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1986-1990

1987: Mayor Election, 1986-1990

Houseal, Willie H.

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1986
Mayor Pro-Tem
Election
1987

OATH OF OFFICE

I do solemnly affirm that I will well and truly perform the duties of Councilman of the City of Valdosta, to the best of my skill and ability, and as to me shall seem to be in the best interest and welfare of this City, without fear, favor or affection; so help me God.

Willie H. ...

Sworn to and sub-
scribed before me, this
1st of March, 1986:

H. ...
Judge, Superior
Lowndes County,



By MIKE COLOMBO
Times Sports Editor

Some 30 years ago, Joe Rivers didn't think he was doing anything special when he let kids play baseball in his yard. Through the efforts of Rivers and several other kids formed the nucleus of the first black youth baseball league in Valdosta.

"They would just come over in my yard and play," said Rivers. "I had a big yard. I would work with them a little bit, trying to teach them fundamentals. My primary purpose as the time was just trying to keep them off the streets and out of trouble."

Eventually, Rivers had close to 100 kids playing in his front yard. He then got a few more people to help him coach, and then split the kids up into different groups.

Rivers then had to go out into the community to drum up funds for balls, gloves, and other necessities. Oddly enough, Rivers

Rivers' Thoughtfulness For

Rivers' Thoughtfulness Paid Off For Local Youth

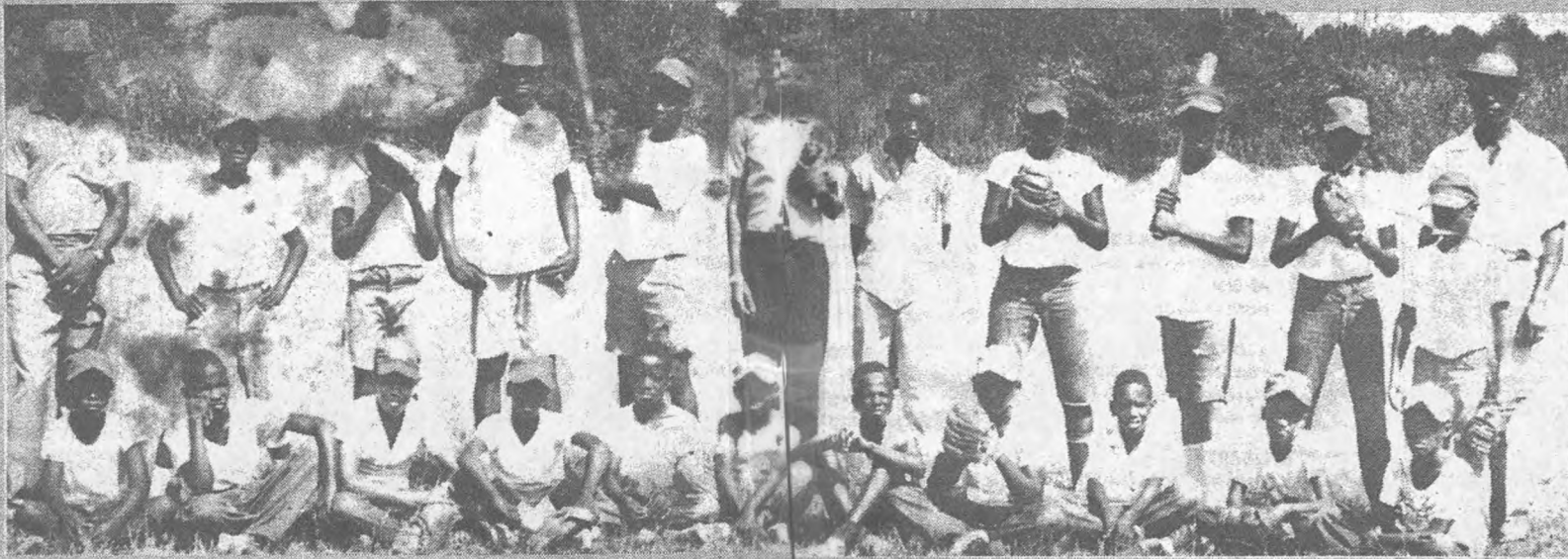
By MIKE COLOMBO
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Some 30 years ago, Joe Rivers didn't think he was doing anything special when he let kids play baseball in his yard. Through the efforts of Rivers and several other in the community, however, those kids formed the nucleus of the first black youth baseball league in Valdosta.

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Joe Rivers, (Standing On Far Left), Here In This 1958 Photo, Started Valdosta's First Black Youth Baseball League

ran into a lot of people who would not help him out unless his team had a charter. That was not an easy thing to do, and in those days, blacks still didn't play baseball with whites.

Rivers eventually got in contact with Little League headquarters in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. In 1959, he finally received the charter he had sought.

Later Coca Cola provided

Rivers with some uniforms and a generous Valdostan helped him get some more balls and bats to practice with.

Rivers still kept his perspective, and did his best to see that the

kids would benefit.

"I would usually make the worst kid on the team the captain," said Rivers. "I figured this would make him take some responsibility. This use to make my son mad and

he quit me once, but I told him on the field I had to treat him like anybody else."

Rivers was a tough competitor in his own right when he was growing up. He graduated from Dasher High in 1948 and played for the Valdosta Trojans alongside W.L. Cut Edwards.

For the Dasher High Tigers, Rivers played pulling guard on offense and was a linebacker on defense. He was such a ferocious hitter that he earned the name Dirty Joe Rivers. Rivers maintains his innocence as far as being a dirty player but admits that he did enjoy popping the unsuspecting running backs.

He was an all-star player in the Southern Conference two consecutive years for his fearless play. This dedication is what made him such a good motivator of his baseball players.

"The trick is to stay ahead of them," said Rivers. "If they did 10 pushups, I would do 20. That's how you earn their respect."

Photo Special To The Times

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of March, 1986:

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Judge, Superior Court
Lowndes County, Georgia





Feb 27 87

It's About That Time Again

Good morning.
I had planned to write about the Maroon Foreign Devil this week but it will have to sit in the garage another week. I went to a riot and a political rally broke out.

There are several fast-breaking developments on the political front these days.

• Valdosta City Council must elect (gasp!) a mayor pro tem.

• Golden Robert Carter may have two (count them, two) opponents in the sheriff's race.

• Ernie Nijem is considering running for City Council (Does Jo know?).

• Fred DeLoach Jr. has told some friends he won't run again for county commission. He told some other friends he will run. (And who did shoot J.R.?)

• Lester Maddox, Jesse Jackson and David Rockefeller have found they have something in common after all.

It's enough to keep the voters awake at night and make a grown woman cry.

Let's look closer at these developments.

Valdosta City Council almost never got organized after the last election because of a couple of temper tantrums over who would be mayor pro tem, the person who runs the meetings in the absence of the mayor. Jim Rainwater currently holds the post. Word is one other member of Council wants the job this year and has three others lined up to vote for him. It sounds like Willie Houseal in a photo finish for mayor pro tem.

G. Robert Carter not once but

City Hall Politicking Childish

Good morning.

Some members of Valdosta City Council have reached the bottom of the barrel in trying to find an issue to run on for mayor. If ever there was a non-issue, the municipal court "todo about nothing" is certainly one of them.

Mayor Gill Autrey should get out his reality paddle and spank the children. Get them working on real problems instead of shadows.

Valdosta has a municipal court. It is descended from earlier days when small towns called them mayor's court. In those days, mayors punished minor municipal wrongdoers. Now, municipal courts in cities the size of Valdosta use lawyers on retainer to sit as judge. It is not a full time position by any means. Lawyers agree to take the post only if allowed to let their law practice come first. The court hears misdemeanor violations of city ordinances and some state traffic laws.

Over the years it has been the custom, by charter actually, for the mayor or the mayor pro tem to sit on the bench when the lawyer is earning his living in another court or whatever.

Most mayors dislike the job while most mayors pro tem sort of like it. In most cases, certainly in Valdosta, neither the mayor nor mayor pro tem is qualified to sit as judge in any court of law. They are not lawyers.

Councilman Jimmy Rainwater wants to run for mayor one day. He is still smarting because he lost a battle to retain his title as mayor pro tem and it is rotated.

The present mayor pro tem is



Dec 87
Archie McKay

Times Managing Editor

Councilman Willie Houseal. Houseal doesn't like to sit as judge and the other two black members of Council might want to be mayor pro tem but don't want to sit as judge either.

Why? The answer is rather simple. Most of the people appearing before the judge at Valdosta Municipal Court are black. They are the constituents of the three black councilmen.

Rainwater, with some support from former council members and others, is stirring the pot about "if you run for the job" and "let the people vote" and other political nonsense.

The real problem is that Rainwater is still politically angry about losing something he thought he won at the polls, the right to be mayor pro tem his entire term. He credits the three blacks with this and he is correct because the three blacks on council did force the issue and have the office of mayor pro tem rotated.

Really, there are a couple of quick solutions to the municipal court judge "problem." Since a lawyer is paid to be the judge, stipulate in his contract of services that if business takes him

elsewhere he must have a qualified lawyer as his replacement and pay for his services out of his annual fee.

If this won't fly, ask the city attorney, a lawyer, to fill in. If this won't fly go ahead and change the charter, put in a few more bucks and pay a lawyer to fill in for the municipal court judge.

If Council won't buy any of these solutions, Mayor Autrey can make the issue disappear in a hurry. All he has to do is announce he intends to sit on the municipal court bench when the lawyer is absent. Should he do this, one wonders how many seconds it would take the boys on City Council to quit pouting and move on from this foolishness to tackle some real problems.

And City Council has some major problems. People are angry about the crime rate here. Some are losing confidence in the police department. People are angry at the wasteful and time-consuming political hangup about curing the water problem. People are angry and upset because the chamber and other groups outside government must take the lead in solving some of our serious problems.

And the people are looking to City Hall for answers. If they are getting answers, we haven't heard about it.

Those on Council wishing to be around for a time would do well to forget foolish in-fighting and get on with the real problems. The voters are getting upset. The Council is in the same position as comedian Bill Cosby who jokes that his father admonished him: "I brought you in this world; I can take you out."

Feb 28 87
m

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Houseal Elected Mayor Pro Tem

By **ERNIE ROGERS**

Times Staff Writer

The election of Valdosta's mayor pro tem was accomplished Thursday night with one nomination and a unanimous vote by Council.

"I nominate Willie Houseal for mayor pro tem," said Councilman Sonny Vickers.

"I move the nominations be closed," said Councilman David Drumheller, immediately.

Council approved the motion and Houseal became Valdosta's first black mayor pro tem by acclamation.

Words of congratulation to Houseal and gratitude to Councilman Jimmy Rainwater, who held the post for one year, filled the last few minutes of the meeting.

"Jimmy Rainwater has been a big help to me," said Mayor Gill Autrey of the man who held the post for the past year. "He probably attended 30 percent of the functions the mayor was asked to attend."

That frequency of service demand has been discussed in and out of Houseal's camp as a concern. A question as to whether Houseal will be regularly available to effectively serve in the post continues to be asked.

Houseal discounts those concerns and said he expects to have the time necessary in meeting the demands of the job.

Being mayor pro tem places more responsibility on me as a servant of the city," Houseal said. "I am available each morning and on Fridays. I'm pretty sure I'll work it out."

"The experience will be gratifying to me. I feel fortunate that my colleagues put their trust in me."

The agreeable mood of Council in smoothly electing Houseal to a one-year term followed a path charted during last year's negotiated election of Councilman Jimmy Rainwater to the post.

Rainwater had expected to be elected mayor pro tem last year as a matter of course after winning the at-large seat on Council. The course wound around a move to limit the term of the mayor pro tem to one year — a move aimed at ensuring that one of the newly elected black councilman would have an opportunity to hold the office.

Negotiations to limit the term began with three blocked efforts to elect Rainwater at the first meeting of the new council one year ago today. Mayor Gill Autrey was forced to recess that meeting and lead further, less public and strident negotiations among councilmembers that resulted in an



WILLIE HOUSEAL

agreement on the one-year term and in the unanimous election of Rainwater on the fourth vote.

An effort to avoid another prolonged confrontation that could have damaged the internal workings of Council eased Houseal into the post he had eyed for the past year.

Rainwater said the business of government and the more important priorities of Council could not be sidetracked by council politics.

However, there is evidence that a cordial brand of internal politics lingers in the wings amid speculation that the term of mayor pro tem could be expanded to two years starting with the 1988 election. Rainwater is expected to seek the post for a second term.

Valdosta company seeks state permit to store own waste

By Terri Langford
Staff writer

VALDOSTA, Ga. — An environmental permit to be issued to a local chemical company is nothing more than a "final formality," according to the company's Valdosta manager, and it will not affect current waste disposal procedures in any way.

Noel Wisenbaker, manager of the Union Camp Corp. in Valdosta, said yesterday the permit to be issued by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division sometime next year will not change either the amount of flammable waste kept on the plant's Valdosta site nor will it change the way the company disposes of hazardous, combustible waste.

For at least the past seven years, Union Camp has kept flammable oils and solvents on site longer than 90 days, which is the state and federal deadline set for hazardous waste generators.

Most companies must dispose of their hazardous material before that time limit is up. But if the company requests an indefinite time limit, it may have all the time it wants as long as an application for such a permit has been filed.

Meanwhile, Union Camp, like other companies that have filed for permits in Georgia, must undergo annual inspections by the EPD to ensure that they are, indeed, disposing of the waste.

Union Camp, based in Wayne, N.J., produces inks, adhesives and other resin-based products.

Wisenbaker said that most of the hazardous waste

Valdosta Councilman Looks At Union Camp

By AMY SWANN
Times Staff Writer

Concern from residents in District 1 over Union Camp's request to store nearly 50,000 gallons of hazardous waste at the East Hill Avenue facility has prompted City Councilman Willie Houseal to request a public hearing by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division on the issuance of the permit.

"The residents in the area have become alarmed," said Houseal this morning.

He has sent a letter to the EPD requesting the hearing and has obtained permission from Valdosta City Manager Mike Cason to use Mathis city auditorium for the hearing, he said.

In addition, Houseal will tour the Union Camp plant Friday at 10 a.m. to examine the emergency procedures and facilities described in the permit, he said.

