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INDIAN SUMMER FESTIVAL 1996



PHOTOS BY SUSAN HARRIS

Thousands of people filled the downtown district and waterfront park in Hertford for Saturday's 15th annual Indian Summer Festival. Dancing in the streets and parking lots was a favorite pasttime of the festival.

Festival draws thousands

Perquimans County literally took it to the streets Saturday when the 15th annual Indian Summer Festival came to Hertford.

"With all that was going on in the surrounding area, we were very pleased with the turnout and the participation that we had," said festival chairman Paige Eure. "It was just a perfect day."

Local officials estimated that the festival drew between 4,000 and 5,000 people to Perquimans County.

The downtown business district was lined with vendors selling such diverse items as food, leather, pottery, cookware and make-up.

"Overall, our vendors told us they were real pleased with the festival," Eure said. "We had such a wide variety of vendors, there was something for everyone."

Something for everyone also extended to the venues and entertainment. Downtown featured line dancers, cloggers, square dancers, a trio, a barber shop quartet, the high school band, a soloist, and three bands.

Over at the Waterfront Pavilion, activities and music were geared to youth. Joy Untold brought magic, animals, clowns, costumed characters, balloon art and more. There was storytime presented by the Perquimans County Library, pony rides, canoe rentals, games of all kinds, food, face painting, performances by two local alternative bands and a disc jockey.

"Having a special place just for youth was one of the best ideas our festival committee came up with," Eure said. "We had children and teenagers at the pavilion all day long. They really seemed to like having their own area."

"We felt very fortunate to have two local bands perform there," Eure continued. "Perquimans County really has some talented young people and I think this festival showed that."

When the waterfront and downtown venues closed in the early evening, the crowd moved to Missing Mill Park to dance the night away to Bill Deal and Ammon Tharp, the original Rhondels.

"The crowd we had for Bill Deal was just unbelievable," Eure said.

A contingent of dancers filled the parking lot, which was turned into a dance floor for the evening. The dancing began before the Rhondels started playing and continued until the band packed up.

"The enthusiasm (for the festival)



The Miss Indian Summer Festival pageant was revived for this year's festival. An enthusiastic audience enjoyed watching nine Perquimans teens compete for the title of Miss Indian Summer Festival. Contestants were (left to right) Courtney Harris, Kim Stallings, Sarah Knehr, first runner-up Erica Ennis, Miss Indian Summer Festival Brandy Hollowell, second runner-up Jamie Lassiter, Julie Bunch, Crystal Gower and Keosha Beamon.

Hollowell crowned Miss Indian Summer Festival 1996 Friday

Nine nervous Perquimans County teenagers competed for the title of Miss Indian Summer Festival 1996 Friday night at the kick-off event for the 15th annual gala.

Brandy Hollowell, an accomplished dancer and sophomore honor student at Perquimans County High School, was crowned at the end of the pageant. During the next year, Hollowell will serve as the youth ambassador for the Chamber of Commerce.

First runner-up was Erica Ennis and second runner-up, Jamie Lassiter. Contestants also included Sara Knehr, Kim Stallings, Keosha Beamon, Courtney Harris, Julie Bunch and Crystal Gower.

"The girls did a beautiful job," said pageant chairman Brenda Dail. "I was so proud of all of them. We certainly have a lot of talented

young ladies in Perquimans County. In my eyes, all of the girls were winners for having the courage to perform on stage in front of an audience. The experience of participating in this pageant will help them as they prepare for college entry and scholarship interviews and to enter the workforce."

Dail was not the only one impressed with the caliber of pageant contestants.

"The pageant was very professionally organized and presented," said overall festival chairman Paige Eure. "Brenda Dail and her committee did a wonderful job. Our contestants were all very talented young ladies who well represented our community, and the auditorium was beautiful. I hope that the pageant will become an annual part of our festival."

was fantastic," Eure said. "People are already talking about next year. All we heard were wonderful comments about everything."

Chamber president Larry Swindell echoed Eure's statements.

