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Kelly Remains Free On Bond As DA Considers Next Move

By CLIFF CLARK

After serving six years in Central Prison as a convicted child molester, Robert Kelly Jr. walked out of the Pitt County Detention Center Friday afternoon a free man...at least for now.

"Our intention is to retry these cases," said First Judicial District Attorney Frank Parrish. However, he qualified his remarks by saying that "it is necessary, of course, to examine the quality and quantity of the evidence and discuss with the parents of the children involved the effect a new trial might have on them."

First Judicial District Assistant District Attorney Nancy Lamb, who served as a special prosecutor in Kelly's first trial, said the DA's office is currently "talking to the families and talking to the children and looking

at what evidence exists" that could be used if Parrish decides to retry the case. Lamb said the reason for contacting the parents is because of the amount of time that has elapsed since Kelly's conviction in April of 1992. The conviction came at the end of the longest and most expensive trial in North Carolina history.

She declined to say what the parents have suggested to Parrish about a possible retrial.

Kelly's release came after his wife, Betsy, posted a \$200,000 secured bond using her family's property as collateral. Mrs. Kelly, who earlier pleaded no contest to similar charges, is currently on parole and living in Edenton with her daughter.

"It is a very happy day for us," said Betsy Kelly, after Superior Court Judge James Ragan established a new bond during a

hearing at the Pitt County Courthouse on Thursday. While supporters of Kelly were jubilant over his release, parents of the children allegedly victimized by Kelly expressed disappointment.

"He's a very dangerous man," said Susan Small, parent of one of the children who testified.

When asked if her family and the other families were prepared for his release, she answered, "We went to the courthouse realizing that he would probably be released. We were prepared emotionally."

Small said the hardest thing has been trying to explain to her children why adults sometimes appear to dodge punishment for their actions.

"It's been very difficult for the children. Children understand that when they do something wrong they will get punished. How do we explain that some-

times adults don't get punished for their actions?"

When asked what her reaction would be if Parrish decided to dismiss the charges, she answered, "Will I be happy? No. But I will support his decision. We have known since this started that it could happen."

If Parrish decides to retry Kelly, Small said that the families "would do what we have to do."

Kelly's quest for freedom began immediately after his conviction in 1992 on 99 counts of first-degree sexual abuse of children. He was sentenced to 12 life sentences by Superior Court Judge D. Marsh McLelland. Attorneys working for him filed an appeal a few weeks after his convictions. He had been in jail or prison since 1989 when he was first charged with the crimes.

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When Bob Kelly Jr. arrived at the Pitt County Courthouse for his bond hearing, he was surrounded by members of the press. He was allowed to answer questions for about five minutes. (Staff photo by Cliff Clark)

48th Chowan County Fair Will Combine Old, New Features

By CLIFF CLARK

With whirling rides, plenty of cotton candy, games of chance, a petting zoo, and a new tram that will help transport people from the parking areas to the entertainment, the 48th annual Chowan County Fair is sure to be another big success when it opens on Oct. 3.

"This is sure to be our biggest fair yet," said John Chilcoat, director of public relations for this year's fair.

While all features that people have come to expect are still there, the organizers of the fair have worked many hours getting the facilities ready for the annual event, which is expected to attract tens of thousands of people from the area.

Jim Hackett, with the help of Bill Schmidt, has rewired nearly evening building on the American Legion Post property.

But perhaps, more importantly, the fair organizers have

acquired additional property to allow for increased parking this year.

