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1992, October - December

# Ray City Community News

Vol. 3 No. 4

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# Ray City Community News



Vol. 3 No. 4

October

November

December

Quarterly

Published by Ray City Community Development Council

## Looking Back To The Future

By Terri Staines

The first "light" plant in Ray City, built in 1923 through a cooperative effort of many citizens, was located near the old water tower on Pauline Street. In its heyday it supplied power to many homes thereby enhancing the quality of life in such a way that what was once a chore became a simple task with the mere flip of a switch. The citizens were "signaled" by the lights flickering each evening around 10:00 p.m. that the plant was about to shut down for the night.

Today, through the cooperative effort of our citizens, Ray City has the potential to become as thriving as she once was, to be more than just a speck on the map. Looking back to what our town once was can give us a fresh vision for the future and a common goal to work towards--together.



The first "light" plant in Ray City. This picture was taken on May 29, 1923 and is provided courtesy of Mrs. Ida Lou Fletcher. Pictured (l-r): James Grissett, Elmer Shaw, Arthur McGuire, Mayor L.F. Giddens, Dock Spivey, Bruner Shaw (policeman). Standing the floor of the building are Dr. Hubert, Ranzo Carter, Caulie May, Mr. Hardin, Mack Duggas (in coveralls) the first man to operate the "light" house, Hardee Futch, Homer Futch, Rufus Mikell, Jessie Turner, Henry Snipes, Floyd Blanton and Henry Watson. Children in front are Rivenbark, the oldest named Melvin.

## The Power Of The People

By Delores Respass

The settlers of the colonies that eventually became the United States came from countries of Europe still dominated by monarchies. Power belonged to the king (or queen) and the aristocracy surrounding the throne.

Commoners had struggled for centuries for civil and human rights, and while they had made progress--in England, dating from the Magna Carta--their daily lives were still governed by the will and whims of Sovereigns. Some governed

with wisdom and generosity; others with cruelty. And some were mad.

Colonial life was far from perfect. Still, it gave its citizens a freedom they had never known before. An ocean separated them from the royal houses that had so arbitrarily ruled their lives. In those days when communication with homeland was slow and uncertain, the colonists survived by taking care of themselves and each other. Allegiance to a far-off king took second place to finding enough to eat, shelter from the weather,

and co-existence with the natives who had previously held the land.

In a matter of some 100 years, the descendants of the first settlers engaged the power and might of the English throne in a war about freedom. In those 100 years, the settlers had learned that when they governed themselves, they prospered. Entrepreneurial spirit abounded and creativity was given opportunity.

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An idea was born. The idea that a government could be "of the people, by the people, for the people" was more revolutionary than the war that followed. Think about it for a moment. A government "of the people" meant that ordinary citizens could make the decisions that affected their lives. "By the people" meant the people themselves would choose those who would govern. The governors became the servants of the governed. "For the people" meant that acts of government must be for the good of the people.

It is of little wonder that the leaders of the revolution were called wild-eyed radicals. This concept of government was radical--a complete departure from the monarchies of Europe. It was an experiment in the human condition. And the wonder is that it has so far lasted for over two hundred years.

How does this "of, by and for the people" governing work? With the ballot. By one person-one vote elections. Each of us hold the most powerful tool of government in our own hands. Each of us hold the key to term limitation and responsible, responsive government. We have the power of the vote.

In November, we are called upon to once again wield that tool. We vote for the legislators and the president who will guide our government in the years to come. Unfortunately, many of our citizens will throw away that tool. Too many of them will not vote.

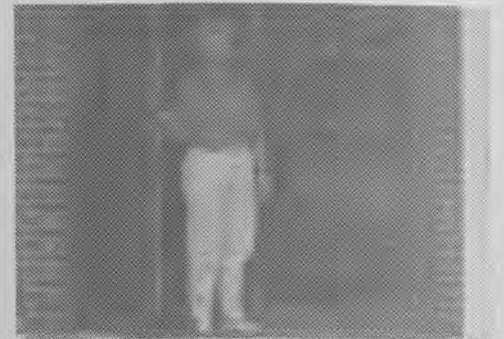
Ray City has 754 registered voters. If past elections are any indication, about half that number will cast a ballot. The most powerful tool in the world is not being used. Why? Some people say, "I'm just one person. My vote won't count." Every vote counts. Elections are decided by votes counted--one by one. Some people say, "It doesn't matter. They're all a bunch of crooks." How do crooks attain office? By an uncaring electorate who fail to hold them accountable.

In many ways this has been a sad summer. We have witnessed, via television, war in the Balkans, starvation in Africa, and rioting, homelessness, joblessness and the devastation of a killer hurricane in our own country. We have heard political demagogues try to divide us as a nation. We worry about our pre-

sent and our future, and in the midst of all this worry, we feel we have no control over the antics being performed in Washington. But we do have control. We have the greatest control of all the peoples of the world. We have the right to vote. Let's not lose it. Let us listen and ponder, think and choose; and on November third, let us come together at our polling places. Our votes mean that government "of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from this earth" (Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, 1863). The power is with us. We, the people will make the final decisions on the events that shape our world.

