

Duplin Times



Straight from the Shoulder — Right from the Heart of Duplin



County Court
County Court ... Mast Head Box
Next term of County Court will
convene Monday June 2nd. A
heavy docket faces Judge Phillips
and Solicitor Mercer.

Vol. 19, No. 19.

KENANSVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA, THURSDAY, MAY 8, 1952.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE: \$3.00 per year in Duplin and adjoining
counties; \$4.00 outside this area in N. C.; \$5.00 outside N. C.

PRICE TEN CENTS

Heads Duplin School Improvement Committee



MRS. ASHE MILLER who was elected president of the Duplin County School Improvement Committee in its final meeting of the present school year here last Tuesday night. Earl Edgerton principal of the Wallace school, was named secretary. Mrs. Miller is the only school committeewoman in the county.

Editorial Saturday Is The Day

By J. R. Grady

Saturday is the day—the most important day in the machinery of our governmental system. The whole structure of our party system and our form of government is built around and from the precinct meetings that are held in every precinct in the United States. Saturday, May 10th, precinct meetings will be held in Duplin County. It is the privilege, and duty, of all registered Democrats to attend their precinct meetings and voice themselves on precinct officials and cast their ballots. Too often we criticize and say that elections at the precincts are under the control of a certain few when that few has no other choice. They attend the meetings and must carry out the law and elect officers. They may be innocent in their actions where so-called special privilege accusations are concerned. At the same time, however, the precinct meeting is the place where experienced politicians who want to get hold of elections machinery for personal gain do their work. They know the average voter doesn't know the importance of the meeting or doesn't bother to attend so they maneuver their schemes and secure control.

Your elections two years from now will be controlled by the groups who attend the precinct meetings Saturday. If you are not satisfied with things now going on in your local election places, Saturday is the time to do something about it.

County Chairman Faison W. McGowen has issued the following memorandum concerning the precinct meetings and county convention:

To All Chairman and Members of Democratic Precinct Committees:

You are hereby notified of the dates for holding Precinct, County Convention and State Convention meetings as fixed by the State Democratic Executive Committee.

1. Saturday, May 10, at 2:00 o'clock, p.m., is the time for holding Precinct Meetings for the purpose of perfecting the precinct organization and for electing delegates to the County Convention.

2. Saturday, May 17, 1952, at 11:00 o'clock, a.m., is the time for holding the County Convention for the purpose of organizing according to the Plan of Organization of the Democratic Party and for electing delegates to the State Convention.

3. Thursday, May 22, 1952, at 12:00 o'clock, noon, is the date for holding the State Convention in the City Auditorium in Raleigh.

The Precinct Meetings Shall Transact The Following Business:

1. Elect a Precinct Committee of five active Democrats, at least two of whom shall be women. The Committee so elected shall immediately elect a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman. The Chairman or the Vice-Chairman shall be a woman. This is required by Section 14 of the Plan of Organization. The precinct meetings shall be presided over by the Chairman of the precinct committee, but in his absence, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee shall preside, and in the absence of both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman, any member of the committee may preside.

2. Elect Delegates and Alternates to the County Convention—three delegates for every twenty...

East Carolina Folk Festival Is Planned For Duplin County

Echoes of The Duplin Story were heard in Duplin last week when the B. F. Grady P.T.A. held its final meeting of the school year. Following election and installation of new officers Editor J. R. Grady of the Duplin Times introduced Bascom Lamar Lunsford of Turkey Creek who discussed with the group ways and means of establishing an Eastern Carolina Folk Festival in Kenansville. The Grady group decided to initiate the move and named Principal Hugh Wells to take the matter up with county school officials and representatives of each P.T.A. in the county.

At the meeting in Kenansville Tuesday night of the Duplin School Committee the P.T.A.s of the county, or those represented heard Mr. Wells present the proposition and listened to encouragement from Chancellor Bob House of the University of North Carolina, and voted to sponsor the project. Hugh Wells of Grady was named chairman of the project.

Mr. Lunsford, who directs similar festivals in Asheville, at Chapel Hill and the State Fair annually will personally select the talent, direct the festival's tentative plans call for the program to be given three nights in Kenan Memorial Auditorium some time in the early part of September. Mr. Lunsford says he expects it to become an annual institution for Duplin and Eastern Carolina and predicts crowds will attend by the thousands. The festivals have proven very popular and have been a huge success with him elsewhere. Duplin will be his third major festival development project in the State.

