Walhalla makes final 8 in outdoor town vote

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SENECA — The city of Walhalla is one step closer to being named the South's top outdoor town.

Walhalla knocked off Bryson City, N.C., to advance to the final eight of Blue Ridge Outdoor magazine's Top Adventure Town 2016 voting. Walhalla now faces Sylva, N.C., for a shot at being named the top small outdoor town in the South.

Readers voted online in 24 matchups for their favorite small, medium and large towns. The Journal reported Aug. 11 that Walhalla was the only South Carolina municipality to make the small town category. Now Walhalla is one of just two South Carolina municipalities remaining in the competition.

Charleston advanced to round two of the large town category.

BRO is a guide to outdoor sports, health and adventure travel, according to blueridgeoutdoors.com. The magazine narrowed the field to 48 cities across the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic.

"They are mountain biking meccas, whitewater oases, climbing paradises and hiking nirvanas," said blueridgeoutdoors.com, BRO's digital platform. "Some are long established, while others are quickly growing on the radars of our readers and outdoor enthusiasts everywhere."

BRO praised Walhalla for its personality and outdoor adventure opportunities.

"Southern charm meets outdoor mecca in this South Carolina town," BRO said. "Paddlers will want to add the nearby Chattooga and Tallulah rivers to their tick list, while hikers and car campers should be sure to add Oconee State Park to their next road trip."

BRO also pointed out Walhalla's convenient location near the Georgia border and Appalachian Mountains.

Oconee County tourism head Ken Sloan said he is "extremely excited" about the recognition that Walhalla is receiving from its streetscape project and extension of the Palmetto Trail into its downtown.

"Walhalla is rapidly developing the 'cool factor' that makes it a destination of choice," Sloan said. "We beat Bryson City in round one, and now I encourage everyone to vote daily so that we can win round two."

Readers can vote online once every 24 hours on multiple devices. To vote, visit blueridgeoutdoors.com/top-towns.

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