

'Neighbors' participant offers tranquil farm stay for locals, visitors

BY CAITLIN HERRINGTON
THE JOURNAL

SALEM — The bed and breakfast Greg and Suzanne Humphreys visited in Salem truly felt like a home away from home — so much so that they bought the property two years ago when the opportunity arose.

A century-old farmhouse serves as the anchor for Sunrise Farm Bed and Breakfast, though two other buildings offer cottage stays on the 10-acre property.

Greg's military standard and animals to feed — they wouldn't have it any other way.

The pandemic has changed a little bit of their operations, the couple said, but most visits with guests take place on the porch this time of year. The personal touch and service emphasis are what make staying at a bed and breakfast stand apart from hotel stays or other temporary rentals.

"It is a home," Suzanne said, "and it's a home away from home."

Visitors come from across the country and right down the road, they said, and many of them make multiple trips back to the tranquil farm setting tucked away behind downtown Salem.

"Ninety eight percent, when they're leaving, say, 'We'll see you again. We're coming back,'" Greg said.

Homemade breakfast made fresh every day, topped off with Greg's fresh-squeezed orange juice, is not only half the namesake of a bed and breakfast, but a bright spot in the day — even if they have to wake up at 4:30 a.m. to start cooking.



NEIGHBORS Helping NEIGHBORS

Want to help?: To support the program, visit upstatetoday.com and click the appropriate link. The website is also mobile-friendly and accepts all major credit and debit cards, and checks made out to Neighbors Helping Neighbors can also be sent to 210 W. North 1st St., Seneca, SC 29678, or dropped off at the Journal office.

The Humphreys live on the first level of the home, spending their days much

as their guests do, Suzanne said.

"Innkeeping isn't a job,

it's a lifestyle," she said. "There's no place I'd rather be."

They can be found sitting on the wraparound porch enjoying a summer breeze, picking blueberries in the garden, hiking nearby trails or trying new restaurants so their recommendations for guests come from firsthand experience.

Though there is some actual work to it — cookies to be baked for every arrival, beds to be made to

SEE FARM, PAGE A5

"With gathering, hearing the conversation and meeting new people, breakfast is really a highlight," Suzanne said. "We always do a fresh-baked offering like strawberry bread or blueberry banana muffins with our own blueberries. There's always fresh fruit, and Greg tries to get local stuff. Lately we've had peaches, strawberries, watermelons, blueberries — all local."

Even those who aren't big fans of juice typically ask for seconds of Greg's homemade orange juice, he said.

"They turn it down if they don't drink orange juice that often, and I say, 'OK, I'm going to give you just this much.' and then



SAVANNAH BLAKE | THE JOURNAL

Greg and Suzanne Humphreys enjoyed visiting the Sunrise Farm Bed and Breakfast so much that they bought the property two years ago.



SAVANNAH BLAKE | THE JOURNAL

Sunrise Farm Bed and Breakfast owners Greg and Suzanne Humphreys can often be found on their front porch.

FROM PAGE A1

tain rescue takes at least three hours and requires 20 or more highly trained rescuers — mostly volunteer firefighters — from the local community,” Walhalla Fire Chief Brandon Burton said. “We know the trails, rivers and waterfalls in Oconee County are special, and the public is enthusiastic about getting outdoors right now. We just ask everyone to take care and be prepared before heading out for a hike. Even a short hike can end up as an emergency rescue if you are not prepared.”

Burton said there have already been five rescues this summer at Yellow Branch and the Stump-house Mountain and Issaqueena Falls areas near Walhalla.

Oconee County interim fire chief Scott Krein said Oconee crews have also responded to four other incidents so far this year to assist hikers in the Bad Creek/Jocassee Gorges, Burrells Ford and Sloan Bridge Falls areas. In addition, Krein said Oconee rescue workers have also helped agencies across the border in North Carolina twice so far this year.

Local officials and the U.S. Forest Service sent out a news release this week asking hikers to keep several things in mind before hiking in these areas, including:

- Yellow Branch Falls is a fairly arduous trip out and back. Many people do not realize that it is a single-track trail with a steady decline in elevation. It is a strenuous trip to get back out. It's about a 3-mile round trip.

- Plan for the weather, as conditions can change rapidly, especially in

the summer with pop-up thunderstorms.

- Wear appropriate footwear. Flip-flops and sandals are not the best choice for trails, especially at Stump-house and Issaqueena Falls or Yellow Branch Falls.

- Drink and carry plenty of water. The humid environment will drain hikers fairly quickly.

- Have a plan, research the area before you trek and tell someone not in your group your plan and when to expect you back. Take snacks and medications, if needed.

- Those with severe allergic reactions should take an EpiPen when hiking. There are many venomous insects — bees and wasps — and poisonous plants in forests.

- Allow plenty of time. Many trips take longer than expected.

- If an area is crowded, look for a less-occupied location or return at a later time.

- View all waterfalls safely from the bottom of the falls or at a clearly designated viewing area. Don't climb rocks at waterfalls or try to view the falls from the top. Many people have been severely injured or killed trying to climb or slipping from the top of waterfalls.

For more outdoor safety tips, visit fs.usda.gov/visit/know-before-you-go. For information on Leave No Trace principles, visit lnt.org/why/7-principles. For recreation information, visit fs.fed.us/ivm/index.html.

For more information or questions, contact the Andrew Pickens Ranger District Office at (864) 638-9568 or visit fs.usda.gov/scnfs.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2020



SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

Oconee County rescuers carry an injured hiker out of Yellow Branch Falls in the Sumter National Forest during one of two separate accidents in June. With the rugged and remote terrain, officials said each mountain rescue takes at least three hours and requires 20 or more trained rescuers — mostly volunteer firefighters — from the surrounding community.

CAUTION: 'Take care and be prepared'