

PROGRESS SENTINEL

Straight from the Shoulder — Right from the Heart of Duplin

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Son Of A Gun....

by Joe Lanier

A few years ago I was at Fort Bragg to do a story on the National Guard units from Duplin County. I was exhausted from riding in a Jeep over trees, gullies, and so on, so I decided to relax awhile before the drive back to Warsaw. I had never been in an "adult book store", so I went in one to take a look around. Now I had seen Playboy magazines. I had seen some of the under-counter books. But never had I seen such a display of magazines and books showing both male and female bodies in the nude. And other paraphernalia. The number of revealing items in the store so openly displayed insulted, embarrassed and confused me. I left the store feeling like a pervert. I was actually ashamed of having been in the store. I have seen stag films, but never had I been exposed to so much at one time.

As I began my trip back home, I was thinking how awful it was that a store such as this could take a beautiful, wonderful thing and make it so very vulgar. I was thinking, "Would I have enjoyed a place like that when I was younger? Would I have been insulted, embarrassed, and would I have questioned myself for being there? I drove along with a stizzed body and confused mind. I thought maybe I should stop and get a soft drink and perhaps change my thoughts. I stopped at a country grocery store, and I heard from across the road some very pretty gospel music. I saw a tent from where it was coming, and as I drank my soda I asked a fellow what was going on over there. He said it was a revival tent meeting. The singing was so pretty I decided to go over and attend for awhile. The weather was cool, and the tent sides were down and the entrance was hanging loose. As I went inside, I was instantly aware it was a black revival. I

quickly looked over the people and saw I was the only white person in the tent. I stopped, not knowing whether to sit down or leave. I thought I might embarrass the congregation if I left, so I sat down. I was uneasy, but soon the beautiful songs made me forget I was the only white there. The singing stopped, and the preacher began to preach. Again the thoughts of leaving entered my mind, but I needed an appropriate exit line. As I was planning my exit, the minister said, "We have a visitor in our tent tonight." Son-of-a-gun, I thought. He is talking about me. I knew I shouldn't have come in here. The minister continued, "He is mingling with us poor lost souls tonight." I cast my eyes across the crowds to see how many were looking at me. but they were looking at the minister. Should I jump up and run out? What should I do? I was thinking. "He is lily-white," said the minister. Son-of-a-gun, I am going to get it. To be sure, they won't beat me up just for coming in to listen to their singing. "You know who he is," said the preacher. The congregation

replied, "Oh, yes, we know." I thought, now, Joe, calm yourself down. Look at the brighter side. If you don't get killed, at least it will make a good story. even if you do have to get someone else to write it because both your arms are broken. The preacher says, "Oh, yes, I can feel his presence. Jesus Christ. The Son of God is here among us tonight." My face turned from white to very red. If there had been a knothole where I was sitting, I am sure I would have fallen through it. Never have I felt so small. At that point I needed no exit line. I just got up and left. Thank goodness they could not read my thoughts. The alternator went out on my truck, and the battery was not strong enough to crank it. So I got Donna to drive her car over to give me a jump. As I was hooking up the jumper cables, I noticed one of the battery cables on her car was very loose, so after cranking my truck, I got a wrench to tighten up the battery cable. But Donna warned me. "Don't tighten it too tight." "Why not?" I asked. "The engine won't turn over if it's too tight," she said. Son-of-a-Gun



GRANT GIVES PARK EXPANSION BOOST - \$33,953.00 Grant announced Saturday gave Kenansville Municipal Park Expansion Project a boost toward its goal of \$66,000 for completion. Doc Brinson, Project Treasurer, is shown pointing to \$42,000, which has been raised thus far for the project. Pictured (L to R): Woody

Brinson, Kenansville Town Administrator; Senator Harold Hardison; Representative Tommy Baker; Kenansville Mayor Douglas Judge; Arliss Albertson, Chairman of the Duplin County Commissioners; Congressman Charlie Whitley; Brinson; and William Fennell, Kenansville Town Board Member.

