

Get the party started



Leslie Hagerty and Jennifer Moss of the Oconee Heritage Center make preparations on Thursday for the kickoff of the county's 150th anniversary celebration, set for Monday.

Council to kick off birthday celebration Monday

BY NORM CANNADA
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WALHALLA — A year of activities commemorating Oconee County's 150th birthday will begin Monday with cupcakes and a proclamation in an event hosted by Oconee County Council.

Jan. 29 is the official 150th anniversary of the formation of Oconee County in 1868 — just three years after the end of the Civil War. County council will mark the occasion in a special called meeting at 5 p.m. The public is invited to attend.

The event will include the

reading of a proclamation approved by county council Jan. 16 and a reception with 150 cupcakes in the shape of the number 150, according to Amanda Brock, the county's public information officer and a

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PROJECT: 'I think it's a fantastic idea'

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"These kids need to not always have us tell them what to do. They have to experiment and try things on their own — just under our supervision. The greenhouse is a perfect way to do that. It's a safe way to do that."

They also want to improve students' confidence and self-worth, she said.

"That's a huge issue with our students," Rogers said. "They don't feel like they can be successful. They don't feel like they can make it through. When we give them an opportunity to say 'Hey, you can do this, and look what comes out of it,' those small steps are actually really big for our population."

Instilling a work ethic in students is another goal.

"One of our main goals at Oconee Academy is to get these kids to understand that they're going to have to work for someone," Rogers said. "So this authority issue that they have to curb that. They have to get that under control."

"We also want to teach them how to follow through on a plan — to make sure to show up and do your best every day. Giving them a planting project, they're going to want to go and check them out, see how they're growing. We hope that's going to give them a little more confidence."

Ledford and Rogers said they hope the project will spark an interest in horticulture in the students.

"The kids that we have, they just need that little push, that extra something to push them over whatever obstacle or hurdle that they're

facing," Rogers said. "This would be the perfect next step for them."

Spring plantings this year will include Echinacea, marigolds, zinnias, petunias and snapdragons. Fall plantings will include cabbage, pansies and mums.

Council members were very enthusiastic about the proposed partnership.

"I don't think you can put a price on fostering relationships with people that are going to be in your community," Councilman Robbie Burrell said.

Mayor Danny Edwards asked the women to get city officials more information about pricing.

"I think it's a fantastic idea," he said.