



THE VILLAGE

CONNECTION

AUTUMN IS A BREATH OF FRESH AIR!

Ah, fall—there are so many reasons to absolutely love the season. The weather is just about perfect, which makes it absolutely ideal to enjoy fall activities, including heading to the apple orchard or pumpkin patch.

A couple of everyone's all-time favorite holidays—Halloween and Thanksgiving—are in the fall, and these two events feature favorite foods and

celebrate family ties—with autumn-inspired cocktails, dinner recipes and sweets. We can almost taste the apple cobbler, pumpkin cheesecakes, and sweet potato pies.

This fall you should not miss the Blessing of the Hounds on Thanksgiving in Hitchcock Woods. Stop at the Historical Museum before the ceremony and enjoy Bloody Marys and bagels.

And then there's the seasonal December events—including a costumed equestrian parade with a stop at The Willcox for a wee nip.

Now that you're eager for autumn, we hope you'll enjoy scrolling through this newsletter for details about some of the happenings in and around Aiken and South Carolina and go enjoy the season!

DIRECTORY

Neighborhood Regulations

Architectural Review Board (ARB)
Jerry Bishop
jeb1fb@aol.com
ARB governs remodeling, exterior colors, landscaping

Housing Construction

Carolina Signature Homes (CSH)
Construction/Home Warranty Issues
www.cshaiken.com/warranty-request/

Property Maintenance/Development

Mike Farmer
mikef48@aol.com
Source for info on new community development and maintenance

Covenants and Bylaws

Bill Reynolds
reyn3358@bellsouth.net
Available to answer your questions about the rules governing our community

Newcomer Welcome

Sally Alexander
rodnsall@comcast.net
Welcomes new residents and provides info to help settle into the neighborhood and Aiken

Social Committee

Jeannie Hart (co-chair)
hart68@atlanticbb.net
Activities are planned to bring neighbors together and build a strong community

The Village Connection Newsletter

Pat Bartlett
patbartcom@aol.com
Quarterly publication. Residents are encouraged to send news and photos of interest regarding neighborhood

The Village at Woodside

230 Village Green Boulevard
Aiken SC 29803
Phone: 803-643-4653

DON'T MISS THESE ANNUAL AIKEN SEASONAL EVENTS



Fall Steeplechase, October 26, 2019

Katydid Combined Driving Event,
October 31 - November 3, 2019

Blessing of the Hounds, Nov 28, 2019

Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony, November 29, 2019

Christmas Craft Show, December 6 - 7, 2019

Night of 1000 Lights, December 12, 2019

Christmas in Hopelands, December 14-23 and 26, 2019



VILLAGE RESIDENT WINS GOLD MEDAL!

The City of Aiken's Parks, Recreation & Tourism Department, lead by a group of local Pickleball enthusiasts, hosted the Palmetto Doubles Invitational Pickleball Tournament at the H. Odell Weeks Activity Center. The tournament ran from Sept. 6 through Sept 8 is one of America's fastest growing sports.

The gold medal winners were Susan Reynolds (our Village resident) and Jo Whitson.

Pickleball is a paddle sport created for all ages and skill levels. The rules are simple and the game is easy for beginners to learn, but can develop into a quick, fast-paced, competitive game for experienced players.

It combines many elements of tennis, badminton and ping-pong and is played both indoors or outdoors and it can be played as doubles or singles.



Gold Medal Winners Jo Whitson and Village Resident Susan Reynolds

VILLAGE BOOKCLUBS

JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2019

VILLAGE BOOK CLUB #1

Contact: Alexis Aronson
803-514-2223

Oct. 21, Monday, 3pm
THE CRAZY LADIES OF PEARL STREET

by Trevanian
Rochelle Friedman (host)
109 Lamp Post Loop
The Village Cottages

Dec. 16, Monday, 3pm
TBD

Annie Woodard (host)
107 Lamp Post Loop
The Village Cottages

(Holiday party follows club meeting)

VILLAGE BOOK CLUB #2

Contact: Susan Reynolds
803-270-5299

Oct. 7, Monday, 3pm

Bring your book suggestions for your favorite Book Club selections to this first Monday of October meeting and a vote will be taken to determine the Fall/Winter lineup.

