Fourth festivities feature fireworks shows galore

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Local Fourth of July events

Monday

ClemsonFest	Campus Beach	5 p.m.
Independence Eve	Walhalla soccer field	6:30 p.m.

Tuesday

Hillbilly Day	Mtn. Rest Community Center	9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Salem celebration	Eagle Ridge ball field	6:30 p.m.
Seneca celebration	Gignilliat Field, Seneca	5 p.m.

NOTE: ALL EVENTS FREE EXCEPT CLEMSONFEST, WHICH IS $5 ON FOOT OR $10 PER CAR.

SENECA — Touting its biggest and best fireworks show yet, ClemsonFest will cap off a night of music, food and fun by lighting up the night at Clemson University's Snow Family Outdoor Fitness and Wellness Center.

Set for 5 p.m. Monday — with fireworks slated for 9:30 p.m. — ClemsonFest is just one of a slew of Independence Day celebrations going on around the area Monday and Tuesday.

After about 3,000 guests attended last year's event, organizers expect an even larger turnout this year of 3,500-5,000 at the venue formerly known as Campus Beach, according to Clemson Area Chamber of Commerce spokesperson Hannah Massey.

Carolina Coast Band will be performing beach music and patriotic music, while Miss Clemson will sing the National Anthem and Boy Scouts Troop 161 will perform a flag-raising ceremony. The event, which costs $5 for those on foot or $10 per car, will also feature a grip contest, food, vendors and a kids' play area.

Also Monday, Walhalla will host an Independence Eve celebration. Entry is free to the public, with gates opening at the Walhalla soccer field at 6:30 p.m.

There will be food prepared by local churches and civic groups available for purchase, and bouncy houses and music will be provided by the city of Walhalla, followed by a fireworks display at approximately 9:30 p.m.

In the event of rain, the alternate date for the fireworks is July 7 at 9:30 p.m.

From 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Tuesday, Hillbilly Day will take place in Mountain Rest. Located at the Mountain Rest Community Center at 120 Verner Mill Road, the event features free parking and admission and will take place rain or shine.

A full list of activities is available at mountainrestcommunityclub.com/Hillbillly_Day.html.

Also on the Fourth, the town of Salem will sponsor a free event beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Eagle Ridge ball field. There will be food, games and a car show, with fireworks to follow at 9:30 p.m. For information about the car show, call Salem Town Hall at (864) 944-2819.

Finally, the city of Seneca will sponsor a free Fourth of July celebration at Gignilliat Field, with gates opening at 5 p.m. and the event beginning at 6 p.m. Music will be provided by Jim Quick and Coastline, and vendors will be onsite selling food and drinks.

Members of city council will take the stage around 8 p.m., with Mayor Dan Alexander set to give the evening's invocation prior to the main act, Band of Oz, taking the stage.

Seneca events coordinator Riley Johnson said the city expects 8,000-10,000 people inside the stadium, with another 10,000-20,000 stationed outside the stadium on the lakes in and around the city.

Johnson recommends guests bring lounge chairs for the music and set up shop through the fireworks show, which will begin at 9:30 p.m. at the rain-or-shine event.

"After people have finished a day of grilling, hanging by the pool or by the lake, we want them to bring the family and come and over," Johnson said. "We salute our country, our soldiers, our veterans and Independence Day. It's just a big party, and it should be great."

Suffice it to say, there is no shortage of parties for area residents and visitors alike to celebrate Independence Day.

"These free events provide a family-friendly opportunity for all of Oconee County to experience community," Oconee County Chamber of Commerce executive director Vanessa Penton said. "They are safe events provided by the local municipal governments and are mostly funded by their hospitality tax. These taxes are generated when we eat at a local restaurant in our downtown districts, and they create opportunities for the cities to give back."

Stephanie Jadrnicek and Eric Sprott contributed to this report.