities throughout the Upstate.

"It is such a great family event," said Liza Holder, marketing coordinator at Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative. "There's great music. There's great fun. You can cruise around and look at cars."

Holder said all the proceeds go to charities in Greenville, Pickens, Oconee and Anderson counties and said this year 12 charities have been chosen.

The festival has raised $810,000 in the past 11 years, according to Holder.

On May 15, residents and visitors alike will find live beach music, food and a classic car cruise-in with vehicles from 1979 and earlier.

Charles Dalton, president and CEO of Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative, said last year there were 700 antique and classic cars at the car cruise-in.

Holder said music this year includes Jerry Butler, the headliner; Puzzle Band, featuring Will Ragland as Buddy Holly; Jim Quick and Coastline; and the Flashbacks.

On May 16, a charity poker run will send hundreds of motorcyclists on a 100-mile ride through the Upstate. Holder said the ride usually draws about 500 motorcycles.

Also on Friday and Saturday, Central will celebrate its railroad heritage with the return of the Central Railroad Festival.

That event kicks off Friday and continues through Saturday with live entertainment, arts and crafts, plenty of food and, of course, trains. On Saturday, festival participants will get their first chance to check out the Central Railway Museum, which opens its doors with a ceremony scheduled for 1:30 p.m.

The museum is across Werner Street from the old Central City Hall.

In Easley, people searching for fresh produce, plants and more can head downtown for the first of Easley's farmers market May 16.

City Councilwoman Kim Valentin said the farmers market will be from 9 a.m. to noon Saturdays in the City Hall parking lot downtown.

WANT TO GO?

Blue Ridge Fest: Friday and Saturday in Pickens
Central Railroad Festival: Friday and Saturday in Central
Farmers Market: Saturday in downtown Easley