Sandy Finney (host)
283 Coach Light Way
The Village

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- 10/1 - Sara Lees
- 10/4 - Carolyn Tribble
- 10/6 - Rochelle Friedman
- 10/6 - Rod Lenahan
- 10/21 - Nita Roberts
- 10/22 - Gretchen Caughman
- 10/23 - Amy Perrine
- 10/26 - Judy Romeo
- 11/5 - Faith Loeb
- 11/6 - Sandy Finney
- 11/23 - Pete Frommer
- 11/26 - Susan Wilkes
- 12/4 - Frank Caughman
- 12/4 - Chichi Peak
- 12/8 - Scott McCann
- 12/9 - Pat Bartlett
- 12/19 - Floyd Peak
- 12/28 - Terry Johnson



MAH JONG

Games are on alternate Mondays and Tuesdays. Play is 2-4 pm.

For schedule details, contact: Pat Bartlett
patbartcom@aol.com

- Tuesday, October 8
- Monday, October 14
- Tuesday, October 22
- Monday, October 28
- Tuesday, November 5
- Monday, November 11
- Tuesday, November 19
- Monday, November 25
- Tuesday, December 3
- Monday, December 9
- Tuesday, December 17
- Monday, December 23
- Tuesday, December 31

WHAT'S NEW IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

CELEBRATING OUR NEW ENTRANCE!



The intersection of Village Green Parkway, Silver Bluff and Richardson Lake Road

After many months of waiting, the Silver Bluff road widening project is completed and has turned out well. Our entrance is much safer and the lighting that had been removed during construction has been replaced. Thanks to those public officials who made this happen!

The lamp posts have been resurrected with the completion of construction at the entrance to The Village.

VILLAGE FITNESS IS EXPANDING

That construction dumpster in front of Village Fitness marks the start of major upgrades as this neighborhood facility approaches a 7th anniversary on October 15th. These upgrades include:

- An infrared sauna is replacing the steam room in the Men's Locker Room;
- A new Kid Zone is being added for children ages 3 months – 12 years old;
- The front entrance will be equipped with electronic card access to permit 24x7 access; and
- A dedicated area will be built for the training of small groups, teams, and clients.



WHAT'S NEW IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD (CONTINUED)

THE VILLAGE CAFE INVITES YOU TO CELEBRATION!

The Village Cafe has 2 reasons to celebrate!!

1. There's a new Manager at the Cafe. Please go and meet Melinda Kitchings.
2. And also, finally, the road is finished!

How long has it been since the road construction started? The Cafe would like to provide a venue for a "Post Construction Party" — an excuse to say it's finally over! Prizes will be given out for the BEST "War Story"! All in all, a plan for a good time.

*Please join the celebration at The Village Café
Wednesday, October 16th from 5 till 7:30pm.*

RSVP by email or phone to let them know
if you can attend!

The Village Cafe, 110 Coach Light Way, Aiken SC 20803
803-640-0247 • www.thevillagecafeiken.com



Chef Michael McFadden and
Melinda Kitchings will be offering:

Filet of Beef Carving Station

Pasta Station

International Cheeses

Assorted Spreads

Lite Hors' d'oeuvres

Beer and Wine

Assorted Mini Dessert Bars, Gelato and Fruit Kabobs

All this for \$24.95!

NEW VILLAGE PARK NAMED "LIBERTY PARK"

A name has been selected for our newest park from entries submitted when residents were asked for suggestions. The winner is Liberty Park. If you haven't taken the time to check out this latest addition to the neighborhood, please stop by. Liberty Park is located directly behind the Courtyard Townhomes on Barrister Lane.

In our previous newsletter we reported that there were residents requesting that the park be used as a dog park for the neighborhood — a "Bark Park". However, our newest park will remain as is — a general use park. The topic was discussed at our Homeowners Association Board meeting and a synopsis of that discussion is that people who have dogs and live away from the park.....are OK with the "Bark Park" idea. On the other hand, those who live close by are uniformly against the concept....including dog owners. Because of this lack of consensus, there will be no dog park.