Kenansville Gets \$33,953 For Park Expansion Grant

Congressman Charlie Whitley announced during a press conference held in Kenansville on Saturday that a grant in the amount of \$33,953.50 has been awarded for the Kenansville Municipal Park from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. According to Whitley, the fund helps state and local governments purchase needed lands and develop facilities for outdoor recreation on these lands. The project sponsor matches the federal grant from state and local sources. Whitley indicated that the purpose of this grant would be to expand the present park and further improve this recreation area by building tennis courts, lighting ballfields and providing a concession stand and restroom facilities. "The Kenansville Municipal Park Project is a clear demonstration of a cooperative effort by the local, state and federal governments and improvements made here will greatly enhance the recreational opportunities for the citizens of Kenansville," stated Whitley. "I look forward to the day when all of us can get back together and dedicate this finished project," ended Whitley.

Mayor Douglas Judge welcomed those attending and expressed his appreciation for their interest in the park expansion. Woody Brinson, Kenansville Town Administrator, gave the following resume of the history of the Kenansville Municipal Park: July, 1972 - Application for \$3,000 for Kenansville Municipal Park submitted. Spring, 1973 - Grant for \$3,000 approved by Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. Summer, 1973 - Green Berets from Ft. Bragg cleared up 9 acres of underbrush for Kenansville Municipal Park. April, 1974 - Kenansville Municipal Park officially dedicated. Summer, 1975 - Summer Recreation Program started in Kenansville. Summer, 1976 - Recreation Commission got approval from Town Board to expand Park. October, 1976 - Park surveyed and site plan prepared for expansion. November, 1976 - Leases for Park extended to 15 years with 10-year renewal option by Duplin County Commissioners and Duplin County Board of Education and Kenan family. December 30, 1976 - Application submitted for \$30,000 for ex-

pansion of Kenansville Municipal Park. April 27, 1977 - Received notification from Howard Lee, Secretary of N.C. Department of Natural and Economic Resources that project has been recommended for funding. July, 1977 - Received notice that Bureau of Outdoor Recreation new regulations required leases to be at least 25 years in length. September, 1977 - Leases for Park with Duplin County Commissioners and Duplin County Board of Education and Kenan family extended to a 25-year period. November, 1977 - Met with Archives and History personnel to dissolve historic area differences. January, 1978 - Received notice that Archives and History concurred with our

plans. February 11, 1978 - Official notification that grant for \$33,953.50 had been approved was announced by Congressman Charles Whitley. Arliss Albertson, Chairman of Duplin County Commissioners, made these observations: "To me, recreation stands out as one of the prime things we should do in Duplin County and the Nation. There was a lot of talk about the money to be spent on the new jail, and I feel that if we had more recreation, we would not need as much jail." "It's remarkable," said Representative Tommy Baker, "what people can do if they don't care who gets the credit, and this is certainly true of this project." "I have never worked with

any people who worked any harder than the people of Duplin County to get this and other projects done," said Senator Harold Hardison. "And as Tommy has just remarked, it proves that projects can get done quicker if people don't care who gets the credit." Doc Brinson, Park Project Treasurer, said that local donations of \$8,324 have been received, bringing the total to about \$42,000 of the \$66,000 needed for completion of the Kenansville Municipal Park Expansion Project. "Other donations will gladly be accepted," stated Brinson. Woody Brinson announced that construction would start next week, although some more money would be needed in order to complete the Park Expansion Project.

School Bus Driver Guilty Of DUI Count

Jeffrey Allen Hammett, 17, of Route 1, Warsaw, was found guilty of driving under the influence and sentenced to six months imprisonment, suspended on two years of probation, providing he surrender his driver's license and pay \$100 fine and court costs from his earnings. The case was heard by Judge Steve Williamson in District Court Thursday. Hammett pled not guilty.

The case stemmed from a school bus incident November 23. Hammett, a regular bus driver at the time, was driving the bus home. He testified that he drove the bus that morning to Kenansville Elementary and then walked downtown, met two other persons, and drank two beers. He told the court he returned to the bus at 2:45 p.m., made his regular route and went home.

