Meet and 3 plans are taking shape for '09

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SENECA — Seneca's events committee continued Wednesday to firm up plans for Memorial Day weekend's Meet and 3 Festival at Norton-Thompson Park.

The event, which drew between 12,000 to 15,000 people last year, kicks off Friday, May 22 with the third annual Classic Cruise-In at 3 p.m., as well as Arts on the Alley and will conclude Saturday night.

This year's Meet and 3 will feature the country music duo The Bellamy Brothers, who perform at 4:30 p.m. on May 23. They'll be accompanied by country music act Alamo that performed at last year's event.

That Saturday will also feature the third annual Education Foundation Barbecue Cook-Off, with proceeds going toward the teacher mini-grant program that provides grants up to $500 for individual teachers in Oconee County and $1,000 for collaborative efforts. Those grants can be used for anything that enriches the teaching of science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics or service learning. The cook-off begins at 12:30 p.m.

Local celebrity Jack Roper and his Weatherman Band will perform Friday night from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Norton-Thompson Park, while Arts on the Alley will feature works of art in various mediums from local and regional artists on both Friday and Saturday.

The Meet and 3 advertising efforts have been considerably consolidated and downsized to reduce redundancy seen in last year's efforts, Recreation Director Rick Lacey said. The events committee considered, but has not finalized, an agreement with Charter Media that would cost the city $4,950 for 30-second spot television advertising on channels such as ESPN, Food Network, HGTV, Fox News and Comedy Central. Lacey said such a plan is more than likely what the committee will agree on. The commercials are scheduled to run beginning May 1 in Anderson, Clemson, Seneca, Toccoa, Ga., and Highlands, N.C.

The city has been paying for anywhere between 30 to 50 spots, depending on the advertising area. Seneca, the Education Foundation of Oconee County and Ram Cat Alley Merchant Association are coordinating efforts to advertise via radio on WGOG, in print with the Daily Journal and other publications and on television.

Lacey said the advertising effort has been far more efficient than last year's.

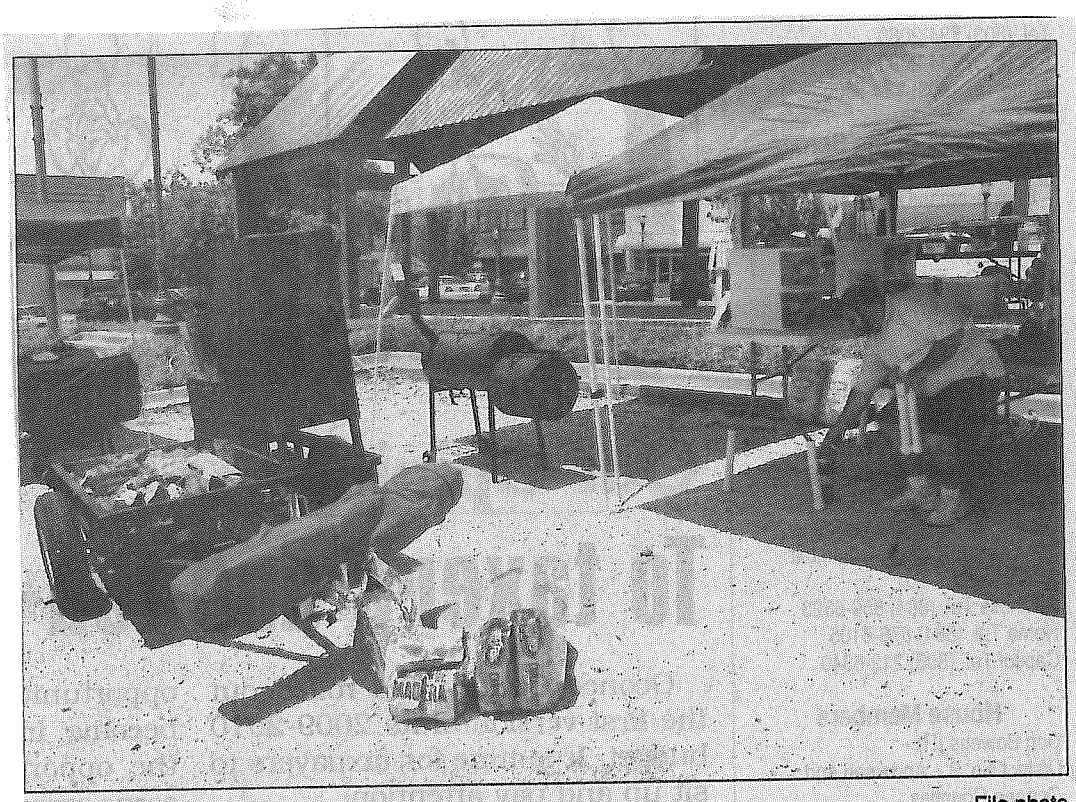
"We wanted to cut that in half, and this (the Charter Media agreement) would let us get there," Lacey said. "Last year we spent about $15,000, and this year we're very close to spending somewhere around $7,000."

Advertising agreements are expected to be finalized by next Wednesday.

Meet and 3 at Norton-Thompson Park

Friday:
Cruise-In: 3 p.m. – 10 p.m.
Jack Roper and the Weatherman Band: 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Arts on the Alley on historic Ram Cat Alley

Saturday:
Barbecue Cook-Off : 12:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.
The Bellamy Brothers and Alamo – 4:30 p.m.
Arts on the Alley on historic Ram Cat Alley



File photo

A contestant at last year's barbecue cook-off sets up shop before Seneca's Meet and 3 event in 2008.