Announcement

There will be a meeting of the Citizen Committee For Good Government Friday night, May 9 at 8 o'clock in the Rose Hill school auditorium.

Compliments To Ralph Miller

Ralph Miller, County Ranger, and his force have been doing a fine job for all of us in their vigilant checking of fires in our county. We can all help by remembering to extinguish cigarettes before we drop them. Be sure they are out, don't guess. If you have ever lived through the horror of a raging forest fire, you will realize the importance of using extra precautions on all days and above class III.

These men who safeguard our property and our lives are to be praised for doing their work, and once in a while, someone remembers to give credit where it is due. The following letter from Dallas Herring of the Atlantic Casket and Coffin Company speaks for himself:

Mr. Ralph Miller
County Ranger,
Beulaville, N. C.

Dear Ralph:
I want to thank you and your entire force for the very splendid work you people did for us recently in checking the fire near our timber in Magnolia Township. It is just another instance of the excellent work you have been doing for a long time and we want you to know that we deeply appreciate it.

We businessmen have some pretty heavy taxes to pay and sometimes it seems to us that we get very little in return. However, your department probably has saved us many times our total ad valorem tax bill. When you look at it that way, our taxes are a very good investment.

With kindest personal regards,
I am,
Yours very truly,
Dallas Herring

Flash! Bulletin!

By J. R. Grady

As we go to press word flashes in that Sheriff Ralph Jones of Duplin County committed suicide. Coroner Gurman Powell has been called. We have no verifying details but reports say he shot himself with a shot gun at the fish pond of his brother Toby Jones some time this morning. It was said a note was found. Senator Rivers Johnson of Warsaw sent a hurried message to the Times by Vance Gavin to hold out and not print the story about the sheriff in this issue. The story must go on. Duplin political corruption must be cleaned up. All facts should out so that everyone may know. Clean thinking Duplinites who prefer honest government in all branches are demanding a clean house. The incident of the death of Ralph Jones should not be allowed to slow down one bit the investigation but should spur it on until people in Duplin can lift their heads and face God and the world with a smile. The S.B.I. are already in the county investigating from new angles. Coroner Gurman Powell becomes acting sheriff.

Education And The Good Life

Pink Hill Suffers \$60,000 Fire; Turner Warehouse, Williamson Home Destroyed

Pink Hill suffered the worst fire since the 1920s Wednesday afternoon when fire started in the self-service laundry located one block north of main street. The laundry, two story home of Flavious Williamson, an unemployed home of Jesse Williamson and storage warehouse for T. A. Turner and Company were totally destroyed. Two fire trucks from Kinston and one from Goldsboro responded to calls and held the fire in this area. Farm and Home Equipment Company barely missed being destroyed. Reports say the fire started about 5:15. Neighbors rushed to the scene and succeeded in saving practically all the furniture in the Williamson home. It was reported that Flavious Williamson lost considerable radios, supplies and electrical equipment. Many items in the Turner warehouse were brought out but a considerable amount of soda, fertilizer and farm machinery was destroyed. All stock and equipment in the Farm and Home Equipment Company were moved out. Reports placed the total loss at between 50 and 60 thousand dollars. The Turner Company and Williamson reported partial insurance coverage.

Rotarians Hear Dallas Herring

An inspiring talk on education by Dallas Herring of Rose Hill and reporting the district meeting recent happenings consumed the major portion of the Warsaw Rotary club meeting last Thursday. Bill Sheffield, president presided. Mr. Herring gave a short talk of the history of the casket business including the effects of his factory in Rose Hill before launching into the talk on education.

Letters From Our Many Readers

Mr. J. R. Grady, Editor
The Duplin Times
Kenansville, N. C.

Dear Mr. Grady:
It seems from an article in the News and Observer, of May 1, that you may have rendered a service to the people of Duplin County in bringing to light some of the violations of tobacco acreage allotments. It is especially interesting to note that some PMA officials have evidently used that office to promote their own personal interests.

I have a small farm in Duplin, and realize that I am in the "absentee landlord" classification. Nevertheless I have maintained a home and helped to support my mother and aunt in Duplin County for more than 10 years. They died in 1950 and '51 respectively. During this time I have each year spent more money in Duplin County than I have taken out of it. I have found it extremely difficult to get much consideration no matter how serious my plea.

I have now had a failure in health myself, and am going to be forced to depend largely on this farm for my own living. I have written the County PMA Office several times asking when the County committee would meet without having my letters acknowledged, and I have recently written asking for other information without receiving a reply.

