

**Application for  
Best Event Under \$20,000**

**Jeepers Creepers,  
City of Fountain Inn, SC**

**Judges' score: 9.2**

## Detailed description of the event

They say that necessity is the mother of invention. Over the years, Fountain Inn has struggled to find an opportunity to provide a safe and fun way for families to trick or treat with our Main Street merchants. As the self-proclaimed “Jeep Capitol” of South Carolina, we decided that the best way would be to host a Halloween themed Jeep Trunk or Treat event on Main Street called Jeepers Creepers! Planning began in June for an October 28 event date. Planning events is always difficult, but that difficulty is compounded when it’s a new event and you don’t know what to expect. As with any event, promotion is key. Posters needed to be designed, social media posts needed to be made, and applications developed. After some brainstorming and many iterations, we settled on a logo and poster that showed a family of friendly skeletons driving down our historic Main Street in high contrast autumn colors. Fonts were chosen to be easy to read and the shadows on the letters gave it a somewhat spooky feel. A promotional video was made to further draw interest to our event. A classic black and white horror film clip with our logo and info overlaid. That video created quite a buzz and was viewed over 5000 times! We knew that with a Halloween Theme, we had a great opportunity to be creative with our marketing. Skeletons were strategically placed on benches along Main Street for folks to take pictures with our frightening friends. With names like Scary Potter, Captain Jack Marrow, and Mr. Bone-Jangles, they were the perfect Jeepers Creepers Ambassadors! Transforming the feel of the environment is key to the success of any event...especially those with specific themes. Storefronts were decorated, jack-o-lanterns were hung in the trees, and our streetscape lights were changed from white to green, yellow, and orange for the event, truly changing Fountain Inn into Halloweentown! A Jeep Cruise In only works if you have Jeeps. We needed to reach out to the local Jeep Clubs to get the word out. As soon as we contacted those clubs, we knew we had a hit because the applications started coming in immediately. We anticipated 75+/- Jeeps, but within two weeks of contacting the Jeep Clubs, we were at 200 Jeeps, and we had to cap attendance there. Figuring out where to place 200 Jeeps in our small town was a pretty big problem, but it was a good problem to have. As soon as we realized the size of the monster we had created, we made the decision to extend our event to include more of our Main Street district. With a footprint covering 4 blocks of Main Street and the associated side streets including Commerce Park, we knew we had to include other ancillary events. A 200 ft. hay maze was designed and built in front of our local brewery, VooDoo Brewing. 300 pumpkins were brought into our Farmers Market Pavilion for kids to paint their scariest (or friendliest) faces on. Inflatable games kept the kiddos busy while parents enjoyed beverages from The Fountain Inn Tap Room, VooDoo Brewing, and Cucina 100. Local favorite, The Vinyl Junkies took the Commerce Park Stage at 6:30 and rocked the house until 9:00. With a music list that spans 10 decades they tailored the music to fit the vibe of Jeepers Creepers and the Halloween season. Through inventive arrangements, danceable grooves, and songs we had not heard other bands play, they kept the audience of all ages involved and moving! The day of the event, we began placing Jeeps of various models and sizes along Main Street with the help of our new Jeep Club friends around 4 pm. By the time the event began at 6pm, we were already in full swing with families taking in the sights. Each Jeep was decorated differently. Many had movie themes like Ghostbusters or Beetlejuice, some were decked out with ghosts and goblins, but all had plenty of candy. All in all, we estimate over 50,000 pieces of candy were given to the kiddos that night.