Go check out the latest addition to the neighborhood — Liberty Park, located directly behind the Courtyard Townhomes on Barrister Lane.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD (CONTINUED)

— TIDBITS —



TREE PRUNING

We are planning to begin pruning the trees on our main roads with the onset of cooler weather. The priority will be those trees closest to intersections in order to remove branches that have interfered with large trucks. The work is planned to begin in late November.



STREET PARKING

Part of the attraction of our neighborhood are the narrow streets, homes cozied up to sidewalks and garages opening to a rear alley. For traffic flow, aesthetics, and safety, residents should please keep Coach Light, Gate Post, Old Market and Chabot Lane free of parking except for visitors or brief periods by residents.



BOCCE BALL

As the temperatures cool down, the Village Fall Bocce Ball play will kick off on Wednesday, October 2 at 6 pm. Just show up and have fun. Equipment is provided, play is free and we will use an open play format where individuals, not teams play. Paul Fields (paulrfields5@gmail.com) is the Village Bocce guru and will be on hand to guide any "newbies" through the ropes.

VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

Thanks for your responses to this annual survey. We have had a healthy response rate and plan to present the results and our conclusions at our annual meeting in January.

JANE DEESE FAREWELL PARTY



We toasted farewell to Village resident Jane Deese as she returned to Northern Virginia to be closer to her family. Standing (left to right): Annie Woodard, Carla Tucker, Sue Peeples, Charlene Shabi, Jane Deese, Bob Erikson, and Pat Bartlett. Seated (left to right): Rochelle Friedman, Alexis Aronson, Faith Loeb, and Jeannie Hart.

MEET YOUR



NEIGHBORS

DON & DANENE CARTER



Don & Danene Carter

Don and Danene Carter moved into 218 Gate Post Lane in April from North Augusta. Working out at our fitness center one day, they decided to take a look at the rest of The Village. They liked what they saw. Don had retired after 30 years at Nutrasweet. Danene, after 38 years as a pediatric nurse,

now works out of their new home with insurance companies and the hospitals as a “go-between”. She also is an avid reader and loves to sew. Don is a runner, completing 3 half-marathons last year and is training for more in the coming months. He also keeps fit doing yard work. They have two very young adorable grandchildren and another one on the way. A daughter lives nearby and their son lives in Charlotte. Don grew up in Downtown Augusta and Danene calls North Augusta her hometown, although her very early years were spent in Athens.

Who is your favorite team?

Danene: Georgia Bulldogs

Don: The Gamecocks

What was the last book you read?

Danene: *Ordinary Grace* by William Kent Krueger

Don: *Ty Cobb: A Biography* by Al Stump (Don loves baseball history)

People would call you...

Danene: Honest

Don: Helpful

Pet peeves...

Danene: People who don't do what they say they're going to do!

Don: People who don't use turn signals!

CHUCK & ELAINE BUROKER



Chuck & Elaine Buroker

The Burokers were one of the pioneers of The Village, buying the first model and taking up residency in June of 2010. They were living in Hilton Head but liked the idea and possibility of community and convenience in a new location. Not being chased by a hurricane was an additional plus.

Both are retired educators from Ohio.

Growing up in farming communities just 30 miles apart, they knew of each other through interscholastic activities including singing in choirs. And Chuck was a basketball star receiving a scholarship to Bluffton U where they start dating. Masters degrees and marriage followed.

They continued singing together for weddings and other events. They have traveled extensively and Italy seems to be their favorite destination. They both like to garden and are, at the moment, nursing along a Chinese pistachio tree...the only one in The Village.

Chuck golfs a couple of times a week and Elaine is an avid reader. Both play bridge and both take advantage of Aiken's many activities.

Favorite sports team?

Chuck & Elaine: Ohio State

What was the last book you read?

Elaine: *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood

Chuck: *The Pioneers* by David McCullough

Who would you most like to visit?

Chuck: Kenny Pool, a western artist and my dad's cousin

Elaine: My great grandmother Alice Owen, a dedicated suffragette



THE VILLAGE INTEREST GROUPS

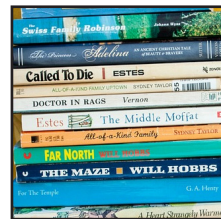
Want to join your neighbors in common interest activities? Here's how to get started.