## "Thank You"

As editor of this newsletter, I want to say an especial thank you to Sherrie Graham for the outstanding job she performed as my editorial assistant. This past summer issue marked our first anniversary working together on the newsletter. Her work was always professionally done, which made my job much easier, and always on time no matter the deadline. My heartfelt thanks and gratitude, Sherrie. It was a pleasure working with you.



MARGIE GARNER gives "service with a smile" at the Citizens Bank Ray City Branch. We appreciate the convenience of having banking services in our town.

## RAY CITY FALL FUN HORSE SHOW

October 17, 1992

Registration: 10:00

Show Begins: 11:00

\*5 age classes \*6 events

\*Cloverleaf \*Texas Barrel

\*Arena Race \*Barrel Crawl Through

\*Catalog Race \*Corn Cob Race

\$1.00 Per ENTRY per EVENT

Ribbons, High Point Trophy for each class

Best Equestrian Unit Trophy

ALSO

HORSESHOE TOURNAMENT

Begins: 12 Noon

For Details Call Ricky Ford, 455-2314

This amateur show is open to ALL riders whether or not you are a member of a saddle club. If you don't ride, bring your lawn chairs and enjoy the show.

## Compliments Of The Ray City Branch of the Citizens Bank

455-2111

Member F.D.I.C.

## W & W SMOKE HOUSE & BAR-B-QUE

Best Bar-B-Que In Town! \*Come See Us!

455-2404



# Pulling Power

By Terri Staines

The actual competition usually lasts a quick five seconds, but the adrenalin has been pumping long before then. The sport of arm wrestling is beginning to muscle its way into the ranks in South Georgia, especially for a group of "pullers" in Ray City.

It all started with the 1989 Octoberfest here in Ray City. Having learned that he is an expert in the sport, the city council asked Bob Watson, a Moody Air Force Base staff sergeant, to hold an arm wrestling tournament during the annual celebration. According to Bob, the tournament went well and two days later Ray Sammons and his father, Jimmy, approached Bob about training Ray in the sport.

Three years later, Bob has "pulled" nearly a dozen arm wrestlers onto his team, the South Georgia Arm Wrestlers Association. On the roster are Bob, Ray Sammons, William Sammons, Mark McLey, David and Renee Plymel, Buddy Stokes, Russell Bates, and Andy Fuller who is from Ludowici, Georgia. The team meets in Bob's home every Sunday for about six hours of training.

"Anyone can learn to pull," Bob says. "But they must be dedicated and sincere about the sport." The first six weeks is the most painful, but by the sixth month of intensive training, one can achieve the competitive edge. Bob says that several people have started with him, but once the pain started, they dropped out. About his pullers he says, "I am very proud of this team. They have worked very hard to get where they are now. There is a real team spirit among them and they are all great competitors."

The pullers compete in a tournament at least once a month, usually in Atlanta, but they have traveled as far as South Carolina to compete. Jimmy Sammons, associate coach, has so dedicated himself to his son Ray and the team that he purchased a van and drives the team to all the meets. At their latest meet in September Bob placed first in right hand pro and second in left hand semi-pro in his weight class. Andy Fuller also placed first

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**SOUTH GEORGIA ARM WRESTLING ASSOCIATION TEAM MEMBERS.** Pictured (l-r) are Coach Bob Watson, Ray Sammons, Andy Fuller, David Plymel, Renee Plymel and Associate Coach Jimmy Sammons. Not pictured are Russell Bates, Buddy Stokes, Mark McLey and William Sammons.

## Ann's Beauty Shop



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Crickets

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## Moody Welcomes Homestead Evacuees

By Terri Staines

Hurricane Andrew blew its way into history as the costliest natural disaster in the history of the United States. Many parts of south Florida were decimated. What was once a fully operational military facility, in a short while, became a huge pile of rubble. Scores of lives were disrupted. Livelihoods and homes were swept away as the home of the Air Combat Command's 31st Fighter Wing, along with several surrounding communities bowed beneath the onslaught of one of nature's mightiest forces.

According to Air Force officials, more than 30 F-16 fighter jets have arrived at Moody. It will take several months to completely move personnel and equipment for their temporary reassignment. Officials estimate that several hundred people will be relocating to Moody.

This unfortunate situation has caused us all to stop and be thankful for what we have. The outpouring of brotherly love and concern for these victims has been phenomenal. Much has been done, yet the rebuilding has barely begun. Many of the former Homestead people have arrived with little more than the clothes on their backs. They are in desperate need of household goods, linens, furnishings, large and small appliances, and especially children's shoes. It is not too late to share in this worthy effort. If you have any of these items that you wish to contribute, the Habitat for Humanity is voluntarily manning a receiving point in Valdosta. The address is Mackey Lumber Warehouse, 633 W. Savannah Ave., Valdosta, Ga., 247-9660. The hours are from 3 until 6 pm daily.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October - November - December, 1992