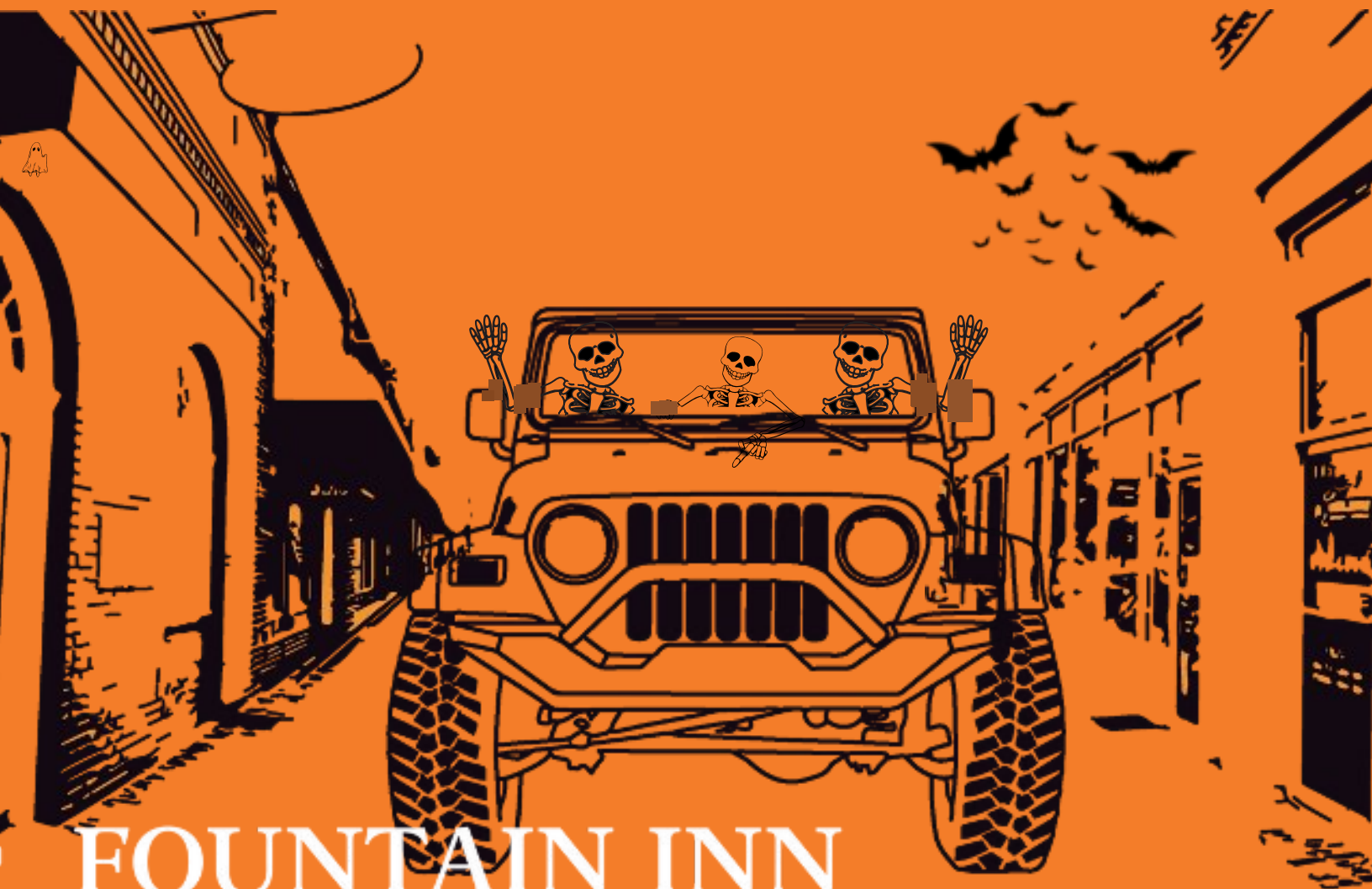
Estimated number of attendees?

8000

Environmental or pet-friendly? Explain how

We always welcome our furry family to our events, but with the nature of this event (costumes, candy, loud noises, etc) we felt it best to leave our four legged friend's at home. Being conscience about the environment is a big part of every event we have here in Fountain Inn. Printed materials and SWAG were branded but not dated so as to be stored and used next year. We used only low voltage LED lighting in our decorations, and we encouraged recycling at our trash receptacles.

Link to promotional video: <https://youtu.be/N-U95FH0K5c>



# FOUNTAIN INN JEEPERS CREEPERS

HEADLINED BY THE VINYL JUNKIES

TRUNK OR TREAT   PUMPKIN PAINTING   HAY MAZE   KIDS GAMES

[MAINSTREETFOUNTAININN.COM](http://MAINSTREETFOUNTAININN.COM)



# CITY *of* FOUNTAIN INN

Welcome aboard the City of Fountain Inn's first ever "Jeepers Creepers Cruise INN"! Join us for a spine-chillingly delightful Halloween experience on Main Street.

