

Duplin Times

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A Look At The Events Of 1984

As the citizens of Duplin County busily welcome a new year, many of the events of 1984 have become history. So, let us learn from the past in order to have a better future.

January headlines from the 1984 DUPLIN TIMES announced the expansion of hog and turkey programs at Carroll's Foods, Inc. of Warsaw. Within a week another announcement of the opening of a \$2.5 million livestock feed mill at Harrells was made by William Prestage of Clinton. Preparations were also in progress for a start of a Junior ROTC program at the East Duplin High School. Directors of Goshen Medical Center in Faison were faced with the possible loss of federal funding when an audit resulted in a suit with the U.S. Department of Labor. And, more than \$12,000 was raised in pledges from a radio-thon for the possible liver transplant of Kenansville infant Ashley Quinn.

February news told of the Watson Seafood and Poultry equipment auction resulting from the bankruptcy of the company. Filing began for the May primary elections. Kenansville's Allyson Stroud was crowned Miss Duplin County. A \$75,000 loan request by Duplin General Hospital was turned down by Duplin County Commissioners. The town of Faison held open house for the Emily Hill Library which had opened in late January in the old depot building at the municipal recreation park grounds.

Headlines from March followed with news of the resignation of Dr. Jeff Margolis, M.D. at Goshen Medical Center. Margolis resigned to join a private practice in the

Clinton area. Duplin Commissioners authorized grants and loans for the Albertson water and sewer district projects. A house fire took the life of four children near Pin Hook and the father was charged the next week with involuntary manslaughter. East Duplin High School senior Camile Grady was a Morehead Scholar. Murphy Farms of Rose Hill made a \$1 million purchase of the Watson Seafood and Poultry Company feed mill at the bankruptcy auction. Greenevers citizens chartered the first all black Jaycee chapter in the state at the end of March. The Greenevers chapter was one of four new or reorganized Jaycee groups to be chartered in Duplin within the previous year. A fund drive was announced to complete the Kelly-Farrior House as the new home for the Cowan Museum.

April headlines announced some of Duplin's lived nightmares — tornadoes had killed, damaged and injured. The tornadoes struck the northern Duplin community of Pine Forest late Wednesday, March 28. While food, money, clothing and shelter were being donated to the tornado victims, life continued to shock Duplin residents when a Rose Hill youth was permanently expelled from Charity Middle School after bringing a gun on campus. Liberty Hall made the news when a national magazine brought camera crews to the town to photograph the home for publication in an up-coming issue of Southern Accents.

The primary election made the early headlines in May. Four Duplin County elective offices were being contested. And, readers were shocked by the news of a young boy shooting himself before his class-

mates at Rose Hill-Magnolia Elementary School. Groundbreaking ceremonies were held in Rose Hill for a new winery just west of U.S. 117. Duplin voters set new record turnouts in the May primary elections. James "Bone Crusher" Smith returned to his native home of Magnolia as a special guest at the Greenevers annual fiesta. Bone Crusher came to Greenevers ranked tenth among world heavyweight boxers; he went on late in 1984 to fight world champion Larry Holmes. Kenansville Jaycees made headlines when they returned from the North Carolina convention with 26 state awards and a second place ranking.

June headlines featured news of the upcoming graduation of 550 high school seniors. James Sprunt Technical College shocked the public when the institute did not renew the employment contract of Dean Gene Ballard, who had been employed there since 1969. Duplin Commissioners approved an annual budget calling for no tax rate hike. Duplin farmers like those in other parts of the state were faced with a problem of herbicide contaminated fertilizer. The county had five farm supply dealerships which had been associated with W.R. Grace & Co. and carried contaminated fertilizer, but only minimum damage resulted in Duplin.

July headlines brought the county's attention to a new type of crop — potatoes for chips. A Beulaville farm was in its second year of contracting Irish potatoes with Tom's Potato Chips! The outdoor drama, The Liberty Cart, opened for its ninth consecutive season in the William R. Kenan Jr. Memorial Amphitheatre in Kenansville with John Rice returning for his second year in the lead role of Phenius Pickett. The Duplin School Board adopted a 10-year plan which may call for the consolidation of James Kenan High School and North Duplin High School if a decline in student population continues at both facilities. Goshen Medical Center Dr. Ken Lee, M.D. announced his

resignation from the Faison clinic and plans to join the private practice of Dr. Edwin Ewers of Warsaw. Lee later opted to return to Goshen Medical Center, never joining the Warsaw practice.

