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FAYETTE COMMUNITY

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2018-2019



A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC
**POPULAR NEW
FAYETTE EVENT**

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RUN FOR IT!

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NIGHT MARKET:
A MONTHLY EVENING
EVENT WHERE PEOPLE
OF ALL AGES CAN
GATHER, MILL, SIP,
MUNCH, AND CONNECT –
ALL WHILE ADMIRING
TALENTED LOCAL
ARTISTS AND ENJOYING
FANTASTIC LIVE MUSIC.



PHOTO BY MARIE THOMAS

GOOD
TIMES
■ ■ ■
FAYETTE



CHAMBER'S YOUNG PROFESSIONALS OF THE YEAR CREATE POPULAR NEW FAYETTE EVENT

WRITTEN BY MAGGIE WORTH

**RT MUSIC, FOOD TRUCKS,
CRAFT BEER. A PERFECT
SETTING. A PERFECT NIGHT.**

That's what Jason Bass and Tommy Ruth had in mind when they dreamed up Night Market, a monthly evening event where people of all ages could gather, mill, sip, munch, and connect - all while admiring talented local artists and enjoying fantastic live music.

And it's exactly what they created. "The best stuff comes out of sitting around talking with other people who have lots of ideas," Jason says. "And that's exactly how Night Market started. Tommy and I are recent transplants who've opened businesses here, and were both really passionate about the area's future. There's been terrific growth in Fayette and there's such great energy, but people are constantly saying there's not enough to do, especially in the evenings."

A little NIGHT MARKET

From left, Daniel Bowman, Zack Brewer, Tommy Ruth and Jason Bass are the brains behind Fayette County's Night Music, evenings filled with great music and great food. Photo by Marie Thomas.





GOOD TIMES
FAYETTE
COMMUNITY

"WHEN MY PARTNERS AND I GOT HERE, WE KNEW, BEING THE NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK, THAT WE NEEDED TO MEET PEOPLE AND MAKE FRIENDS. SO WE GOT INVOLVED WITH THE CHAMBER AND WE SHOWED UP IN SERVICE TO OTHERS AND IT BECAME OUR LAUNCHING PAD."

TOMMY RUTH,
CO-OWNER OF MALT
MAKER MEDIA

no idea so many people would be interested. It was immediately obvious that the community is hungry for this kind of event."

For November's event, the crew doubled the number of vendors and food trucks. Unfortunately, temperatures dropped radically, but about 1,500 people still came out and they considered the evening another success. December brought even colder temps - and snow, as we all recall - so they had to cancel, and March's event was rained out.

But Night Market was back with style in April with vintage rock from four bands: The Ties, the Honey Stripes, Exit 27, and The Ides of June. Vendors offered everything from fine



art, including handmade art jewelry, pottery, photography, wearables, and woodcrafts, to homemade organic bath and beauty products to spice blends, specialty teas, local honey, and other food items. The event's 50 vendors (including six food trucks, six alcohol vendors) said they were very happy with the results. Community members, too, left rave reviews about the evening.

"It was amazing," Jason says. "Absolutely amazing. Everyone had a terrific time."

Night Market isn't just a great way for local vendors to connect with the community and a fun place to spend an evening. Each Night Market benefits a local nonprofit, something its founders feel is incredibly important. "We didn't really go into this with the expectation of making a profit,"

Jason says. "We were just really interested in bringing people together. And part of investing in the community is investing in its nonprofits, so that's a natural fit."

"We wanted to give the community a place to congregate," Tommy adds. "We wanted to give people a time to just come and enjoy each other, listen to good music. And we wanted to create a specific atmosphere, something people would remember, something special. I think we've done that and it's very satisfying to see."

The Fayette Chamber was certainly impressed. Night Market - as well as Jason's and Tommy's other involvement in the community - led to the pair being named, along with Night Market team members Daniel Bowman and Zack Brewer, the 2017 Young Professionals of the Year. "You know, you hear them start

talking about the person who's being named," Tommy says of receiving the award, "and all of a sudden you realize it's you and it's surreal. We were so surprised and it's such an honor. Now we want to live up to it. We want to make Night Market - and everything else we do in the community - worthy of the honor we've received."

"To be recognized for starting something in a community you think of as home is really incredible," Jason adds.

Interestingly, the men honored for Night Market are recent transplants. Jason, who owns JasonHunter Design and specializes in websites, SEO, social media, and branding, came from New Jersey. Tommy, Daniel, and Zack, who co-own creative agency Malt Maker Media, came from Kentucky, where they met while in college. All four, however, now

consider Fayette their community. And all say the award was an incredible honor.

"This was a very humbling experience for me," Zack says, "but also a real reflection of how I've grown, and on the effect Tommy and Daniel and others have had on me. I never intended to be in an entrepreneurial environment. I didn't know I was capable of it. I've grown so much since joining Malt Maker and this award is absolutely because of them."

I love that we were honored for involvement in such an incredible, versatile event," Daniel adds. "I have friends who are still in college who drive down for it, but also, my 68-year-old father-in-law says it's the most fun event he's been to in years. That really says something, I think."

For Tommy and Jason, who are both also heavily involved in StartUp Fayette and other local growth initiatives, Night Market is simply a way of giving back to a community they say has welcomed them from the beginning.

"The Chamber has been good to us and for us," Tommy says. "When my partners and I got here, we knew, being the new kids on the block, that we needed to meet people and make friends. So we got involved with the Chamber and we showed up in service to others and it became our launching pad. We're invested in this community now and we want to see it thrive."

Jason agrees completely. "I started my business while in college, eighteen years ago," he says. "But it has really thrived since I've been in Fayette. Southern hospitality is a real thing. This is a very close community and we really wanted to do our part to get more people involved, to give people another way to connect."

Certainly, the group's April 2018 Night Market event provided just that: Tommy and Jason estimate about 6,000 people came out to enjoy the evening. Given the atmosphere and incredible array of vendors, it's no surprise.

Night Market is the kind of thing you want your weekend to be," Zack explains. "It's a ton of fun and a great way to spend a Saturday night. For me, it was the kind of thing I didn't even know I was missing until I saw it. There's always something unexpected, something interesting. I think we're all very proud to be part of it."

The Young Professional of the Year award is sponsored by Hartshel-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. ■