JAZZ ON THE ALLEY

Weekly event kicks off in downtown Seneca

BY CARLOS GALARZA-VEVE
THE JOURNAL

SENECA — Bill and Ingrid Reeves, each with a cup of beer in their hands, were eager to make it to the block party called Jazz on the Alley.

The retired couple joined a large and lively crowd Thursday who showed up for the start of the fifth season of the weekly event, which runs weekly through October in downtown Seneca.

Empty seats at tables set up by participating restaurants in the middle of Ram Cat Alley were hard to find. Cars lined the parking lots downtown at Norton-Thompson Park.

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PHOTOS BY CAITLIN HERRINGTON | THE JOURNAL

The season premier of Jazz on the Alley, which featured a live broadcast by WYFF meteorologist John Cessarich and music by Funk Factory Jazz, attracted a large crowd to Ram Cat Alley on Thursday.

JAZZ: 'We enjoy the music and the people'

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Bill and Ingrid have been coming to Jazz on the Alley for the past three years. The couple sold their home in Travelers Rest and built a home on Lake Keowee. After being cooped up at home during much of the winter, they were ready for a little fun.

"We enjoy the music and the people," Ingrid said.

Thomas Payne, who served in the Air Force during the Vietnam War, said he's lived in Seneca for 32 years and thinks Jazz on the Alley is one of the best things the city has going on.

"I come to all of them," Payne said.

Payne's daughter, Stacy Mettlach, watched WYFF chief meteorologist John Cessarich broadcast his popular feature "John on the Road" in front of Channel 4 TV cameras.

"It's good to be home and enjoy this," said Mettlach, who had been stationed in Germany while serving in the Air Force just like her father.

Karen Brooks, who has lived in the area 23 years after moving from Wisconsin, sat at a table with friends enjoying the music.

"I like it here — this is a great little town," Brooks said.

Stuart Pohl, owner of The Spot on the Alley and a newly elected city councilman, said he had his business hat on and was enjoying the atmosphere.

"It doubles our business," Pohl said of the event. "We have 80 seats outside and 80 inside."

Funk Factory Jazz singer Mia Darj'de, who appeared in the Will Ferrell movie "Anchorman 2," entertained the crowd.

Cyndi Angel, another regular at Jazz on the Alley, can't get enough of it.

"It's a good place to meet new people, hang out and have a good time," Angel said. "It's an event that brings the community together."

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