

Chamber awards \$12K in grants

By Christina Wilson
For The Greer Herald

The Greer Chamber Foundation last week announced doling out \$12,000 in community grants to seven local organizations. It's the second year the group has accepted applications and distributed funds, now needed more than ever due to tightening budgets and a worsening financial forecast, the

Chamber's chief executive officer said.

"By all means, the timing of these grants was perfect," John Kimbrell said. "It's time to financially support area organizations who help community organizations that are in need, especially now that times are tougher."

Foundation Chair Phil Feisal agreed. "Enhancing the Greer community through grants is the main reason that the (foundation)

was created. The Foundation Board has been working for three years to establish the Foundation and create an application process so that grants could be awarded. With the current economic uncertainty, these grants will prove very beneficial to the community organizations and the clients in which they serve."

Junior Leadership Greer

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Greenville Indoor Rowing

Greer couple opens new fitness center

By Christina Wilson
For The Greer Herald

Former NFL player Lowell Caylor credits his clean bill of health following 2006 heart surgery with his longtime passion for rowing. After 20 years working out on the machines and this February ranking fifth in his class at a worldwide rowing competition, Lowell and his wife Laura in September opened Greenville Indoor Rowing.

About 60 active members participate in 14 different one-hour classes each week, up from 6 people twice weekly rowing with Lowell in a back room at Garner's Natural Foods starting in April.

"I knew when I retired I wanted to do something that kept me rowing," said Lowell, who worked as a salesman for several different companies after his pro ball days. "I get to stay involved and we get to help other people."

Located on Laurens Road, the fitness center boasts 17 Concept 2 rowing machines, a surround sound system that pumps music during classes and most importantly, Lowell. He himself rows 10 hours each week, leads warm-ups and interval training and provides the comic relief.

"While they're grunting they're also laughing their heads off," laughed Laura, who rows a fraction of the time as does her husband of six years. "He's a freak."

Rowing appeals to a wide range of clientele, from ages 19 to 72, because resistance can be set to accommodate all physical levels, Lowell said.

"When people come in here we expect them to



CHRISTINA WILSON/FOR THE GREER HERALD

Former NFL player Lowell Caylor and wife Laura. The Greer couple is gaining national attention after opening an indoor rowing center in Greenville.

work hard but we crank up the music and have fun."

The Caylors live in Pelham Falls with pooch pals Chili and Kipper. He's 67 and she's 50. Lowell's two daughters from a previous marriage live in Ohio, where he played safety for the Cleveland Browns in 1964 and 1965.

At least 70 percent of GIR's members are women, including one, 62, who suffered a stroke in 2000 and lost the ability to read and write. "She wanted to try rowing," Laura said. "She can't get enough of it. Her daughter, an oncology radiologist, comes with her now."

In addition to fun and fitness, clients credit rowing with quick weight loss. Kim Whitmire, 47, a Fountain Inn resident who works in Greenville, has lost 42 pounds since starting in May while the Caylors were still at Garners.

"The workout is never, ever the same," she said. "Every time you go it's a different challenge. One

other thing I love about it is you set the machine at a different intensity and can always keep up."

Lowell, 6-feet, 3-inches tall, weighs 212 pounds. Cardiologists credited his healthy and active lifestyle for surviving 100 percent blockage in an artery. It was cured with only a stent.

"Rowing is why I'm alive today," he said. "The key thing is it works every major muscle group and is cardio all in one workout."

Classes are Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday mornings and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings. The first workout is free and additional sessions are \$20. Cards for 10 workouts are \$150 and 20 for \$250. An unlimited monthly membership is \$100 per month.

Lowell, a certified indoor rowing instructor, also offers individual training sessions.

For more information or to enroll in a class call 864-281-1505 or 864-498-8608.