



Dancing in the street

African World Peace Festival draws hundreds downtown

By Paul Woolverton
 Staff writer

Diali Cissokho & Kaira Ba band got people dancing on the street Saturday night for Fayetteville’s fourth annual African World Peace Festival.

The event in downtown Fayetteville drew hundreds through the day for music, street vendors, food and other entertainment.

It continues today until 7 p.m.

“We are entertainers, but we are here doing what we love to do – this is what we do for a living – bringing musical

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medicine to everybody here,” percussionist Will Ridenour of the Kaira Ba band told the audience at a stage set up on Person Street. “To make you feel a little happy, a little joy. And to get moving.”

The heat seemed to keep

people away earlier Saturday, as relatively few were on hand to hear a smooth jazz band and vendors grumble about the light turnout. But more people arrived as the sun went down and the temperature cooled. Person Street had a crowd of people sitting on the curb and lawn and camping chairs to watch the musical performances.

Afternoon heat or in the cool of the evening, Eric Reye of Fayetteville found the festival worthwhile.

“The sights, the music, the environment,” he said.

Tiffany Torres and her friend Chris Baker have been to the festival before. They enjoyed the food. They had meals of oxtail and goat.

And they made a discovery: Back-A-Round Records, a vinyl record store that recently opened.

“I got a Prince album,” Torres said. It was “Kiss,” a

12-inch single released in 1986. “I cried when he passed away” so she was excited to find the record, she said.

Torres also bought earrings from a street vendor, and Baker got a necklace.

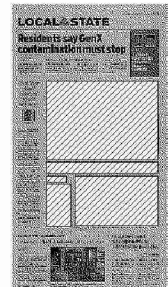
It all came together, Torres said.

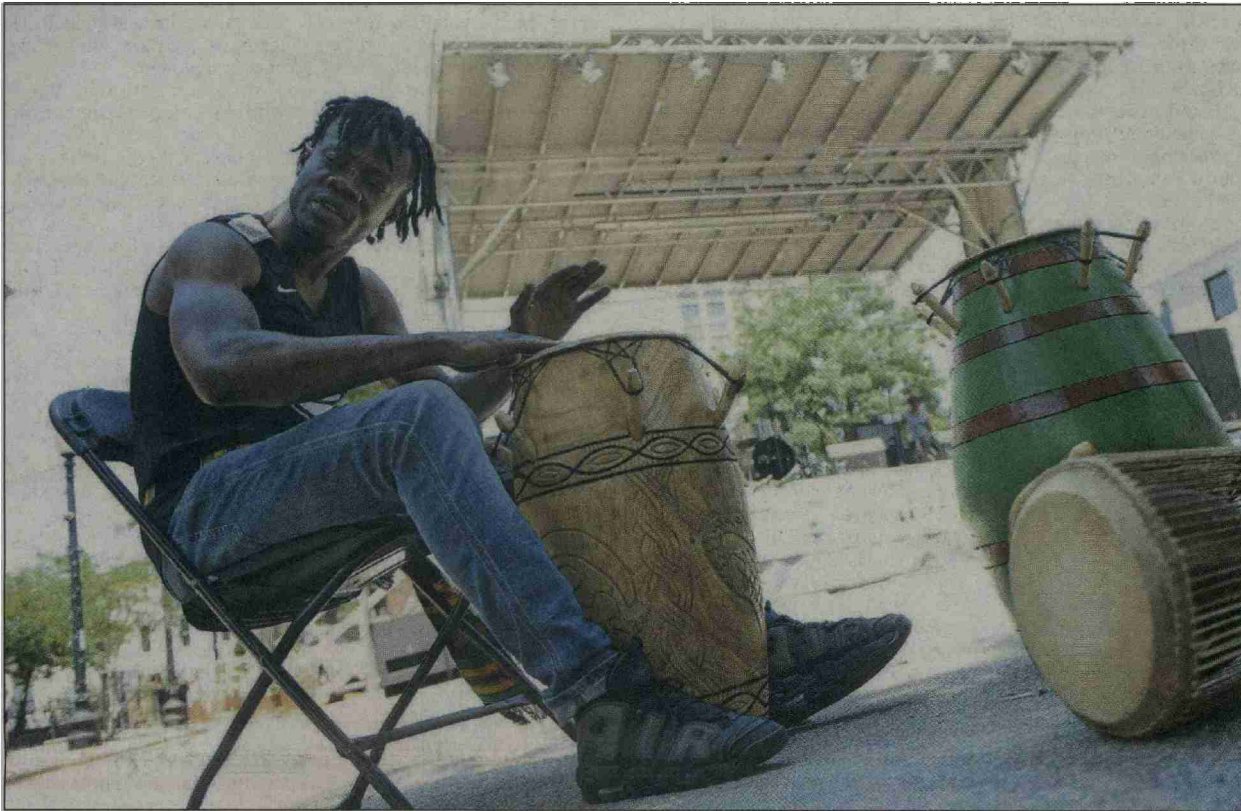
“It’s the atmosphere and what we’re celebrating: African Culture,” she said.