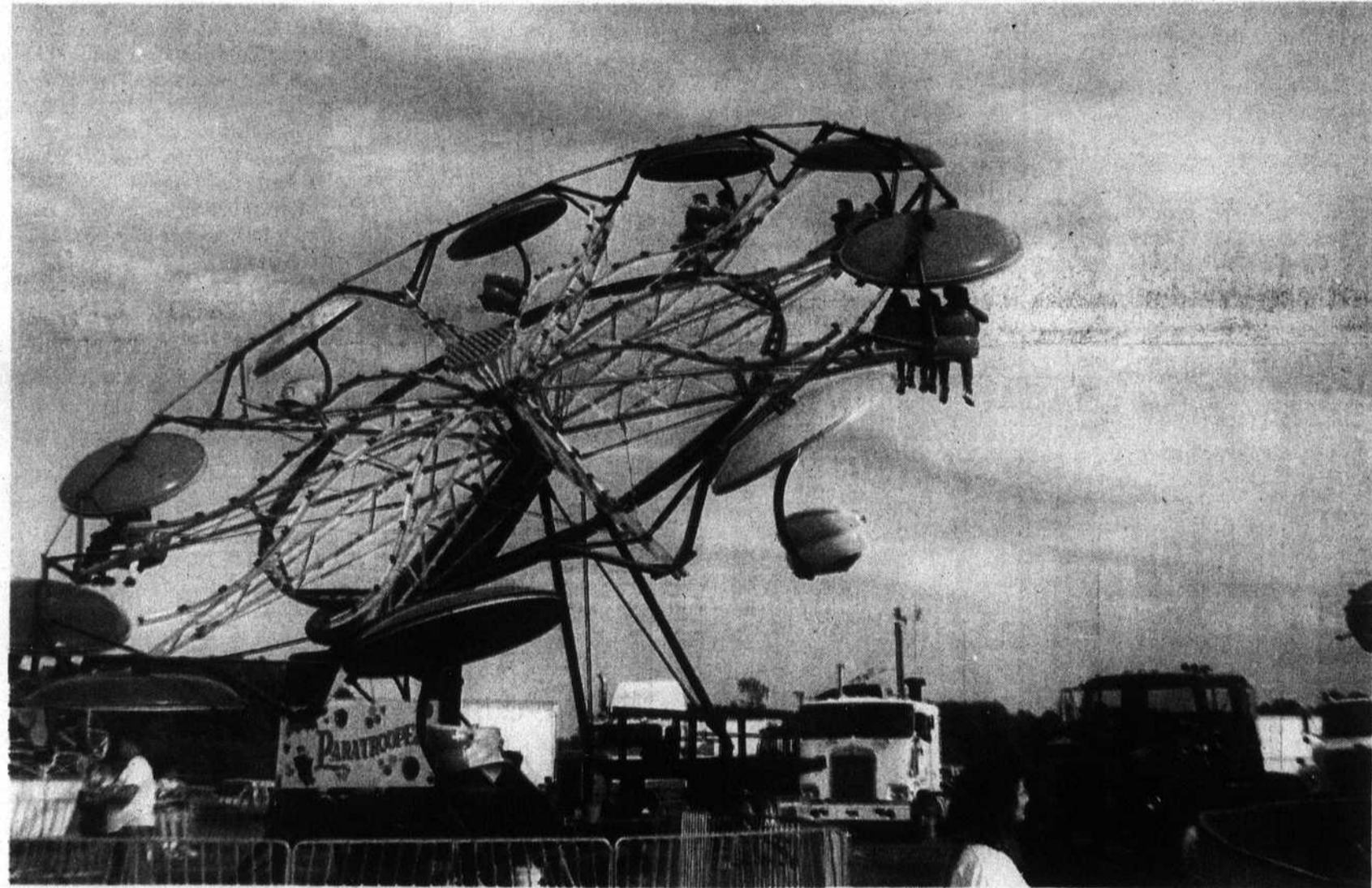
"We think we'll be able to park between 500 and 600 additional cars this year since we've gotten the new property," said Chilcoat.

This, said Chilcoat, will be a great benefit to those who attend the fair during the weekend. "Last year, we really had a problem with people parking on the side of the road. With our new parking area, we hope we will be able to accommodate all of those who attend."

Because the distance between the new parking and the fairgrounds has increased, Hackett, with help from many others, has built two trams to ferry people to and from the fairgrounds.

"The trams can hold up to 26 people and are even handicap accessible," said Hackett, who spent three and a half months building trams, which will be

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The 48th Annual Chowan County Fair will open next Tuesday, October 3. Among this year's attractions will be live entertainment, a petting zoo, exciting rides and games of chance. Two new features of this year's fair will be expanded parking and a tram that will transport people to and from the parking areas.

Document Signing To Be Highlight Of Meeting

By CLIFF CLARK

Described as "enthusiasts and crusaders," almost 300 historical preservationists from across North Carolina will descend on Edenton this weekend to attend Preservation North Carolina's 1995 Annual Conference.

