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# Valdosta Project Change

November 1998

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## **Included Articles:**

11/4- Crime lab done with inmate death: Review- no author

11/9- Rose calls for a march on Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>: Says they are also researching a possible recall of Sheriff Paulk- Al Parsons

11/9- A letter to the white folks about division- no author

11/9- Third protest march planned: Protestors targeting Chamber of Commerce- Lowell Vickers Jr.

11/11- Weed and Seed kicks off clean-up- Suzanne Harris

11/11- City Hires Information Officer- Suzanne Harris

11/12- Show some proof- no author

11/12- Just causing trouble- no author

11/12- Boycott won't help- no author

11/13- No racism here- no author

11/13- Won't hurt holiday- no author

11/13- Actions not Christian- no author

11/16- College class teaches that slaves were happy- no author

11/17- Parents should 'grade' child's learning- Dr. Yvonne Fournier

11/17- GOP election setbacks renew questions of diversity- no author

11/18- People's Tribunal seeks more answers from commissioners: Rev. Rose says he will question hiring, promotion practices of the Lowndes Sheriff's Department- Stacey Green

11/19- Education should be an adventure- Louis Schmier

11/19- Lost SAT tests causing concerns for students: Kids at 12 schools in state of Georgia getting free retest- Associated Press

11/19- Not all is negative- no author

11/19- Rose wants Paulk ousted: People's Tribunal ask county leaders to seek his resignation- Stacey Green

11/20- Rev. Rose pleads not guilty to minor traffic ticket- Joe Dunlop

11/20- City school chief questions state study: Sam Allen would prefer to dump middle school concept- Patricia H. Croll

11/23- Love one Another: Hundreds urged to look past race at special Sunday Service- Patricia H. Croll

11/24- Indonesia's Chinese minority seek safety from ethnic, religious riots- Associated Press

11/25- People's Tribunal seeks to pool buying power- Lowell Vickers Jr.

11/26- Williams inquest set for Wednesday- Shelby G. Spires and Joe Dunlop

11/27- Health gaps between blacks, whites persist: Public health experts say disparities exist even among middle class blacks-

## Continued From Page 13

### Crime Lab Done With Inmate Death

With toxicology reports complete, Lowndes County officials await other crime lab and Georgias Bureau of Investigation reports before holding a coroner's inquest into the death of jail inmate Willie J. Williams Sr.

Williams, 49, died Sept. 2 while in custody at Lowndes County Jail. Moultrie crime labs manager Larry Slightom said toxicology results were completed and mailed to District Attorney David Miller.

Coroner Charles Exum said he received a verbal report of the results but has declined to release them.

Exum said the complete autopsy report is being transcribed, which normally takes 10 to 14 days.

Preliminary results released to Exum Sept. 14 showed cause of death as "complications of blunt force head trauma," and ruled the death a "homicide."

After Exum receives final reports from the crime lab and the GBI investigation, he has three days to decide whether to hold a public inquest.

He said he plans to do so. He then must schedule a courtroom and a court reporter, as well as subpoena witnesses and a jury selected from the last grand jury.

Steve McDermond, a Federal Bureau of Investigation supervisory special agent in Thomasville, confirmed the FBI is conducting a civil rights investigation into the case.

He said the investigation should be completed before the end of the year and the results sent to the U.S. Department of Justice. The department will review the case and then make recommendations.

# The Post

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## Rose calls for a march on Dec. 5th

Says they are also researching a possible recall of Sheriff Paulk

BY AL PARSONS

Last night Rev. Floyd Rose called for another protest march Dec. 5 which will involve the black community as well as black and white students from VSU and other colleges throughout the state and Tallahassee.

He said his People's Tribunal is also looking into the possibility of a recall of Sheriff Ashley Paulk.

Rev. Rose told his audience, "Based on the figures I saw, you put him in, and since you put him in, you can put him out."

The applause was long and loud.

He told a standing room only audience at the All Nations Deliverance Center at 707 Broad St. that this march would be aimed at the Chamber of Commerce.

He said, "The only power white folks recognize is money, and if they want a nice Christmas, they are going to resolve this issue...face this this issue."

The issue is Lowndes County Sheriff Ashley Paulk and the death of black men in his jail and discrimination against black inmates and black guards in his jail.

The latest of three deaths, all of which followed beatings as reported earlier in *The Post*, was Willie James Williams Sr., 49, who was arrested Sept. 1 and died Sept. 2 in the Lowndes County jail.

His death was ruled a homicide by the state lab in Moultrie. Even before this ruling Sheriff Paulk had personally exonerated his men, saying Williams died after a fall while resisting arrest.