BOCCE BALL

Paul Fields
paulrfields5@gmail.com

Learn to play or join league play on our neighborhood courts



BOOK CLUBS

Alexis Aronson – Club #1
aaronson59@gmail.com

Susan Reynolds – Club #2
susrey@atlanticbb.net



COMMUNITY GARDEN

Darrell Finney
darrellfinney@hotmail.com

Grow your own vegetables/herbs/flowers



GOLF

Frank Caughman
ttooth76@comcast.net

Teaming up people to play golf



HIKING CLUB

Jim Pierce
jbpierce649@outlook.com

Woodside resident leads easy Aiken hikes (include nonresidents)



MAHJONG

Pat Bartlett
patbartcom@aol.com

Fun, casual group whether you're wanting to learn or already playing



PICKLEBALL

Faith Loeb
faithloeb@aol.com

Learn or play this fast growing sport



VOLUNTEERING

Mike Farmer
mikef48@gmail.com

Connect with a non-profit or public school cause



WOMEN OF WOODSIDE

Karen Carman
kcarman3@gmail.com

Women's group that provides service and social activities



BIBLE STUDY

Sandy Finney
sandyfinney31@hotmail.com

Meet your neighbors while enjoying neighborhood Bible study group

2019 NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL EVENTS

The following neighborhood events are being planned for 2019. Details will be provided prior to event dates.

OCTOBER

Low-Country Boil

October 11, 6 pm

The Pavilion

Just bring beverage & chair

DECEMBER

Holiday Party

December 6

The Design Center

— Featured Non-Profit —

Friends of the Aiken County Historical Museum

The 'Friends' support the Aiken County Historical Museum, which is housed in a 1930's Winter Colony mansion named "Banksia". Located downtown, its' grounds are also home to a 1890's one-room schoolhouse and a log cabin built in 1808. The Museum provides insights into our county's past, by offering traveling exhibits, educational tours, and items of interest to children. To learn more about possibly helping, contact one of our involved neighbors—Judi Romeo, President, and Mike Hart, Financial Management.



*Hundreds of us volunteer to help make a difference
Consider donating some of your time & talent!*

LEARN MORE FROM A NEIGHBOR....



Supported by the public and dozens of area churches, ACTS provides food, clothing, household items, and other services to the poor.

INVOLVED NEIGHBOR

Darrell Finney



Care for horses until they are adopted. Over 1,000 have been placed. Some fifty horses are cared for at a time on the rescue's 80 acre farm.

INVOLVED NEIGHBOR

Pat Bartlett



Builds housing for poor families in Aiken County, who qualify for the mortgage and help with the construction. Each year 4 homes are built.

INVOLVED NEIGHBOR

Mike Farmer



An advocate for the library and source of funding to help with its financial needs.

INVOLVED NEIGHBOR

Bill Reynolds

— NEW OPENINGS IN AIKEN —

SOLO VINO WINE PARLOR

(Excerpted from the Aiken Standard by Dede Biles)



At the new Solo Vino Wine Parlor in downtown Aiken, the alcoholic beverage served there inspired the decor. Wine racks on the walls are filled with bottles.

So far, since Solo Vino opened late August on the corner of Newberry Street and Park Avenue, the several flights of wine offered make up its No. 1 category in sales. Each flight features a trio of 3 ounce wine samples.

“One of the things important to us is to educate our clientele,” said Lou Giusto, who owns the business with his wife, Stephanie Sheridan..

And even though Solo Vino’s name means “just wine” in Spanish, other beverages such as craft beers, hard ciders, iced tea and coffee are available.

In addition, soups, salads, cheese and charcuterie boards, sandwiches, entrees and desserts are served because Solo Vino also is a restaurant.

Solo Vino also has a wine club and special wine dinners for the club’s members.

“Our atmosphere is upscale, but we aren’t stuffy,” said Giusto, who is a chef and a member of the Court of Master Sommeliers. “We’re a place where you can come in and feel relaxed. Equestrians come in wearing their breeches if they choose to, and there is no jacket required.”

Hours: 11:30–9 pm Thursday–Sunday and from 5–9 pm on Monday. Located at 200 Park Avenue, SW. For more information call 803-262-5335 or visit solovinoaiken.com.

