Wednesday, September 14, 2011

Pumpkintown Festival

PUMPKINTOWN — The feeling of fall is in the air in the Oolenoy Valley, which means it is time to make plans to attend the 33rd annual Pumpkin Festival in Pumpkintown on Saturday, October 8.

The festival will kick off at 9 a.m. with the annual parade and continue until 5 p.m. that Saturday afternoon. The theme for this year's festival is "Cherokee Indian Maid." The festival site is on the ground of the Oolenoy Community House located at 5301 Dacusville Highway (Hwy 135).

Thousands of attendees are expected for this year's festival, so those interested are urged to come early, and bring lawn chairs or blankets to set up in front of the music stage and wander through the more than 150 arts and crafts booths which will have a variety of homemade/handmade products. No commercial products are allowed at the festival.

There will also be a number of food booths, which will have funnel cakes, barbecue chicken, hamburgers, hot dogs, fried fish, chili, sausage dogs, fried pies and more. To satisfy the sweet tooth there will be numerous cake and cookie booths set up around the perimeter of the Oolenoy Building. Drink stands are also available throughout the festival grounds. There will also be a variety of breakfast items being offered inside the building starting at 6 a.m. that morning.

There will be bluegrass and gospel music, plus cloggers, appearing on the music stage throughout the day.

Many festival-goers look forward to the greased pole climb around 3 p.m. in the afternoon. It isn't an easily won competition, but the climbers persevere until someone captures the flag on the pole to claim the coveted prize.

Amusement rides for children will be available on the back side of the festival grounds. Festival souvenirs will be available outside and inside the Community Building, which will include T-shirts, sweat shirts, totes, car tags, and books written by local authors.

As usual, there will be a wide variety of pumpkins available to select from to get that special one you want to take home. Of course, as with every year, the pumpkin pile is a big attraction for taking that special picture of a baby or small child.

A popular fundraiser for the festival is the annual quilt raffle, which gives anyone interested an opportunity to win the festival quilt. The quilt was designed and quilted by Peggy Thomas Crum. The theme of this year's quilt is

approaching

"Cherokee Indian Maid." Tickets are $1 each and may be purchased the day of the festival inside the Community Building. The quilt drawing will be held at 4 p.m., and you do not have to be present to win.

The annual event is sponsored and organized by the Pumpkintown Community Club and raises money for community projects that benefit many area organizations. The club meets the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Oolenoy Community Building (with the exception of July and December) and encourages anyone interested in helping with the event and other community projects to attend. The only pets allowed on the festival grounds will be service animals.

The festival is free and open to the public. There will be handicapped parking available at the Oolenoy Baptist Church parking lot, and golf carts will be available to shuttle these folks to and from the festival ground throughout the day. For additional information on the festival or rental of the Oolenoy Community Building, contact Susie Flowers at (864) 898-0261.