Trunk-or-treat in style as you wander through a parade of ghoulishly decorated Jeeps, laden with treats and surprises for all ages. Enjoy your Halloween favorites played by the Vinyl Junkies, creating the perfect eerie ambiance while you savor delectable Halloween-themed food. Whether you're a young ghost or an old vampire, our frighteningly fun activities and entertainment guarantee an unforgettable night of thrills and excitement. Plus, there's more in store with creepy contests, ghostly games, pumpkin painting and more for the little monsters. Get into the Halloween spirit and let the Jeepers Creepers Cruise INN transport you to a world of hauntingly good times! So, whether you arrive in a monstrous machine or on foot, don your most spooktacular costume and immerse yourself in the "Jeepers Creepers Cruise INN" for an otherworldly celebration filled with treats, tricks, and terrifyingly good times!





The Jeepers Creepers Rubber Duck pays homage to the #DuckDuckJeep craze of 2020. The spooky black cloak and scary face celebrate the Halloween season on October 28 with the Jeepers Creepers event on Main Street in Fountain Inn. Of course, it's an opportunity to share the Fountain Inn logo which is displayed on the Duck's cloak.

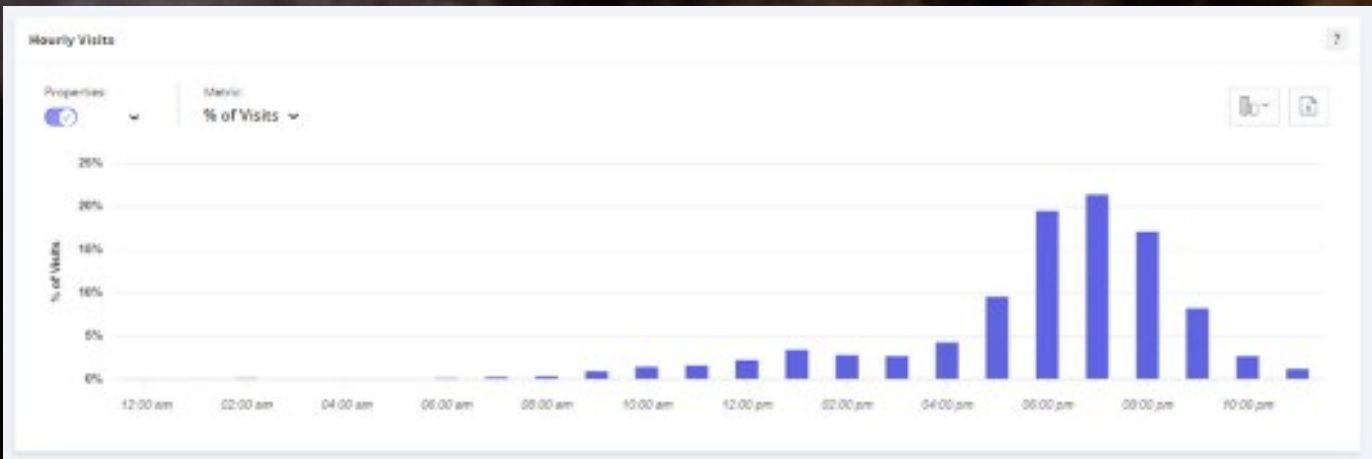
### **HOW DID THE IDEA COME TO BE?**

In 2020 at the height of the Covid shutdown, a 30 year old Jeep owner named Allison P. Alabama was verbally assaulted in her home country of Canada by a stranger who did not welcome her in Canada. She was attacked because of pandemic concerns over her presence. Later during that visit, she purchased a bag of small rubber ducks with the intention of leaving them around the house for friends and family to find. As she left the store, she found a Jeep jockey who wrote, "Nice Jeep - Have A Great Day!" on a duck and left it for the owner to find. #DuckDuckJeep was born that day for no other reason than to spread joy and fun across the Jeep community. Duck Duck Jeep pages have been set up in over 40 countries and every state. The #DuckDuckJeep hashtag has over a million posts across several platforms and continues to be a positive way to interact with Jeep owners.