BOOKSTORE OPENS ON LAURENS STREET

(Excerpted from the Aiken Standard by Kristina Rackley)

There’s a new place on Laurens Street to find rare books.

A Fox’s Tale is a small, locally owned bookstore that opened recently in the heart of downtown Aiken.

Co-owner Holly Segar has lived all over the world, from London to New England, but her heart has always been in Aiken, where she is from originally.

“I wanted to come back to where I’m from and bring books and things that interest me into the town,” Segar said. “It’s the perfect town for a bookstore.”

A Fox’s Tale, formerly known as Caroliniana Rare Books, specializes in rare, collectable first edition books but has a \$5-and-under section of reader-friendly material for those who are just looking for a new novel to read.

Segar has been in the rare book trade for 13 years and travels all over the country to find the books she sells in Aiken. She often goes book hunting at estate sales, but she occasionally has someone reach out with the promise of a rare book.

Her shop, which she co-owns with Jeffrey Rovenpor, was originally open on Hayne Avenue. They rebranded, expanded the business and reopened on Laurens Street for better foot traffic and exposure.

The shop doesn’t just offer books; Segar also sells artisan crafts from artists all across the country. Much of what she sells is seasonal; her shop is decked out in autumn colors and Halloween decorations currently.



Pick Your Own South Carolina Pumpkins

Pumpkins are really great for carving into Jack O' Lanterns, but there's so much more you can do with them. The list of recipes goes on and on, but some of my favorites are: Pumpkin Pie, Pumpkin Butter (like apple butter!), Pumpkin Muffins, Pumpkin Spice Cookies, Pumpkin Bars, Pumpkin Spice Cake, and pumpkin soups and casseroles as well. It's really good and really good for you.

Dempsey Farms

1576 Sea Island Parkway
St. Helena Island, SC
(About 40 miles from Hilton Head)

On St. Helena Island sits this beautiful farm that lets you pick your own pumpkins and pretty much all other kinds of vegetables too. However, the pumpkin patch is open from October to November!

Denver Downs

4915 Clemson Boulevard
Anderson, SC
(About 28 miles southwest of Greenville —
Be wary of incorrect maps.)

Denver Downs has a lot going on this season! Not only are they having pumpkin pickin', but they have fall festivities and a huge corn maze.

Legare Farms

2620 Hanscombe Point Road
Johns Island, SC
(13 miles from Charleston)

Legare Farms has pumpkins galore for you to choose from. They also have mazes, barnyard animals, hayrides and so much more!

Autumn Farm and Vineyard

2980 Pacolet Hwy
Gaffney, SC
(16 miles east of Spartanburg)

They pair pumpkin picking with a corn maze that's known all over as "The Field of Scream." Go pick my pumpkin and then maybe see if you can coulda cornfield maze at night....



McLeod Farms

29247 S. C. Hwy. 151
McBee, SC
(67 miles northeast of Columbia)

You can pick your pumpkins or they can pick them for you. They also have a fall festival every October.

Willard Farm

1120 South Brick Church Rd
Gable, SC

They are serving up pumpkins to you this October all pretty and orange and while you're there you can take a chance on their corn maze.

Bush-N-Vine

1650 Filbert Hwy
York, SC
(39 miles southwest of Charlotte)

This pumpkin patch is open in late September and stays that way up to October 31st. They also have a hayride on Saturdays.

Cotton Hills Farm

2309 Wilson Road
Chester, SC
(42 miles southwest of Charlotte)

This farm has been open since 1882. They plant a pretty big crop of pumpkins as they supply some other farms in the area and the public as well.

Nivens Apple Farm

130 Orchard Drive
Moore, SC

Nivens Apple Farm has apples and pumpkins that you can pick this time of year. Their annual Pumpkin Fest is coming up October 17th with incredible pumpkin carvings and contests plus so much more.

Clinton Sease Farm

130 Orchard Drive
Moore, SC

Go have some fun at the Clinton Sease Farm as they roll out the carpet for us to pick pumpkins, have hayrides, try their huge corn maze, and participate in other fall festivities!

