

**\*\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\*\***

The North Carolina Rhododendron Festival will take place in Bakersville, North Carolina, June 19th and 20th, 2026. The festival, in its 79th year, draws hundreds of visitors from all over the region and features the Rhododendron Festival Pageant, the Craft Fair with food vendors, children's activities, live music throughout the day, as well as a classic car show, a 10K run, and 2 nights of street dancing. The festival coincides with the yearly blooming of the rhododendron atop Roan Mountain, home of the world's largest, naturally occurring rhododendron gardens. The festival began in 1947 as a joint effort between the towns of Bakersville and Roan Mountain, Tennessee to gather support and call attention to the need for new roads to the top of Roan Mountain. The efforts paid off with new roads constructed in the late 40's and early 50's.

Bakersville is just over an hour away from either Asheville, Boone, or Johnson City [TN]. Penland School of Crafts, the Blue Ridge Parkway, Spruce Pine, and Burnsville are all within 20-30 minutes of Bakersville and provide plenty of activities to see or do during the weekend.

For more information, visit our website [linked here](#) or follow us on social media.

## **List of Events**

### ***The NC Rhododendron Festival Scholarship Pageant, Bowman Middle School***

**Friday, June 19, 2026:** The first round of competition includes Junior division talent and Senior division swimsuit. Special entertainment is provided by former and visiting queens. Doors open at 6:00 pm with the pageant beginning at 7:00 pm.

**Saturday, June 20, 2026:** The final round of competition includes Senior division talent, Junior and Senior evening gown, and the crowning of this year's NC Rhododendron Queens. Special entertainment is provided by former and visiting queens. Doors open at 6:00 pm with the pageant beginning at 7:00 pm.

\*Admission: \$10/adult and \$7/child per night. A special two-night discount pass will be available for \$15/adult and \$10/child. Souvenir program books, concessions, and event shirts are available. Master of Ceremonies is Robert Hensley.

### ***The Rhododendron Craft Fair, Bowman Middle School Football Field\*\****

**Friday, June 19, 2026:** 12pm to 5pm

**Saturday, June 20, 2026:** 10am to 4pm

Free admission!

Our yearly show offers exhibitors of talented local and regional artists & craftspeople and showcases a variety of musical performances. The Rhododendron Craft Fair, which is open to the public and free of charge, typically takes place along the banks of Cane Creek, which winds through the center of the beautiful and historic small mountain town of Bakersville. It has become a local favorite with artists and visitors alike; many returning year after year.

*\*\* Please note the change in location for 2026 to the Bowman Middle School Football Field, due to the damage sustained by Hurricane Helene.*

### ***The Rhododendron Festival Street Dance***

**Friday, June 19, 2026:** 8pm to 12am

**Saturday, June 20, 2026:** 8pm to 12am

*One of the largest square dance events in NC!*

The Rhododendron Street Dance truly has something for festival-goers of all ages. On Friday and Saturday nights during the Festival, join us to dance the night away on the main street in downtown Bakersville. This event features traditional mountain square dancing with a live band and caller as well as modern line dancing. Don't dance? Bring a chair and listen to the band. It's a great time for the whole family!!

**\*\*Admission:** \$5 for adults; \$3 for children.

### ***Rhododendron Classic Car Show***

**Saturday, June 20, 2026:** 9am to 3pm

We welcome everyone to join us for the Rhododendron Classic Car Show, with the Rhododendron Cruisers, held at the Quality Plus parking lot, across from the fire department. We have 100+ cars, all makes and models. Awards include Top 25, People's Choice, and Best of Show. Tickets will also be sold for a 50/50 drawing. We also have music and food for you to enjoy during your visit. Proceeds benefit Shriners Hospitals for Children.

**\*\*Admission:** \$2 for adults; children 12 and under are free.

### ***47th Annual Rhododendron 10K Run***

**Saturday, June 20, 2026:** 8:30am

The 47th Annual Rhododendron 10K Run will be held on Saturday, June 20, 2026, at 8:30 am. There is also a 1-mile walk that starts at 8:00 am. Both courses begin at Gouge Primary School, 134 Laurel Street, in Bakersville.

10K entry fees are \$20 with pre-registration postmarked by June 8th. \$30 race-day registration.

Race-day registration is open from 7 am until 8 am.

SFTC K&Q Event - \$1 discount to SFTC Members.

Pre-registration link: <https://runsignup.com/Race/NC/Bakersville/Rhododendron10KRun>

Chip Timing: electronic timing is provided by [We Run Events](#).

Course: USA T&F Certified 10 kilometer, out and back loop course. Moderately fast.

1-mile entry fees are \$10 with pre-registration postmarked by June 8th. \$15 race-day registration.

Race-day registration 7am until 8am.

For more information including payment details, limitations, age divisions, Cash Prizes & Awards contact Bakersville Town Hall at 828-688-2113.

***The Rhododendron Golf Tournament at Grassy Creek Golf Club***  
**Friday, June 19, 2026 through Sunday, June 20, 2026**

The Rhododendron Tournament is back at Grassy Creek, and we're bringing this legendary event back in a big way. Join us June 19–21 for an unforgettable weekend of golf, great food, cold drinks, live music, and friendly competition on our beautifully renovated course.

Open to both members and non-members, this all-inclusive event features three rounds of golf in a two-person team format, flighted by handicap. Play Captain's Choice on Friday, Best Ball on Saturday, and Modified Alternate Shot on Sunday, with tee times beginning at 7:30 AM each day.

Your entry includes lunch and beverages all three days, cash payouts and side games throughout the weekend, and a Blue Tees Golf gift for every player—choose from a rangefinder, GPS, or GPS speaker. On Saturday night, enjoy a full dinner party with live music from the Johnson Brothers Band, and spouses are invited to join the celebration.

The entry fee is \$800 per team and includes all golf, food, beverages, tee gifts, side games, and Saturday night's entertainment. Guest and non-local players must have an active USGA Handicap.

This tournament was once one of the premier events in Western North Carolina golf, and we're excited to bring it back bigger and better than ever. Gather your partner and reserve your spot today—it's going to be a weekend you won't want to miss.

Register your team by contacting us at 828-765-7436 or <https://ukg.golf/q?ac=CEJpkPOe>