

Dogwood Festival parade beats Sunday downpour

By BARBARA B. KALFS
staff writer

PIKETON — The sixth annual Dogwood Festival closed Sunday afternoon because of cloudbursts, but not before the weekend event's hour-long parade had been completed.

"This is just great . . . just what a pioneer festival should be" was a comment made by one of the thousands of visitors who wandered about the Old Village of Piketon sampling home-cooked foods, demonstrating craftsmen and a variety of musical performers.

Many visitors found the usually ample parking in the historic village depleted and cars lined the berms of U.S. 23 skirting Piketon. The success of the 1976 Bicentennial festival was evident from the reaction of craftsmen, all of whom said they would return next year.

The Adelphi Community Band performed following the parade in front of the piano shop of their director, R. W. Connitt. The later scheduled concert of the Bicentennial Community Concert Band was rained out. All three days, country, bluegrass and Appalachian Mountain music was performed at two stages.

Gregg Romanello, Route 2, Minford, dropped his carpenter tools, left his construction job and hurried home to pick up his banjo when he heard about the old-time banjo pickers' contest on the radio Saturday afternoon. He arrived just in time to become the last contestant and picked his way to the top prize in the festival's first banjo competition.

Second place went to Mike Diehl, Route 8, Chillicothe, and third to Leroy Haskins, Route 1, Clarksburg, both using John

Hatfield, Route 8, Chillicothe, as guitar back-up for their three selections each. Young John Masters of Route 1, Blue Creek, was another contender who caught the crowd's attention, especially with his own composition, "Blue Creek."

Don Boots, Waverly, Pike County sheriff's deputy and member of Sheriff Roy E. Ross' Blue Ridge Mountain Boys Bluegrass group, bowed his way to first place in the old-fashioned fiddlers' contest. Immediately after the competition, Boots appeared in an hour-long concert with the Blue Ridge Boys.

Taking second was Ronnie Eldridge, Ashland, Ky., and petite, 13-year old Dorothy Ferris, West Union, placed third. R. W. Skeens, Bluegrass music entrepreneur, South Webster, was master of ceremonies for both contests.

Winners in the student art show received awards: First overall for most talent — Gail Hill of Piketon; seventh and eighth grades canvas painting — 1, Linda Steinhauer; 2, Linda Sheets; 3, Jeff Lapp; string art — 1, Darren Riggsby; 2, Ronald Robertson; 3, Gail Hill; fifth and sixth grades — 1, Billy Rider; 2, Diane Sheets; 3, Brian Rider; third and fourth graders — 1, Brian McDowell; 2, Royce John Bumgardner; 3, Debbie Osborn; honorable mention — Terry Holdren, Cincy Gatrell, C. Williams, Steven Acord, David Weisel, Debbie McCoy, Robin Wagner, Randy Hays and George Barlow.

The Pike County Genealogical Society maintained a register in which visitors could note family names and geographical locations they were researching.

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