The plant, which manufactures naval stores derivatives, has applied for a permit to the EPD to store ignitable and toxic waste in 55 gallon drums and tanks and to treat 25 gallons of ignitable and toxic waste per day at the plant by air drying filter cakes.

"Not only are the residents opposed to storing the materials more than 90 days, the air drying of the filter cakes is out of the question because it will decrease the air quality," said Houseal.

The plant is located in a densely populated area with the Bray's Quarter



Willie Houseal

area, Hudson Dockett and Dollar Bay all within one mile of the plant, said Houseal.

"The residents are not just going to accept this; when the public hearing is held, the public will be out in full force," said Houseal.

Houseal has also requested that the city attorney examine local ordinances as to what the city allows. In addition, a petition is being circulated in the district to monitor the opinion of the residents, he said.

Houseal said even if it costs the company more for an alternative method of waste disposal it would be worth it.

"When it comes to cost over humans, we should be thinking of the humans everytime," said Houseal.

Permit only a formality, company spokesman says

(From Page B-1)

stored at its plant in Valdosta is flammable. Currently, the plant stores 55,000 gallons of bulk waste in storage drums after it has been dried in filters to remove the flammable substances. It is then shipped to Emile, Ala., to the regional hazardous waste site.

Wisenbaker said his company sometimes needs more than the 90 days allowed for on-site waste storage because of delays caused by waste handlers.

"With a couple of customers, there are sometimes in-

terruptions," Wisenbaker said.

The EPD was scheduled to issue Union Camp a permit Dec. 15, but Valdosta City Councilman Willie Houseal, on behalf of residents in his district, filed a request for a public hearing with the EPD last week.

Houseal said yesterday the hearing will not be held before Dec. 15, but probably sometime in mid-January.

"It's [permit] not for me to decide," Houseal said. "But the right thing to do is to have the company explain to the residents involved."

Valdostans Cite Union Camp Odor

By AMY SWANN
Times Staff Writer

Accounts of burning eyes and chronic respiratory problems were vocalized by residents of southeast Valdosta at a Tuesday public hearing concerning Union Camp's hazardous waste storage request.

Citing a constant chemical odor near the 1401 E. Hill Ave. plant, many of the residents pleaded with Georgia Environmental Protection division officials to deny the permit allowing more than 50,000 gallons of ignitable and toxic waste to be store indefinitely at the plant.

At the beginning of the hearing, Valdosta City Councilman Willie Houseal presented EPD officials with a petition signed by more than 600 residents of the area who oppose the permit.

The residents not only objected to the storage but to the treatment of toxic waste they feel will reduce air quality.

The permit will also allow 25 gallons of toxic waste to be treated each day by drying filter cakes containing xylene.

"Xylene is a highly flammable solvent that has to be handled carefully ... xylene can explode in heat or fire ... is very poisonous if inhaled or swallowed," said Valdostan David Parker, a member of the National Campaign Against Toxic Hazards.

Parker said even at low levels xylene can cause damage to the central nervous system and liver. He said many questions needed to be answered before the permit is issued.

"The smell is terrible at times. There are certain times when it is hard to breathe," said Charles Robinson, who has lived on Windsor Street near the plant for 25 years.

Virginia Copeland told EPD officials that the odor emitted from the facility often causes her eyes and nose to burn and voiced her concerned about the effects of long term storage.

It was the lack of community involvement and the absence of information on the permit which brought Mrs. John Fischer to the meeting, she said.

"I'm wondering if Union Camp thought of the health and the welfare of the people. The people in the community were not called in and given information ... I do not wish to see hazardous waste in the community," she said.

Resident Rosa Hughes concurred. "We just don't need that here. If there is a need to store it put it out in a swamp 25 miles from the city. I ask that you please deny the permit," she pleaded.

And the question of safety was one that concerned many of those at the hearing.

Mrs. Annie Mayfield told officials that within a few miles of the plant are two elementary schools, two public housing projects, a day care center and a densely populated residential area.

"Does the hospital have provisions to treat people if there is an accident and is there an evacuation plan?" she said.

See ODOR, Page 2-A

From Page 1-A

Hattie Smith shared the concern of an accident. "What if there is an explosion?"

Several of the residents commented on past fires at the facility. One fire this fall in a heating kettle at the plant caused \$460,000 damage.

"The fire trucks have been there two and three times a week. The ditch behind the place caught fire one time and burned for a block and a half," said Charles Robinson.

More than 50 people showed up for the hearing which was requested by the City Councilman who represents the

district, Willie Houseal.

"I was very pleased with the turnout and I feel each person had a legitimate concern," he said.

Those who made comments and asked questions will be contacted by the EPD with a response, said Moderator John Taylor, with the Land Protection Branch of the EPD.

Tuesday's hearing consisted of a formal process where citizens made comments for the record. The comments will be taken back to the EPD office in Atlanta for further study.

"After assessing all the data, we will make our recommendation," said Taylor.

Union Camp Waste Site Hearing Set

By AMY SWANN
Times Staff Writer

A public hearing on Union Camp's application for a permit to store hazardous waste at their East Hill Street facility will be held at Mathis city auditorium Jan. 19 at 7 p.m., said Valdosta City Councilman Willie Houseal.

The permit, which would allow the plant to store more than 50,000 gallons of toxic and ignitable waste for more than 90 days, was scheduled to be issued Dec. 20 but has now been postponed until after the hearing.

Representatives of the Georgia Environmental Protection division's Resource Recovery Unit will be at the hearing to answer questions relating to the technical aspects of the storage at the plant.

Houseal, who toured Union Camp two weeks ago, said he was impressed with the facility but wants the public to have an opportunity to be informed about the storage and treatment of the hazardous wastes at the plant. He said he remains concerned over emergency plans, especially any necessary evacuation plans.

The permit will allow Union Camp to treat 25 gallons of toxic waste each day by drying filter cakes which contain the toxic and ignitable solvent xylene.

A petition circulated by a concerned citizen already has 700 signatures, said Houseal, of residents near the plant who are protesting the proposal.

The petition states the residents are opposed to the close proximity of the plant to their homes, the potential for reduction of air quality and the fact that no assurances have been given.

Hearing

From Page 1-A

hearing will reflect the number of citizens who signed the petition, but I think it's very important that those in the area are informed about the industry," said Valdosta City Councilman Willie Houseal, who represents District 1 where the plant is located.

"Historically, great numbers of people do not turn out for public hearings," he said.

Houseal requested the public hearing be held and toured the facility in November.

"I was impressed with the safety precautions they have taken," said Houseal.

But even with the precautions, a disaster caused by human error cannot be calculated as was illustrated by a September fire at the facility which

caused more than \$350,000 damage, residents argue.

In addition to being allowed to store hazardous waste, the permit will also allow Union Camp to treat up to 25 gallons of toxic waste each day by drying filter cakes containing the toxic, ignitable solvent xylene.

"We can't predict the effects of that," said Mrs. Mayfield, adding that her neighbors fear the permit will be granted.

When copies of the permit were released for public inspection in October, the document said the permit would be issued Dec. 20.

"When you get to the public comment period ... it is tantamount to issuing a permit," said Noel Wisenbaker, Union Camp manufacturing manager.

But with the public hearing, issuance will be delayed until public comments can be reviewed.

Statements at the hearing may oral or written. A written transcript the hearing will be made available the the public.

A copy of the permit application available for the public at South Georgia Regional Library on Woodrow Wilson Drive.

According to the public hearing notice, all comment received will be considered in the final determination. EPD will announce any substantial changes in the final decisions by public notice.

Storage Allowed^M At Plant

By AMY SWANN
Times Staff Writer

March 88

The state Environmental Protection Division has issued a permit to Union Camp to store more than 50,000 gallons of ignitable and toxic waste at the East Hill Street facility in Valdosta.

Some area residents protested the proposal at a recent public hearing.

"We answered all the questions and ultimately decided the permit was in the best interest," according to Jim Ussery, unit coordinator for the Hazardous Waste Management Program at the EPD.

An additional application to treat up to 25 gallons per day of the hazardous waste was withdrawn by Union Camp because a recent ruling by the federal Environmental Protection Agency stated the substance to be treated, filter cakes, did not fall under the definition for hazardous waste, Union Camp Plant Manager Noel Wisenbaker said.

Ussery said the filter cakes do contain xylene, a toxic and ignitable waste, but not enough to create a hazard.

"It still gives off fumes, but it is not defined as a hazard," Ussery said.

The permit was issued on Feb. 26, more than two months after it was scheduled to be issued.

The hold up was a public hearing on

Plant—

March 88

From Page 1-A

the matter requested by Valdosta City Councilman Willie Houseal.

More than 50 people came to the hearing on Jan. 19 to voice opposition to the permit and presented the EPD with a petition signed by 600 residents of the area who objected to the storage permit.

The comments made at the hearing were taken back to Atlanta by EPD officials and studied.

"There were some valid concerns," Ussery said Monday in reference to the hearing.

The comments made during the public notice period were grouped into five categories.

These are the comments and the answers given by the EPD:

- Many residents at the hearing questioned the storage facility being located in the middle of a residential district.

According to EPD, since the hazardous waste storage was an existing onsite facility in compliance with local zoning nothing could be done.

- EPD also ruled that the company had a complete plan to handle any emergencies which may arise with the handling, storage and treatment of xylene.

- Comments on releases of chemicals and solvents to the air and water

were referred to the Air Protection and Water Protection Branch of the EPD.

- Questions on spill prevention and control were answered by the plant's emergency plan. According to the EPD, the plans are in compliance with the hazardous waste rules.

- Concerning the "indefinite" storage of the material, the EPD answered that the permit had a 10-year duration.

Concerning the issuance of the permit, Houseal said Monday, "I felt that the permit would be issued because the facility met National Fire Protection Association rules for set-back and was in compliance with local zoning codes."

Houseal said he was glad the public became involved and questioned the permit.

"These complaints have been floating around in our neighborhood for years," Houseal said.

But he commended Union Camp for the effort they have made to adjust to the community.

"We don't want to lose them because then we would lose jobs," Houseal said.

The plant produces resin from raw pine rosin used in the production of inks. One of their products, Uni-Rez 4203, is used for gravure printing which is found in phone books.

Storage Hearing Scheduled

Safety Concerns Trigger Neighbors

By AMY SWANN
Times Staff Writer

One month after a public comment period on Union Camp's request for a hazardous waste storage permit was to have ended, a hearing has been set to answer nagging questions voiced by neighbors of the Hill Avenue facility.

When Annie Mayfield — a resident of Bunche Drive who has lived near the 1401 E. Hill Ave. plant for nine years — heard of the permit allowing Union Camp to store more than 50,000 gallons of toxic and ignitable waste, she helped circulate a petition against its issuance.

"I keep up with the news, and the first thing I thought of when I heard of the Union Camp request was Three Mile Island and the Bhopal India accident. If there was an accident, what would happen," Mrs. Mayfield said. "I am worried about the unknown."

At the public hearing, scheduled for Tuesday at 7 p.m. at Mathis city auditorium, concerned residents will have an opportunity to make comments on the proposal but will not be allowed to ask questions.

"This is a formal proceeding. The Environmental Protection division will present the facts and state the basis for the decision. Then the public will be allowed to make comments," said EPD Unit Coordinator Bill Munday with the Hazardous Waste Program.

Munday said after the formal hearing is completed, the EPD representative's generally take questions from individuals.

"But, we try to keep these things moving along," said Munday.

And if all those 600 residents who signed the petition attend the hearing, keeping things moving along will be an imperative.

In the petition, the residents listed three concerns as to why the permit should be denied.

The petition states that the plant is too close to residential neighborhoods to be allowed to store the waste, that the potential exists for the reduction of air quality and no assurances have been given by plant officials as to what effect a fire could have on the environment.

"I don't think the attendance at the

See HEARING, Page 3-A

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pine rosin used in the production of
inks. One of their products, Uni-Rez
4203, is used for gravure printing which
is found in phone books.

Council Faces Housing Amendment

By AMY SWANN
Times Staff Writer

A stronger ordinance governing the moving of residences into established neighborhoods will be presented to Valdosta City Council tonight by City Attorney George Talley.

"George and I have been working on that all week...We need something on the books that will be effective," City Councilman Willie Houseal said.

Houseal has been instrumental in drafting an amendment to the housing code, which governs moving structures.

"The ordinance we have now has weaknesses and it's not enforced," Houseal said.

Houseal said the present ordinance does not require an evaluation of the worth of the residence before it is moved. He wants to make sure a sub-standard home is not put in the same neighborhood with higher cost homes.

But in a memo from Inspections Director Ralph Noles, he reminded Council that the city does not have a "pretty ordinance" to govern how a house looks.

"We also must keep in mind our Building Codes are for safety, health and welfare of our community," Noles stated.

Houseal said the thrust of his amendment is to make sure that residences moved into neighborhoods are renovated and brought up to standard in a timely manner and to insure the homeowner is financially able to make the needed changes.

"The ordinance is going to have to be strengthened. That's the bottom line," he said.

Houseal became involved with the situation when a substandard home was moved into an existing

neighborhood in his district. The dilapidated wood structure was left untouched for nearly eight months before renovation work began.

Council will discuss the amendment at their 5:30 p.m. meeting in the Municipals Courtroom at the Valdosta Police Department.

In other business, Valdosta City Council will:

- Select a bid for the installation of new water mains under dirt streets which are scheduled for paving.

City Engineer Art Daniel has recommended the contract go to the low bidder, Standard Contractors for \$290,965.

- Appoint a Council representative to the Valdosta Tree Commission. Newly elected Councilman Richard Hill, a local architect, has been recommended for the appointment by the Tree Commission members.

- Appoint another member to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Zoning Board of Appeals.

Zoning Administrator Karan C. Dykes submitted two names Mary Eleanor Rawlings and Earl Smith, but

was unable to get a third nominee for the position.

- Select a voting delegate and alternate to the Georgia Municipal Association Convention Business Session to be held June 28 in Savannah.

Valdosta Considers Housing Code Change

By AMY SWANN
Times Staff Writer

Substandard houses being moved into existing residential neighborhoods has prompted a Valdosta City Councilman to request an amendment to the city's housing ordinance.

