

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

"1957 March of Dimes Popularity Contest"
Carroll County Times article for 2 April 1995
by Jay A. Graybeal

Two weeks ago I asked for assistance in identifying a group of young women who posed with Mrs. Gladys Wimert in the living room of her Westminster home. Mr. and Mrs. Paul Wardenfelt of Westminster were the first to identify the women, however, they did not know anything about the event. This information was supplied by Mrs. Carol (Bixler) Head who appeared in the photo. She recalled that it was a 1957 fund raising event. A quick check in the Society's newspaper collection revealed the following article from the January 10, 1957 issue of The Times.

The contestants for the 1957 March of Dimes Popularity Contest, sponsored by the Westminster Civitan Club, have been selected and have begun collecting.

They are already receiving generous support of the residents of Westminster and vicinity as in the past.

The seven young ladies selected this year by the Civitan Club are rapidly soliciting their votes which will determine the winner of the contest. Each ten cent donation given to the girls to fight polio is equivalent to one vote toward their efforts to the title of "Miss 1957 Popularity." The winner will be crowned Queen of the 1957 March of Dimes Ball at the Westminster VFW home Saturday night, Feb. 2, by Miss Patricia Welk, the 1956 Queen. The Queen's court will be composed of the remaining six girls participating in the contest.

The nominees for this year's Queen are all students of Westminster schools. Miss Ginny Owings is 17 years old and a senior at WHS. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore W. Owings, Uniontown Rd. Miss Carol Bixler, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Bixler, Washington Rd., is another 17 year old senior from WHS. Miss Loretta Leister lives near Leister's Church. She is a senior at WHS, 17 years old and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ira L. Leister. Miss Rose Marie Frock, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John S. Frock, Littlestown Rd., is also 17 years old and a senior at WHS. Miss Frock is employed part time at Newman's Book Shop. Miss Sylvia Ford comes from Gamber. She is 17 years old, a senior at WHS, and is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry T. Ford, Sr. Miss Ann Bixler is a junior at St. John's High School. She is 16 and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard S. Bixler, 156 Willis St. Miss Elaine Myers, daughter of Mr. Kenneth Myers, is also a senior, aged 17, at WHS and lives at 14 Kemper Ave.

All girls said they will appreciate your votes in helping them to fight polio, and thank you in advance for all the consideration and courtesies you will extend to them. Should you desire to contribute by mail please make out your check to "March of Dimes" "Popularity Contest" and indicate the name of your favorite contestant, or if you care to vote for several, list them accordingly. This should be mailed to John H. Reaver, Popularity Contest, Treasurer, 42 Westmoreland St., Westminster, Md., and should be received prior to midnight, Feb. 1.

The following committee of the Civitan Club is promoting this year's contest: Donald Beard, chairman, Ralph Starner, co-chairman, John Reaver, Denton Twigg, Carl Myers, Jade Shaeffer, Ralph Yealy, Robert Buchman, Edward Baker, Herb Mathias, Ken Jones and Charles Warner.

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Miss Ann "Tanny" Bixler was crowned the 1957 March of Dimes Queen at the March of Dimes Ball held at the VFW held on February 2nd. The seven contestants collected \$2,007.24 for the Infantile Paralysis Campaign.

On the lighter side, the following article appeared in the April 6, 1895 issue of the Westminster American Sentinel.

April 1st, All Fool's Day as it is called, was made the occasion of many practical jokes in the city. Many persons were sent on "fools' errands" and empty pocket-books lay about promiscuously. The only harmful piece of joking of which we have heard was the burning of some barrels on the lot opposite the ice factory, for the purpose of causing an alarm that brought out the fire department. An act of that character deserves punishment.

The editor of the Westminster Democratic Advocate published a similar story but noted that the mayor of Westminster had offered a reward of \$10 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators.

Photo Caption: Left to right : Virginia (Owings) Lambert, Rose Marie (Frock) Healander, Elaine (Myers) Little, Gladys Wimert, an unidentified man (possibly Donald Leitch, Director of the Maryland Chapter for Infantile Paralysis), Loretta (Leister) Basler, Carol (Bixler) Head, Ann Bixler and Sylvia (Ford) Arbaugh. Historical Society of Carroll County Collection.