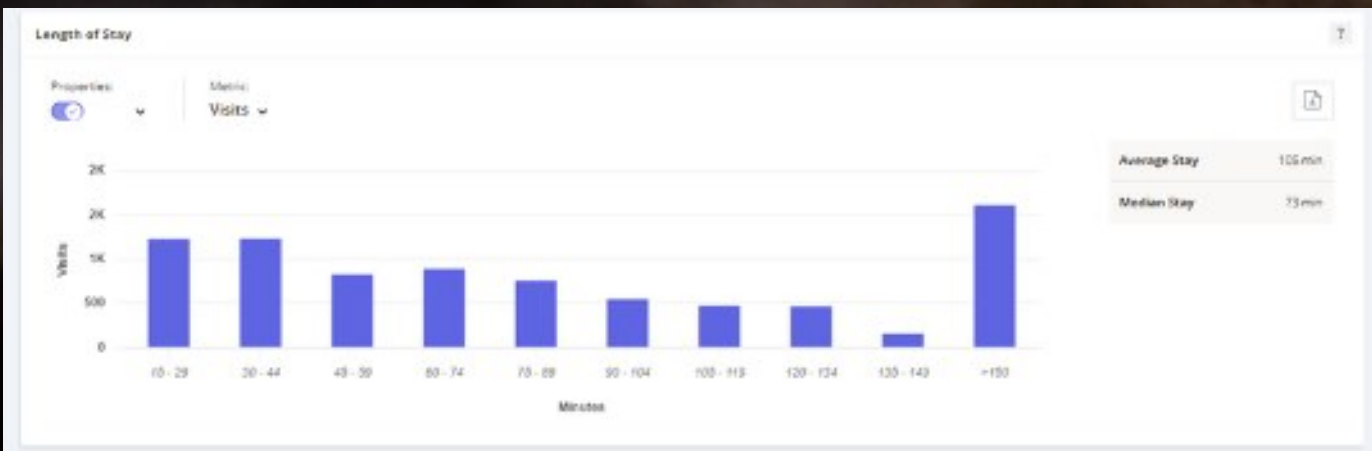


While brainstorming the best way to create some buzz about our upcoming Jeepers Creepers, we knew we had to be creative. While Facebook and other traditional marketing platforms work, we needed something new and unique. That's when we decided that the best way to let people know would be for our friends to tell them in person as they wandered Downtown Fountain Inn.