By Bettie Langford

- OCTOBER 6 - SUNDAY- Sirmans Family Reunion
- OCTOBER 10 - SATURDAY- Ms. Lena Fountain Family Reunion
- OCTOBER 11 - SUNDAY- Hayes Family Reunion
- OCTOBER 17 - SATURDAY- Drawdy Family Reunion
- OCTOBER 18 - SUNDAY- Lee Family Reunion
- OCTOBER 24 - SATURDAY- Garner Family Reunion
- OCTOBER 25 - SUNDAY- Miller Family Reunion  
(Family of Eloise Sirmans)
- NOVEMBER 1 - SUNDAY- Brogdon Family Reunion  
(Family of Annette Baker)
- NOVEMBER 26 - THURSDAY- Camon Family Reunion & Thanksgiving Dinner



RAY CITY OLDEST HOUSE, owned by Ms. "Pinkie" Vaughn, located on Main Street was built about 1903 by Dr. Charles Jones, Ray City's first doctor, for his practice. Mr. and Mrs. Vaughn purchased and moved in the house in 1948. Mrs. Pinkie still lives there.

## P & R Sales & Service

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PVC Fittings, Pipe, Water Pumps and Tanks  
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**TOMMY RICE - VIRGIL PARR**



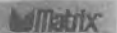
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Ray City, GA

## Roll Call

By Terri Staines

Ray City School has a new principal conducting roll call for the 1992-93 school year. Fred Lawrence comes to Ray City well prepared and well qualified to oversee the education of 235 children who have the potential to be our future leaders.

His personal educational accomplishments are impressive. After graduating from Cook County High, he attended Valdosta State College (VSC) where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in History. After teaching for seven years in the Berrien County School system, Fred returned to VSC to achieve a Masters degree in Counseling. For 21 years he was a guidance counselor at Berrien High School. In the spring of this year, he once again returned to VSC to receive a second Masters degree in Administration. And he's not finished! Currently he's working on a 6 year Education Specialist program in Administration at VSC. In addition to all this, Fred is a member of the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE) and of the Georgia and National Association of Elementary School Principals.

Fred says that having been a counselor has helped prepare him for the task at hand by being more alert to the children's needs and by discovering that each child is an individual with differing needs and interests. His transition from counselor of high school students to administrator of kindergarten through eighth graders and faculty has been challenging. Yet Fred is undaunted. His sincerity is evident when he says, "I am excited about being here."

His excitement is contagious as he outlines the programs at the school that do more than just entertain the children. Beginning in October, the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program will begin at Ray City School and throughout all Berrien County elementary schools. DARE, led by Deputy Scott Stalaker from the Berrien County Sheriff's Department, will not only teach the children to "just say no" to drugs, but HOW TO JUST SAY NO to drug use. This program is primarily targeted to 5th and 6th graders but eventually will expand to include younger and older age levels. In addition, many teachers received training

in Power of Positive Students (POPS). Through various teaching aids, students learn to think positively about themselves and the world they live in, thus building self esteem and confidence. Further, students gain incentive by receiving special treats for not only achieving honor roll but also letter-grade improvement.

Fred stresses the importance of parents involvement in their children's educational experience here at Ray City School. He encourages all parents to participate in the PTO and to interact with the teachers. Fred says that the quality of education students have been receiving here has been outstanding because of the quality of students he has seen pass through Berrien High School from Ray City.



RAY CITY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL Mr. Fred Lawrence with school secretary Mrs. Janelle Emig. Although this is Mr. Lawrence's first year at Ray City School, Mrs. Emig is now in her 23rd year there.

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Earl's Grocery has a new meat market/produce manager. Michael Cooper began working late in August after having worked most recently with the Food Lion Grocery chain for over a year. Pride in his work and dedication to the customers is readily apparent in the quality and appealing display of meat and produce products. Michael Cooper enthusiastically greets all customers.

**Don't Forget!! Set Your  
Clocks BACK  
One Hour October 25th.**

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in right and left hand pro in his weight class. Ray Sammons, holding fourth place in the nation in his weight class, placed third in pro in two weight classes while David Plymel placed fourth in super heavy weight pro. David's wife Renee, who holds first place in the state for her weight class, placed first in pro. Buddy Stokes placed first in semi-pro in his weight class as did Russell Bates, this being his very first meet. There is still room for more pullers on the team to fill in some missing weight classes.

Currently the team has no sponsor but would really like to have one. If an individual or business is interested in the publicity a sponsorship of this nature would provide, contact Bob or Jimmy.

The South Georgia Arm Wrestlers Association will be hosting and refereeing an amateur competition at Moody Air Force Base on November 7th during their Fall Festival. It is stressed that this is an "amateur" competition and anyone who has never pulled but is interested in "trying it out" is encouraged to enter.

Think you could "pull" your own weight as a member of this team? Contact Bob Watson at 482-2745.



**CONGRATULATIONS GEORGE!**  
Congratulations to George Skinner, winner of a run-off election for Berrien County Commissioner, Post 1. We're expecting great things from George as our representative.

### TURKEY SHOOT

Starting Oct 9, 7:00 P.M.  
Every Friday & Saturday Night

Hwy. 37 West (towards) Adel  
1/10th mile after Cat Creek Bridge  
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