Williams had injuries all over his body. The lab said he died from blunt force trauma to the head.

Irked over the fact that County Coroner Charles Exum won't release the toxicology report on Williams Sr., Rev. Rose called the rally last night.

Rose told his audience that the

least Ashley Paulk could do with a jail in which 85 percent of the prisoners were black, is to have some credibility with the black community.

"Ashley Paulk has to go!" Rose said. He repeated it. The whole audience stood up and chanted it, over and over again.

Rose said that while Martin Luther King Jr. prayed "he didn't remain on his knees or we'd still be at the back of the bus. Some people stay on their knees because they don't have the courage to stand on their feet."

Rose emphasized the streets saying that public demonstrations get public explanations and they have been ignored so far in a search for answers.

Rose put two other things on their calendar: on Nov. 18th at 4:30 p.m. he wants people with him at the Lowndes County Commission meeting on Savannah Avenue.

And on Nov. 19th at 6 p.m. he wants people with him as he faces Valdosta traffic court for a ticket he got after 8 a.m. for supposedly not having his lights on. Rose said they were on.

"I want you to see me in action and I want you to see them in action," he said about his traffic court appearance.

Rose had his audience laughing, applauding, chanting, saying 'amen.'

He said one Toledo radio commentator who was critical of him said Rose would protest anything, even protested a laundromat because all the washing machines were all white.

The commentator added that the agitators in the machines were black.

Rose responded that's okay, because you can put the water in and add the soap, but without that black agitator nothing's going to come clean.

He said that agitation changed Montgomery, Selma, and civil rights, and we can change the Lowndes County jail.

He told his audience to believe in themselves. "We're gonna win!"



Rose

We

## A letter to the white folks about division

Dear Editor:

I'd like to address this letter to white people in this community.

Do you ever wonder why it's hard to get white people to speak out when their black brothers and sisters are being wronged? Do you ever wonder why low income whites, who have much in common with their black neighbors are often the most bigoted towards them? Do you wonder why we can't get whites here in the Valdosta area to show up and support the People's Tribunal at their marches and gatherings? Do you wonder why very few white people have spoken out against Ashley Paulk's Sheriff's Department and his running of the Lowndes County Jail? Do you wonder why white people find every excuse they can to conceive the death of Willie James Williams as a black problem? Is this an accident? Is it fate? I say it's neither. Consider the history of "black" and "white" in this country.

We are seldom told that the first Africans who came to North America in 1619 had a status very similar to that of white indentured servants. Nor are we told that these groups, similar in status and holding much in common, spent time together, intermingled, created friendships, married and had children. We are not told that the alliances between white servants, Africans (and natives) created difficulties for the ruling elite, so laws were enacted to (a) discourage if not prohibit inter-group interaction, (b) severely punish whites who helped Africans escape or joined with native people's society, and (c) give disparate punishment to blacks and whites for the same crimes.\* The point of this was to divide working class whites from blacks and natives so that the ruling elite could continue to exploit them all. We are not told this. The result, the consequence of which we still feel today, is the creation of feelings of superiority and resentment between the groups. The elite knew well the adage: Divide and Conquer.

We are seldom told that during the civil war era, 2/5 of the whites owned slaves and only a small percentage of that--less than 10%--were large plantation owners.

The rest were yeoman farmers--the middle class of the day--with ties to the ruling elites and aspirations for upward mobility. Nor are we told that when the war broke out, there was not unified support for the confederacy, that it was called a rich man's war and a poor man's fight.

We are not told that the "Twenty Negro Rule," which stated that slave owners who owned more than 20 slaves were not subject to the draft, created a lot of resentment among the working class. We are not told that most of the volunteers fought not because they owned slaves, but because they were fearful of having to compete with free black

In fact, the North Carolina popular vote, for instance, was narrowly *against* secession. We are not told that desertion and sabotage during the war was widespread and came largely from working class whites.\* We are not told these things. The result is that those in power profit from a portrait of unity, solidarity and difference. Do you wonder why? Divide and conquer.

We are seldom told that after the civil war, the battle flag of the confederacy was considered too sacred to be displayed frivolously, that wishes of the confederate veterans were to display the emblem rarely if ever. Nor are we told that when the Georgia Legislature decided to change the State Flag in 1956, they were opposed by both the Sons of the Confederate Veterans and the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

In fact, the previous flag that the current flag replaced was designed by a confederate veteran who created it to honor the confederate dead. We are not told that most white Georgians *opposed* the flag change because of the cost and a suspicion that only the northern flag making companies would gain anything from the change.