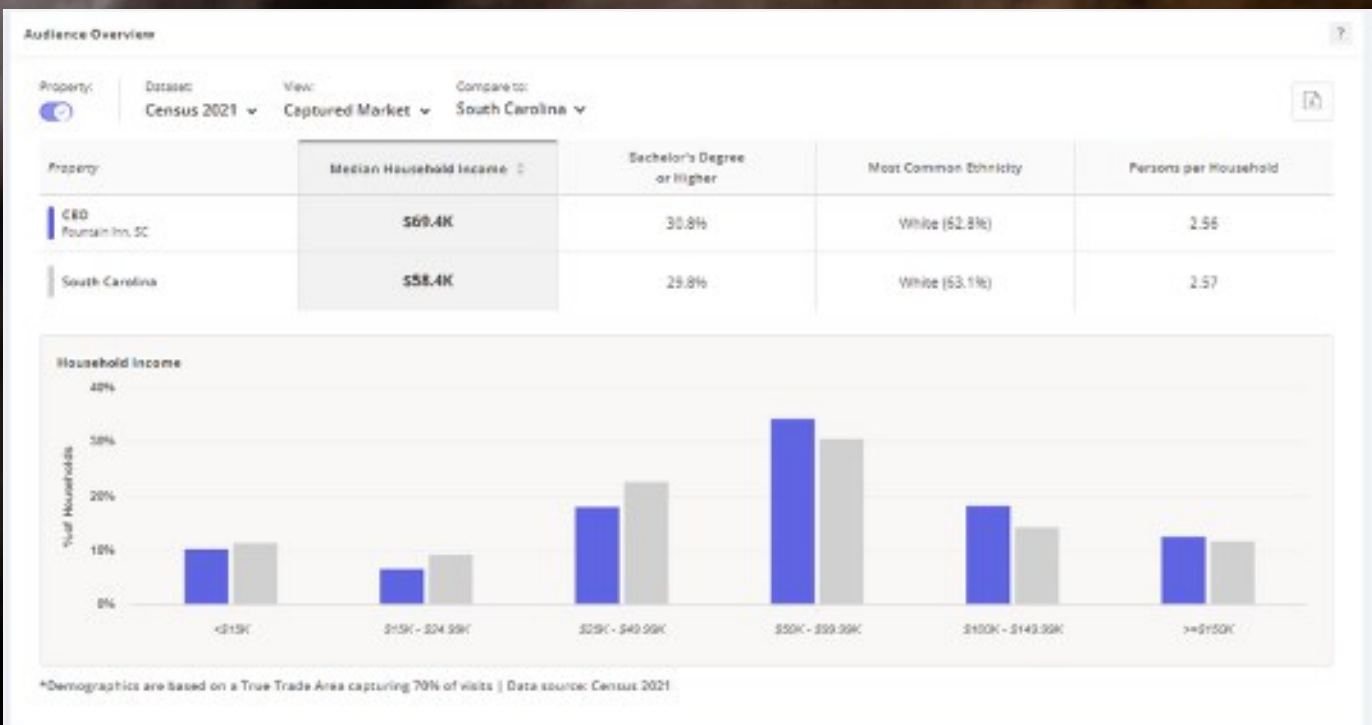
Jeepers Creepers was our first annual Halloween themed Jeep Cruise. We knew that with a Halloween Theme, we had a great opportunity to be creative with our marketing. Skeletons were strategically placed on benches along the route for folks to take pictures with our frightening friends. With names like Scary Potter, Captain Jack Marrow, and Mr. Bone-Jangles, they were the perfect Jeepers Creepers Ambassadors!



Jeepers Creepers Cruise Inn lasted from 6pm - 9pm. 7pm was our busiest time, with the visitors. The trunk or treat area was packed, leading to lots of folks dancing, and high participation in the hay maze.



The average stay at the Jeepers Creepers Cruise Inn lasted 105 minutes.



# Public Reception

**Mack Blackstone**  
October 28, 2023 · 🌐

Jeepers Creepers Cruise Inn and Trunk or Treat | City of Fountain Inn was a SUCCESS!!!! We never ran out of candy and we painted the City purple and green tonight!! Thank you Joshua McCaleb for letting me borrow the awesome ride!!! A HUGE THANK YOU to my friends and family for helping me tonight!! Couldn't have done it without them!! THANK YOU to the Event Staff!! Shout out to the police officers at the Fountain Inn Police Department, and the Fire Department for keeping us all safe tonight!! Shout out to public works for helping keep everything cleaned up and clutter free!! Huge shoutout to CJ Mason for helping get the jeeps parked and set up!! Was an incredible night in the INN! Over 200 jeeps and thousands of children in downtown!! Such an Honor to be PRESENT in MY community tonight and be able to be a small part of such event!! Nothing like actually serving your OWN community!! Until next year!!



**Cheeky Tees, LLC**  
This was so much fun!! 🍊❤️  
12w Love Reply Hide

**Bobbie Schilder**  
October 28, 2023 · 🌐

FI you have outdone yourself. The Jeepers Creepers event was amazing. I'm so proud to be part of this community.

👍❤️ Mack Blackstone, Heather Carpenter and 191 others 42 comments

👍 Like Comment 📄 Send

**Marci A. Martin**  
Great event! We never been bc we never had a kids and now we do. The line was long took an hr going one way and then half way and we couldn't even finish we were getting hungry so we tried the new place "farehouse" which was very good 🍌 another good restaurant! Love our little town ❤️

12w Like Reply

**Brian Kelly**  
Very Crowded, another great event from the city of Fountain Inn.

12w Like Reply

**Mary Anna**  
This was absolutely amazing! It was so much fun!

12w Like Reply

**Miranda Moore**  
We had a great time

12w Like Reply



12w Like Reply

**Jay Lawrence**  
October 29, 2023 · 🌐

Absolutely amazing night at Jeepers Creepers, my wife and I moved here from central NC at the beginning of the year. We came from a very unconnected area, even our own neighbors were not social. We picked FI for this exact purpose, and last night confirmed once again that we had made the right decision. Thank you to the folks that put this event together and to the police presence that made it feel completely safe.

