

PEANUT FESTIVAL



PHOTOS BY NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON/CHOWAN HERALD

The Pasquotank County High School band performs their "Alice in Wonderland" themed show Saturday.

Behind every child is a dedicated adult

Somewhere out there right now, a child is dribbling her basketball. A future Ace is running in a few extra miles after soccer practice to build his stamina.

An eighth-grader is practicing her part for this Friday's performance with the Marching Aces at the football game.

Chowan County's children — whether they are an artist, musician or athlete — do a lot to perfect their talents.

Behind every successful student are parents or other family members who make sure their child has the tools to succeed.

This past Saturday, I saw this in action as I volunteered at the Peanut Festival Battle of the Bands. While some parents from our area has already started their day at 5 a.m. at the John A. Holmes athletic complex, I worked from 5-9 p.m. in the hopes of getting the results and covering the event for the newspaper.

I missed the Marching Aces performance while doling out delicious burgers, but it was worth it. I didn't just get my story, I learned a lot about our community.

Both of my oldest children, who are in the Chowan Middle School band, worked concessions. They quickly became friends with the other Bulldogs there as they assembled meals for hungry customers.

The customers who were in the competing bands complimented each other on a job well done. They also hung out with their fellow band mates, making sure each other went home with full bellies and enthusiasm for the music discipline.

As the battle of the bands progressed into the late hours, the adult volunteer looked a little worn out, but they were smiling and still



NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON

able to joke with one another. The parents, friend and family of the visiting bands were just as loud at 9 p.m. as they were at 4 or 5

p.m. It was incredible to see all the work that goes into putting together a half-time performance. Some bands didn't just have trailers for their gear, they brought in big U-hauls full of instruments, panels and other things that make the music come alive.

The Peanut Festival shuts down Edenton's Broad Street for one Saturday every fall. It's a short parade, but when you see all the people come out, it really shows how much our community cares about all its children.

That uplifting spirit is something that comes from helping others. The Peanut Festival is organized by adults, but it's really for the kids. The funds help Chowan Middle and John A. Holmes band programs compete in other places, get new uniforms and even fund the making of the props used at halftime.

Those programs help students learn math, appreciate music and learn valuable organization and leadership skills. In time, these students will be successful adults running our country.

Somewhere in Chowan County, a middle school student is practicing his instrument. It may not be pitch perfect, but it's the sweetest music you'll ever hear, as it the song of promise and hope.

To the dedicated friends and family behind that student, you rock.



The John A. Holmes High School Marching Aces performs Saturday during the Peanut Festival Parade.



Above: The Chowan Middle School students march in the parade. Right: The Currituck High School band performs Saturday during the Peanut Festival's Battle of the Bands. Below: A tractor in the parade.



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PEANUT

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they were still smiling.

Later in the day, as the buses, trailers and U-hauls carrying 12 bands and their equipment started to fill the school's parking lot, other vehicles — filled with band parents and supporters — came in. While band practiced and perfected their performances before competing in front of several judges and a crowd of well over 700 people, parents and siblings carefully assembled visual pieces, checked electrical equipment and unloaded big instruments off the U-hauls and trailers.

To get the 12 bands — and the Marching Aces — there took dedication and support from students and family members alike. For example, as the Smithfield-Selma High School band waited for its turn to perform, parents carefully applied mirrors to towers that were used in their performance. The band from Smithfield was named Band of the Day and received the Fred Gebhardt Award, winning two of the top prizes at the Peanut Festival.

The Gebhardt Award, presented in memory of Fred Gebhardt, a longtime drill designer and instructor for the Marching Aces, goes to the band that achieves the highest marching and visual performance. Band of the Day honors go to the band that achieves the highest overall score of the day.

Hampton High School, the only band from neighboring Virginia, received the Otis Strother Award. The award is presented annually in honor of Otis

Strother.

"Strother was an instrumental music educator in the Edenton-Chowan Schools for 20 years and a founder of the Peanut Festival," Aces Band Director Lynn Dale said in a previous story. "This award is presented to the band that has displayed professionalism, spirit and cooperation throughout the day."

Kip Vinson, this year's festival organizer, said that the event went well.

"Other band directors have been happy with what we're doing," he said. "We had so many good bands this year."

Vinson also noted that in the spring, the festival organizers hope to reach out to more bands in Virginia so they put the Edenton festival on their fall schedule.