PICK YOUR OWN SOUTH CAROLINA APPLES

As hints of fall start creeping in, we can't help but get excited for apple picking. There are many wonderful apple orchards in the Upstate area where you can pick your own apples.

Before you go apple picking, be sure to call ahead to check on hours and apple varieties available or check the orchard's Facebook page for updates as many of the orchards will list upcoming events, changed hours and list of fruits available.



Justus Orchard

828.974.1232

187 Garren Road
Hendersonville, SC

Located in a picturesque part of Hendersonville with views of the mountains, Justus Orchard is the perfect place to go apple picking. Their apple cider donuts are also a treat not to be missed. They also offer a cow train ride through the orchard for the kids, a big bouncing pillow, farm animals and a pond with ducks (bring some coins to use to buy food to feed the animals with). Apples from mid-August to early November.

Offers:

Apple orchard
Farm Store with apple cider donuts
Cow train, bouncing pillow
Farm animals

Coston Farm and Apple House

828.685.8352

3748 Chimney Rock Road
Hendersonville, SC

Apple picking is a delight at Coston Farm with the mountains as a backdrop to the orchard. Like other orchards, they also offer delicious baked goods and apples already picked for sale.

Offers:

U-pick apple orchard from August–October (See their apple ripening calendar for different varieties)
Farm Store with pre-picked apples, pumpkins, and fall decor

Fisher's Orchard

864.895.2892

650 Fisher Road
Greer, SC

Primarily known for their incredible peaches, Fisher's Orchard also grows apples that are available for picking in the fall (call for exact dates). Their Fall Festival begins in October. Families can pick out pumpkins, enjoy a wagon ride, the maze and the animals (\$9).

Offers:

U-pick peaches in summer
U-pick apples in October
Fall Festival October 1–October 31 with Wagon Rides, Maze, Farm Animals

Chattooga Belle Farm

864.647.9768

454 Damascus Church Road
Long Creek, SC

At the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains lies this gorgeous farm and orchard, which is not only a working farm but also a popular wedding venue. Besides a pick-your-own experience, Chattooga Belle Farm also offers cabin rentals, a bistro for lunch and dinner, disc golf, and an amazing variety of exotic fruits like Asian pears, figs, paw paws, and persimmons.

Offers:

Restaurant serving lunch and dinner
Cabin rental
Event Venue
Disc Golf
U-pick apples and more
Farm Store

Bryson's Apple Orchard

864.647.9427

1011 Chattooga Ridge Road
Mountain Rest, SC

Just a few miles from the Chattanooga River, Bryson's Apple Orchard is also close to gorgeous waterfalls and many of the hiking places that KAG has recommended (so maybe hiking and apple picking one day this fall?). The Long Creek area, according to their website, is one of the "largest apple producing areas east of the Mississippi River."

Offers:

The farm is open for U-pick apples August 15th–October
In July, fresh peaches are available at their farm stand.

Windy Hill Orchard and Cider Mill

803.684.0690

1860 Black Highway
York, SC

The owners of the Windy Hill Orchard and Cider Mill got their start 20 years ago when they wanted to create the perfect apple cider (they apparently succeeded). Their main apple variety is the Stayman Winesapp and u-pick opens up in late August. The orchard asks that everyone 2 years of age and older have their own pre-purchased bag before heading into the orchard. Opening this year on Saturday, August 17th!

Offers:

U-pick Apples
Farm Store with baked apple goods
Hard Cider Tastings

THANKSGIVING EVENTS IN AIKEN



The Blessing of the Hounds at Memorial Gate in Hitchcock Woods

Aiken celebrates Thanksgiving as a community with three events that have become traditions. Held in and around the downtown area, Bloodies and Bagels, Blessing of the Hounds and One Table are open to the public and **FREE** to attend.

The Aiken Land Conservancy's 8th edition of Bloodies and Bagels is scheduled for 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on Thursday on the lawn of the Aiken County Historical Museum.

Bagels from Panera Bread, Bloody Marys and coffee will be served, and donations will be accepted.

The Land Conservancy is a nonprofit with a mission to preserve open, undeveloped space. The Historical Museum is at 433 Newberry Street S.W.