"Fantastic is the biggest thing I can say (about the festival)," Swindell said. "The response from the community helped in the number of people who came and shared with us in the event. It was the biggest and best (festival) we've had in 15 years."

"I think the combination of having the Rhondels, the number of vendors who took part and just the overwhelming response from the community with assistance had a great deal to do with the festival's success. We were also fortunate to have strong leadership and planning skills of our festival committee."

Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Sandra Smith accepted her position at the Chamber too late to be a part of the planning for last year's festival, but was right in the thick of planning for 1996.

"It was an absolute pleasure to be a part of the planning team for this year's festival," Smith said. "Every member of the team, including the sub-committees, did an outstanding job. Our president, Larry Swindell, was there every step of the way offering his assistance. There isn't enough room to thank each individual personally who helped to make our festival the success that it was."

Smith said she and the Chamber, organizers of the event, appreciate the support of the community and participants.

"We hope you had as much fun as we did," Smith said.



PHOTO BY BRIAN VANDERVELT, THE DAILY ADVANCE

Perquimans County economic developer, Robert Baker (right) talks with Richard Baker and Martha Daniels about potential sites for a planned commerce center in Hertford.

Extravaganza: economic plug

By GINGER LIVINGSTON
The Daily Advance

It was a show of southern hospitality that could have put Scarlett O'Hara to shame.

The region's economic development and business leaders wined and dined over 350 local politicians, state economic developers, private site consultants and business people during the Northeast North Carolina Regional Economic Development Partnership's Fall Extravaganza at Albemarle Plantation last Saturday.

The weekend event, postponed two weeks because of Hurricane Fran, was designed to give potential industrial and development clients insight into the 16 counties that make up the partnership, Chairman Jimmie Dixon said.

Unofficially, the event signaled the resurrection of the commission which this time last year had fired its economic and tourism development directors and was being warned by state officials to shape up, or risk losing funding for itself and the state's six other development partnerships.

"We are more dedicated and focused than a year ago," Dixon said. "I want to say this without hurting anyone's feelings but I think the commission, and the members, decided to stop the infighting and get down to business."

Commission members organized the site consultants, industrial clients and state economic development officials into four groups that toured counties in the region.

"We're trying to get the Department of Commerce familiar with northeastern North Carolina so when they are asked about the northeast they will be familiar," Dixon said.

Brenda Stroud, special assistant to Peggy Anderson, director of the Department of Commerce's international division, said the commission did its job.

"We've seen things we never knew existed and it's

been a plus. I don't think some of our developers are aware of everything that's happening in the northeast," she said.

Stroud toured Beaufort, Hyde, Tyrrell, Washington and Martin counties and was surprised to learn how many people travel through those counties on their way to the Outer Banks.

Business people from outside the region said they like the things that are happening in the northeast.

"I think people and manufacturers in Hampton Roads are looking at the area because sites are starting to develop," said Martha Daniels, an associate broker with Riddle Associates, Inc. The Chesapeake, Va. based commercial real estate company is currently working for a construction materials firm interested in building a plant in northeastern North Carolina.

Hampton Roads industries are fighting crowded conditions and high land prices. The northeast's relatively inexpensive land and close proximity to Hampton Roads, combined with local government efforts to secure infrastructure for its industrial parks, make it very attractive, Daniels said.

"They have now made this area economically feasible," she said. "All they need is a little more practice, it's coming."

Last year Barnes, a native of northeastern New York, started the process to sell his share of his family retail lumber business. Barnes said he was interested in starting a specialty millwork business and came to the northeast on the advice of a friend. Three weeks ago he moved his family to Edenton and wants to eventually open his business in Chowan County.

Barnes said Edenton and Chowan County officials, along with the Department of Commerce's Vann Rogerson, helped with his pre-planning.

"We're not used to it being from the North. It almost appeared they'd offer you the keys to their home to use the phone if it would be helpful," he said.

Outside

THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
High: 80s	Low: 60s	High: 70s	Low: 60s	High: 70s	Low: 60s
PARTLY CLOUDY		PARTLY CLOUDY		MOSTLY CLOUDY	