We are not told that those who *did* support the change did so because it symbolized defiance toward the federal government and the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision of the Supreme Court.\*

Today working class whites brandish the emblem in the name of unity, pride and heritage. They are not told the full history. The result is continued division between whites and blacks. Is it any wonder? Divide and conquer.

We are seldom told that the majority of persons benefiting from Affirmative Actions programs are white women. Nor are we told that those who do get in seldom get beyond low level low status positions. When we look to see who are in positions of power and privilege today, we see mainly white men. When we look to see who makes the most money and exercises the most control of our policies and procedures, if we really look, we see again, white men. Yet there *are* positions, inferior as they may be, that have become open to traditionally under-represented groups. Those positions, like those for secretaries, custodians, fire fighters, are ones traditionally held by *working class* whites.

What that means is that the working class whites have to bear the brunt of the small measures of social equity and must make the largest sacrifice. They are not told this. The result is continued resentment from low income whites and an excuse for the elites to remove these programs before *their* positions are open for fair competition. Could it be an accident? Divide and conquer.

Racism. Whose benefit? Whose loss? Vitriolic hatred and bigoted decisions are cultivated in the lower class. Low income white voters clamor to the polls to support race baiting politicians. Hate groups recruit from

uninformed disenfranchised whites. Meanwhile middle class whites distance themselves from overtly bigoted behavior while supporting policies, practices, and procedures detrimental to the well being of people of color. Working class whites divided from blacks. Middle class whites divided from low income whites and blacks. We are continually being mystified by this thing called race.

The Lowndes County Jail is just one more example of a repeating historical pattern. African Americans are not the only group to have complained of mistreatment in the jail, yet our first impulse is to see their cause as separate from our own. Is it any wonder? Is this our fate? Can we rise to the occasion and break the cycle? Or will we once again fall prey to the oldest trick in the racist book: Divide and Conquer?

Aristotelis Santas, Ph.D.  
2705 Dogwood Dr.  
Valdosta GA 31602  
242-1287

\*See A. Leon Higgenbotham, *In the Matter of Color* (Oxford, 1980), Chapter 2 and Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States* (New York: Harper Collins, 1990), Chapters 2,3.

\*See Phil Rubio, "Civil War Reenactments and Other Myths," in Noel Ignatiev and John Garvey, eds., *Race Traitor* (New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 183-94.

\*See John Walker Davis, "An Air of Defiance: Georgia's State Flag Change of 1956," *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, vol. LXXXII, No. 2, Summer 1998.

# THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Monday, November 9, 1998

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he Valdosta Daily Times

Monday, Nov. 9, 1998 — 3A

## Our Community

Continued from Page 1A

### March

# Third protest march planned

## Protesters targeting Chamber of Commerce

By Lowell Vickers Jr.  
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — Since previous marches have not provided a political solution, protesters plan a Dec. 5 march on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce to demand an inquest into an inmate's death.

The People's Tribunal, led by the Rev. Floyd Rose, also hinted Sunday at a possible boycott of white-owned businesses this Christmas unless their complaints are resolved. The local protest organization is demanding

the immediate release of a coroner's report into the Sept. 2 death of Willie James Williams Sr.

The group has expressed concerns about what they perceive as stalling tactics. Protesters also are frustrated by what they describe as inaction by local political leaders.

Rose said since earlier marches and rallies before the "political apparatus" have failed to yield results, it is time for an economic approach.

"The only power white people respect is money," Rose said. "If they want to have a nice Christmas, they are going to resolve these issues."

At prior rallies, speakers have

Please see **MARCH** on Page 3A

## Many hope movement will bring needed changes

By Stacey Green  
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — People gathered at the All Nations Deliverance Center Sunday calling for the release of the medical examiner's report about the death of Lowndes County jail inmate Willie Williams.

Outside, a sign reading "Obedience is the only path that leads to glory" cast a glowing shadow on a parking lot full of cars. Inside the center, supporters whispered to one another

as they would before a Sunday morning church service began. Martin Luther King Jr. fans lay on some of the pews.

For the most part, people were calm and quiet before the rally.

But Alean Williams said she was there to support this movement—a movement that has brought this community together, she said. She was hoping this rally would bring about a much-needed change.

Some were worried about violence. Penni Johnson said the move-

ment will probably result in violence either in the community or in the jail. The leaders are preaching against that happening, she said.

After these rallies, the governmental leaders will do something to correct the problem, she said. "They need to fire (some county jail employees) — Ashley Paulk anyway," Johnson said.

To contact reporter Stacey Green,  
please call 244-3400, ext. 265.

urged support of black-owned businesses and others that stand behind their cause.

Another demand of protesters is that Lowndes County Sheriff Ashley Paulk resign. In a spirited rally at All Nations Deliverance Center, 707 Broad St., Rose led a packed crowd of hundreds in an enthusiastic chant of "Ashley Paulk has to go!"