"We are trying to head off future problems by looking back," Houseal said, referring to a house moved to Hedgewood Circle last year.

The wood-frame home was placed on a lot on Hedgewood and remained untouched in its dilapidated state for nearly eight months — angering neighboring residents, Houseal said.

Talley is in the process of drawing up an amendment to the housing code which will be presented to council for a vote.

One of the primary concerns of Houseal is whether those who move the houses have the financial means to make necessary repairs.

"We need to see if it's legal to look at the applicant's finances," Houseal said.

He said it is unfair for someone to move a substandard structure into a neighborhood with \$60,000 and \$70,000 homes and leave it in poor condition.

Consequently, he would like the amendment to include a clause prohibiting moving a house into a neighborhood.

The amendment will also set guidelines for renovation. He wants to begin within 30 days after a house is moved into a neighborhood.

"I you can build a house in certain ways, you can renovate one," Houseal said.

He is in favor of stiffer fines for violators. If all else fails, he wants the maximum fine and to have the house moved.

Houseal became involved with the situation when a substandard home was moved into an existing neighborhood in his district. The dilapidated wood structure was left untouched for nearly eight months before renovation work began.

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Apr 14, 1988

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To prevent a repeat of the incident, Houseal has proposed several measures to City Attorney George Talley.

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"We need to see if it's legal to look at the applicant's finances," Houseal said.

He said it is unfair for someone to move a substandard structure into a neighborhood with \$60,000 and \$70,000 homes and leave it in poor condition.

Consequently, he would like the ordinance amendment to include a clause that would prohibit moving a house into a neighborhood if it is not of comparable worth.

The amendment will also set specific time guidelines for renovation. He would like renovation to begin within 30 days and end within 90 days.

"If you can build a house in 90 days, you can certainly renovate one," Houseal said.

He is in favor of stiffer fines for violators and wants the maximum fine and jail term imposed on violators. If all else fails, he wants a provision to have the house moved back out of the neighborhood.

"We are trying to protect the homeowners," Houseal said.

The existing ordinance governing the moving of homes into existing neighborhoods allows a house to be moved as long as it meets the size specifications of the lot, Inspections Director Ralph Knowles said.

The homeowner then has a specific time period to bring the house up to standard. Violators are written up, and the case is sent to city court where the judge may grant an extension, Knowles said.

The amendment will probably come before council at the mid-month meeting on April 21.

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City Council Toughens

Valdosta Housing Code

The Valdosta Daily Times, Fri., April 22, 1988 9-A

By AMY SWANN
Times Staff Writer

It will be more difficult to move a house into an established Valdosta neighborhood following City Council's unanimous vote Thursday night to amend the city's building code.

The amended ordinance requires a detailed list of all renovations to be done, that the structure be compatible with the surrounding homes and that all work must begin within 30 days from the date of moving and be completed within 90 days.

City Councilman Willie Houseal, who

requested the amendment to the ordinance, said he was elated by the decision.

"I think this will make it more difficult to move a house in Valdosta," he said Thursday. "With the more in-depth investigation, we can now do everything before the wheels are put in motion and the house is moved."

Houseal became concerned with the ineffectiveness of the existing ordinance when a sub-standard house was moved into his district on Hedgewood Circle. Since the single-family residence met the requirements for lot size, it was allowed to be placed on the

lot.

The dilapidated wood structure was left untouched for nearly eight months before renovation work began.

Under the new ordinance, extensions on the 90-day completion limit may be granted if progress is being made and the delay is beyond control of the owner.

The additional requirement that the house must be compatible in value will insure that a \$15,000 home does not end up in the middle of a \$50,000 neighborhood.

"Our goal is to protect the established neighborhoods from this type of thing happening again,"

Houseal said.

In other business, council members:

- Awarded a bid for the paving of 11 dirt streets in the first phase of a two-year street paving program.

"We are beginning to use the 1 percent sales tax to get the people out of the mud and dust," Mayor Jimmy Rainwater said.

The contract was awarded to Reames and Son, the low bidder, for an amount of \$156,890.

Daniel said the 11 streets were selected for the first phase because they were the worst in design. Paving of these

streets will begin within the next 30 days.

- Selected a bid for the installation of new water mains under dirt streets which are scheduled for paving.

City Engineer Art Daniel has recommended the contract go to the low bidder, Standard Contractors for \$290,965.

- Appointed Richard Hill to be the council representative to the Valdosta

Tree Commission.

- Appointed Valdostan Sis May to serve on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Zoning Board of Appeals.

- Selected Mayor Rainwater and Mayor pro tem David Drumheller as the voting delegate and alternate to the Georgia Municipal Association Convention Business Session to be held June 28 in Savannah.



Valdosta Mayor James Rainwater stands with project coordinator Harold Bennett and members of City Council as a ribbon is cut during official dedication ceremonies Thursday evening of the newly-renovated Valdosta City Hall. For an in-depth look inside the "new" facility, see this Sunday's Valdosta Post magazine.

William T. Martin/Post

inter-agency task force that is...

City Council Toughens

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Building Wednesday. Church mem- Times Staff photo by Bob Lupinek

Free Papers Target Of City Ordinance

By AMY SWANN
Times Staff Writer

Shopping guides and free circulation papers thrown into Valdosta yards are creating a litter problem and one city councilman wants to put a stop to the practice.

Valdosta City Councilman Willie Houseal is working with City Attorney George Talley to create an ordinance which would prohibit the distribution of free papers in residential areas.

Houseal said this is the second time the issue has come up pertaining to the litter problem having been discussed previously with the owner of the Valdosta

Shopping Guide about two years ago.

"We had an agreement to deliver the papers by mail, but we have recently received complaints about the Shoppers Guide becoming a litter problem," he said.

Houseal said in a letter written to the owner of the free circulation paper, the city requested the house-to-house deliveries be stopped.

"The deliveries are taking place in a number of areas in this city to include District 1," Houseal said.

"For fear of breach of promise in the future, I am inclined to move forward in establishing an ordinance which would prohibit distribution of free newspapers, shoppers guides and sales papers in our residential areas," he said.

To keep it from becoming a problem again, Houseal has sought the help of Talley to draft an ordinance prohibiting the house-to-house deliveries.

The delivery of the these publications has resulted in a litter problem because people often leave the papers in the yard, or they are thrown into the street, Houseal explained.

City Manager Mike Cason said the paper was delivered to homes all over the city at one time, but after the agreement the papers were mailed.

"In certain areas, they've gone back to delivering them to the houses," he said.

The owner of the Valdosta Shopping Guide, Fred Robinson, was out of town this morning and could not be reached for comment, an employee said.

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Death Lowers Speeds

City To Reduce Residential MPH

By KATHLEEN McCROCKLIN
Times Staff Writer

An April 21 traffic-related death of a seven-year-old has prompted requests by Valdosta city council members that speed limits on Continental Drive be reduced and measures be taken to prohibit parking in areas already marked "no parking."

Tyrone Horne, 7, of 1506 B Continental drive was hit April 19 by a driver who did not see him, according to police reports. He died April 21 at South Georgia Medical Center.

The driver was not speeding but Council has recognized the need to tighten up on speeding in the area due to a high number of children in the area, said councilman Willie Houseal.

Houseal said he will propose Council lower Continental Drive's speed limit from 30 MPH to 25 MPH.

"We didn't anticipate anything happening on Continental Drive but there are a lot of kids in the area. The parents are keeping a close lookout on their children," said Houseal. "There have been times on the weekends when I have witnessed motorists driving at high speeds. The young people sometimes really put the pedal to the metal, so to say."

According to Houseal, Valdosta City police have agreed to strictly enforce no parking regulations along the road sides of Southeast Elementary School on Old Statenville Road.

"He (Police Chief Charlie Spray) agreed to intensify the surveillance in the area. The first time, they (violators) are going to be issued a warning ticket. We want to give them a warning ticket to know who is obeying the law. The second time, they will be fined," Houseal said.

City Manager Mike Cason said "no parking" signs have been posted along

been posted along Continental Drive.

Signs warning of children playing in the area have also been posted, Houseal said.

Houseal said parking on road sides is especially congested on Sundays in the Scott Park area.

"This is a traditional thing that they have been doing. It's a tradition we're going to try to eliminate to decrease safety hazards," Houseal said.

"The emergency vehicles would have to get on curbs of property on Forest Manor and Pine Hill to get through," Houseal said. "We've got to put a stop

Council Slows Speeds

By AMY SWANN
Times Staff Writer

The speed limit on Continental Drive in Valdosta is now lower following the death of a 7-year-old boy who was hit by a car on the street.

Valdosta City Council approved the lower speed limit for Continental Drive from Old Statenville Road to Bethune Drive at a meeting Thursday night.

The new speed limit is 25 MPH, replacing the old 30 MPH limit.

"Five miles per hour makes a big difference, and it also makes people more aware," City Councilman Willie Houseal said.

Houseal, who represents the district where the street is located, requested the lower speed limit.

"I take walks on the weekend and some cars come through there wide open," he said. "The concern was there before the little boy was hit but that really speeded things up."

The catalyst was the death of Tyrone Horne of Continental Drive.

On April 19, the W.G. Nunn Elementary School student ran in front of a car on the street and was knocked 29 feet into the air, according to witnesses.

"It was almost dark and he lived just across the street in those apartments," Houseal said.

The driver of the car said he never saw Tyrone run into the street.

The boy died two days later at South Georgia Medical Center.

Houseal said Valdosta's traffic problems are on the increase as more drivers flood the city and more residences are constructed.

"We have a lot of young drivers who drive too fast," he said.

After Tyrone's death, Houseal asked City Engineer Art Daniel to study the possibility of lowering the speed limit.

The original proposal was to lower the speed limit from Old Statenville Road to Morningside Drive, but at Thursday's meeting Houseal requested that it be extended to Bethune.

"That's a long stretch in there. By the time they've reached Morningside, they've gained momentum," he said.

Houseal said lowering the speed limit won't stop the problem of children in the streets and speeding drivers, but maybe it will increase awareness.

"It's up to the citizens to obey the rules," he said.

Press Papers Target Of City Ordinance

OPPORTUNITIES IN HEALTH CARE

To keep it from becoming a problem again, middle 70s. Wind northeast near 10 mph. Tonight clear. Low in the middle 40s. Calm wind. Friday sunny. High in lower 80s. Wind northeast around 10 mph. The Memorial Day weekend outlook is mostly sunny days and fair, relative humidities 40 to 50 percent

Valdosta Has More Balance

Minority Numbers Increase Slightly

By JIM THOMPSON
Times Staff Writer

Local officials say Valdosta's equal employment opportunity policy is doing the job, citing a 10 percent increase in minority employment among city workers.

"Our city wanted to make a change," said City Councilman Willie Houseal. "By focusing on the matter and implementing ideas, we are able now to have equal opportunity."

Employment of 1 other minorities has increased 10 percent in October 1988 since March 1988, Houseal said.

During that time, 265 applications from 298 whites, 19 blacks, 26 whites, 26 blacks, and 19 minorities were hired.

"The program project is getting closer to having a fair distribution of job opportunities," Houseal stressed.

Houseal stressed the program's goals but rather than making the percentage of employees nearly equal to the general population, the minority population is from 40 to 44 percent, he said.

Houseal believes the city has allowed the hiring discrepancies head-on.

"With the program, we were able to focus more on our problem and deal with it," he said.

When Houseal first introduced his proposal in May of 1986, it met with some opposition, he said, pointing out that many took offense to the idea of quotas and time tables.

"We had an equal opportunity employment policy that for some reason didn't seem to be working," Houseal said. "That's the reason we're placing more emphasis on equal opportunity."

In 1985, only 20 blacks held administrative or professional jobs for the city that paid more than \$10,000 per year and all of the positions were in the fire and police departments.

Four of the five females employed

See EQUAL, Page 2-A

From Page 1-A

were in the police department and the only other female was the Clerk of Council.

Council appointed an advisory committee to work on the proposal.

One major portion of the plan was a job applicant profile that would show race and sex as an aid in pointing out problem areas that may exist with the hiring and promotion of minorities.

The amendment also stated the city manager should place a priority on filling upper-level supervisory, managerial and executive positions with minority employees when possible.

Houseal believes a lawsuit filed by nine black police officers, charging discriminatory promotion practices, helped the city expedite the process of developing the equal employment opportunity policy.

"We have more black sergeants and staff sergeants than ever before," he said. "And they are getting the jobs on

their own merit."

Recently promoted Detective Sergeant J.C. Williams agreed that the equal opportunity program has helped the situation but attributes most of the progress to the lawsuit.

"It might be working hand-in-hand" with the effect of the lawsuit, Williams said.

Hiring more black police officers has improved the police department and made the job of black officers easier, he said.

In many cases it is easier for a black officer than a white officer to obtain information or work with the individuals in a case, Williams said, and in the past much of that burden has been placed on just a few people.

The equal opportunity program has helped the minority situation in the public works division of Valdosta City government.

"I can see change since its been

Valdosta Council Adopts New 'Free Paper' Litter Ordinance

By AMY SWANN
Times Staff Writer

Further, anyone who does not wish to receive free papers may call the companies and asked to be taken off the list, and all free papers must include a telephone number and an address of where people may contact them.

"This gives the homeowners a little more leeway. It is the law now," Houseal said.

The ordinance adopted Thursday was a compromise from the original which would have prohibited the home delivery of free papers.

Houseal said he has talked with the owner of the Valdosta Shopping Guide, Fred Robertson, who agreed with the revised ordinance. The ordinance did meet with opposition especially from City Councilman John Robert Sessions.

He told members of council that the enforcement of the ordinance concerned him, adding that the ordinance will penalize the free papers and not those who allow the papers to stack up in their yards.

Houseal reiterated the purpose of the ordinance was to keep the papers from being thrown out in the street or in a manner that they would scatter and create a litter problem.

He said Valdostans can simply call the company involved, asked to be taken off the delivery route and if they continue to receive the papers, the law is on their side.

Council members voting for the ordinance included Houseal, Richard Hill, Ron Borders, Bunnis Williams and Sonny Vickers. John Robert Sessions voted against the request.

