

# Fun and farming



PHOTOS BY REX BROWN | THE JOURNAL

Nadia Yates takes aim at the Fun-Z-Bows booth with a soft-tip bow and arrow made by Jim and Pat Barton. Nadia was with her sister, mother, Carol, and friends at the South Carolina Foothills Heritage Fair on Tuesday.

## Heritage Fair opens with entertainment, education

BY JUSTIN LEE CAMPBELL  
THE JOURNAL



Mr. Twister the Clown waits for the kids to roll in at the South Carolina Foothills Heritage Fair on Tuesday. Mr. Twister, who expects to put on magic shows for about 1,200 kids this year, loves to see the smiles he brings to people's faces.

SENECA — Seneca resident Carol Yates watched with a smile and giggled as her daughter Nadia figured out how to work a bow and arrow at the South Carolina Foothills Heritage Fair.

Nadia had some help from Fun-Z-Bows owner Jim Barton, who traveled down from Fargo, N.D., with his wife, Pat, last winter to sell their soft-tip bow and arrows at fairs and jockey lots.

After a crash-course lesson from Barton, Nadia took aim, released the arrow and nearly shot it through a hanging hula hoop.

"Well the girls were looking forward to the fair, and it was just that time of year," Yates said.

Yates and her friend, Lisa Berke-



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meier, brought their daughters to Westminster for the fair on Tuesday's hot afternoon. The Heritage Fair runs through Saturday and features carnival rides, food, antique farm equipment, craft vendors, farming demonstrations, barrel racing and a rodeo.

Heritage Fair president Charlie Whiten told The Journal the fair is about more than rides, games and food. It's called the "Heritage" Fair for a reason.

"It's a place to come and learn the heritage of Oconee County and agriculture in the county, past, present and future," Whiten said.

Whiten is a farmer himself. His family plants 1,200 acres of soybeans and wheat every year.

"The fair is promoting agriculture education," Whiten said. "Everybody has a part in agriculture. If you eat food, you have a part in agriculture, because you're having the end product of what we grow. Nobody could eat without farmers. We're blessed in this country to have them."

About 1,400 school kids will come through the fair on Thursday and Friday to see how soybeans and corn are harvested, Whiten said.

The Heritage Fair's dual role as a place for both education and entertainment makes the event unique. While kids have the opportunity to learn about farming,

they can also hop on rides or visit Mr. Twister the Clown.

Mr. Twister, who will celebrate his 10th year in the business next year, puts on magic shows. He expects to entertain about 1,200 kids over the next few days.

"I love the smiles I get to bring people," Mr. Twister said. "Clowns are the cause of emotion. What I love is getting to see a kid who may have never come up to a clown but comes up to me because I have a very gentle look and impress people with magic. It's a really fun feeling."

Mr. Twister wore red face paint, a red Hawaiian shirt, a red cap with a sewn-in letter "T" and a big smile. More importantly, Mr. Twister had a warm and welcoming personality.

When Yates' daughter was finished at Fun-Z-Bows, she let her mom know she and her sister and friend were ready to go to a different booth. Their next stop was face painting. Yates told The Journal they also planned to take the girls to see Mr. Twister.

"We were ready to come out and ... just spend time with a friend and hang out with our girls," Yates said.

The Heritage Fair is open today and Thursday from 4-10 p.m., Friday from 4-11 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m.-11 p.m., according to [carolinafoothillsheritagefair.org](http://carolinafoothillsheritagefair.org).

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