👍❤️ Mary Campbell, Melody McCoy and 128 others 13 comments

🗨️ Comment 📄 Send

**Marlowe Schuck**  
It was so fun!!! Thank you for making it such an awesome event City of Fountain Inn!!

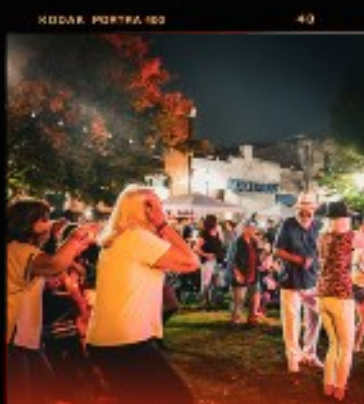
12w Love Reply Hide

This was our first time and loved it. We ran out of candy within 30 mins. Reloaded at the Dollar General and still ended up running out. We gave away our bats off the Jeep. Lots of fun. Beyond Loaded Fries was the BOMB.

12w Like Reply



# Event Photos



**Expense**

\$1,477.24	SPOOKY DUCKS
\$3,500	VINYL JUNKIES
\$2,968.00	SOUND - PRODUCTIONS UNLIMITED
\$690.54	HALLOWEEN TOTE BAGS
\$375.00	STRAW BALES
\$450.00	PUMPKINS
\$195.00	FACE PAINTER
\$1,650.00	ROLLING VIDEO GAMES - 2 FOG MACHINES
\$32.84	MERMAID SKELETON
\$72.04	HALLOWEEN WRISTBANDS
\$35.31	DECOR COFFIN
\$1,173.55	GHOST POLE DECOR - PUMPKIN TREE DECOR - PAINT - SELFIE STATION DECOR
\$28.60	BEST JEEP TROPHY
\$347.55	SKELETONS
\$38.42	PAINTING SUPPLIES
\$11.66	HAUNTED HOUSE DECOR
\$814.40	PORTABLE TOILETS - ADA - 2 STANDARD

**\$13,860.15 Total Expenses**

**Income**

\$10,000 City of Fountain Inn  
\$3,000 Donations

**\$13,000 Total Income**

**-860.15 Revenue**



January 17, 2024

Southeast Festival & Events Association  
Best Events Under \$20,000 Award Selection Committee  
Best New Event Award Selection Committee

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to commit my support for the City of Fountain Inn's (SC) *Jeepers Creepers* event held in 2023 for the following awards at your annual conference:

- Best New Event
- Best Event Under \$20,000

In 2023, our community launched a new Halloween-centered event, *Jeepers Creepers*. Capitalizing on the popularity of Jeeps in the area, our community's strong Halloween traditions, and our historic downtown, this event exceeded every expectation. In our town of just under 12,000 residents, our downtown saw over 8,000 visitors in just around four hours (this is based on cell phone data, so does not include all children), with an average dwell time in our downtown of over one and half hours. With Jeeps lining our historic Main Street, thousands of residents in costume, and all our businesses brimming with customers – it was a great night to be in Fountain Inn, as it always is.

Events are a central part of our community's economic and community development strategy – they are not only produced “for fun.” Through our events, such as *Jeepers Creepers*, our businesses see large increases in sales, are introduced to new customers, and sustain local jobs. Sometimes, businesses see their largest sales of the year during our events, which happened at one of our local restaurants during *Jeepers Creepers*.

Beyond the economic impact of our events, they also offer unique and meaningful moments for our community members to connect with one another. Community is built on “shared experiences” - a philosophy we live by in our City Hall. Our goal is to create positive “shared experiences” for our residents and businesses, all to strengthen our bonds between each other and strengthen our community's heart.

I am proud to support our team in their efforts and look forward to their consideration for these distinguished awards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "GP McLeer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Mayor GP McLeer  
City of Fountain Inn, South Carolina