

Welcome to First Night!

From the Executive Producer



This is the year the Piedmont will witness the culmination of a pleasurable, year-long toil of hundreds and hundreds of citizens. A spectacle is planned for you! I am sure your first impression of this year's First Night Piedmont celebration will be "How can they do that for a \$6 button (ticket) price?" I sometimes ask myself that. Especially since I can't even watch my daughter cheer on her high school football team and buy a soft drink for that price, or see a current movie, much less buy popcorn, too.

Though the value of First Night Piedmont is obvious, there may be someone you know that still may not be able to attend. This year we urge you to do your part to help someone attend this wonderful event. Make someone safe. Buy someone a button. . . your daughter, or grandson, or someone not able to fend for themselves. We will provide family packages at the First Night Piedmont Office and the High Point Arts Council at reduced prices. Also, if you know someone truly in need, you may contact me directly to work something out. You see, First Night is for all of us. This year, there are more than 300 entertainers, most of which would charge more than the button price to see them individually on any given Friday or Saturday night! "How can they do that?"

The answer to the question above is clear in the minds of all of us that are close to the production of First Night. We can do it because there is a whole community, a whole Piedmont Triad coming together to make it possible. There are incredible stories to share. Stories of the High Point Arts Council bravely spear heading the first entertainment hub in

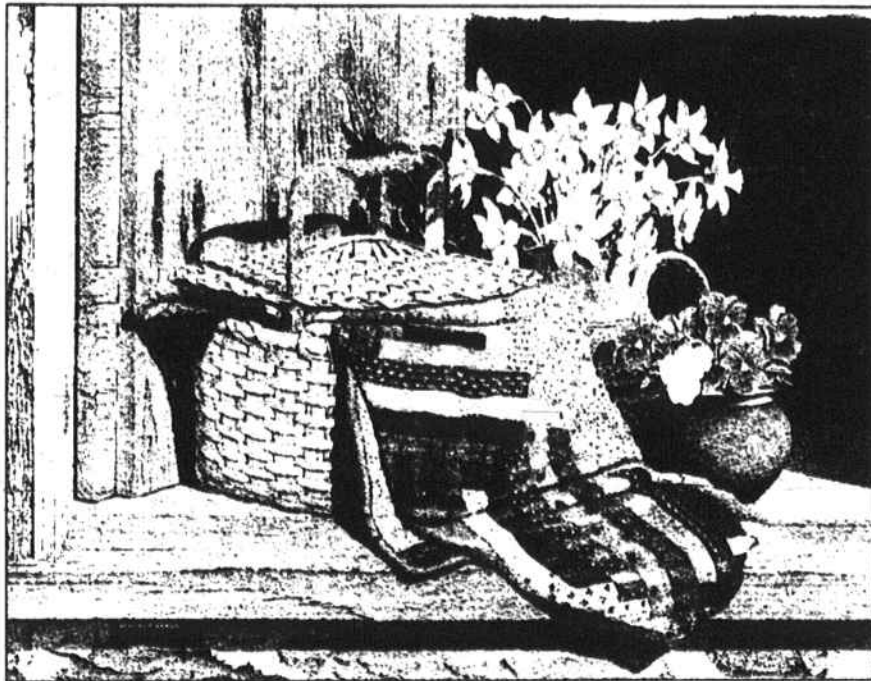
their city, of Becky Smothers, High Point's Honorable Mayor taking time to spend in steering committee meetings. . . of all three mayors of the Triad cities working together, of countless Jaycees in both Winston-Salem and High Point joining together to operate a major alcohol-free festival, of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools leading the way by supporting their arts teachers such as Betty Longinotti and Lynn Foltz as they pioneer class projects to be developed and represented for the community during First Night, of Dempsey Essick, the renowned artist from Welcome, accepting a commission of five original works of art to represent the Piedmont over that many years, of the commitment of the STEP ONE board to manifest the truest form of drug and alcohol prevention: providing safe environments, of the new sponsors and friends found, from premiere sponsor A. Steve Pierce, to the very office of the Governor of North Carolina!

It is clear that without a commitment of an entire community to support the arts and provide a safe alternative for its families, this festival (and others such as Project Graduation and Family Fourth) simply could not exist.

We urge you to become a part of the festival by wearing a costume, helping create some art, or by simply helping someone to be able to attend and wearing your button proudly! First Night is for everyone, and together we will change the way our very young perceive what celebration on New Year's Eve should be!

Craig W. Ewing
Executive Producer, First Night Piedmont

Cover Credit:



The cover is a rendition of the original work "Carolina Heritage" by Dempsey Essick, commissioned for First Night Piedmont by Mid Atlantic Marketing. For information regarding this year's logo and future works by Mr. Essick, or if you are an artist interested in creating for the First Night event, call (919) 722-0066.

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