

**Drama**

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selors. Substance abuse problems most common in the community - alcohol, marijuana, heroin, other opiates and cocaine or crack - were included in the drama.

One goal of the project was to educate the audience that drug abuse is a disease. The play also educated participants about protective factors, such as parental monitoring and involvement.

The six performances of "Tunnels" were attended by more than 700 people. Of those, more than 250 adult members of the audience residing in the Durham area agreed to complete a 22-question survey both before and after the play that assessed their attitudes and knowledge about substance abuse and their involvement in substance abuse prevention.

Three months later, a telephone survey assessed their attitudes about substance abuse as a disease and whether the audience had participated in substance abuse prevention activities during the time since they had seen the play.

The after-play survey revealed that the drama met its education objectives and also increased intent to participate in substance abuse prevention activities. Of participants who strongly or somewhat disagreed that drug use is a disease prior to the play, nearly half changed their opinion to somewhat agree and strongly agree after viewing it.

After seeing the play, participants were less likely to agree that alcohol and other drug use is a choice, and more likely to agree that addicted people must go through treatment to stop using.

Of those who had reported before the play that they



Howlett

never or sometimes volunteered time, talked with others in the community or donated money, after viewing the play 43 percent reported intentions to volunteer, 55 percent intended to talk about substance issues, and 40 percent intended to donate money to organizations.

The telephone survey revealed that participants followed up on their intentions and did discuss the play with others and increased their participation in substance abuse prevention activities, especially donating money to organizations.

In the follow-up survey, 81 percent of respondents reported having talked to their family or friends about alcohol or other drug abuse and 43 percent reported having donated money to organizations involved in substance abuse prevention.

The project was supported by grants from the National Institute on Drug Abuse and an EXPORT grant from the National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities.

Co-researchers were Aileen Stephens-Hernandez, lead author, and Amura Cameron, who are both students, Jonathan Livingston, Ph.D., and Steven Franklin, Ph.D., both faculty members at North Carolina Central University, Howard Craft, the play's author, and Karen Dacons-Brock, the play's director and producer.

# Birdhouses help build people-houses

HabitatForsyth event continues to be major fundraiser

BY LAYLA FARMER  
THE CHRONICLE

Since its inception in 1984, Habitat for Humanity of Forsyth County (HabitatForsyth) has changed the lives of hundreds of local families, giving them a chance to realize an American dream they never thought possible. With more than 230 houses built to date, HabitatForsyth is among the top-producing Habitat affiliates nationwide.

"We are committed to continuing to serve families within the community," said Executive Director Sylvia Oberle. "We are doing as much as we can to eliminate substandard housing."

HabitatForsyth uses funding from a variety of sources in order to make homes available to families who need them, but is best known for its annual Birdfest fundraiser.

A three-day event, held May 3-5, Birdfest is a unique affair that relies upon the wealth of artistic talent that this city is known for to make it a success. More than 500 artists donated their creations that were sold or auctioned off at the 2007 Birdfest.

"A lot of times, artists in our community don't have the kind of disposable income to contribute to Habitat, but they wanted to be part of the mission," Oberle explained. "(Birdfest is) a way for artists to ... provide financial resources to Habitat."

Even school-age kids were able to lend their support to the project, by donating hand-painted birdhouses to be sold as "Buy 'n Fly"

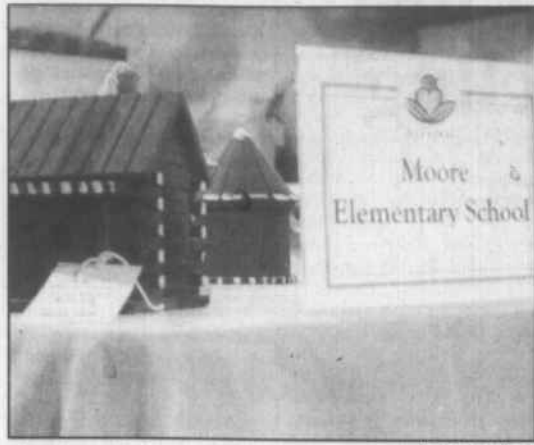


Photo by Layla Farmer

Moore Elementary was among the schools that contributed to this year's Birdfest.

items, or items that are available for immediate purchase, last Thursday and Friday.

Parkland and Glenn high schools participated in the Birdfest, as well as Hanes Middle School and Brunson and Moore elementary schools. Students at non-participating schools were allowed to submit their pieces individually.

