

Headlining The News In 1983

As the citizens of Duplin County busily welcome a new year, many of the events of 1983 have become history. So, let us learn from the past in order to have a better future.

January headlines from the 1983 DUPLIN TIMES announced the reduction of the 1983 tobacco poundage. Construction began on a 62,000 square-foot freezer warehouse near Wallace. Union officials signed a contract with the J.P. Stevens & Co. textile plant in Wallace, ending an eight-year effort by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers to win the contract with the plant. The town of Warsaw signed an agreement to loan National Spinning funds from a federal grant to update the plant. Duplin General Hospital reported its operating expenses exceeded its income by \$209,749 during the 1981-82 fiscal year.

February news for 1983 told of farmers beginning to sign up for the Payment-In-Kind program and the cost of leasing tobacco poundage had jumped 10 cents from the previous season. Local independent truckers parked their vehicles to join a nationwide strike against new state and federal taxes. The donation of the historical Kelly-Farrior house to the county was announced by the Kenansville branch of United Carolina Bank. The house was later moved to the Kenansville municipal park for the future use as the Cowan Museum and the office of the Duplin County Arts Council. Rains overloaded the Warsaw sewage treatment plant three days following the acceptance of the new \$2 million facility.

Headlines during March followed with news of an increase of \$3,735,586 in Duplin agricultural income from 1981 to 1982. Calypso announced plans to celebrate the town's 70th birthday. The Duplin County Sheriff's Department announced the recovery of more than 50 percent of the stolen property reported during 1981. Efforts to revive the North Carolina Poultry Festival in Rose Hill succeeded and the largest frying pan in the world was readied for the event. Citizens appeared before the Beaulville Town Board of Commissioners to request the old town hall, a condemned structure, be renovated for use as a library and drivers license examiner's office. Owners of land in Maxwell Creek organized to begin efforts to reduce flood and erosion in its watershed. The Warsaw plant of National Spinning began taking applications for the first time in two and a half years.

April headlines were of the North Carolina State University basketball team capturing the hearts and dreams of Americans everywhere by winning the national cham-

pionship. A district court judge threatened to jail a Kenansville property owner who defied previous court orders to stop construction of an office without a building permit. Losses in jobs and potential income for chicken growers was predicted to exceed \$3 million a year when Watson Seafood and Poultry Co. in Rose Hill failed. The Duplin County Board of Commissioners tentatively approved the request from J.P. Stevens Co. for the sale of \$1 million in tax-free bonds to retrofit the Carter Plant in Wallace.

Silver thefts in Warsaw amounted to \$18,000 in losses, according to May issues of THE DUPLIN TIMES. Headlines followed that month reporting area farmers just beginning to plant due to late freezes and rain. The town of Rose Hill announced plans to begin construction of a sewage treatment plant in January of 1984. The Duplin County Board of Election registered 341 voters during the in-school visits throughout Duplin's senior classes.

June brought headlines of a new crop for Beaulville. Farmers Laurie and Sherwood Jackson of Beaulville planted 69 acres of Irish potatoes. The Faison Williams home, built in 1853 in the town of Faison, was restored and opened to the public. Craig Warren, a senior at South Lenoir High School, was named state champion in the two-mile race. He won the title in high school competition at Raleigh. Produce sales were off to a late start at the Faison Produce Market. John Rice, the former star of the outdoor drama Blackbeard, arrived in Duplin to join the 1983 production of the Duplin outdoor drama THE LIBERTY CART. Rice led in the role of Phenius Pickett at THE LIBERTY CART. Duplin residents were faced with a tax increase of 5 cents per \$100 assessed valuation for the next year, bringing the rate to 75 cents. Kenansville Baptist Church celebrated its 146th anniversary. A new display was sent to the Legislative Building in Raleigh depicting the outdoor drama THE LIBERTY CART; the mural was painted by James Sprunt Technical College Commercial Art Instructor Mark Patrus.

July headlines informed the local citizens of changes. The Duplin General Hospital Board of Trustees was reduced from 28 to nine voting members. The Duplin County Department of Social Services announced transportation to the North Carolina Memorial Hospital in Chapel Hill. The 1983 season of the outdoor drama THE LIBERTY CART based in Kenansville was dedicated to James F. Strickland of Warsaw. An increase in the number of patients and infusion of county funds improved Duplin General Hos-

pital's financial position. Fire destroyed the N.N. Ellis Produce warehouse and packing shed located seven miles west of Faison.

The headlines for August began with the opening of the eastern tobacco belt including sales at the warehouses in Wallace. Sales at the Wallace tobacco markets averaged only one cent above 1982 opening day prices. The Duplin public schools excused students involved in tobacco production. Furnie and Margaret Boyette of Kenansville were named the North Carolina Conservation Farm Family of the Year. Governor Jim Hunt met with the state Advisory Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Seafood Industry in Kenansville. Swift & Co. turkey grow-out operation and feed mill at Hartells was sold to William Prestage of Clinton, and an announcement was made for an expanded turkey production operation under the new management.

Headlines in September stated the approval of the half-cent sales tax in Duplin by the County Commissioners. The Faison Historical Commission announced tentative plans to open the town library in the newly restored depot building during October. Duplin County and two of its towns and one industry received federal development or improvement grants and loans totaling \$1,719,376. Duplin school officials announced the outline of a \$10 million plan to replace school facilities and expand school services in the county. The Beaulville Town Board approved the purchase of a computer system for billing, taxes and record-keeping at the town hall. Dr. Kenneth Lee was named as a member of the staff of Goshen Medical Center in Faison and Plain View Medical Clinic in Greenevers. The Duplin County Health Department announced plans for a maternity clinic in Kenansville with Dr. M.I. Ammar, M.D. in charge.

October headlines included celebration of William Thornton Day in Faison. Thornton, a native of Faison, was among the crew members of the space shuttle Challenger during the August mission. Branch Banking & Trust of Wallace donated \$10,000 to the town's library during the 50-year anniversary celebration of the bank. The 1983 Duplin Agribusiness Fair opened in Kenansville running October 3-8. A children's wear manufacturing company located in Warsaw under the name of Duplin Manufacturing. Goshen Medical Center announced a tentative plan for relocating its doctors as full-time staff members at Duplin General Hospital from Sampson Memorial Hospital.

Bids were opened for the Muddy Creek project

according to November headlines. Channel work on the second phase of the Muddy Creek Watershed project in eastern Duplin County was scheduled to begin December 1. Duplin towns held local elections to fill expiring seats of commissioners and mayors. Attorney and Duplin native Robert L. West was honored at the 1983 celebration of the Warsaw Veterans Day. B.F. Grady teacher Jackie Herring was named Duplin Teacher of the Year. Goshen Medical Center in Faison and Plain View Health Clinic at Greenevers requested Rural Health Incentive of Atlanta add a third physician to share the workload at the two facilities. Duplin County announced a water system bond referendum for January in the Albertson district. The Kenansville Jaycees received recognition as the Number One Chapter in the state.

December headlines announced the uniting of the Duplin Chapters of the Jaycees and Jaycettes to raise funds for the possible liver transplant surgery of Kenansville infant Ashley Quinn. The Kenansville Jaycees announced plans to host a radiothon to raise money toward the goal set at \$50,000 to help the Quinn family. The Muddy Creek Watershed project was suspended by the Army Corps of Engineers because of an excessive amount of spoil material from earlier work on the creek. Duplin General Hospital announced the turnaround in financial status with the year ending and books showing the facility \$260,898 in the black. Duplin farmer Furnie Lee Boyette was invited to the White House along with 10 other conservation farmers and ranchers from throughout the United States.

