

4-1980 Piketon Dogwood Festival

Dogwood Festival opens Friday

PIKETON — A 90-year-old leading a 100-year-old band is an appropriate combination.

Just a week after he turned 90, R. W. Connett of Piketon will step out in front of the century-old Adelphi Community Band at the 2:30 p.m. Sunday grand parade of the 10th annual Pike County Dogwood Festival. The band will be leading the procession in recognition of its centennial.

Both the band and its still-sprightly director are familiar to folks attending the festival. For the last several years they have regaled parade-watchers with their martial music and Connett has served alone as

Zane Trace

Zane Trace High School students won the second place trophy at the Southeastern Ohio Foreign Language Fair held Saturday in Athens.

Superior ratings went to the Spanish Folk Dancers, the debate team of Lavonne Adams and Scott Frey, Anna Sanchez in art and Sharon Myers in art.

Excellent ratings went to the Spanish Folk Singers, Joe Stoneburner for art, Treva Baker and Kim Cook for a pinata and Cultural Quiz Bowl participants Scott Shaffer, Lavonne Adams, Andrea Helton and Scott Frey.

parade marshal in recognition of his "ageless" community involvement. The Adelphi Band concert in front of his piano shop has also be a regular festival feature.

Connett received extensive band training during World War I as a member of the U.S. Army Band attached to an artillery unit. In early November 1918, the band was en route to Europe. Due to inclement weather, the ship was ordered back to the United States where the bandsmen learned of the armistice.

Following his discharge, Connett continued to study music and was instrumental in started the Ohio University marching band in 1923. He is perennially invited to march with his alma mater band each fall and plans to be on hand this year.

He later directed a Topeka, Kan., school band and then taught in Athens and Madison County schools, the former Buckland High School in Auglaize County, Scioto Valley (Piketon) and Eastern Local School Districts of Pike County where he is a longtime resident.

A former performer with circus bands which visited towns where he lived, Connett is still active in the Windjammers Association, a special fraternity of circus band musicians. The groups hold a week-long convention in a prominent city each year and Connett is always on hand.

After retiring from public school music in 1970 at age 80, Connett opted for activity rather than the rocking chair. He opened his Piketon piano shop and continues to repair and rebuild pianos of all types, including the player variety.

His association with the Adelphi Band began 15 years ago as a player and he soon became director. He gave up "umpaaahing" on the tuba and now concentrates on his clarinet which he uses as his drum major's baton in parades.

The musical aggregation he directs combines a toe-tapping mix of the 19th and 20th centuries in its repertoire. The band has played for several presidents and other men of state and has appeared consecutively at the Circleville Pumpkin Show for more than a half century.

One former director was so proud of the band he was buried in his uniform. Chillicothe's prominent composer, Will Huff, played with and occasionally conducted the Adelphi music-makers.

In early June, the band will celebrate its entry into a second century of service to community, state and nation by giving a concert in Washington, D. C., on the Capitol steps.

Other Dogwood Festival activities this weekend are detailed in the schedule below.