"Things range from the \$5 and \$10 birdhouses that are done by school children here locally, to artists' work that sometimes brings in thousands of dollars," Oberle commented. "Everything has sort of a bird or garden theme."

The ongoing theme of the Birdfest holds special significance to the organization. "The birds are sort of a fun, whimsical way to make a point," Oberle explained. "Birds need houses and so do people - families deserve

houses." Proceeds from the Birdfest are, on average, enough to cover the cost of building one full home, Oberle says.

"Our goal this year will be very similar to last year - to raise around \$70,000 for a Habitat house," she stated.

Leo Rucker, a well-known painter and Winston-Salem native, was among the throngs of people who contributed to the 2007 Birdfest.

"I always want to do something to support the community, as far as giving back," said Rucker, who worked as a Habitat volunteer with a group from Greater Cleveland Avenue Christian Church earlier this year. "It's good giving back, and this is a good cause, because you're helping people who need to get homes that they may not, in other ways, be able to afford it."

Rucker donated a Latin dance-themed painting - which he created onsite - to be sold at the silent auction.

"It's a community cooperative event, and people get to see my work as well," he said. "It's good exposure, and just being able to give back is the ultimate key, I think, in life - service and things like that. It's very important to be able to do that."

Glassblower Jeff Wilson was also on the scene, donating his colorful glass jewelry to Birdfest for the first time.

"I think it's a great cause," he said. "It's a wonderful, wonderful way to give back to a community that supports you as an artist."

Wilson, who teaches his craft at the Sawtooth Center and other venues citywide, had more than 50 pieces on sale for Birdfest, all of which he created in about two weeks. He said he planned to make his appearance at the fundraiser an annual tradition.

"I'm certainly going to try to come every year," he stated. "It's something that I do believe in very strongly."

The 2007 Birdfest has already surpassed last year's gross earnings of \$82,000. The money will be used to construct a house in the Glenn Oaks development, where Habitat volunteers are currently working on their 236th home.

For more information on volunteering or donating to HabitatForsyth, call 336.765.8854, or visit [www.habitatforsyth.org](http://www.habitatforsyth.org).



Oberle



Rucker

**LaChanze**

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ing the Smart Spot Dance! initiative that intends to empower and motivate the Latino and African American communities to adopt healthier, more active lifestyles," said Ernest McFadden, PepsiCo manager of community affairs. "We'll engage the community through dance, which is a fun, culturally relevant way for families to get active and we'll educate our consumers about our

Smart Spot products that can contribute to healthier lifestyles.

The Smart Spot Dance! initiative also includes a partnership with the National Council of La Raza to reach out to Latino communities to encourage physical activity through dance and educate the communities about healthier eating. Mario Lopez from Dancing with the Stars and Claudia Gonzalez, a registered dietitian, will visit several cities targeting the Latino communities.

The Smart Spot Dance! initiative will also travel to

Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, St. Louis and Washington, DC.

PepsiCo says it recognized its responsibility to encourage people to adopt healthier lifestyles - beginning with its products. In 2004, PepsiCo launched the Smart Spot symbol - the green symbol of Smart Choices Made Easy. This symbol is a simple labeling system that makes it easier for consumers to identify PepsiCo products that contribute to a healthier lifestyle and explains why each product is a better choice.

**Kidwell**

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can also help to create a bridge between the intellectual and scholarly resources of the university and the Indian communities in North Carolina."

The American Indian Center at UNC-Chapel Hill, which will be housed in Abernethy Hall, will be one of the only centers on the East Coast to focus solely on American Indian issues and research. As director, Kidwell will collaborate with faculty, students and staff to initiate new programs, continue outreach to American Indian communities and raise funds

for the center.

The objectives of the center, as outlined by the Provost's Committee on Native American Issues, include:

- establishing a leadership institute for North Carolina tribal leaders, in collaboration with the UNC School of Government;
- helping faculty and student researchers partner with native communities;
- including native perspectives and cultures in UNC research projects;
- communicating regularly with American Indian tribal leaders and communities;
- sponsoring and facilitating activities that give visibil-

ity to and provide learning opportunities regarding American Indian cultures, histories and perspectives; and

• promoting inclusion of native people and perspective in campus dialogues.

North Carolina is home to the largest American Indian population east of the Mississippi River. In 2005, the U.S. Census estimated the state's total population at just under 8.7 million, with 1.3 percent, or approximately 113,100, listed as American Indians and Alaskan natives. In fall 2006, American Indian students at UNC numbered 219, nearly 1 percent of total enrollment. American Indian students and faculty at Carolina include members of the state's eight tribes as well as tribes from across the United States and Canada.



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