I do not know your subscription rates, but please use the enclosed check to start me on your subscription list.
Sincerely yours,
A. B. Alderman,
Elizabeth City, N. C.

Malfeasance In Office Others Are Implicated Charges To Solicitor

The following statement by Charlie Nicholson, former deputy sheriff of Duplin County and bookkeeper for Treasurer Ralph Jones was made before the Duplin County Board of Commissioners in session here Monday, May 5th. Nicholson's statement was taken down verbatim by Mrs. Lauren Sharpe. After hearing Mr. Nicholson the County Board ordered a transcript of the statement be made and turned over to District Solicitor Walter Britt. The statement in detail is as follows:

Press Time

Time is pressing. Readers are anxious for the news so we are going to press at once, leaving out some important stories. They will appear next week along with details on Sheriff Jones' death.

Duplin Boys Are Inducted

The following Duplin County boys were inducted into the army on May 5: James Owen Powers, Jr., Wallace; Gurman Lee Lanier, Beulaville; Route 1; William Daniels Carr, Wallace; Route 1; Nathaniel Murray, Beulaville; Route 1; Munford Wilkins, Beulaville. The following were transferred originally from Duplin and inducted from other places: Joseph Stallings, Wallace; Robert Craddock, Faison; Albert Oders, Orange, Chinquapan; Richard Lee Beaton, Wallace.

Education And The Good Life

Dr. Robert B. House, Chancellor of the University of North Carolina gave the main address at a meeting of the Committee for Education and Improvement in Duplin County held in the Kenansville High School cafeteria on Tuesday night. The committee is composed of the Duplin County Board of Education, The Superintendent of the public schools, local school board members and the County Commissioners. Dr. Allen Hurlburt, head of the Dept. of Education of the University, and who has worked closely with the committee under the Kellogg Foundation, also gave a short address thanking the members for their cooperation.

Mitchell Allen, chairman of the committee, presided at the meeting. E. D. Edgerton, principal of the Wallace school, and the new secretary of the committee, introduced Chancellor House. Before the address, a dinner was served by the Kenansville Lunch room Committee under the direction of Mrs. L. Southerland.

Dr. House gave a delightful and inspiring talk on education and life. It might well have been entitled, Education and the Good Life. In his introduction, he mentioned the history of Duplin County, its contribution to education in North Carolina and the great men it has given to the State and Nation in every profession.

The informality of his talk was enhanced by several harmonica solos... an instrument of which Dr. House is a master. He used the selections to illustrate the points of his speech. He said that education can help you make a living and is equally important in making a life. The beginning of education and life is to find your instrument and learn to play it. What educates you is not what you are exposed to but what takes... it's like measles. It is important to fall in love with something, to have enthusiasm, and to follow through. We do not need new ideas as much as we need to learn to use those we have. He emphasized that in our community, in every community there may be a red-headed boy who may not fit the conventional pattern but in whom genius may be latent, awaiting our understanding and encouragement for its development. We must believe in children, love them and encourage them. The power of love is the greatest in our life. "You can't start in this life from where you ain't—you've got to start from where you is." Intelligence must have a religious and moral and spiritual basis. We must hear church bells along with school bells to have a good life. We must preserve reading in the home, begin work in the environment. Children must learn to love reading, must be encouraged to form habits of reading every day. Education begins before the cradle and never graduates. We must place the deposit in the...