Williams died while in the custody of the sheriff's department. Paulk vehemently denies any wrong doing by his personnel and denies rumors Williams was beaten. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation and the Federal Bureau of Investigation are both on the case.

Regardless of the dual investigations, Rose said the coroner's report should be released now and an inquest called. The coroner's investigation is independent and there is no legitimate reason not to release the results, Rose claims.

Coroner Charles Exum said last week it would be "bad business" to release the reports until the GBI and FBI complete their investigations. "Justice would be best served

of the facts. But protesters say an inquest should be called and the sheriff should be out of the picture to ensure that justice is done. Rose said if the situation were reversed — a white prisoner killed while in the custody of a black sheriff — the white population of Lowndes County would have risen up by now to demand his resignation.

"Most of the jail population is from our community," Rose said. "He should at least have credibility among our population."

Rose said by marching on the chamber, he hopes to grab the attention of "those in power." The march is being organized with Valdosta State University student organizations. The march is to begin at Drexel Park.

Rose also invited protesters to join him at the Nov. 18 meeting of the Lowndes County Commission. Rose also wants support at a Nov. 19 court date, where he said he will fight a traffic ticket he believes was politically motivated.

To contact reporter Lowell Vickers Jr.,



# Weed And Seed Kicks Off Clean-Up

By Suzanne Harris  
Mailbox Post staff Writer

The Weed and Seed steering committee, in cooperation with city department volunteers, kicked off three consecutive weeks of neighborhood cleanup projects last Saturday at the Magnolia Street School near the corner of Lamar and Magnolia streets.

The cleanup, scheduled from 8 a.m. to noon, is a part of Weed and Seed's restoration and revitalization process meant to make neighborhoods more beautiful. According to Weed and Seed Director Jeremiah Lawton, the neighborhood cleanup campaign culminates months of planning and hard work.

"This project has been about 12-

18 months in the making," Lawton said. "Everyone involved with planning this event - from steering committee members to city employees - deserves a pat on the back."

As volunteers made their sweep through the neighborhood target area from Hightower Street eastward to Ashley Street, area residents were invited to help pick up trash and to plant flowers, vegetables and shrubbery. Weed and Seed steering committee members also handed out flyers detailing what residents can do to "beautify" their neighborhood.

Among the specific steps neighborhood residents can take to clean up community and facilitate trash pick up are:

- Keeping yard trash separate

from garbage or junk.

- Calling 259-3590 to schedule pick-up for items that will not fit in your rollout container.

- remembering recycle bins are for recyclable materials only, which include: glass, newspaper and inserts, plastic jugs or bottles, steel and aluminum cans and cardboard.

- Disposing of old tires through tire dealers; the sanitation department will not pick up scrap tires.

"Residents may not realize the benefits of cleaning up their respective neighborhoods but there are many," Lawton said. "A clean community shows people care and deters crime." According to Lawton, crime and drug abuse prevention is the underlying goal of the nationally implemented

Weed and Seed program.

Public Works Director Pete Pyrzenski said the city continually looks for ways to enhance and advance the services Valdosta provides to all neighborhoods.

"This project is another definite step we're taking to improve the appearance of our community and the lives of our citizens," he said.

The second of the three cleanup efforts is scheduled for Nov. 14, while the third is scheduled for Nov. 21. For specific information regarding any of the neighborhood cleanup projects, you may call Lawton at 293-3158.

# City Hires Information Officer

By Suzanne Harris  
Mailbox Post Staff Writer

The City of Valdosta recently hired Ron Gibson to fill the newly-created public information officer position at city hall.

According to city officials, creation of the public information position is to improve communication between Valdosta residents and their elected officials and administrators.



**RON GIBSON**

"Ron brings a tremendous amount of talent and ability to this position," said Mayor Jimmy Rainwater. "Our city council set a goal of improving communication with our citizens. The city

mation will all pay dividends for the community."

Among immediate projects Gibson will tackle is the implementation of a quarterly newsletter and a revamped city website. Additionally, he will be responsible for informing residents and soliciting feedback regarding past, present and future activities. According to Gibson, the fundamental objective is fostering the civic accountability, city officials have always promoted and provided Valdosta residents.

"Public sector communication is more than a mere nicety in an open, democratic society - it's a necessity," Gibson said. "As this burgeoning, increasingly important community moves forward, our citizens need and deserve to be informed about the invaluable contributions Valdosta's public servants make every day."

Before joining the city, Gibson worked for the Georgia State

city's Office of University Relations. Prior to that, he worked as the internal products editor for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala., and served as an Air Force public affairs specialist at Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, Nev.

