**May Days brings together the best Florence has to offer**

April 8, 2014

FLORENCE, AL. – From art festivals to storytellers to graduations and concerts, the month of May in Florence is absolutely packed with events. Add a wedding or family reunion, and it’s likely there’s not a free weekend left.

“We looked at this and realized Florence has so much to offer those in town as those who might be looking for a weekend get-away,” said May Days Committee Chairman Jackie Hendrix. “May Days is something that brings it all together.”

Hendrix conceptualized May Days in 2013 and brought together a group of Florence residents as part of a volunteer committee to launch the idea for 2014.

In addition to Arts Alive in Wilson Park, the annual celebration of the arts, May’s events include the University of North Alabama Derby Days and commencement, the local author’s fair at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library, which takes place in conjunction with the UNA Storytelling Festival.

This year, some new events are also on the May calendar, including Restaurant Week, which will be May 9-17, and the Home and Garden Expo sponsored by Riverhill School scheduled for May 3.

On May 24, on Mobile Plaza, the first Florence Beer Festival is scheduled. This gathering is designed to bring together representatives from every micro-brewery in the state who will bring samples and information about their product.

“As a community, we really have a lot to celebrate in May,” said Hendrix. “All of these events combined illustrate just how far we’ve come and how much we’ve grown so that we have the capability of attracting a local as well as statewide and regional audience.”

Florence recently made it to the Elite Eight in Garden and Gun’s recent vote for the South’s Best Small Town, and Hendrix said May Days is what spotlights the city’s talent when it comes to the arts, music, and entertainment.

Florence May Days has launched a website, florencemaydays.com, as well as a Facebook page under the same name. Progress Bank is the presenting sponsor of Florence May Days, and the website and calendar are being maintained by the Florence/Lauderdale Public Library. Hendrix said events are still being added, and he encouraged those who have events planned to seek out these venues in order to become part of the month-long celebration.

For details or to schedule an interview, please contact Christi Britten, Florence-Lauderdale Public Library (256-764-6564 or christi@flpl.org or Allen Tomlinson at ATSA (256-766-4222 or allen@noalapress.com).

# # #