Apart from a full schedule of workshops and forums that will be held during the event, a significant document designed to protect the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse will be signed by Chowan County Board of Commission Chairman James Taylor protecting the courthouse and the Edenton Green forever.

"It's a preservation covenant that will be on file at the Chowan County Register of Deeds office

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Calendar of Activities

Marker To Be Placed

On Thursday, September 28 at 3 pm a Daughters of the American Revolution Historic Marker will be dedicated on the grounds of the James Iredell House. This marker will be dedicated to the 13 Edenton Tea Party DAR members that saved and restored the Iredell House. The public is invited to attend.

Support Group To Meet

"The Alzheimer's Disease Support Group will meet at 7:30 pm, Thursday, September 28, at Winslow Memorial Home, 1700 W. Ehringhaus Street. All interested persons are invited to attend.

Annual Turkey Shoots Set

The V.F.W. Post 7312 of Sunbury, NC will sponsor Turkey Shoots at the Post Home on Hwy 158 every Friday night starting on Oct. 6 through Dec. 23. The event will start at 7 pm until and will feature both turkey and ham rounds. Participants can use either shotgun or 22 rifle. For more information, call 919-357-1494.

Women's GOP Group Is Forming

The Albemarle Federation of Republican Women, serving Chowan and Perquimans Counties, is holding its charter meeting on Thursday, Oct. 5 at 12 noon at the Golden Corral in Edenton. All registered Republican Women, or those who might be interested in becoming registered, are invited. For more information or to make reservations, please call 482-2686 or 482-8266.

Welcome Wagon Is Coming

By REBECCA BUNCH

A community welcome wagon will be the first project tackled by a revamped Chamber Auxiliary group here. The decision was made during a meeting at the Chamber of Commerce last Thursday afternoon.

The new group, unlike its predecessor, will encompass local residents of all ages who would like to participate in the welcome wagon and future projects of the auxiliary.

The auxiliary will be headed by Andy Elliott, a financial analyst for the Edward D. Jones Company in Edenton. Elliott said that he is very excited about the welcome wagon concept and feels it is just the right project for the group to embrace in its early days.

"I think we'll see positive results from that," he said.

"And that will give us a foundation to build on, to try some other things."

Elliott said another potential auxiliary project could involve forming a "feedback committee" that would regularly visit local businesses and industries to find out firsthand about any concerns or difficulties they may be experiencing.

"Belk is about to leave," Elliott said. "We've just got to keep the smaller businesses here. We all need to do everything we can to help." Looking around the room at those assembled, he added, "I feel like we've got the people here that have got the know-how to do that."

Elliott said he was pleased with the turnout Thursday, but wanted to see even more people get involved in the welcome wagon and other auxiliary activities.

"I'm a big supporter of the welcome wagon and of visiting local businesses," he said. "But I think there is still more we can do."

He stressed that all of the auxiliary-related activities would not involve work, however.

"We're thinking about having some type of social events that will be similar to those hosted by the Chamber, but that will be just for the auxiliary members. This will give us an opportunity to reach others in the community who may want to join."

Gordon Fenner said he felt the auxiliary members could develop a system for volunteering their time to share their expertise and ideas with local businesses, a plan that Charlie Shaw pointed out had

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GATES OPEN WEEKDAYS AT 5 PM,
EXCEPT THURS. AT 3:30, SAT. AT 1 PM
MIDWAY CLOSES 11 PM, EXCEPT ON
SAT. IT CLOSES AT 12 MIDNIGHT
EXHIBITS CLOSE NIGHTLY AT 10 PM

Over 30 Rides
GAMES &
FAIR FOOD

48TH ANNUAL
CHOWAN COUNTY
OCT. 3RD - OCT. 7TH • FAIRGROUNDS IN EDENTON

FAIR

FUN FOR
THE ENTIRE FAMILY
EXHIBITS • CONTESTS
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

ADMISSION: \$7 PER PERSON
SAT. FROM 1 - 5 P.M. ALL
YOUTHS THRU HIGH SCHOOL \$5
TUES. NITE EARLY BIRD SPECIAL
ONLY \$5.00 FOR EVERYONE