



Pickens County Meals on Wheels
P.O. Box 184
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www.pcmow.org

Mission: Pickens County Meals on Wheels exists to combat the effects of hunger, loneliness and isolation on those living in Pickens County, and to provide a lifeline through the use of caring volunteers.

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 3, 2010

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Community Flocks to 1st Annual Wings & Wheels for Meals Event

Pickens County Airport was the host and location for the 1st Annual Wings & Wheels for Meals event this spring. The Airport's landscape of open vistas along a mountain range provide the backdrop for a perfect display of classic cars and aircraft. Seventy-seven cars and ten aircraft competed for the Airplane and Automobile People's Choice awards. The public voted for their favorite by putting money in a box provided to each registered owner. Admission was free and an estimated 3,000 people took advantage of the sunny weather to support the Meals on Wheels organization that serves their community.

The public was treated to the opportunity to take an airplane or helicopter ride to view their hometown aloft. Jim Justice flew his airplane, virtually non-stop, to keep up with the queue that formed quickly and remained until well after the event had closed.

The Masonic Lodge kept the crowd fed with a hamburger lunch, prepared by the Easley and visiting Lodges. Boiled peanuts were prepared by Charles Stewart and Ken Keith; and Little Bistro Restaurant offered cakes, bakery and fruit to round out the menu.

People enjoyed a leisurely walk on the tarmac to look at a variety of outstanding vehicles, speak with their owners or have their image captured at the cockpit of the County's helicopter. Others listened for their number to be called to win raffle items donated by local businesses. In the meantime, a silent auction was ongoing in the hangar and the Pickens Raptors RC (radio controlled) Club was set up there as well. RC enthusiasts were on hand to share their hobby and assist the winner of the RC airplane they donated to the effort.

The event had a dual purpose that benefited everyone. Airport director, Skeets Cooper, wanted to bring the public out to see and appreciate the new facility. The tastefully designed terminal and amenities include a flight planning room with weather service, a snack bar and outdoor picnic area. Citizens often do not take the time to visit such places without a purpose. Having a fundraiser to benefit Pickens County Meals on Wheels at the airport raised the citizens' awareness of their airport and this community-based nonprofit.

Meg Benko, director of Pickens County Meals on Wheels said, "So many people worked hard to put together this fundraiser and it went unbelievably well. The aviation community represented by John Garner, Alan Woods, Arlie Asay, and Skeets Cooper were excellent planners, and were assisted by Jean and Dean Thomas, Amanda Dow and Alan Warner." Pickens County Meals on Wheels is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit, charitable organization that serves a hot, noontime meal to homebound and disabled Pickens County residents.

"The event grossed over \$9,000 that translates into more than 2,000 hot meals to be delivered by warmhearted volunteers. That's what the citizens of Pickens County have done," stated Cooper. The Masonic Lodge donated all its proceeds to Meals on Wheels and raised \$3,000 of the total funds. Justice flew 7.2 hours on behalf of Meals on Wheels, donating the proceeds to the charity.

"Meals on Wheels relies on the generosity of this community, and because of it we have been able to decrease our wait time to less than 5 months last year. This represents huge progress that has improved the daily lives of hundreds of people," reported Benko.

An appreciative public chose a PA 281140 Cherokee Piper owned by John Garner as People's Choice airplane and a 1929 Studebaker owned by Jack Gaughf for the People's Choice automobile. They went home with trophies as proof of their vehicles' popularity.

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