In other business, council members:

- Tabled a request from the United States Geological Survey to enter into a joint agreement for an urban flood runoff study. The city participated in the study last year, but the members said they would like to hear a report of last year's results before funding the program for another year.

City Manager Mike Cason said he would contact the department and have someone come to a future council meeting.

- Approved a request from Larry Dean for the waiver of the city ordinance to allow the installation of city water to his property without sewer to serve the residents of Garden Drive.

The property was recently annexed into the city and has individual septic tanks. Installing the sewer system would cost an additional \$27,000 over the cost of the installation of the water main.

Council has allowed the installation of water without sewerage, but does not allow for sewerage lines to be installed without a city water main.

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"Our city wanted to make a change," said City Councilman Willie Houseal. "By focusing on the matter and implementing ideas, we are able now to have equal opportunity."

Employment of blacks, women and other minorities has increased from 23 percent in October 1986 to 36 percent in March 1988 since the program's adoption, Houseal said.

During that time, the city received 265 applications from minorities and 298 from whites. Ninety-seven blacks were interviewed for jobs with 109 whites interviewed. From those numbers, 26 blacks, women and other minorities were hired as were 31 whites.

"The program projected 40 percent," Houseal said, adding that the city was getting closer to having a more equal distribution of job opportunities.

Houseal stressed that the equal opportunity program does not have strict goals but rather a general goal to make the percentage of minority city employees nearly equal with the general population.

The minority population of Valdosta is from 40 to 44 percent, based on 1980 census information, he said.

Houseal believes that the program has allowed the city to meet with its hiring discrepancies head-on.

"With the program, we were able to focus more on our problem and deal with it," he said.

When Houseal first introduced his proposal in May of 1986, it met with some opposition, he said, pointing out that many took offense to the idea of quotas and time tables.

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ol. John Nixon gave the reading of the Declaration of Independence to a crowd gathered at Independence Square in Philadelphia.

The Wall Street Journal was published.

President Warren G. Harding died. Florence K. DeWolfe was born.

Ernest Ziegfeld staged his first production "on the roof of the New York City Building."

President Woodrow Wilson was elected to a second term. He was welcomed in New York after his return from the Peace Conference in Paris.

Demolition work began in the city to make way for the new city headquarters of the police department.

General Douglas MacArthur was named commander-in-chief of the United States forces in Korea.

Major Dale R. Buis of the California National Guard, and Master Sergeant M. Ovnan of Copperas Cove, Texas, were the first Americans to be killed in action during the Vietnam War.

Council Adopts New Litter Ordinance

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The ordinance gives the homeowners a little more control. It is the law now," Houseal said.

The ordinance adopted Thursday promises from the original ordinance to have prohibited the home owners from having free papers.

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The ordinance did not have opposition especially from City Councilman John Robert Sessions.

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Council OK's Drug Test Ordinance

By TERRY RICHARDS
Times Staff Writer

New city employees will soon have to be tested for illegal drugs before they are hired, due to an ordinance passed by Valdosta's city council Thursday night.

The ordinance, which was not on the agenda for the meeting, prohibits city officials from testing current employees for illegal drugs unless there is "probable cause" to suspect drug abuse.

Mayor Jimmy Rainwater said he was "elated" and that the ordinance is "a move forward for the city of Valdosta."

The drug-testing policy is based on one used in Albany, Ga., Rainwater said.

The council passed the ordinance on the condition that no current employees be tested for drugs at all until the legality of the policy is checked.

Councilman Willie Houseal said the ordinance would be "setting an example for the community ... I

hope the good example trickles down from the city into the private sector."

The city has more than 400 employees, Houseal said.

City employees should not be upset by the new drug policy, said Councilman Ron Borders. "Drug-testing programs like these are becoming trends among larger cities," he said.

The city should make sure tests are carried out fairly, said Councilman John Sessions, who also said that drug testing should be

expanded to cover all city employees.

"Anyone who does not use illegal drugs should not be worried about testing," he said.

Rainwater said test samples would be shipped out of the city for analysis to insure security.

"We need employees who are drug-free," said Richard Hill, councilman. "We also need to make sure we tell job applicants up front that drug tests will be necessary."

The policy will go into effect Jan. 1, 1989, Rainwater said.

In other business, the council voted to pursue a \$100,000 grant for the Valdosta-Lowndes County Drug Unit.

The resolution passed by the council calls for the city of Valdosta to pay \$15,000 in matching funds once grant sources are found. The resolution also calls for the drug unit to expand its coverage to include Hahira and Lake Park.

The money would provide for an additional drug agent, an evidence officer and a secretary, councilmen said.

Thoughtfulness Paid Off For Local



Joe Rivers, (Standing On Far Left), Here In This 1958 Photo, Started Valdosta's First Black Youth Baseball League

ran into a lot of people who would not help him out unless his team had a charter. That was not an easy thing to do, and in those days, blacks still didn't play baseball with whites.

Rivers eventually got in contact with Little League headquarters in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. In 1959, he finally received the charter he had sought.

Later Coca Cola provided

Rivers with some uniforms and a generous Valdostan helped him get some more balls and bats to practice with.

Rivers still kept his perspective, and did his best to see that the

kids would benefit.

"I would usually make the worst kid on the team the captain," said Rivers. "I figured this would make his take some responsibility. This use to make my son mad and

Housel Backs Hudson Docket Post

By **SHERRIE FARABEE**
Times Staff Writer

City councilman Willie Housel has expressed his support of the plan for a Valdosta Police Department substation to be placed in the predominantly black Hudson Docket housing projects.

That plan was announced Wednesday.

"The council members and city officials and community leaders have been working for years now in

trying to alleviate some of the crime that has been taking place in Hudson Docket," Housel said.

At Wednesday's press conference Mayor Jimmy Rainwater said opening the substation should help the crime situation in the area. Valdosta-Lowndes County Drug United Capt. J.R. Willingham said the increased law enforcement visibility and moving into the area of drug activity was a positive move in the effort to reduce criminal activity.

Housel said the drug problem has

existed in that area for some time and the city has addressed such problems as black on black crime and has worked toward neighborhood watches and increased patrols in that area.

He said he hoped having the substation there would, if not put an end to the crime, increase chances to take a big "notch" out of it.

Housel expressed his appreciation to Ronnie Jones, director of the city housing authority, who approached police and city officials about establishing the substation.

"We would like to congratulate Mr. Jones, Valdosta housing director, and commend him for taking such a stance on the problem we have and also our mayor for having the foresight to support such a pilot program that has never been done in this area.

"By having the substation in the area we hope to curtail crime to a degree."

Housel doesn't see the substation, if it proves to be a successful measure, as the final solution to the high rate of drugs and drug-related

crime in the area, but as a good move in a continuing fight.

"Well I think we are doing about as much as we possibly can. We are adding staff to the drug squad and adding more police officers. It's not something you can see an end to but just hope you can continue to do your part," he said.

"I think it is a world-wide problem. It is not unique to this area and I think every citizen, every official will have to do everything

See HOUSEL, Page 2-A

Housel

From Page 1-A

they can and that is all they can do."

Housel said he did not think the drug problem could be addressed along racial or economic lines.

"I think drugs has no boundary lines, it is among the poor and among the very rich, it has no boundary lines so I don't think race comes into it," he said. "I know the elderly in the area will really

appreciate this and I don't see this being a racial thing. I see it being a moral thing and we have to start somewhere to start restoring morals."

City officials' travel policy vague, unwritten

By Tim Bower
Post Staff Writer

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of articles about local government officials' use of expense money.

Although the Valdosta City Council has not blatantly wasted taxpayer money all at once, as was the case with the Gwinnett County Commission, there is apparently some excessive spending taking place with no strict guidelines to prevent it.

During fiscal year 1987-88, Valdosta Mayor James H. Rainwater and six council members spent a total of \$17,272.10 on 30 trips. This tab includes \$4,364.51 in meal expenses in addition to \$340.75 in tips.

According to the Georgia Department of Administrative Services Com-

missioner's Office in Atlanta, if the mayor and council members were state employees, they would have only qualified for a \$2,187 meal allowance on their trips — less than half of what was actually spent.

A spokeswoman for the commissioner's office said state employees must adhere to regulations for their reimbursements with a maximum of \$21 per day meal allowance for in-state travel and \$24 per day for out of state travel. She added tips were included with these figures.

"I feel like we need a policy (governing expenses)," Councilman Richard Hill said. "(But), I think you're going to have to depend on the integrity of the official to be reasonable."

Hill explained there is no policy for city officials governing their traveling expenditures. He added he would like

to see one implemented soon.

Rainwater said there is an ordinance listed in the city's code concerning travel expenses, but it does not set any maximums for different areas of expenditures for officials.

"I think we need to be frugal with taxpayers' money...I think if there is an abuse occurring, the council would take steps to correct it," Rainwater

During 100 days of travel for the council in FY87-88, an average of \$47 per day was spent on meals and tips.

However, some members of the council exercised more discretion with their expenses than others.

Councilman Willie Houseal had the highest per day meal expense of all council members during FY87-88 with \$83 per day for 16 days of travel. Next comes Councilman Joseph Vick-

ers with a \$57 per day average for 21 days of travel.

Councilman Bunnis Williams averaged \$56 per day for 20 days of travel, Mayor Pro-tem David V. Drumheller averaged \$35 for four days, Councilman Richard Hill averaged \$26 per day for three days and Rainwater averaged \$24 per day for 24 days.

Two councilmen, Ron Borders and John Sessions averaged less than the state's allowance at \$21 per day for eight days and \$10 per day for four days, respectively.

Neither the state nor the city of Valdosta require officials to turn in receipts for meal expenses. However, Hill said he would like to see some guidelines on spending, including a meal receipt requirement.

Councilman says no abuse in travel policy

In response to the article published in the Valdosta Post on December 13, 1988, "City Officials' Travel Policy Vague, Unwritten," by Tim Bower, I feel compelled to shed further light on the subject matter.

In 1986 a study was conducted concerning the City's travel policy. The results showed that Valdosta's travel expense was not out of line with the surrounding cities such as Thomasville, Albany, and Waycross. Furthermore, these cities paid all expenses including spousal expenditures. Perhaps if a similar study was initiated today rather than making an incompatible analysis of Valdosta to Gwinnett County, the results would probably be the same or similar to that study of 1986.

I find it ironic that for twenty (20) years or more prior to the three of us being elected (Houseal, Vickers, and Williams) little or no interest was shown towards city council travel. Yet old news has resurfaced with, in my opinion, an impression of antagonistic journalism without just cause. I would hesitate to think that racism or malice, rather than public concern, could be the primary motivator of this mode of reporting.

We should keep in mind that there are almost always two sides to every story. It would be appropriate to inform your readers that most conferences sponsored by the National League of Cities and the Georgia Municipal Association are conducted in our cities' most reputable hotels. Often times the accommodations are conveniently designed to provide the conferences, dining, and entertainment without having to leave the premises. On some occasions during fiscal year 1987-88, my spouse accompanied me to these conventions.

Bear in mind that the cost of two dining exceeds the cost of one person dining, giving reason for the higher meal expenditures reported.

These conferences have been very enlightening, and have provided valuable information in helping me better serve my community. Much of the information I have received at the conferences has been shared with the Council. Furthermore, I personally feel that my constituents are receiving a profitable return on their tax dollar. The record of City officials' travel is available for all interested citizens to review. I only ask that more consideration is given to the subject matter before the final analysis, and I hope and pray that fair and equitable reporting becomes one of the Valdosta

Post's finest attributes.

Willie Houseal
City Councilman

Leadership Lowndes Gathers

By SHERRIE FARABEE
Times Staff Writer

The 1989 class of Leadership Lowndes, a program to train leaders, met Thursday night at Crescent Garden Club, to acquainted and review the schedule training they will have during the coming year.

During the nine-month program, the class members, who come from all walks of life and work in the area, will participate in seminars on city and county government, public safety, defense, economic development, education, health and human services, and other services.

"Hopefully you will take leadership skills out into the community and serve it much better," Chairman Tess Price said, addressing the participants.

Business and community leaders who will be conducting the training session each briefly addressed the class, explaining about the program and what class members could expect to be exposed to. According to Mrs. Price, Leadership Lowndes will better prepare leaders to serve their community. Preparing trained leaders, she said, is becoming a necessary step in

-A Saturday, December 17, 1988



Leadership Lowndes

Those participating in the Leadership Lowndes program include from the left: back row: Gene Felts, Tom Kurrie, Bob Hendrix, Woodrow Clemons, Scott Ferrell; third row: Terry Johnson, Johnny Dukes, Scott Alderman, Mark Buescher, Paul McNeal; second row: Barry Chapman, Joseph Brown, Willie Houseal, Brick

Rosenbaum; front row: Jim Respass, Inez Pendleton, Susan Turner, Patti Karras, Pat Colson, Marry Jo Whidby, John Sessions and Stan Fillion.

Not pictured are Larry Hanson, Evelyn Hargett, Terry Hiers, Jo Prater, Barbara Rentgchler, Bill Thompson and Mary Ann Wilhoite.

Leadership Lowndes Gathers

By **SHERRIE FARABEE**
Times Staff Writer

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"It's necessary," she said. "We have lot of people who run for office who don't know anything about the system and don't know what our needs and concerns are."

Ms. Price said there were 150 applicants for the program but the number was held down to 30 because groups about that size had been most effective in other cities with leadership training programs.

"We really are excited," Chamber Executive Vice President Johnny B. Lastinger said. He said a leadership training program has been pinpointed by community leaders as a valuable asset to future development.

"Basically, people are shy," Lastinger said. "We have observed a lot of untapped potential. By

See LEADERSHIP, Page 5-A

Was First Christmas Couple

Saturday, December 17

It started then with only two churches — Manhattan's St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church and Calvary-St. George's Episcopal Church, but has since spread to a wide inter-religious network.

Besides the sheltering and feeding program, the partnership also runs a permanent housing operation, Protect Domitella which...

York Landmarks Conservancy that helps fund restoration of historic sites, said a critical need in reducing homelessness is reform of the welfare system.

It "is not supportive of family life," he said. "It ought to support and encourage families to stay together and encourage stability."

"Some of the most here the country are won children."