Vinson noted that the festival sold out of their allotment of Leon Nixon's Catering barbecue and fried chicken dinners. Although doubling their hamburger order, they almost ran out of the popular item. He also thanked the local Pizza Hut and other businesses and sponsors for helping with the fundraising effort.

Peanut Festival proceeds benefit Edenton-Chowan Schools band programs. The money is split between Chowan Middle and John A. Holmes and allows the bands to go to competitions, get new equipment or other necessary items.

While the festival volunteers, which included Chowan Middle School band students, worked behind the scenes, the real focus was on field and the band competition.

Smithfield-Selma, which

Dale said was the largest band attending the festival in recent memory, swept its Class AAAA category.

Many performances focus on technology as their theme. For example, Camden High School Big Blue Machine's performance was entitled, "Talk to Me," and looked at how people are buried in their smartphones. During the performance, the audience went through time seeing how Morse code evolved into rotary phones which paved the way for the handheld devices of today.

Currituck High School's performance looked at things from a man against machines angle.

Roanoke Rapids High School, from Roanoke Rapids, focused its performance on "Words," using music to convey how different words and phrases effect people.

Pasquotank County High School had a modern take at a classic by taking on "Alice in Wonderland," complete with members of the color guard dressing as Alice, the White Rabbit and the Red Queen's guards.

The repetition of lines from films such as the 1951 Disney animated film and Alan Rickman's caterpillar in the 2010 version — "Alice, at last" — added to the performance.

Trophy sponsors included the Bakers, Lynn and Jennifer Dale, Vidant Health and Tommy Vinson.

The following awards were given:

Class A

Cape Hatteras Secondary School — 2nd place, color guard; 2nd place, visual; 2nd place, general effect; 1st place, music; 2nd place, overall.

Gates County High School — 1st place, drum major; 1st place, color guard; 3rd place, percussion; 3rd place, visual; 3rd place, general effect; 3rd place, music.

Manteo High School — 2nd place, drum major; 1st place, percussion; 3rd place, overall.

Perquimans High School — 3rd place, drum major; 3rd place, color guard; 2nd place, percussion; 1st place, visual; 1st place, general effect; 2nd place, music; 1st place, overall.

Class AA

Riverside (Williamston) — 1st place, percussion; 3rd place, visual; 3rd place,

music.

Roanoke Rapids (Roanoke Rapids) — 1st place, drum major; 2nd place, color guard; 2nd place, percussion; 1st place, drum major; 1st place, general effect; 1st place, music; 1st place, overall.

Southwest Edgecombe (Pinetops) — 2nd place, drum major; 1st place, color guard; 2nd place, drum major; 2nd place, visual; 3rd place, general effect; 3rd place, overall.

Pasquotank County — 3rd place, drum major; 3rd place, color guard; 3rd place, percussion; 1st place, visual; 2nd place, general effect; 2nd place, music; 2nd place, overall.

Class AAA

Hampton — 1st place, drum major; 3rd place, color guard; 1st place, percussion; 3rd place, visual; 3rd place,

general effect; 3rd place, music; 3rd place, overall; Otis Strother Award.

Camden — 2nd place, drum major; 1st place, color guard; 2nd place, percussion; 1st place, visual; 1st place, general effect; 1st place, music; 1st place, overall.

Currituck — 3rd place, drum major; 2nd place, color guard; 3rd place, percussion; 2nd place, visual; 2nd place, general effect; 2nd place, music; 2nd place, overall.

Class AAA

Smithfield-Selma — 1st place, drum major; 1st place, color guard; 1st, percussion; 1st place, visual; 1st place, general effect; 1st place, music; 1st place, overall; Fred Gebhardt Award, Band of the Day Award.

Spayden's Supermarket
Belvidere, N.C.

Plan 1	2pc 3/4 Ribeye Steak	2lb Chicken Drums
	2lb Ground Chuck	2pc Chicken Breast
	2lb Stew Beef	2cups Carolina BBQ
	2lb Link Sausage	2pk Hotdogs
	2lb Pork Chops	1lb Cheese

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5:30 PM Great Food & Great speaker.

\$250 Bass Pro door prize

Bring your own gun for turkey shoot and gun & shells for skeet.

Participants under age 18 must be accompanied by parent/guardian.



Registration \$10--Registration & instructions at 2:00 pm at First Assembly of God--1201 West Queen St., Edenton