He was arrested by Patrolman Billy Ward when he stopped the

bus in his yard. Six students riding on the bus testified that they smelled beer on his breath when they boarded the bus, and he was singing in a loud voice. The riders said his driving was erratic, zig-zagging from one side of the road to the other. They testified he let them move around on the bus and play. The father of one of the riders, Carlon Batts of Magnolia testified his son told him the bus driver was drunk. He said he

called the Sheriff's Department. They called the Highway Patrol. Ward said he spotted the bus near the driver's house. When he approached the youth about 5:45 p.m., Ward said he smelled beer on the youth's breath and his face was flushed.

The breathalyzer test registered .08. Officers testified they gave Hammett sobriety tests, such as the heel-and-toe test, and walking a straight line, and said he failed these.

Albertson For Hunt

The annual Albertson Fox Hunt will be held Saturday, February 18, at the Albertson Community Building on Highway 111.

A Memorial Service will be held at 6:30 a.m. Breakfast will be served from 5 until 8 a.m., and luncheon and fish stew from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. The meals are served by the Albertson

Volunteer Fire Department and you are invited to come and bring your friends and dogs.

Proceeds from the day's events, including the dance at the Albertson Fire House at 8 p.m., will go to the Volunteer Fire Department, and the Fox Hunt is sponsored annually by the Albertson Ruritan Club, according to Donald Grady.

Music And Art Program Sunday At JSI

The Duplin County Arts Council will sponsor a special program of music and art on Sunday, February 19 at 3 p.m. in the auditorium of James Sprunt Institute in Kenansville. Artists featured will be Alice Boyd of Goldsboro and Barbara Taylor of Clinton.

Mrs. Boyd will explain her recent workshops in the junior high schools of Duplin County and exhibit drawings by participating students.

Mrs. Taylor will present the musical program she has prepared for high school students in Duplin County demonstrating the potential of the voice in popular, folk and classical music. She will be accompanied by Jean Hatch, pianist, also of Clinton, and Tres Rich, guitarist from Wallace.

ROTARY STUDENT OF THE MONTH - H. C. Allen congratulates Greg Hedrick, who was selected Rotary Student of the Month.

Hedrick Honored At Rotary Meeting

Gregory Alan Hedrick was guest of honor at the Warsaw-Kenansville Rotary Club Thursday. Greg was selected Rotary Student of the Month for February by the faculty at James Kenan High School.

A senior at James Kenan High School, Greg ranks 7th in his class of 153 students. Awards and honors while a student at JK include: Golden Star Award Nominee; National Foundation of Commended Scholars; Who's Who Among American High School Students during his senior year; a Gradu-

ation Marshal his junior year; Biology Award his sophomore year; and Math Award while a junior high student.

Extracurricular activities include Chess Club; Science Club; Pep Club; and National Honor Society.

Greg is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Lonnie Hedrick of Warsaw. They attend the Warsaw United Methodist Church.

Birthday Sale Set

Mount Olive merchants will sponsor George Washington's birthday sale promotion Friday, Saturday and Monday, February 17, 18 and 20, it was announced today by Mrs. Ethel Brewer, president of the Retail Merchants Division of the Mount Olive Area Chamber of Commerce. "A wide variety of bargains will be available in each store participating in this promotion," she said.

Thigpen Files

Orzo Thigpen, Sr., longtime farmer and owner-operator of Besseville Antiques and Furniture Co., filed for County Commissioner for Limestone and Cypress Creek Townships last week.

Orzo is married to the former Mary Ellen Powers. They have three children, Sloan and Lonnie Thigpen, and Ada Brown. All of Besseville. Thigpen is a member of the Besseville Baptist Church where he has served as Sunday School secretary for the past thirty years. He is also a member of the Duplin County Farm Bureau and has been active in all phases of its work. He may be reached at his home at 242-1111 or by letter where the



PROUD TO BE FROM DUPLIN - When you are driving around in Duplin County, you might get behind a car displaying the above pictured license plate. The word in the plate DUPLIN will tell the story. "I'm proud to be from Duplin County." By the way, the license plate belongs to the car that belongs to the Duplin County Civil Defense Director Hiram Brinson of Kenansville.