Describing a sick, yet with an eight-months-old fell into the subway Manhattan's Union Square was lifted out just before

Leadership

From Page 1-A

ving people nominate them helps, as a lot were nominated by their employers and that is a commitment on the part of the employer."

Susan Turner, employed by Wood School, is one of the class members. She said she grew up in Lowndes County and Valdosta and wanted to understand more about how to contribute to the improvement of the area, especially education, through education in local government.

I never know that much about local politics and I think I ought to know more," she said. Ms. Turner said she was excited not only about

the training program but meeting, and getting to know the different people involved in the program.

The 1989 class includes, Scott Alderman, Joseph Brown, Mark Buescher, Barry Chapman, Woodrow Clemons, Pat Colson, Johnny Dukes, Gene Felts, Scott Ferrell, Stan Fillion, Larry Hanson, Evelyn Hargett, Bob Hendrix, Terry Hiers, Willie Houseal, Terry Johnson, Patti Karras, Tom Kurrie, Paul McNeal, Inez Pendleton, Joe Prater, Barbara Rentschler, Jim Respass, Brick Rosenbaum, John Sessions, Jack Sullivan, Bill Thompson, Susan Turner, Merry Jo Whidby and Mary Ann Wilhoite.

Lowndes program include from back row: Gene Felts, Tom Kurrie, Bob Hendrix, Woodrow Clemons, Scott Ferrell;

Leadership —

From Page 1-A

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City travel primarily for education

By Tim Bower
Post Staff Writer

Education is the principal reason behind Valdosta officials' travel.

According to Valdosta City Council member Sonny Vickers, although travel to various conferences, workshops and conventions by members of the council is expensive, in the long run, Valdosta taxpayers receive a high return on travel expense money. Vickers said the trips make the council

members better officials.

"It's a necessary evil for you to be exposed to the different ideas and finding out about what's coming up and the position the city is going to take," Vickers said. "My philosophy is, as a council member, I want to be effective. I try to to be exposed to and learn things at seminars that make me a better councilman."

The Valdosta City Council spent \$5,368.35 in city funds between July

and the first week of December in travel expenditures. During fiscal year 1987-88 the council spent \$17,272.40 on a variety of business trips.

Vickers explained travel is a must for the council in order to make each member effective for the city. Council members establish important contacts at conventions, so if needed, a potential problem can be worked out more quickly by having a good rapport with key officials.

Vickers also said council members learn from representatives of other cities who may have had a similar problem in the past and implemented a successful plan to rectify it.

David Drumheller, mayor pro-tem of Valdosta, echoed Vickers' emphasis on the importance of education in being an effective council member.

"Most elected officials usually come out of the private sector," Drumheller said. "There are two ways of learning about government during your tenure...one is by osmosis and the other is by experience. But you can speed up that process by learning from your peers and colleagues (at meetings and conventions)."

Among the cities to which the Valdosta City Council members traveled recently are Atlanta, Washington D.C., Seattle, Las Vegas, Savannah and Athens. In these cities, council members attended events such as Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) meetings and conventions, National League of Cities (NLC) meetings and Georgia Association of Black Elected

Please turn to page 2-A

Officials travel for education

Continued from page 1-A

Officials (GABEO) meetings.

Vickers said at many of the meetings, discussions take place about legislation the associations believe should be presented to the United States Congress (in the case of the NLC meetings) and the Georgia General Assembly (in the case of GMA meetings).

"Attending these meetings is like going to school for career training," Vickers said. "You develop the knowledge and skill to make you perform better for the city taxpayers."

The educational value of attending these meetings goes much further than just learning what to do, Vickers said, but also teaches those in attendance what to avoid.

Feb. 26, 89
Willie Houseal — A remarkable young man who is doing an outstanding job as a councilman for his district and the community at large. We appreciate him for keeping us informed and for addressing our needs. He is always willing to listen to our concerns and always follows through when requests are made. He truly is helping to make our community a better place to live and for this we are grateful

Maceo and Cherry Horne
Valdosta



VALDOSTA CITY COUNCILMEN

James H. Rainwater

Bunnis Williams

John Sessions

Joseph Vickers

Willie Houseal

David Drumheller

Richard Hill

Ron Borders

**WISH YOU A
HAPPY
NEW YEAR**



THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCILMEN

James H. Rainwater

Bunnis Williams

John Sessions

Joseph Vickers

Willie Houseal

David Drumheller

Richard Hill

Ron Borders

***WISH YOU A
HAPPY
NEW YEAR***

Residents fight proposal; win

By Tim Bower
Post Staff Writer

1/6/89

A proposal to relocate four delapidated and substandard housing units into a South Valdosta neighborhood met with violent opposition Thursday night and was rejected by a 5-1 vote by the Valdosta City Council.

After more than half an hour of discussion between the council and others involved, a motion was made to reject the proposal and all council members — with the exception of Ron Borders — voted to deny it.

"I can't believe all the filibustering taking place on the council tonight," Councilman Willie Houseal said after the long discussion. "I can't understand why you won't listen to the peo-

ple. The people have spoken."

At least eight residents of the neighborhood near the intersection of Fry Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, where the four houses were to be located, were on hand for the meeting. Yvette Council, a representative of the group, informed the council the people from the neighborhood did not want the houses there for a variety of reasons.

Ms. Council echoed the residents' feelings that if the homes were brought in, it would be detrimental to the neighborhood.

The proposal was brought before the council by Jon S. Burch, of Burch Enterprises, Inc., who planned to take four existing houses from another area of the city and bring them into the Fry Street neighborhood to be used as rental property. Burch, who said after the insides of the houses are completely renovated, they would be worth around \$20,000 each, and plans to rent them for \$240 per month.

However, the question of the value of the houses, both current and after renovation, was discussed, and it was agreed they would not be compatible with the homes already in the neighborhood which have a reported value of between \$25,000 and \$36,000.

"I think it's an injustice to those individuals of the area," Councilman Bunnis Williams said. "Let's be honest, we wouldn't even think about putting those houses in some other neighborhoods."

The houses are very old and at least 75 percent deteriorated, according to Williams, and they would not fit in with the existing homes in the community.

"I'm very disappointed with some of your attitudes and positions," Councilman Sonny Vickers said to his peers near the end of the lengthy discussion. "We need to always remember that we need to protect the integrity of the neighborhood."

Council Ends Jekyll Island Meeting

By ARCHIE McKAY
Times Managing Editor

JEKYLL ISLAND — Closer communication with Lowndes County Commission, clean water, recreation and facing up to tough issues were among the things Valdosta's mayor and city council agreed were priorities as they left for home Sunday after a weekend retreat and planning session.

"If I had to give you my idea of

our top priority, I guess I would say it is the delivery of services to our citizens with a minimum waste of their money and to improve the quality of life in Valdosta," said Mayor Jimmy Rainwater.

Councilman Willie Houseal said he learned during the sessions how to get more things done in less time and with fewer distractions than in any other activity in which he has engaged.

Others on council agreed.

While the meeting was legal,

according to the city attorney's interpretation of the state open meetings law, there was at least a technical violation, according to a written opinion sent to members of the Georgia Press Association by state Attorney General Michael Bowers.

Bowers interprets the law to mean governmental agencies must notify the citizens 24 hours in advance any time a meeting is to be held other than at the regular time or meeting place.

His interpretation is that this requirement can be met by posting a notice in a prominent location or through an announcement to the legal organ (newspaper which carries legal advertising, in this case *The Valdosta Daily Times*), or another publication of general circulation in the county.

The mayor and members of council arrived here Friday afternoon and night. They stayed at Villas by the Sea, a complex which also has conference rooms often

used by state agencies for conferences.

The city hired John Jefferys, a management specialist with the University of Georgia, to conduct an encounter session, a session where he attempts to help them learn to operate as a team and organize their planning skills.

The entire weekend, which ended at noon Sunday, cost about \$1,000, according to Dave Christian.

See JEKYLL, Page 2-A

TAW 18 1989

Post

City leaders see 'getaway' as beneficial

By Yao Atiim Seidu
Post Staff Writer

After a two-day "teambuilding" retreat at a Jekyll Island resort community, the Valdosta mayor and city council have a much better idea of what they hope to accomplish this year.

High on their agenda is identifying funds which will insure the continuing operation of the Valdosta Regional Airport. Other priority concerns include promoting better city-county cooperation, beginning construction of a new recreation complex, and finding solutions to housing inmates both at the city jail and at the Lowndes County facility.

"The airport is something that we've got to address right away," said Valdosta City Manager Mike Cason, speaking at one of the retreat sessions. "We've got to find some solutions to our problems at the airport or it's

going to be closed down."

The airport's tower is scheduled to be shut-down January 31 unless funds can be identified to staff the control tower with qualified personnel. The cost is about \$2,500 a month.

Over the "grueling" two-day session (as described by several councilmen) which ended Sunday noon, the local lawmakers were able to outline 21 concerns that they would seek solutions to over the next three, six, nine and 12 months.

Some of the more unusual interests expressed by the council included addressing the high drop-out rate in area schools; improving the city's public relations; and appointing a tax assessor. The council also said that they would give priority status to drainage and street improvement in addition of locating more landfill capacity.

District One Councilman Willie

Houseal asked the elected officials to commit themselves to the city's affirmative action plan by hiring its first minority as a department head. That idea didn't receive a warm response.

The mayor and council affirmed its "equal opportunity employment policy" but stopped short of saying they would give any special recommendation for hiring a black to fill the position.

The position of head of the city-county inspection department, has to be confirmed by both city and county governments. Mayor James Rainwater said neither he nor the council "needed to be reminded (of the city's minority hiring plan) but when we have an opening we'll keep that policy in mind."

"We have very little turn-over at the department head level," Houseal said. "It happens maybe once every four to five years. I think we ought to

go ahead and do it," he said at a Sunday morning session. He later dropped the consideration after receiving no support from the mayor or other councilmen.

The Valdosta lawmakers did say they would soon recommend the expansion of both the Industrial and Hospital authorities in order to add minority representation to those policy-making bodies.

"Blacks ought to be included on those boards," one councilman said. "But not at the expense of failing to appoint a long-time representative who continues to make valuable contributions to the Authority."

The retreat, funded primarily from the mayor's and city council's travel budget, is anticipated to cost less than \$2,000 for the entire weekend.

Houseal Says Work Challenge Rewards

By KATHLEEN McCROCKLIN
Times Staff Writer

Willie Houseal has four important priorities in his life.

God comes first, his family second, his job as instructor third and the city of Valdosta comes fourth.

"This is really the bulk of my life. This is it. Now I might sneak away and play a little golf..." the second-term city councilman said with a grin.

But time for golf and other hobbies is scarce for Houseal.

As the city continues to grow, Houseal is faced with increased challenges which other councilmen are faced with. Such challenges take a lot of time and planning, Houseal said.

Houseal is District 1 city councilman, covering the area from south Park Avenue on southwest to Griffin Road.

He is serving his second full term as Valdosta City councilman. He was elected in a special election when the city went from at-large council districts to the ward system. Since his partial term, Houseal will have served two terms on the six-district council. Houseal served as mayor pro tem in 1987.

Houseal's decision to run for council was based on his desire for improvements in the city, especially in the areas of housing, street paving and employment for minorities.

"It was a decision to serve in a capacity which would enhance the entire community, especially those areas which I felt had been neglected by previous city councils," Houseal said.

Houseal, one of three black council members, said he feels redistricting has generated more minority interest in local government. He said redistricting has helped increase the number of elected offices held by minorities.

Houseal said there have been eight black elected officials, including school board members and county commissioners, since the mid-70s. He said he has worked toward increasing minority membership of area governing boards.

"The interest had been somewhat dormant for a while. It stems from the political arena. We hadn't had any black council members serving since the mid-70s," Houseal said.

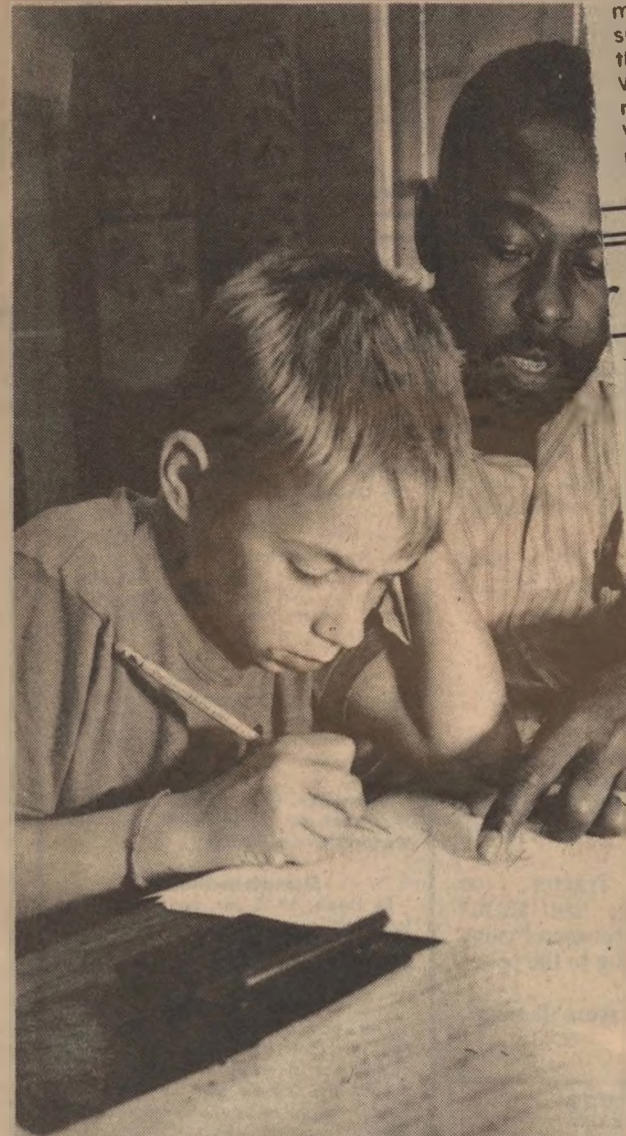
Houseal said housing improvements have been made in Valdosta, including a \$6 million renovation project in Hudson Dockett. That project should be completed in one year, according to officials.

