

Tanglewood Park's history resurfaces with wristband controversy

BRIDGET ELAM AND JUDIE HOLCOMB-PACK
THE CHRONICLE

While celebrating America's 243rd Independence Day, a Tanglewood Park visitor became appalled by what she saw on her wrist.

While floating on the lazy river at Tanglewood Park's Paul Brunsetter Aquatic Center, Sage Magness (who prefers being identified with the pronoun they) noticed that the pool admittance wristband, which they initially assumed was a depiction of the American flag, was not the American flag.

"As I was floating, I was staring at my wristband and I said, this is not the American flag. This cannot be what I think it is," recounted Magness. Magness immediately asked their daughter's other mother to weigh in on her assessment and soon realized their depiction of what was the wristband was not just an individual interpretation.

Outraged, they went to the pool's gate to ask who was responsible for ordering the wristbands. At that time, Magness was directed to the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department and messaged a complaint to them from home.

"I told them [Parks and Recreation] that I was very disappointed, actually appalled, that a public park in 2019 would be handing out Confederate flag wristbands at any point, especially on Fourth of July weekend. This is really, really not okay."

Magness said Parks and Rec's initial response was they had been ordering the bands for several years with no complaints. Then they went further on to say that the wristbands were a generic red, white and blue pattern and Magness' must have been cut in a way to resemble the Confederate flag. She then took a picture of the wristband and sent it to Parks and Rec., who then said they would pull the rest of the bands.

Magness said it was hard to believe that the wristbands were approved through several levels of management before getting to the park with being noticed.

In the interview with The Chronicle earlier this week, Magness said she was aware of Tanglewood's history.

"I wondered how many people of color there at the pool were actually aware of the history of this park and this pool ... and sitting there with that symbol of hatred on their wrists."

The 61-mile stretch of land the park sits on was owned by the Reynolds family and in 1951 it was willed to the white citizens of Forsyth County. It was later integrated in 1971 after 20 years of segregation.

Magness felt it was their duty to speak up. "Others may not have been comfortable to speak up from fear of being targeted."



Submitted photo

Sage Magness wearing Stars and Bars wristband she received at Tanglewood Park.

In a response released Tuesday, July 9, Tonya McDaniel, Forsyth County Commissioner, stated:

"In light of the incident at Tanglewood, I would first like to say that we have to be mindful and sincere about complaints made by our constituents and/or visitors to Forsyth County. This is an opportunity for County Officials and Administration to revisit the mission, vision and values of the County. Bad choices were made by all. Thinking back, I am grateful for having mentors and leaders who helped me process those bad choices. After speaking to Dudley Watts, our County Manager, I believe Damon Sanders-Pratt has admitted to the errors made by the organization and assured me there was no malicious intent. Dudley has assured me he has set some sensitivity concerning oversight. This is definitely concerning and I am confident we will do better. I don't believe it to be intentional. However, if any findings that confirm differently, expect there to be consequences."

Magness says they are glad to hear that the County is taking the matter seriously, but seeing it put into action is when she'll believe it.

Forsyth County was home to Magness for many years and their daughter was born here and her love for Winston-Salem was apparent.

"Come on Forsyth County; I'm rooting for you. You've taken so many steps forward, don't take steps back."

Forsyth County employees raise \$15,866 for Arts Council

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

Forsyth County employees raised \$15,866.56 for the Arts Council of Winston-Salem & Forsyth County during a month-long campaign in May.

County employees contributed through pledging money, which often involved them setting an amount per paycheck to go to the nonprofit. They also contributed through countywide or department-wide fundraisers.

County departments created a variety of fundraising events. They included a hotdog cookout, sales of baked goods and other snacks, a waffle ball home run derby, painting flowerpots, a guitar raffle and tie-dyeing shirts.

The campaign ended with a finale at the County Government Center on May 31, which featured an art contest, vendors, food trucks and live performances.

"The County's Arts Council campaign is one of the top, if not the top, most engaged workplace campaigns that we have seen in the county," said Devon McKay, Arts Council VP of Development/Chief Development Officer. "The



Photo provided by Forsyth County

An employee art contest raised money for the Arts Council of Winston-Salem & Forsyth County during a campaign finale celebration held at the Forsyth County Government Center on May 31.

employees who volunteer raised \$15,000 for our community's art organizations and the schools, and best of all, they do it by having fun and educating their colleagues about the breadth and depth of the arts offerings in our community. We are so grateful to the special, hard-working people who make it happen every year."

The Arts Council is the biggest driver of cultural investment in Forsyth County. The Arts Council collectively raises \$2.5 million for the Community Fund for the Arts, which provides operational support to a broad range of partner arts organizations that provide 800,000 experiences a year, including music, visual art, theater,

festivals, film and independent bookstores. Forsyth County is one of 54 workplace campaigns that help fund the Arts Council.

The Arts Council is one of only two organizations the county participates in fundraising campaigns for, the other being the United Way of Forsyth County.

IFB Solutions honored at annual award luncheon

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

IFB Solutions was honored at the 4th annual Excellence in Business Award Luncheon hosted by the Triad Chapter of The Risk Management Association. Each year, the chapter honors three local organizations and one individual for their success in business and contribution to their communities. IFB Solutions was nominated for the award by BB&T in the non-profit category.

IFB Solutions Chief Financial Officer Rob Burgess and Employee Relations Manager Brent Burkholder accepted the award. During the presentation, Triad Chapter President Theresa Arrighi of BB&T highlighted IFB's commitment to the community through its mission of employment, training and services for people who are

blind or visually impaired. In the Triad area, IFB Solutions employs nearly 350 people who are blind and offers extensive training programs so they can progress in their positions and careers of choice.

IFB Solutions also is a critical community resource for those who are blind or visually impaired. The nonprofit operates four Community Low Vision Centers serving hundreds of adults and children each year with assistive devices and technology. The Centers are the hubs for IFB's Focus on Literacy programs which pair school-age children with free assistive devices and technology to use at home to complete their homework and foster a love of reading. IFB also runs the SEE (Student Enrichment Experience) program for children in grades K-12 with a year-round calendar of

free, after-school activities and summer camps teaching valuable independent living skills and fostering personal confidence.

"We are very honored to be recognized by the Triad Chapter of The Risk Management Association for our success and impact on our community. As the largest employer of people who are blind in the country, our commitment to serving the larger community through jobs, training and services as well as programs such as SEE and the Community Low Vision Centers is clear," said Burgess. "The unemployment rate for people who are blind is an astounding 70 percent, and IFB Solutions is working very hard to change that statistic by creating jobs of choice and encouraging greater independence and confidence in individuals of all ages."

IFB Solutions is a nonprofit corporation founded in 1936 that provides employment, training and services for people who are blind or visually impaired. For more information, visit www.ifbsolutions.org.

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