

BAXTER'S PAST BECOMES FOCUS OF STREET FAIR

[Liz Engel](#)

Herald-Citizen Staff



Herald-Citizen Photos/Camille Fliss Friends of the Baxter Depot group member Jeanie Lee, at left, holds a piece of artwork created by James Mason from her personal collection. The picture, depicting President Martin Van Buren, features more than 250,000 pieces of wood inlay, and will be one of several on display during the second day of the Baxter Street Fair Oct. 4.

BAXTER -- It's been a long time since Baxter was considered a railroad town.

But during the first weekend of October, there's high hopes that it can transform back to a historical atmosphere as a street fair will take over the streets downtown. Featuring live music, a parade dedicated to military personnel and several activities centered around Baxter's rich railroad history, the two-day event is scheduled for Oct. 3 and 4.

Proceeds raised in the separately planned Friday and Saturday events will benefit several local groups -- funds taken in on Oct. 3 will benefit the Friends of the Baxter Depot, a group working to rebuild the town's historic train station, and on Oct. 4, funds will go toward the town's senior citizens center and local medical clinic.

"I think Baxter is totally a railroad town. The town was built around the railroad and the railroad theme," said Friends group member Jeanie Lee. "This event is to rekindle our heritage so the 'now' generation and the future generation will know what their community is about."

Friday night will feature live, '50s-themed music starting around 7 p.m., complete with costumes, dancing, food, vintage cars and more. Local band Legacy will also be performing.

On Saturday, a 3.1 mile run will begin at 7 a.m., storytelling will begin at 9 a.m. and the featured "Parade of the Proud" will start at 10 a.m.

The parade is open to all veteran and current military personnel and will feature Rep. Henry Fincher as the grand marshal.

"We are saluting veterans and members of the armed forces, and we will have everything from motorcycles to Jeeps, to cheerleaders and school clubs," Lee said.

Booths available for browsing on Saturday include woodturning, beekeeping and face painting as well as children's rides, laser tag and more. The fair will also feature a poker run at 8 a.m., an auction at the Bank of Putnam County at noon, and a "Stepback in Time" hayride, which will begin at 4 p.m. with rides running every half hour.

A Baxter Depot themed booth will be open to all friends and family members of those who worked on the railroad, and longtime local historian Maurine Patton will be available for a book signing during the day.

The depot booth will also feature a personal collection of artwork by James Mason, who used thousands of wood pieces to create renderings of U.S. presidents. About 25 to 30 pieces of Mason's work will be on display.

Several other activities will also be taking place.

"We are trying to make this really big and build on it each year," Lee said.

Those interested in setting up a booth during the street fair will have until Monday to do so. For more information, contact Lee at 372-9663, Depot Treasurer Sue Neal at 858-3355, Secretary Connie Gentry at 858-3020, or Robin Hawk at 858-4611.

Tuesday, Sep 23, 2008: Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, TN

STREET FAIR TO BENEFIT DEPOT, CLINIC, SENIORS

[Liz Engel](#)

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BAXTER -- It's still more than two months away, but a group in Baxter interested in rebuilding the town's historic train depot is already trying to raise excitement for a large-scale street fair set for October.

Organized partly by the Friends of the Baxter Depot as well as the Baxter medical clinic and Senior Citizens group, the Baxter Junction Street Fair is already slated for all sorts of activities, from live music, Southern style food and a parade that will feature veterans, dog owners, city leaders and more.

The Friday and Saturday downtown event will raise funds for all three groups and is an extension on street fairs held each year by the seniors and the town's not-for-profit medical clinic -- this year's event will just be on a much larger scale.

"This will not only raise money for the depot, but the street fair every year is one of the things the medical clinic thrives on," said Jeanie Lee, president of the Friends of the Depot group. "The whole thing will benefit the three different groups, and this hopefully is going to be big."

Starting Friday, Oct. 3, around 7 p.m. things will kick off with the theme "Rock-A-Billy," featuring live '50s music, vintage cars and trucks and food including hot dogs, milkshakes and cherry and vanilla Cokes.

And starting around 8 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 4, food ranging from smokehouse sausage, gravy and biscuits, and more hot dogs and cotton candy will be served, while the main feature of the day will be the "Parade of the Proud." Lee said the march will feature veterans, city officials, local ball teams, cheerleaders, school organizations, scouts, bikers, dog owners, Jeep owners and more.

Also on Saturday, there will be music from all venues including gospel and bluegrass, country, western swing and pop/rock. And the fair will offer a slew of activities for everyone -- booths of crafts, antiques, sports, a dunking booth, magic, soap making, wood turning, art, wrestling, competitive games, a petting zoo, an auction, gift design, storytelling, Baxter history rides, a railroad family, a Friends of the Baxter Depot reunion and a railroad educational booth.

And, Lee said, the day will start and end with motorcycle poker, where tickets are purchased and the winner gets to split the pot.

"Someone will celebrate with a lot of money, but everyone will leave with memories," she said.

The fair is a joint effort of the Friends of the Baxter Depot, the Baxter medical clinic and senior citizens.

For booth or other information about the event, contact Lee at 372-9663, Depot Treasurer Sue Neal at 858-3355, Secretary Connie Gentry at 858-3020 or Robin Hawk at 858-4611.

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Members of several local groups in Baxter are joining forces to organize the Baxter Junction Street Fair in October. The event will serve as a fundraiser for the Friends of the Baxter Depot – a group is working to rebuild the historic train depot downtown – but will also aid the Baxter medical clinic and senior citizens group as well. Helping with the event from the Friends of the Depot include, from left, Sue Neal, Depot treasurer; Faye Shanks, Depot historian; Carol Johnson, Friends member; Isam Keith, Friends member; Connie Gentry, Depot secretary; Glen Jones, parliamentarian; John Lucas, Friends member; Jeanie Lee, Depot president; and Jeff Wilhite, Baxter mayor.

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