August headlines began with news of the possible abandonment of the railroad line between Castle Hayne in New Hanover County and Mount Olive in Wayne County. Quinn Company expanded its service to include supplying the Piggly wiggly food store chain which created 75 new jobs at the Duplin business. The Eastern Belt opened with tobacco prices up \$6.76 over the previous year's average the first day in Wallace. National Spinning in Warsaw announced the expansion of the plant with a 38,000-square-foot addition and the expectation of 70 new jobs. Kenansville town commissioners voted to buy its first permanent town hall with the purchase of the old Federal Land Bank building. Plain View Health Center in Greenevers announced the association of a new doctor at the clinic. Dr. Bruce Brasher, M.D. signed a two-year contract at Plain View Health Center.

September began with headlines of the Coastal Expo and Field Day set for the Kenan Memorial Auditorium. The event was part of a statewide look at soil and water conservation. Duplin schools opened with a county enrollment of 7,794 students which was 200 fewer than counted on opening in 1983. The coast of North Carolina was hit by Hurricane Diana while inland the rain and winds from the storm caused some flooding and only minor damage to Duplin crops. The Duplin Board of Elections reported almost 3,000 new voters registering to be eligible for November balloting, which brought record turnouts at the polls.

October brought headlines of the newly approved plans to construct a student center building on the campus of James Sprunt Technical College. Duplin had 10 students named as Morehead Scholar Nominees of which Patrick Simpson

of North Duplin High School will compete in state finals during February. If selected, Simpson will be the first Morehead Scholar in the history of North Duplin High School. The Duplin Agribusiness Fair opened October 1 for a week and set attendance records. Governor James B. Hunt stopped just south of Warsaw to announce new funding for the completion of I-40 which would cut five years from the planned schedule. Plans to build one of the world's largest turkey processing plants were announced jointly by Carroll's Foods of Warsaw and Goldsboro Milling Co. of Goldsboro. The plant is expected to create 750 to 1,000 jobs when it goes into operation. Hy-Cross Co., the Pennsylvania firm that opened a poultry operation at Rose Hill during the spring, closed its hatchery. The closing threw about 14 people out of work.

November headlines told of the settling of a local malpractice suit against a Kenansville surgeon for \$125,000 out of court. The Duplin County Arts Council began its tenth year of operation. Heber Dalis Taylor of Kenansville was honored in the 63rd annual Warsaw Veterans Day celebration. Johanna Vest of North Duplin Junior High was selected as the Duplin County Teacher of the Year. The Duplin County Board of Commissioners approved the purchase of the PCA/FLB building in Kenansville for \$500,000 to be used

as the Duplin County Mental Health Center. Following a public hearing, the Kenansville Board of Commissioners unanimously approved a request to annex The Country Squire and Vintage Inn about three miles west of the town city limits. Based on the number of ballots tallied in the state senatorial race, just over 72 percent of the county's 20,133 registered voters marked ballots in November elections. Duplin Commissioners shuffled two voting precincts to equalize the population in county voting districts. Locklin was moved from District 4 to District 3. Hallsville was re-assigned from District 3 to District 1.

December brought news of the Twelve Days of Christmas in Kenansville and the traditional open house at Liberty Hall planned for December 23. After the resignation of two administrators during the year, Goshen Medical Center Board of Directors appointed staff member Elinor Ezzell to the position. Ezzell will continue to serve as part-time health educator and part-time Goshen Medical Center administrator. Kenansville's first permanent town hall opened during December in the old Federal Land Bank building. The Cowan Museum closed for Christmas holidays and announced plans to reopen in its new home, the historic Kelly-Farrior House next to Liberty Hall in Kenansville, in January.



Bonecrusher Visits Grenevers



Plantation Day At Liberty Hall



Little Miss Duplin County Dena Houston
Miss Duplin County Allyson Stroud



Tornadoes Hit Pine Forest



Contaminated Tobacco Fertilizer



Ninth Season Of The Drama The Liberty Cart



Heritage Week In Duplin Schools



Chartered First Black Jaycee Chapter



Coastal Soil And Water Expo