Gibson graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor of arts degree in communication studies from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Currently, he is pursuing his master of public administration degree at VSU. Gibson, and his wife, Jill, Moody Air Force Base's athletic director, have one son, Grant.

"Ron Gibson has an excellent combination of education, work history, and the ability to communicate well and work with people," said City Manager Larry Hanson. "We are pleased to have him as a member of our team."

# RANT & RAVE

*Here's your chance to let South Georgia and North Florida know how you feel, with just a single a phone call. RANT: to let loose with the steam that's been building up inside. RAVE: to give recognition for things well done. Call 244-3400, ext. 418, and take up to 30 seconds to express yourself.*

## **Show some proof**

“I am so sad that Rev. Rose finds it necessary to do so much protesting before he even has the facts of the case in hand. His actions literally wreak of self-propulsion and not wanting to find out the truth. Worse, he is leading some really fine people in the wrong direction. Please tell me where is the proof of Ashley Paulk's wrongdoing?”

## **Just causing trouble**

“I resent Floyd Rose's remark that the only power white people respect is money. Who is he to be so prejudiced and he's supposedly a pastor? He says if they want to have a nice Christmas we'll do something. I hate to tell him Christmas is about more than money. He's just about causing trouble and The Valdosta Daily Times is just feeding into his wishes for trouble.”

## **Boycott won't help**

“If Floyd Rose is going to boycott white-owned businesses, he better plan on half of his people being out of work because it's not going to solve anything.”

# RANT & RAVE

*Here's your chance to let South Georgia and North Florida know how you feel, with just a single phone call. RANT: to let loose with the steam that's been building up inside. RAVE: to give recognition for things well done. Call 244-3400, ext. 418, and take up to 30 seconds to express yourself.*

## **No racism here**

“Hot dog! There goes Floyd Rose again wanting to boycott white businesses. This is not a racist issue.”

## **Won't hurt holiday**

“Rev. Floyd Rose wants the coroner's report released now without the GBI and FBI investigation completed. Rose needs to realize that procedure must be followed. This is not a racial issue, but Rose is trying to turn it into one. Boycotting white-owned businesses won't hinder my Christmas, nor do I think it will hinder the Christmas of very many other white people.”

## **Actions not Christian**

“Although the death of this prisoner is a terrible tragedy, I want to know who does Rev. Rose think he is? Rose calls himself a man of God. Maybe he needs to teach more on the word of God and less on racism. Is the act of a Christian man to threaten to ruin the Christmas for any other man of a different race?”

# College class tea

ARCHDALE, N.C. (AP) — Black leaders and the leader of a state civil rights panel are miffed over a local college course whose teachers claim that most slaves were happy in captivity and that many served as loyal Southern soldiers.

“How is the college letting this happen?” asked Wyatt Kirk, chairman of the state committee of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

Leaders of the state NAACP have threatened to file a formal complaint after reviewing the nine-week class at Randolph Community College.

College officials stand behind the course taught by local members of Sons of Confederate Veterans, a nationwide heritage group. Twelve students currently are enrolled.

Course organizers say their intent is to teach while restoring pride to their Confederate ancestors.

“We cannot allow political correctness to rewrite history or wipe out our heritage,” instructor Jack Perdue said on the first day of the class in September.

Most of the curriculum is history with a pro-Confederate twist. Among the course’s statements is that the Civil War was not fought over slavery but over the right of Southerners to self-determination.

The instructors say slavery was wrong, but conclude from a 1930s series of interviews with ex-slaves that 70 percent of slaves were satisfied with their lives in captivity.

“These people loved the South. They weren’t looking for some Yankees to come down here and save them,” said Herman White, who is the main lecturer on the role of black people in the war and the pastor of the Archdale Church of God.

The instructors also use diary accounts by Northern officers, among other sources, to teach that as many as 38,000 blacks fought in the Confederate army. They teach that, by and large, slaves and free blacks fought in the same spirit of patriotism as their white counterparts.

Local black leaders are especially galled by the claim of slaves’ loyalty.

“That’s a totally ludicrous statement to say that slaves loved their

# College class teaches that slaves were happy

ARCHDALE, N.C. (AP) — Black leaders and the leader of a state civil country," said Richie Everette, president of the Randolph County chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

# Parents show

**DEAR DR. FOURNIER:** My son is an eighth-grader who does well in school. The teachers all give him rave reviews. So what is the problem? Me.

I want to believe that all the good reports I get from school are right. Yet when I ask my son to help me decrease the amount of a recipe, or figure the mileage when we are on trips, he says he doesn't know how.