The African World Peace Festival presented by the Culture and Heritage Alliance in Fayetteville to bring people together and promote peace, love and respect, its website says.

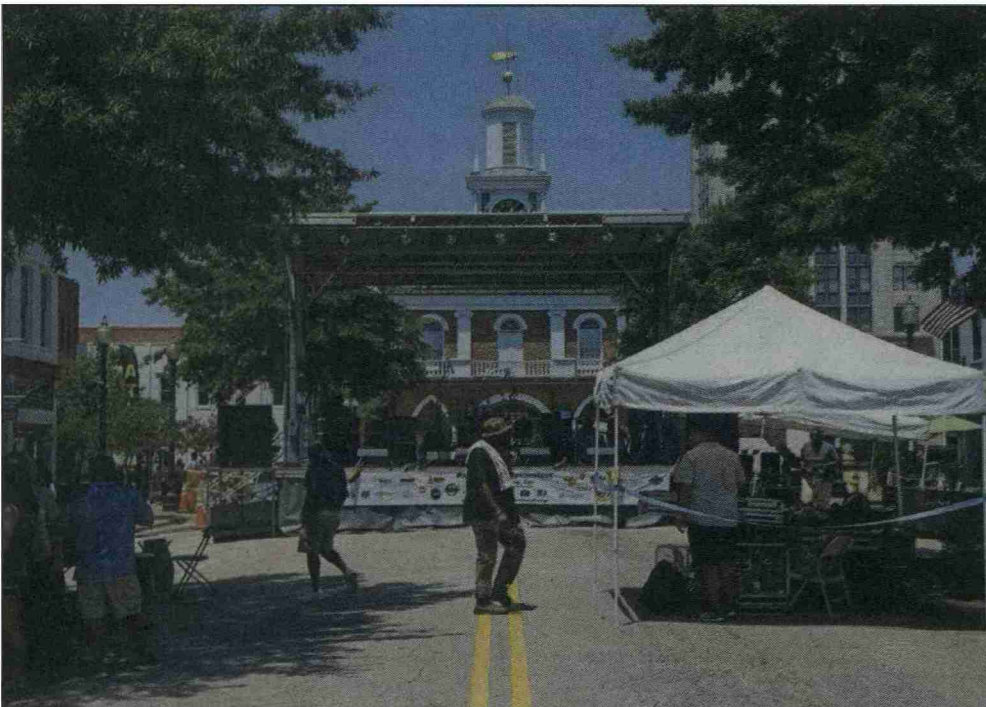
The festival continue today with more activities and music, including an African gospel concert. It’s free and open to the public.

Staff writer Paul Woolverton can be reached at pwoolverton@fayobserver.com and 910-486-3512.





Performer Nana NYC warms up for a later performance by playing to the beat of music during the African World Peace Festival in downtown Fayetteville on Saturday. [PHOTOS BY MELISSA SUE GERRITS/THE FAYETTEVILLE OBSERVER]



People walk to venues and listen to music during Saturday's African World Peace Festival in downtown Fayetteville.