



Fun Fund Festival Ticket Sales Winners

The Kenansville Elementary School fun fund festival made over \$3,000 through a Halloween carnival and barbecue dinner. More than 780 tickets were sold for the dinner and most of the sales were made by the students. Winners in the ticket sales contest among the

students are pictured above, left to right, Bill Thomas, Ted Rouse, Melissa Grady, Kathy Bowden, Nicole Summerlin and Jason Kennedy. The proceeds from the annual school fun fund festival are used to purchase instructional supplies.

And, each year the Council supports Duplin's public schools through programming art activities. According to Merle, most of the Arts Council budget is spent on school programming.

"I am real proud of the Art's Council's programming, especially in the schools," former member of the Arts Council Board Ervin Graham of Wallace said. Graham was elected to the board in 1977.

"The big thrill in working with the Arts Council is knowing that its programs are reaching children," Graham said. "Each child has different abilities and through the Arts Council programming, some of those talents may be brought out!" Through the Arts Council, Graham and personnel from his business worked two summers with Duplin school students at The Liberty Cart outdoor drama in Kenansville. Graham and his staff organized student ushers and ran the concession stand at the amphitheatre two seasons. Graham Drug Company of Wallace was recognized as one of five businesses in the state to receive the first Governor's Business Awards in the Arts and Humanities for outstanding county leadership in 1978. Graham was presented the Business Award for their efforts through the DCAC to help launch the new outdoor drama of Duplin.

"Regina asked me to attend a meeting of the Arts Council board," Graham said. "And, I went. I got a full-time job that night — just the quickest you've ever seen — I

became a member of the board and chairman.

"We had some good people go on the board that night, along with me," Graham said. "And, that year we originated the idea of memberships and raised more than \$12,000 in the first fund drive. Looking back,

I know it was just an example of getting the right group of people together and working for a common goal.

"And, I know we had an active and enthusiastic board, but Regina was the real sparkplug that kept us charged," Graham said.

Letter To The Editor

Dear Sir:

I recently had occasion to be in Duplin County to select two juries in first degree murder cases arising in Bladen County. The special jury was necessitated by the high volume of publicity the cases received in Elizabethtown.

On each occasion I was assisted by the Duplin County Sheriff's office in every regard. Sheriff Elwood Revelle

went above and beyond the call of duty in helping the State during jury selection. He is a most impressive Sheriff and his entire department is extremely professional.

Duplin County truly has one of the best Sheriff's Departments in the State.

Very truly yours,
Michael F. Easley
District Attorney

Duplin Arts Council Operating In Its Tenth Year

Grants — just another way to waste taxes? The Duplin County Arts Council built a permanent foundation after operating three years on grant dollars.

The DCAC is in its tenth year and today operates on a budget of more than \$30,000, excluding the director's salary. The largest single source of income for the Arts Council budget is private donations.

"There were critical times when funds could have not been renewed," said W.G. Warren of Pink Hill, recalling the Arts Council's early dependence on grant funds. Warren served on the developing organization's interim board and later as a board member of the chartered DCAC.

"There were no promises if you did real well you'd be around the next year," he said. During the early years, the Arts Council organized an annual Arts-in-the-Schools program which gained state and national recognition. An achievement award from the National Association of Counties was awarded the Duplin Arts Council for the program in 1977. According to minutes of the Council,

the program was performed in all 17 public schools in the county and reached 10,000 individuals. The Arts-in-the-School program provided workshops by a potter, painter, pianist, vocalist and photographer.

The Duplin Arts Council was the first group in the state to be organized in cooperation with a technical institute. A grant between James Sprunt and the North Carolina Arts Council provided funds to begin the organization and an office was established at the technical institute in 1975. Regina Whaley, a Duplin native, who had just completed a term as visiting artist at JSI became the first director of the Duplin County Arts Council, Warren explained.

"Considering where it has evolved — the quality of programs, the volunteers and the use of the available resources — has made the Duplin County Arts Council one of the most respected in the state today," Warren said.

"Everyone brought a little different perspective to the first meeting of the interim board. Schools were the binding tie. We

saw the Arts Council as a way to make Duplin County a better and more enjoyable place to live. But, the single, most unifying thing was what we could do to improve the quality of life for our children in the schools. And, Regina inspired members to work," Warren said. "You know, she was an organizational whizz!" Warren explained.

Today the Duplin County Arts Council is directed by Merle Creech of Warsaw from an office located in the courthouse building of Kenansville. The salary of the Arts Council director was assumed by the county in July of 1978 and office space provided when the courthouse annex was re-opened after renovations in 1979.

"The Arts Council has a two-focus approach today," Merle Creech said. "Our programming is focused on the school and the community. We focus first on our schools because the children are a large base of the population.

"The Arts Council wants to be related as a supporter to established organizations, not as a sponsoring presenter," Merle said.

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