After Bloodies and Bagels, the Blessing of the Hounds will begin at 11 a.m. at Memorial Gate in Hitchcock Woods. The ceremony will be part of the opening meet

that officially kicks off the hunting season for the Aiken Hounds.

The Blessing's purpose is to make sure the "hounds, horses and riders are protected by the eternal spirit throughout the season," said Larry Byers, who is one of the three joint masters of foxhounds for the Aiken Hounds. The Rev. Joseph Whitehurst, assistant rector at St. Thaddeus Episcopal Church, will officiate. Assisting him will Deacon Jane Hostetter, also of St. Thaddeus.

The Aiken Hounds have been around for more than 100 years, and they have the oldest drag hunt in the nation. Before a drag hunt, a cloth saturated with fox scent is dragged across the terrain to create a trail for hounds to follow. The pack of dogs sets the pace during the artificial chase, and the horses and their riders are behind them.

As soon as the Blessing is over, the riders leave and go bounding through the Woods, ending at the

Woods' show ring with libations ready for them.

The distance from the Woods' South Boundary Avenue entrance to Memorial Gate is six-tenths of a mile. For the Blessing of the Hounds, no motorized vehicles will be allowed in the Woods or beyond the South Boundary/Laurens Street intersection. In addition, spectators won't be able to bring their dogs.

One Table began more than 10 years ago. The free event is set for 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in The Alley downtown. A Thanksgiving lunch will be served, and the menu will include turkey, dressing, gravy, rice, mashed potatoes and rolls. There also will be live entertainment.

"We want everybody to come and enjoy themselves," said Kathryn Wade, who formerly served as One Table's coordinator and is now a consultant.



One Table provides a Thanksgiving meal uniting the Aiken community.

8 Reasons Why Aiken is the Most Magical Town in South Carolina for the Holidays

It's no secret that Aiken is a charming town, especially this time of year. It has been named one of the most magical Christmas towns in South Carolina. It's the perfect place to begin a holiday tradition. Here are 8 reasons why Aiken is so magical.



1. Downtown Christmas Tree Lighting

It's a tradition to gather downtown for the lighting of the Christmas tree. Carolers serenade you while refreshments are served. The best part is hearing the squeals and delights from children being greeted with a special appearance by Santa and Mrs. Claus! December 1, 6:00 pm.

2. Christmas Craft Show

Featuring over 100 exhibitors from all over the Southeast, this two-day event is a great place to find those unique holiday gifts. And, for the foodies out there, food trucks are available to satisfy your taste buds. December 1–2, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm.

3. Festival of Trees at the Depot

The Aiken Visitors Center and Train Museum is known for hosting special holiday events, and this year is no different. The museum will add an extra dose of the holiday spirit by showcasing its first annual display of themed trees. December 1–30.

4. Night of 1000 Lights

Experience luminaries lining the streets of downtown Aiken, as the beautifully decorated windows of the shops stay open late and offer holiday treats, drinks, and music for a festive evening out. December 7, 6:00 pm.

5. Aiken Symphony Orchestra presents “Home for the Holidays”

Tune in for some holiday cheer. The Aiken Symphony Orchestra, along with the Aiken Choral Society and Masterworks Chorale, performs a variety of holiday favorites. The sounds of the music will enhance your holiday spirit. December 10, 3:00 – 4:30 pm.



6. Christmas in Hopelands

This enchanting walk-through exhibit features over two miles of lighted pathways and illuminated displays. The gardens are filled with holiday spirit, with over 100,000 twinkling lights, marshmallow roasting, traditional Christmas caroling and so much more! December 9–10, 14–23, and 26 from 6:00 – 9:30 pm.

7. Hoofbeats and Christmas Carols Parade

This annual parade is unique because Aiken celebrates its rich equestrian heritage and the holidays at the same time! Organized by the Hatchaway Hounds Mock Hunt, the procession features horses of many breeds, carriages, carolers and even dogs with their human companions. December 16, 2:00 pm.

8. Aiken Civic Ballet presents The Nutcracker

Have sugar plum fairies dancing in your head? The Nutcracker ballet is performed at The Etherredge Center by The Aiken Civic Ballet Company — South Carolina's longest continuously operating dance company. December 22, 7:00 p.m. and December 23, 2:00 pm.