Last week, he was assigned to summarize an article from the newspaper. He chose one about the stock market. When I asked him what he thought about what was happening, he responded that his teacher didn't ask him to know that. All he wanted was to summarize the article.

I can't talk about this to many people because all I hear is that I want too much and should be grateful for what I have. But that doesn't mean that I'm not concerned about my son's complete separation of what he does in school from what happens in life.

Do students like my son do all right in college and in life?

**Assessment:** Parents are the consumers of education. We ask schools to educate our children and, as consumers, we must assess if the service is satisfactory.

Imagine taking your car in for brake service. The mechanic checks off a list and tells you that the problem has been fixed. But if your brakes were squeaking when you drove in and your brakes are still squeaking when you drive out, then you will most likely take the car back and insist that more work be done.

The mechanic had one piece of the information — what work had been performed on your car. But you had more complete information. Only you could describe how your car performed both before and after it was in the shop.

Grades are simply a teacher's assessment of how your child performs in school. The teacher does not have the benefit of seeing your child perform in other "real life" situations.

So as a parent and education consumer, the final assessment of your child's education is really in your hands. If your assessment doesn't agree with the teacher's,

# uld 'grade' child's learning

then you should be concerned.

**What To Do:** In assessing your child's progress in school, keep in mind three words: Recall, Learning, and Knowing.

"Recall" is the information that our children must commit to memory in order to complete their thoughts. For example, to understand a specific war, students must be able to recall specific data dealing with when and where it occurred, who was involved, and what the consequences were.

All children must experience recall in order to be schooled and educated. But they cannot stop at the recall stage.

"Learning" is the next step. It allows students to develop their own explanation consistent with the facts. They must be able to discern that not everyone who has the same facts will end up with the same interpretation. They must be able to see the multiple possibilities, and then formulate their own conclusions.

"Knowing" is the third step in the learning process. Children who enter into "knowing" are able to use both their recall and their learning to find parallels in other areas of their lives. These children can find a new way of solving a problem based on what they learned in science or social studies. They are able to take knowledge and create new knowledge.

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## Homework

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**Yvonne Fournier**  
Columnist

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With this in mind, you must recognize that a report card is not a final assessment. It's up to you to decide whether your son's grades show any progress through the Recall-Learning-Knowing stages of education.

As your son matures — and remember that he is still just in eighth grade — he may begin to develop his own explanations and create his own knowledge. It may just take time.

Now, ask yourself the question again: "Do students like my son do all right in college and in life?"

Many schools and colleges still value recall more than learning or knowing. Many employers still hire "new recruits" based more on grades than ability. But recall alone is not enough for success in today's workplace. It requires learning, knowledge and true innovation.

Only the "knowing" get and keep the really good jobs — and they know why!

*Send questions about homework education or parenting to Dr. Yvonne Fournier, Fournier Learning Strategies Inc., 5900 Poplar, Memphis, Tenn. 38119.*



# GOP election setbacks renew questions of diversity

ATLANTA (AP) — Republican setbacks in this month's general election have renewed questions in the GOP about the party's ability — or lack of it — to attract more women voters.

Many of the Georgia losses were blamed on large black voter turnout and Democratic strength nationwide.

But an exit poll showed that 52 percent of the votes in Georgia in this election came from women. Some Republicans put the figure higher, and say the GOP has not done enough to attract them.

"Until the Republican Party starts reflecting the diversity of America, they can hang it up," said former Republican state lawmaker Matt Towery, author of the new book "Powerchicks: How Women Will Dominate America."

A few days after the election, the party approved a slate of white men to lead the Republican legislative caucuses.

Shortly before the election, a GOP flier with a checklist of the party's statewide candidates failed to include schools Superintendent Linda Schrenko, the first Republican and first woman to hold the post and the only Republican woman on the statewide ballot.

Mrs. Schrenko, who was re-elected, considers it symptomatic of the problems facing her party.

"My initial reaction was, what's new?" she recalled.

"The other side had everything to offer — women, minorities," Mrs. Schrenko said. "And here we were touting 'We've got money.' But you can't buy Georgia, and we just proved it.

"We've got to have some diversity in the leadership. I think we need to put women and minorities in responsible roles and give them some respect," she said.

State Rep. Robin Williams, R-Augusta, was more blunt.

"The party absolutely distanced itself from Linda Schrenko. The Republican Party distanced itself from one of the best vote-getters it has," Williams said.

Georgia GOP chairman Rusty Paul said the party GOP put out 10 million mailings this fall, many advocating for Schrenko.

"The bottom line is, Linda won. We either did enough to get her elected or didn't do anything that hurt her," Paul said.