He added that city employment of blacks has improved between 10 and 15 percent since 1987, which he, in part, attributes to the city's Affirmative Action hiring policy.

Houseal said city-county relations have improved.

"Money is the key issue between

See HOUSEAL, Page 2-A



Student Charles Taylor, 12, gets some one-on-one with educator and city councilman Willie Houseal — T by Paul Leavy.

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Mon 14, 1989

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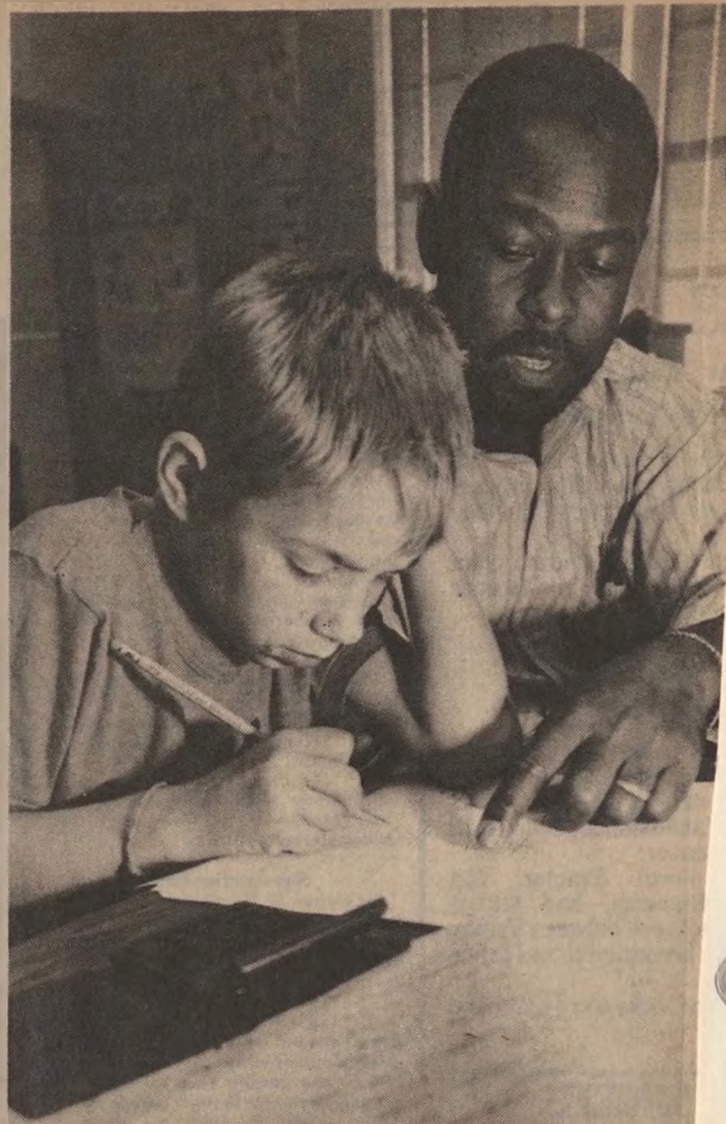
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See HOUSEAL, Page 2-A



Student Charles Taylor, 12, gets some one-on-one help from educator and city councilman Willie Houseal — Times P by Paul Leavy.

Houseal

From Page 1-A

two government entities. Taxes, and how the taxes have been allocated, still leaves somewhat to be desired. There is a formula being used and it is based according to population, really. Not so much to services being rendered. Since Valdosta is the county seat, as far as services being provided, we give more services to the people in Valdosta than the county gives to the county

residents at large," Houseal said.

Houseal is a graduate of the old Pinevale High School and is a Vietnam veteran. He graduated from Pepperdine University in California and holds a master's degree in human resources management. Houseal did his undergraduate work at St. Leo College in St. Leo, Fla., where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in sociology. He has done doctorate work in

public administration at Nova University in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

Houseal is Chapter 1 instructor at the Georgia Sheriff's Boy Ranch in Hahira, where he tutors about 48 ranch residents.

Houseal is a member of the Church of Christ at River Street. He is a member of the National Association of Educators, the Georgia Association of Educators and Georgia Committee for

Municipal Policy Makers. He is also a member of the National League of Cities.

Houseal is married to his high school sweetheart, Pat Sanders Houseal. Ms. Houseal is an administrator with a job training program of the Area Planning and Development Commission.

The Houseals have three children; Yorshia, 16, Terry, 17, and Willie Houseal Jr., 17.

Valdosta Council Boosts Payday

By ELLEN AVERY
Times Staff Writer

Valdosta councilmen voted themselves and other city employees a pay raise, as well as funded a new northside fire station, a land use computer and other projects which will cost taxpayers more money dur-

ing the 1989-90 fiscal year.

In a 4-3 vote Thursday, council approved the city's \$21.7 million budget for the coming fiscal year, which begins July 1. Councilmen Joseph "Sonny" Vickers, Bunnis Williams, Ron Borders and Willie Houseal voted for the budget, which included a 1.14 millage increase,

bringing the city property tax rate to 4.64 mills.

Councilmen David Drumheller, John Robert Sessions and Richard Hill voted against the budget. Mayor Jimmy Rainwater votes only in case of a tie or if a councilman abstains.

"I think the 4-3 vote shows that nobody is trying to tell the coun-

cilmen what to do," Rainwater said. "They are all individuals. The City of Valdosta got the best we can give. It just shows there is no backroom politics going on. It shows they voted their convictions."

Councilmen were also divided on their pay raise and a 4 percent cost-of-living increase for city employees.

The same councilmen who voted for the budget approved the pay increases. Councilmen who voted against the budget opposed the increases.

Vickers, who proposed the council pay raise, decreased the amount of the hike he had originally asked for.

See BUDGET, Page 2A

Tax rise OK'd for Valdosta

*\$21.7 million budget
includes pay raises*

By Bret Kofford

6/24/89

Staff writer

VALDOSTA, Ga. — The fiscal 1990 budget passed by the City Council has something for everybody: a pay raise for the mayor and council members, a tax increase for property owners.

By a 4-3 vote Thursday night, the council approved the \$21.7 million budget, which includes a 1.14-mill increase in Valdosta's property tax rate.

The increase brings the city property tax rate to \$4.64 for every \$1,000 of a property's taxable value.

Council members Willie Houseal, Bunnis Williams, Joseph "Sonny" Vickers and Ron Borders voted for the budget; members David Drumheller, Richard Hill and John Sessions opposed the package.

City Council members, including Mayor Pro Tempore Drumheller, now make \$6,000 a year. In the new budget, the mayor pro tempore's salary will increase to \$7,500, and the rest of the council members will go to \$7,164.

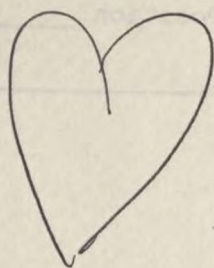
The mayor, James H. Rainwater, makes an annual salary of \$6,600. Under the new budget, Rainwater's salary will increase to \$9,880 a year.

The increases were approved as part of a three-year pay plan that will bring the mayor's salary to \$11,500 in fiscal 1992, the mayor pro tempore's salary to \$10,500, and the rest of the council members' salaries to \$9,500.

City Manager Mike Cason said the budget contained about \$390,000 in employee pay increases. One of the main reasons for the millage increase is that income sources that the city had for the fiscal 1989 budget — such as \$350,000 from

(See TAXES, Page A-2)

Willie



Peace
Thank
you

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Taxes, salaries to rise in \$21.7 million Valdosta budget

6/24/89
(From Page A-1)

The sale of the city's Pendleton Park to South Georgia Medical Center — are not available for the fiscal 1990 budget.

Council opponents of the budget said that cost-of-living adjustments for city employees could have been pushed back a year and that the Council and mayoral pay raise should have been omitted.

Cason said yesterday that final rates for city residents depend on state approval of the city's tax budget and on the city school district setting its budget.

Only 40 percent of the assessed value of a property is taxed in Valdosta.

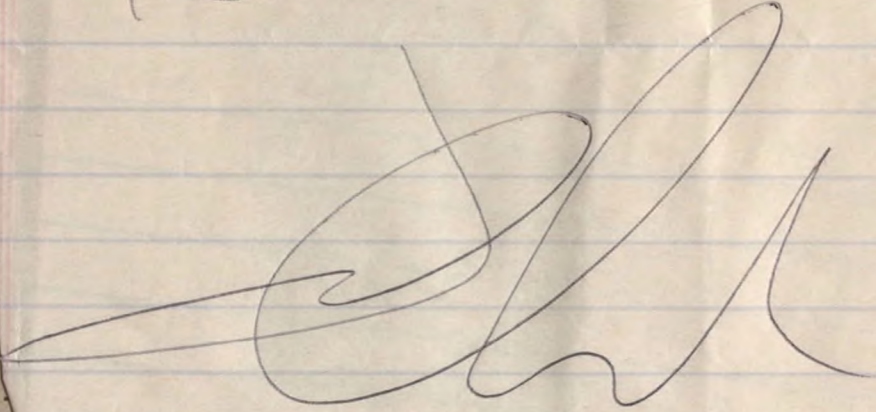
Rainwater said that the tax proposal had been worked through many long sessions and that the draft was "an adequate budget for the City of Valdosta. Several people in the audience

the city operating," Gordon said. Rainwater told Gordon that those workers were getting generous raises in the proposed budget and al cost-of-living increase. After amendments to head off the increase failed, the budget passed.

City government

Willie Houseal

Determination will lead to success



Taxes, salaries to rise in \$21.7 million Valdosta budget

6/24/89
(From Page A-1)

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Only 40 percent of the assessed value of a property is taxed in Valdosta.

Rainwater said that the budget proposal had been worked on through many long sessions, and that the draft was "an adoptable budget for the City of Valdosta." Several people in the audience dis-

“City government is becoming more complicated all the time, every day.”

— Willie Houseal, council member

agreed.

Lewis Gordon, president of the Lowndes/Valdosta chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said he thought the proposed salary increases for council members were "outrageous." The money would be better spent, he said, by giving it to full-time city employees like firefighters, police officers and sewer workers.

"Those are the people who keep

the city operating," Gordon said.

Rainwater told Gordon that those workers were getting generous raises in the proposed budget, ranging from 6 percent to 15 percent before cost-of-living adjustments.

Edith Smith said she also thought the proposed raises for the City Council and the mayor were excessive. She said many of the council members were business people who would not consider doubling the salaries of their employees in one fell swoop.

Valdosta Police Officer Tom Weed said city employees had not been getting the type of raises they were promised after a University of Georgia study — which the city received two years ago — indicated that city employees were underpaid dramatically.

Weed said he would like to see city workers start getting the 10 percent annual increases they were promised then, along with an annu-

al cost-of-living increase.

After amendments to head off the increase failed, the budget passed 4-3.

"City government is becoming more complicated all the time, every day," and consequently is taking up more time for council members, Houseal said.

Houseal said that the city constantly was annexing more areas and growing faster than it ever had, and that the cost of running the city was going up because of that. That, combined with necessary pay raises for city employees, means that millage will have to go up, he said.

Hill said he would have rather seen a more gradual increase in millage, which could have been accomplished by not raising the council salaries and phasing in city employee salary increases. He said such a sudden leap in taxes would be too much of a burden on many taxpayers.

Letter To The Editor

Thanks Valdosta, Says Former Councilman

Please allow me this opportunity to share my gratitude with the citizens of this great city. I am deeply touched with being awarded the privilege of serving Valdosta as councilman of District 1 from March 1985 through November 1989. My decision to resign was a difficult one, but well contemplated.

The circumstances are known by many and I am happy to say I have had the support of a vast majority of our citizenry.

My gratitude extends throughout this city, particularly to the citizens of District 1. Without your support, I would not have been able to effectively serve in this most important capacity.

I have grown to respect the public and even further, those who serve the public. I am proud to have served with the administration of the '80s (the administration that will go down in history as an aggressive and effective body of decision-makers). I would hope that I have made a difference in the lives of our citizens, and perhaps one day the opportunity will once again come my way.

Publicizing VSC Theatre Productions

Thank you for printing the article regarding VSC Theatre's production of three one-act plays in Sunday's edition. It caused a major increase in our attendance, beginning that afternoon.

The largest increases, however, were for the final performances on Monday and Tuesday evenings. These "slow" nights usually draw about 50 percent of capacity. Thanks to the article in *The Valdosta Daily Times*, the performances were com-

pletely sold out. On Tuesday, the three directors — myself included — had to sit on the floor in order to accommodate the capacity crowd.

Obviously, people rely on your paper to keep them informed of entertainment events in the Valdosta area. I appreciate your help in making the public aware of the variety of productions presented by VSC Theatre.

Jack Carroll
Valdosta

I commend those who offer themselves to serve Valdosta, particularly those of District 1. Democracy is alive and well. All the candidates who ran for office are, in my opinion, well-qualified to serve.

Citizens should vote their convictions. What worse than having to choose, is not having a choice at all.

Thanks again Valdosta.

Willie Houseal
Valdosta

Dec 5 89

Council On Council

Takes Houseal's Seat—Page 3-A

Goodin In Court

Retrial Begins—Page 5-A



Staff Development Day

Staff development offers one of the most promising roads to the improvement of instruction. On March 2, 1992 the Brooks County High School System's faculty and administrators met at Brooks County High School to take advantage of planned opportunities to increase competencies, and to receive up-to-date information on the latest school issues. Resources from across the state, to include, State Department officials, neighboring school systems personnel and teachers from our own system worked together to provide interesting presentations for our system. Emerging from these workshops were positive professional attitudes, a greater perception of staff development, and effective teaching practices.

A positive, healthy school

climate has been the objective of each staff development program sponsored by the Brooks County Board of Education.

The primary goal for sponsoring the workshops was to assist teachers in providing better learning for students and to keep in line with continuous planned efforts to meet the needs of the system, the school and the individual. The Brooks County School System believes that there is a direct correlation between expectation and accomplishment, and that an effective staff development program provides for: readiness, planning, training, implementation, and maintenance. Evaluation of this staff development workday reflects this accomplishment and an ongoing effort for workshops are planned for the future.