A HEARING BEFORE DUPLIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF C. H. NICHOLSON, MAY 5, 1952 (C. H. Nicholson duly sworn by R. V. Wells, Clerk Superior Court) Chairman Wells: When did you make your first statement? C. Nicholson: My first statement was made on August 4th. Chairman Wells: What do you want to do, make a new statement? C. Nicholson: I want to retract the statement I made on August 4th. Chairman Wells: I notice you never did come back and sign this statement. C. Nicholson: I did not because the statement was not true. I made the statement under pressure. Chairman Wells: I noticed that you said to the Sheriff, when you had finished, Sheriff wasn't that about right? Had you gone over it with Mr. Jones? C. Nicholson: Yes. Chairman Wells: It was not true? C. Nicholson: No. Chairman Wells: Tell us about it in your own words. C. Nicholson: Gentlemen, I have asked permission to come before you at this time to retract the previous statement I made to you back in August of last year. I made that false statement under pressure and knowing at that time that it was untrue. I was not sworn and I refused to sign the statement because it was not the truth. I am now ready to make a true, complete statement of the shortage that occurred in the Sheriff's office while I worked there. Now I am sworn and will make a complete statement. The only way I know is to start at the beginning and go all the way through. I made these notes, and I am going to use them to keep it straight. I began working for the Sheriff in January 1947. That was about a month after he came in office. I had never met the Sheriff but had heard he was looking for an office deputy or clerk. I was working at Goldsboro for Wayne Agriculture Ass'n. at that time and he offered I would like to have an office job. My father and I went to see Sheriff Jones one night. I told the Sheriff I had heard about an opening in his office and was interested in working there if I was properly qualified. I told him I did not have any schooling or experience in bookkeeping but would try hard and if he felt I could do the work I would like to try. He assured me that he had been working in the office some 30 days and knew the general routine of the business and he did not believe I would have any trouble in doing the work. I found the work was not too complicated, there was quite a bit of posting and copying figures and making deposits. The Sheriff was some help in the beginning, and at times I would ask the County Auditor to help with a problem. Everything went along fine until the Spring of 1948, then on taking a bank reconciliation it was found that a \$650.00 deposit was not get to the bank. I have forgotten but the records will show the exact amount of that deposit. The Auditor checked and found it was in the Tax Fund and we agreed that for some reason it failed to get in the bank in time to get on the statement, it usually being sometime in the middle of the month before we take our trial balance or reconciliation. As soon as the Auditor completed his trial balance showing the deposit to be outstanding, I immediately sought to find the deposit. Mr. Jones on occasions would make deposits and receive tax deposits, sometimes he would place the deposit in the tax receipt book and leave them in a drawer or table or somewhere he would look it in the safe. I thought this was probably the case this time and asked if he had made a \$900.00 or \$950.00 deposit, that I had found one to be outstanding at the end of last month. He said he knew about the deposit and would put it back in the bank before the end of the month so the record would be cleared up. The day before the end of the month I asked him if he had made the deposit, and he said he would on that day but he did not. It was carried as an outstanding deposit again. He had a check for \$300.00 at that time in the safe for Petty Cash and I had orders not to cash that check unless I had to have it and then to give him notice that I had cashed it. He said not to let the same deposit be outstanding month after month but to deposit a deposit for that amount from money received later.

Chairman Wells: You did take money from the Tax Fund to cover for this. C. Nicholson: Yes. Chairman Wells: Did the Sheriff instruct you to do this? C. Nicholson: Yes. He told me dozens of times that he could replace the money any time. I reminded him that the Auditor would become suspicious of this but he said he was running the Treasurer's Office and that Faison McGowen did not have anything to do with the way he did or made deposits, just so the money got into the bank. It was impossible to keep the Petty Cash box straight. The money just would not stay in the box. It would just disappear if there was cash. Often when we were getting ready to pay the Jury I would remind him that his check was still in the Petty Cash box ranging anywhere from \$300.00 to \$600.00 and he usually kept a check in the box for \$340.00 at all times and if he was going off he would write another check and clip them together. Usually when he received his salary check, he would tear up those additional checks and still leave a check for \$340.00 in the cash box. Very often I would remind him that the money was out of Petty Cash and that we did not have any money to pay the Jury in the Petty Cash box. He would tell me to cash some checks from tax deposits and he said Gilbert Alphin does this every month and the deposit could be made the following month after the Petty Cash had been reimbursed by the Auditor. He told the other deputies that this County had been run by two or three persons long enough. Several times he told this and that he was going to do away with it. He told us that Faison McGowen and Preston Wells ran the whole works and that we did not have any Board of Commissioners. He said the Commissioners were against the Sheriff's Office, all except two and that they just sat there and listened to Faison and Preston and agreed.

Chairman Wells: Do you know what date those statements were made? C. Nicholson: He made them 50 times or more while I was there and to outsiders too. He told us that the next election would be fixed so that a majority of the Commissioners on the Board would be on his side and would get rid of Faison McGowen and Gilbert Alphin. He told me to watch Mr. McGowen when he was in the office for any reason and when he came in to check the numbers of the bonds in the safe or to sign coupons for me to get them out myself and to watch him all the time.

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Angela Daughtry to Give Recital
Kenansville will give a graduation piano recital Thursday, May 15, at 8 p.m. in the Kenansville High School Auditorium. Miss Daughtry is a pupil of Mrs. W. J. Middleton of Warsaw. The public is invited to this musical event. The program will feature both modern...