Legislators running for Republican caucus offices in the state House last week were questioned about their willingness to include women in decision-making roles.

"Women make up 56- to 57-percent of the vote. We need to reflect that in our leadership," said Rep. Lynn Ratigan Smith, R-Newnan.

Men were re-elected to the prominent leadership posts in the state House caucus, and men control the top Senate GOP offices as well.

# Community

The Valdosta Daily Times

## People's Tribunal seeks more answers from commissioners

Rev. Rose says he will question hiring, promotion practices of the Lowndes Sheriff's Department

By Stacey Green  
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — The Rev. Floyd Rose will represent the People's Tribunal when he addresses Lowndes County commissioners at a 4:30 p.m. regular meeting today.

Rose said he plans to discuss the Sept. 4, death of Lowndes County Jail inmate Willie James Williams Jr., the "treatment of blacks in the hiring and promotion practices of the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department," and "the way white ministers and black ministers are listed (by race) when they visit the

jail."

The listing of a minister's race is "unfortunate at the least and illegal at the most," Rose said Tuesday.

Commissioners will also discuss topics from a Saturday work session, including a reported county office space crunch, employee bonuses and changing the regular meeting dates for February, said County Manager Alan Ours.

Several county departments have complained about a lack of office space. Chairman Inez Pendleton said Tuesday she would like to renovate or rearrange to create more space instead of building a new structure.

She said the county needs water and sewerage infrastructure and roads paved more than it needs office space.

Pendleton also wants to give county employees a 2.5 percent bonus. She said Ours had found the money to do it, but some other commissioners "want to go with a small, set amount."

The commission will consider changing its meeting dates in February from the first and third Wednesdays of the month to the second and fourth Thursdays. Ours said the current dates conflict with the annual Association of County Commissioners of Georgia meeting on Feb. 2-3 and the annual Georgia legislative banquet Feb. 17.

To contact reporter Stacey Green,  
please call 244-3400, ext. 245.

# Education should be an adventure

*This column was written by Louis Schmier, a Valdosta resident, who teaches Valdosta State University students about history.*

Your front-page article with the headline, "Second-graders discovering education can be an adventure," struck a chord. A colleague recently commented, "Students nowadays don't want to learn. They don't want to work at it. They want it easy, and just want a grade."

His, unfortunately, is not a lone voice. And after reading the article, I wondered why the attitude of so, so many students in the course of their educational experience does seem to run an unnatural course from an excited "wow" in the early grades to a dull "ho-hum" and a stagnated "yuk" by the time they get to college.

Something happened. At first, so many young people bring that enthusiasm and motivation with them to school. Then, they seem to increasingly lose a readiness to learn, an excitement to learn, a desire to learn, an interest to learn, a motivation to learn, a need to learn, a reason to learn, all of which they had before they entered the school systems.

Why does the phenomenal learning curve of most small pre-school children quickly begin to level off as they go up the grades in school and is practically flat by the time they enter college?

Before children enter the classroom, they're always asking questions, in touch with the world about

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**"What unpalatable recipe, then turns their feasting on learning into something of a hunger strike? What put that bad taste for food for thought in their spirit?"**

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them, touching it, feeling it, smelling it, holding on to it, crawling over it, climbing it, digging into it, tearing it apart, putting it together, soaking it in. No place is too dangerous; no place is off-limits. They're asking, "why is the sky blue;" they're picking up worms; they holding frogs up to their faces.

They're curious as heck. Without a school room, without tests, without grades they learn the language of their parents and possibly other languages as well; they learn the majority of their vocabulary that they would use daily; they learn how to throw, catch, walk, run, skip, jump, swim, ride a bicycle, use the bathroom, draw, print, count, (reading if our parents gave us a bit of help), and take in a hundred of other things through their pores that they would do for the rest of their lives. If you wanted to keep these endlessly curious kids out of things you had to put things out of reach.

What unpalatable recipe, then, turns their feasting on learning into something of a hunger strike? What put that bad taste for food for thought in their spirit? Did the children somehow get exposed to a pollutant that caused them to undergo some unnatural, grotesque genetic

mutation of attitude whereby the pleasure of learning was replaced by the pain of it? What could cause them to lose the capacity to play at learning and learn by playing? What is it that drains their power and dims their lights and slows their step so that they go silent and immobile, and their zest slows down to rest so that learning hard becomes hard to learn?

Why have they generally been transformed from excited learners into bored test takers, homework doers, grade getters, score makers? Why has the sparkle of inquisitiveness in their eyes turned into the blank stares of passive note-takers? Why has their delightful skip mired into a sorrowful trudge? Why is the prevailing question in their spirit changed from a challenging "why" to a fearful and submissive "what do you want?"