Letters To The Editor

7/9/90

Your Vote Will Count In Primary On July 17

We are about to embark on a political endeavor which will affect us for the next decade and, perhaps, the rest of our lives. We will elect our next governor, lieutenant governor, district representatives and other public officers.

Too often we have taken for granted the right which people have died for — the right to vote. Not only do we continue to neglect this right, but we haphazardly exercise this

right by not preparing ourselves to select the appropriate candidate. If we have not read newspaper articles, read literature or attended forums, we are not effectively exercising this right. No longer should we select candidates based upon popularity or namesake, but on merit and experience.

We have many issues which are important in this election. We need to know how our candidates stand on

such issues as environmental conservation, budgetary matters, education, health care, lottery, crime, drug abuse, pro-life or pro-choice and other issues not mentioned in this letter and not necessarily in this order.

Campaign promises have become an obsolete tactic in elections. We know now that even the president has proven that it doesn't pay to make promises; therefore, we should keep in mind that elected officials can only accomplish what the entire legislative body allows or agrees upon.

The time has come for us to make intelligent decisions at the polls. We can continue to blame others for our shortcomings or we can hold those who are elected accountable for their actions which affect us by actively participating in the electoral process.

Our trip to the polls on July 17 should not be viewed as a task or burden but rather an opportunity to voice our opinion in matters that concern the citizens of this great state.

Believe me, your vote will surely count.

Willie Houseal

**VOTE FOR
WILLIE HOUSEAL**

"GOVERNMENT FOR THE PEOPLE"

DEPENDABLE, AVAILABLE

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 4

FEBRUARY 11, 1992 244-4608

pd. pol. adv.

The Candidates

School Board, Council Posts Before Voters

■ Related Items, Page 3-A

By DEAN POLING
Times Staff Writer

Thirteen candidates are vying for Valdosta City Council and Board of Education seats in the upcoming non-partisan Feb. 11 election.

Mayor James H. Rainwater, District 6 Councilman Richard Hill and at-large District 9 school board member David Waller Sr. are all unopposed in their re-election efforts.

Dr. Louis Schmier and Jimmy Whatley, both running their first political campaigns, are hoping to fill the school board's District 8 seat being vacated by incumbent Dr. William Grow.

With the most candidates is a



DR. LOUIS SCHMIER
BOARD, DIST. 8

OCCUPATION: VSC history professor.

This is Schmier's first election race.

"With my experience in education and being considered one of the premier teachers on campus, I believe that I can bring an added and needed dimension to the board," he

said.

"I feel the board needs to be more active in establishing and executing school policy. I believe the board has to be active in communicating with parents, teachers and students, listening and acting upon their concerns"

Schmier wants to make the board a more active participant in establishing school policy, hold board sessions in a town-meeting fashion, instill creative and innovative leadership in school administration, establish a model school program, strengthen programs for students with special needs and re-evaluate budget priorities.

He plans to maintain close contact with his district's constituents and regularly go to the schools and discuss problems with students, teachers and administration.

Schmier has lived in Valdosta and taught at Valdosta State College for 24 years. He has two sons who graduated from the city school system.

Schmier has written six published history books including *A Ray in the Sunbelt: A History of Valdosta and Lowndes County*. He is past president of the congregation of Temple Israel and presently serves as board secretary.



JIMMY WHATLEY
BOARD, DIST. 8

OCCUPATION: Employed by

Page 4B

THE QUITMAN





Walker Street student receives award from Principal Houseal Principal Houseal presents students with awards.

Walker Street Promotion Ceremonies

Mr. Willie Houseal, principal at Walker Street School, presented 175 kindergarteners with a promotion certificate on Friday, May 29. The program also included awards presented for perfect attendance, scholarship, most improved and citizenship.

Scholarship awards were

presented to Cedrick Brooks, Christopher Craig, John Christian, Jr., Marcus Stroud, Justin Smith, Britney Buckmaster, Alicia Lux, and Candice Fulton.

Most improved awards went to Lamekia Williams, Tamira Griffin, Krystal Little, Kendrick Sloan, Cordell Sutton, Ethan

Meeks, Chances Brooks, and Kristy Wims.

Citizenship awards for the month of May went to Brandy Mitchell, Janet Hall, Derrick McCray, Lakeria Mitchell, Lacey Wise, Apryl Walker, Alicia Lux, and Adrian Jones.



MAJOR LYNN COUNCIL, DIST. 2

OCCUPATION: Correctional officer.

The Lowndes County Correctional Institute lieutenant and former assistant police chief of Berlin said he will base his campaign on fighting the drug abuse problem in the city district he'll represent.

"My No. 1 priority will be to clean up the drugs — make it hard for pushers, users, suppliers and dealers," Lynn said in a recent interview.

For the last 12 years, Lynn has been employed at the correctional institute and received formal drug enforcement training at the University of Miami, Fla., while working for the Berlin Police Department.

Secondly, Lynn said, if elected he'll work to beautify Martin Luther King Drive and other areas. "The whole district needs a facelift which includes making it safe for our children and elderly," Lynn said.

A satellite station where elderly can pay utility bills is another thing Lynn said he would like to see the city implement if he's elected.

He said the stairs at City Hall make it difficult for the elderly to pay bills and feels a pay station at Lomax Center would serve members of his district.

Lynn ran in 1990 for a seat on the Valdosta School Board, but was not elected.

The Valdosta native is a member of the Georgia Peace Officers Association and the Correctional Officers Association.



BUNNIS "B" WILLIAMS COUNCIL, DIST. 2

OCCUPATION: School employee.

Williams said he is "proud of the progress that has been made in Valdosta" since he was elected to the City Council in 1985.

"Valdosta is a better place to live and continued efforts will be made to enhance the quality of life for our citizens," he said in a recent statement.

If elected, this will be Williams' second term.

During his first term in office, Williams lists the city's street-paving program, the establishment of the Lowndes/Valdosta Drug Squad, Victim Witness Assistance Program, construction of the water-treatment plant and revitalization of the Miller Lane area as some of his accomplishments.

He is also a member of the Georgia Municipal Association's Transportation Committee, the water-treatment plant committee and the solid waste and recycling committee.

The water-treatment plant on Guess Road is scheduled for completion at the end of this year.

If re-elected, future projects include solving Valdosta's drainage problems, continued financial stability and the fight against crime, Williams said.

Williams is employed by the Lowndes County school system as a counselor at Lowndes High School. He is married to Alma Williams, a Valdosta Board of Education member.



RON BORDERS COUNCIL, DIST. 4

OCCUPATION: Real estate agent.

Borders also has served as the City Council elected mayor pro tem for the past two years.

As mayor pro tem, Borders has served as mayor in the mayor's absence.

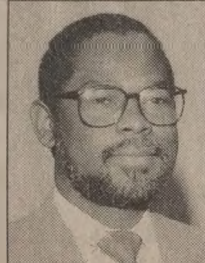
"During my tenure, we have accomplished many positive things for the City and District 4," he said in a recent interview. "All of the streets in District 4 are paved. There are three new parks in the district. The new water plant is on schedule and will begin pumping water in late November of this year. We have started a recycling program which will be implemented shortly."

Additionally, Borders said his experience is needed to see through to completion several projects currently underway.

"One is the expansion and remodeling of the Valdosta Regional Airport. Another is the proposed civic/convention center," Borders said. "These programs are ambitious and need a conservative and cost-sensitive approach to minimize the cost to the taxpayer while maximizing the benefits to the citizens."

An agent for Mike Hill Real Estate, Borders has a master's degree in public administration from Valdosta State College and continues toward a doctorate degree at Florida State College. Borders received a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Marian College.

He also served as an Army helicopter pilot during the Vietnam War. Borders has three children and two grandchildren.



WILLIE HOUSEAL COUNCIL, DIST. 4

OCCUPATION: School principal.

Houseal, 40, was elected as a District 1 representative in 1985 and re-elected to the position in 1986.

However in November 1989, he resigned, after moving out of District 1.

Councilmembers must live in the district they represent, according to Valdosta's city charter.

During his tenure on the City Council, Houseal was involved in current projects such as the city's road-paving and water-treatment plant efforts.

He also served as mayor pro tem for one year, as a municipal court judge and served on the Georgia Municipal Association's municipal policy committee.

"I have a new agenda, one that concerns itself with anti-crime, economic development and a greater recruitment effort for clean industry," Houseal said in a recent statement.

"I would like for the city government to place more emphasis on job training and co-op programs."

Houseal said he enjoys the competitive nature of the City Council.

He also believes Valdosta has a lot to offer in attracting more business and industry to the area.

Houseal is employed by the Brooks County school system as principal of Walker Street School and staff development coordinator for the system.

He is married to the former Cleopatra Sanders and the couple has three children.



JOHN S. BURCH BOARD, DIST. 7

OCCUPATION: Businessman.

This is Burch's second political campaign.

Burch said his three children went through the Valdosta school system and he currently has a grandson at Valdosta Junior High.

"I'm interested in seeing the city school system upgraded and see it stay upgraded to attract more industry to the area and to see that people's taxes aren't greatly increased," Burch said in a recent interview.

He believes the school board has done a good job providing quality education and keeping taxes at a fair rate, but would like to see the implementation of a program to get high school students more interested in college.

The program would also sponsor advanced technical skills classes.

He would also like to see a pre-kindergarten program which would both help working mothers and prepare students for the first grade.

He also believes high school students who fall behind a grade should have an option for night-school courses.

Burch said night courses may keep the drop-out level down by letting students who want to work have a day-time job and attend school in the evening.

Burch and his wife, Linda, own and operate a wholesale poultry business, Burch Rental, a house-cleaning business and the recently opened Checkers Pub & Grill.



WILLIE R. JONES BOARD, DIST. 7

OCCUPATION: Retired school teacher and military man.

"My main concern is putting the child first with teachers running a close second," Jones said in a recent interview.

"I believe the Board of Education should provide as much aid as possible to make them be first-class students."

He said he believes more discipline is needed in the classroom to ensure better student performance.

Jones is chairman of the Greater Lowndes County Planning Commission, a member of the President's Minority Advisory Council at Valdosta State College and on the Board of Directors for Southside Recreation Center.

He is also a member of the Georgia Retired Teachers Association and member of the Enlisted Men's Association.

He also helped establish Project Save-A-Child which provides tutoring to students in neighborhood churches.

Jones took the District 7 seat last April.

Jones retired from the Lowndes County school system after 20 years of teaching grade-school students math, science and social studies.

Before teaching he served 21 years as a non-commissioned officer in the Air Force.

School Board, Council Posts Before Voters

■ Related Items, Page 3-A

By DEAN POLING
Times Staff Writer

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Mayor James H. Rainwater, District 6 Councilman Richard Hill and at-large District 9 school board member David Waller Sr. are all unopposed in their re-election efforts.

Dr. Louis Schmier and Jimmy Whatley, both running their first political campaigns, are hoping to fill the school board's District 8 seat being vacated by incumbent Dr. William Grow.

The contest with the most candidates is a four-way showdown for the school board's District 7 seat. Incumbent Willie R. Jones is facing off against two political newcomers, Ben Stauber and S. Riley Kendall Jr., as well as John S. Burch.

On the remaining City Council elections, incumbent District 4 Councilman Ron Borders faces off against former District 1 councilman Willie Houseal.

Incumbent District 2 Councilman Bunnis "B" Williams is squaring off against Major Lynn for that seat.

The only race which may require a run-off is the four-way District 7 campaign for the Board of Education.

If necessary, the run-off will be held Tuesday, Feb. 25.

To get on track with the state's effort for all municipalities to have elections during the normal November period, the mayor is running for a three-year, 10-month term.

City Council and school board candidates are running for a five-year and 10-month term.



DR. LOUIS SCHMIER BOARD, DIST. 8

OCCUPATION: VSC history professor.

This is Schmier's first election race.

"With my experience in education and being considered one of the premier teachers on campus, I believe that I can bring an added and needed dimension to the board," he said.

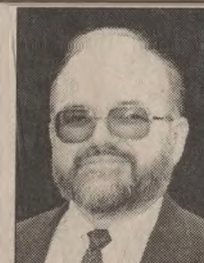
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Schmier has written six published history books including *A Ray in the Sunbelt: A History of Valdosta and Lowndes County*. He is past president of the congregation of Temple Israel and presently serves as board secretary.



JIMMY WHATLEY BOARD, DIST. 8

OCCUPATION: Employed by the Griffin Corporation.

This is Whatley's first election race. Whatley said he's running because his two children are in the school system.

Whatley said he hopes to help the school board "create understanding of where we are and then evaluate a plan of where we need to be in the next five to 10 years."

He's pushing hard for stronger parental involvement with the school board and the schools.

His job at the Griffin Corporation has also given him the opportunity to travel to various countries.

Whatley said Japan has little or no literacy problem, but the U.S. "as a nation is falling behind from an educational standpoint."

Whatley has lived in Valdosta for 14 years. He said it's time to give something back.

"Every child should have the opportunity to reach his potential. Whether it be in college, technical school, as a housewife or whatever they want to do, every student should have the opportunity in the school system to reach their potential," he said.

He is a deacon at the First Baptist Church. He serves on the board of directors of Habitat for Humanity, the Valdosta/Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce's Foreign Relations Committee and is a member of the Azalea City Kiwanis Club.



S. RILEY KENDALL JR. BOARD, DIST. 7

OCCUPATION: Businessman.

This is Kendall's first political race. Kendall referred to his first political race as "a learning process."

He has two children currently in the city school system. Kendall said he's seen the "tremendous pressure placed on the school system and wants to work for a solution. ... It's time to quit talking and get to work."

He said the theme of his campaign is "Family is the Key."

Kendall hopes to get parents more involved in the schools from classroom to administration as well as the school board itself.

If elected, he also plans to send a monthly questionnaire to parents to get their ideas on what direction the board should take.

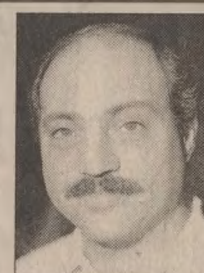
He said he would have to wait until he is elected before discussing possible changes for the school board.

"I would want some time on the board to see what kind of changes are needed or wanted," Kendall said.

If elected, he hopes to be a team player and an active member on the school board.

The lifelong Valdosta resident and his wife, Terrie, are involved in the Parent/Teacher Organization and are members of Lee Street Baptist Church.

He owns and operates Kendall Aquatics Inc. and was once employed by Ken Harbin Pools.



BEN STAUBER BOARD, DIST. 7

OCCUPATION: Owns and operates SubStation II; retired military man.

This is Stauber's first political race.

"I've been feeding their bellies for years and now I want to fill their children's minds," the Valdosta sandwich shop owner said of his candidacy during a recent interview.

But when it comes to what he'd like to see in the school system, Stauber is very serious.

Stauber said he is running for the school board because one of his two children are in the city school system.

He said he would like to see more direction in the school board and believes a school board representative should listen to the concerns of parents and students in the school system.

"I think the school board needs to listen more and I believe it needs more parental involvement," he said.

He also believes more discipline is needed in the classroom, but it needs to come from the students.

"Right now, it seems like teachers spend half of their time with discipline problems and the other half with paperwork," he said.

He said the school board should continue its fight against the drug problem and get back to the basics of education.

He has lived in Valdosta for about six years, returning here after serving several years in the Air Force.

Scott Park's Drug Problem 'Needs Solving'

By LAURA
Times Staff Writer

Members of the Coaches All-American Association of Valdosta Inc. are concerned about a drug problem in Scott Park, but officials say the situation is "not out of control."

"When they (law enforcement officers) started moving into Scott Park, the coaches All-

in 1979 in
Robert

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for peo-
ug deal-

Dec 6, 1989

Drug

From Page 1-A

Winningham said. "The drug dealers are looking for a place to get a foothold. We're not going to let them get a foothold in Scott Park or anywhere else."

Valdosta Police Chief Charlie Spray said they have also increased their patrol in and around Scott Park. "We have not lost Scott Park or the streets, and we're not going to lose them," Spray said.

Winningham said as officers run dealers from one area, they will move to another place to make drug transactions. "They're moving around, and we're moving around with them."

In the meantime, youth and adult athletes who play in the park are finding used needles and other drug paraphernalia, said Mitchell, who coaches an adult city softball team.

"You can see them migrating out there, and you know what's going on," Mitchell said. "There making

deals out there now."

Mitchell said Valdosta City Council should do something to keep the park "clean."

"We're going to do anything we can to help," Mitchell said. "We're waiting on what the council members are going to do. It looks like they've given themselves an hour a day pay, and they could do something."

Willie Houseal, the former councilman for District 1 — where Scott Park is located — resigned in November and could not be reached. Ruth Council will be appointed Thursday to replace him during the three remaining months of the term.

"It's a slow process, and it takes a great time to eliminate a problem of this magnitude," Ms. Council said. "My main concern is looking at the young people and getting them attracted by educating them. We need to access our needs, we need to educate and have the community become more involved in solving the problem."

Valdostan Alleges Crime Report Bias

This letter is written in reference to the bias reporting of crime in our city. Too often I read in *The Valdosta Daily Times* reports of crimes committed by black males. I am not defending criminals of any color by any means. I am simply stating that if a black male commits a crime, report it as such. On the other hand, if a white male or a member of another ethnic group commits a crime, report it as such, also.

Most times when a white male is the perpetrator of a crime, he is reported only as a male, not a white male. This form of reporting is bias, and further, it subliminally seduces the general public in thinking that only black males commit crimes. This method of reporting is damaging to the image of the black males and sets race relations back 100 years or more. This form of reporting also promotes stereotyping of black males. In other words, it is my opin-

ion that this method of reporting does nothing for human relations, nor the image of the black male. A change is called for and the sooner the better.

Willie Houseal
Valdosta

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Valdosta Daily Times cites the race of criminals when they still are at large, no matter what color they are. In virtually all instances, race is the only description that the Valdosta Police Department will release. If *The Daily Times* was able to describe the offenders more fully, such as what type of clothing they wore at the time of the crime or any scars or other distinguishing features, that information would be printed. However, the Valdosta Police Department will not release such information.

something must be done" ballfield clean — Times and Leavy.



Scott Park's Drug Problem 'Needs Solving'

By LAURA
Times Staff Writer

Members of the Coaches All-American Association of Valdosta Inc. are concerned about a drug problem in Scott Park, but officials say the situation is "not out of control."

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Dec 6, 1989

Drug

From Page 1-A

ningham said. "The drug dealers are looking for a place to get a foothold. We're not going to let them get a foothold in Scott Park or anywhere else."

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Several coaches from an area association say a drug problem has developed at Valdosta's Scott Park and argue that "something must be done" to keep the ballfield clean — Times Photo by Paul Leavy.

Scott Park's Drug Problem 'Needs Solving'

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Times Staff Writer

Members of the Coaches All-American Association of Valdosta Inc. are concerned about a drug problem in Scott Park, but officials say the situation is "not out of control."

"When they (law enforcement officers) started moving the drug dealers from the 5th Inn and Hudson Dockett, they (drug dealers) started moving into Scott Park," said Clyde Jackson, president of Coaches All-American Association.

The nine-member association was formed in 1979 in an effort to better the community, said member Robert Mitchell.

"We're concerned about the drug problem as a whole in Valdosta, but that park was put there for people to have recreation — not for a place for drug dealers to congregate," Jackson said.

J.R. Winningham, captain of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Drug Unit, said his officers, as well as officers from other law enforcement branches, are policing the park.

"It's not anywhere near out of control there," Winningham said.
See DRUG, Page 2-A



Several coaches from an area association say a drug problem has developed at Valdosta's Scott Park and argue that "something must be done" to keep the ballfield clean — Times Photo by Paul Leavy.

that universities enroll athletes who ment. Ever since, since.

Letters To The Editor

There Always Are Two Sides To An Issue

In response to the letter to the editor published on October 23 titled "Troubled By A Minority Group's 'Manifesto'", it is felt an effort should be made to show that there are two sides to an issue.

I would like to share with the letter writer much of the reasoning behind the approach in making candidates aware, or shall I say accountable for the task before them as they seek political office.

It is true that blacks make up only part of the minorities in this country, however, one must understand that blacks comprise a major part of this melting pot.

Steam Engine Gave Gin Power

I am writing in regards to a picture in the Oct. 19 issue of an engine ("steam") that furnished power for 55 gins that ginned that long staple, cotton.

The ginning company was, at that time, the largest in the world, and began operating in 1874.

The writing with the picture referred to it as a gin. It is a steam engine that furnished power for the machinery.

I was born and raised within a half-mile of the cotton gin.

W.E. "Coot" Bunting
Quitman

Also, blacks have made major contributions toward building this country to what it is today.

The letter writer must also understand that an evolution of interest and involvement is taking place within the political structure in this country.

I cannot recall any other ethnic group in America which has been denied entrance to the political mainstream or access to the voting process to such extremes as poll taxes, reading tests and the requirement to own property, not to mention the ridicule blacks have had to suffer.

One must be open-minded enough to understand that interest groups will always be a part of the political process.

Blacks are beginning to pull together a unified body of social, political and religious leaders to convey

the concerns and interests which need to be addressed.

By having an objective view of the ramifications of the letter, one can understand the need for African-American studies to be taught in secondary schools, or the concern about the high unemployment rates among black youths.

By having these and other issues addressed in a uniform manner, it is possible that some, if not all of these concerns will be adhered to.

Please understand that public officials must be held accountable.

It is felt that such an approach can be very effective in getting the candidate's attention.

This measure can very well be perceived as a particular interest group in the same light as big business, environmental protection or education.

Willie Houseal
Valdosta

In Search Of Her Family Tree

I am in the process of seeking information about some of my family members.

I am the granddaughter of the late Joseph Berrian Griffin Sr. and the late Annie Mae Powers.

I know that my grandmother was born in Valdosta.

My grandfather was born in Swainsboro.

My father is Joseph Bill Griffin Jr., whom is deceased.

Anyone who may have known or knows the whereabouts of any relatives to these family members, or can help me with any information about them, please contact me.

Judy G. Sipes, P.O. Box 290, Bagdad, Fla., 32520 or Route 3, Box 298 Apt. B Hwy 89, Milton, Fla, 32570.

Judy G. Sipes
Bagdad

Boys Ranch – Home Away From Home



Stan Reaves, Houseparent At Georgia Sheriffs Boys Ranch, Has Jam Session With His 'Boys'



Willie Houseal Gives Tutoring Help To Tony

"The most important thing we do for them is give a home with a feeling of permanence with love, caring and understanding," are the words Resident Director Carlton Adams used to describe what he and 15 other staff members give the 44 boys presently living at the Georgia Sheriff Boy's Ranch.

The ranch received the first boys in March 1961. Since that time many young men have made their way to the doors of the ranch on Highway 122 between Lakeland and Hahira.

The ranch is funded by donations from people in Georgia and other states, Adams said. It is sponsored by the Georgia Sheriff's Association.

"These boys we have are neglected, dependent children; not delinquent children," he said. "Please stress that, so many people think they are delinquent;

The boys attend Lowndes County Public Schools. They participate in school and church activities, according to Adams.

And like all parents Adams said he and his staff sometimes feel "like we are running a taxi service," in seeing that the boys get back and forth to school and church activities.

City Councilman Willie Houseal serves as tutor for the boys having trouble with their schoolwork. "He does a good job for us," Adams said.

The boys are typical boys. "They participate in football, baseball, we have a fish pond here if they want to fish. We have horses but right now we don't have anyone really interested in riding," he said.

"We have some come back and visit us after they move out. It's the only home they know. They are just like other boys

Times Staff

Photos By

Paul Leavy



they are not, they are just boys who need a home."

who grow up and leave home; they come back and visit in their home."



It's Time For Good, Wholesome Fun As Chad Takes Off During Game Of Tag Football



Craig Rakes Leaves As Part Of Daily Chores



Matt Gets Helping Hand From Jimmy Loading Hay On Tractor In One Of The Ranch's Many Fields

Council's Houseal Resigns Position

By LAURA JOHNS
Times Staff Writer

Valdosta Councilman Willie Houseal resigned at the beginning of council's Thursday meeting.

Houseal, who served on the council since March, 1985, said he had to resign because he moved out of his district 10 days ago.

By law, a councilman must live in the district he represents.

"My plan was to finish my term," he said. "But the interest rate is so good right now, it dictated that I had to move right away. I never intended to stay on the council for a long period of time. I'm just glad I was able to leave on a good note."

Houseal's second term would have expired in February and he said he had no intention of running for re-election. Though he is worried about leaving his district without representation for three months, he



HOUSEAL

is satisfied with what he has accomplished as a councilman.

Houseal was the first black male councilman to serve in Valdosta, he said. Entering office, his main goals were to improve black-white relations in the city and to help Valdosta grow economically. He said he feels he has accomplished those things.

Another reason Houseal gave for resigning was that he no longer had as much time to devote to the job as he once had. He took a job as staff developer for the Brooks County school system about six months ago.

Houseal said he will try to serve the public again but probably in a different capacity.

"I want a normal life for awhile. I'm going to go into seclusion for awhile right now," he said.

Mayor Jimmy Rainwater asked Councilmen Ron Borders and Joseph "Sonny" Vickers to question District One residents about who they would like as their next councilman. However, several residents who attended Thursday's meeting asked council not to appoint a councilman for them because they would like to decide that themselves.

Houseal said there is a "full slate" of people who will seek the position, but he would not give any names.

One Council Joins Another

Replacement Taking Over Houseal's Old Seat

By LAURA JOHNS
Times Staff Writer

Valdosta's eastern citizens in District 1 will again have representation on city council after Ruth Council is appointed to fill the position on Thursday during council's regular meeting.

Former Councilman Willie Houseal resigned from the position in November because he moved to another district. Mayor Jimmy Rainwater asked Councilmen Joseph "Sonny" Vickers and Ron Borders to ask the citizens of district one who they would like to fill in for them.

"We took a survey on the community, and they had reservations about giving the position to someone who would be a candidate for it in February (when Houseal's term



expires)," Vickers said. "The primary reason we are recommending Ruth Council is because she will not seek election for the seat."

The city's charter says that if a remaining term is more than six months, an election must be held to fill the position. If the remaining term is less than six months, mayor and council can appoint someone.

Ms. Council, 55, said she is glad she has been selected to fill the position, but she has no plans to run for council after serving the three months before the term expires. She previously served on council for six years.

In 1976, when she ran for the first time, she was the first black official in Valdosta to be elected at large.

"We didn't have districts when I served on council," she said. "I was elected in 1974 and 1976 by the com-

munity at large.

"I had no problem working with people on the council or for the people of the city," she said. "One thing that is unique about me replacing Willie Houseal is that he was in one of my second grade classes. I was very glad when he offered himself up for council, and I think he served our district very well."

Ms. Council retired from her position as principal of Lomax-Pinevale Elementary School in 1987. She is married to Ralph Council, the assistant superintendent for the Lowndes County School System, and has two daughters, Lynette Council, in Atlanta, and Yvette Waters, in Valdosta.

Ms. Waters owns and operates The Care House, a day care for children, where Ms. Council is the educational consultant.

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515

CHARLES HATCHER
SECOND DISTRICT
GEORGIA

February 26, 1986

Dear Willie:

Let me offer my congratulations to you on your recent election success!

Please rest assured that I stand ready to assist you with any matter related to my responsibilities in the United States Congress. If you have any needs from constituent problems to legislative matters of interest to you, please call on my office.

Again, congratulations, and good luck as you assume your duties at City Hall.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely,



CHARLES HATCHER
Member of Congress

Mr. Willie Houseal
Box 1125
Valdosta, GA 31603



Charles Hatcher
Second District
Georgia

Tim Golden
Executive Assistant

February 28, 1986

Dear Willie:

Just a note to say congratulations on your recent election victory.

I hope you will feel free to call on me if Congressman Hatcher's office can ever be of service to you. There are a wide range of services available through your Valdosta District Congressional office, and I want you to take advantage of them whenever the need may arise. Enclosed you will find a brochure that explains very briefly a number of those services.

Again, congratulations!

With warm personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'T. Golden', is written over the printed name.

TIM GOLDEN
Executive Assistant

Mr. Willie Houseal
Box 1125
Valdosta, GA 31603