What sucked out the life juices of excitement leaving an inert residue of boredom? What stiffened their once spontaneity and flexibility? What was it that redirected their wonder of the world about them to wondering about a grade? What was it that remodeled their risk-taking into playing it safe? Why do they hate history, find math boring, see a foreign language as a struggle, treat English as if it were a foreign language? Why are they, as someone calls it, "passion deprived?" What happened to them?

And, my last "why." Why are the students almost always solely blamed for this?

I sure do have a lot of questions.

# Lost SAT tests causing concerns for students

## Kids at 12 schools in state of Georgia getting free retest

LAWRENCEVILLE (AP) — With their sharpened No. 2 pencils, some 440 students took the SAT at Gainesville High School and waited for their scores. And waited.

Now, they may never see them. Officials at Educational Testing Service, the Princeton, N.J., company that oversees grading and scoring of the Scholastic Assessment Test, say the tests are lost.

"We got the booklets, but not the answer sheets," said Tom Ewing, an ETS spokesman. "We're still looking and will continue to look."

In the meantime, students from the 12 Georgia high schools that took the test Oct. 10 at Gainesville High, have been offered a free retest Saturday. Students with scheduling conflicts can take it another time.

Gainesville High Principal

were last seen Oct. 12 when a secretary walked out with the U.S. Postal Service mail carrier to his truck and handed the package to him.

He said he was surprised to see the postal truck on the federal holiday, Columbus Day.

"They just showed up, even though it was a holiday," Christian said. "It was an unusual thing to happen. We followed their instructions to the letter, put them in the box and sent them in the regular mail."

Michael Miles, spokesman for the U.S. Postal Service's Georgia office, said a postal worker did go to the school that day and picked up three packages.

He said officials are trying to figure out what happened to the package mailed to ETS.

"The scores are missing and we are looking into it," ETS spokesman Kevin Gonzalez said. "In this particular instance, we are going to be expediting scoring."

Students and parents are under-

standably unhappy about the missing SATs, but an admissions official at the University of Georgia said the problem won't affect students' early-admission prospects.

Carol Nobles, associate director of admissions at the University of Georgia, said the school handles admissions on a "rolling basis" beginning Dec. 1.

"Students should go ahead and apply. The date of it will have little or no effect," Nobles said. "The worst part is that the students have to go through the stress of taking it all over again."

High schools that had students who took the test in Gainesville Oct. 10 are North Hall, West Hall, South Forsyth, North Gwinnett, White County, Collins Hill, Robert W. Johnson, Habersham Central, Dacula, Forsyth Central, Lakeview Academy and Gainesville.

VDT  
11/19/98 4A.

# RANT & RAVE

*Here's your chance to let South Georgia and North Florida know how you feel, with just a single phone call. RANT: to let loose with the steam that's been building up inside. RAVE: to give recognition for things well done. Call 244-3400, ext. 418, and take up to 30 seconds to express yourself.*

## **Not all is negative**

**“I** don't agree with everything that Rev. Rose says, but just like you can advertise all of the negative things that he does or he has said, advertise in the newspaper some of the positive things. Everything about him is not bad. Open your eyes, look around and see some of the positive things he is doing!”

Thursday, November 19, 1998

# Rose wants Paulk ousted

## People's Tribunal asks county leaders to seek his resignation

By Stacey Green  
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — The People's Tribunal, led by the Rev. Floyd Rose, urged Lowndes County commissioners Wednesday to seek Sheriff Ashley Paulk's resignation.

"We ask you to ask Mr. Paulk to step aside in the interest of the peace and tranquility of this community," Rose said at the commission meeting. "We're here because we're hurting."

Rose said he didn't think local officials and white residents understood the "depth of our pain, our hurt and our anger."

The People's Tribunal was formed after Willie James Williams Sr. died Sept. 4 while in the custody of the Lowndes County Jail.

"If Ashley Paulk was black and Willie Williams had been white, you would have found a way to get rid of Ashley Paulk," Rose told commissioners.

Cheers of "That's right" came from the audience.

Rose said "(Paulk) is white, he's rich and he's politically connected." He asserted that Paulk was responsible for the divisions in the community.

The Valdosta pastor then questioned why the full medical examiner's report about Williams' death had not been released publicly.

Both Commission Chairman Inez Pendleton and Commissioner Mitchell Chaney said they wanted to wait until results from the report are released before commenting.

"I can understand your waiting, but don't expect us to wait," Rose responded. "They told us to wait in Montgomery. They told us to wait in Birmingham. We won't wait," he said.

County Attorney Oris Blackburn told Rose, whom he called "preacher," that the commission did not control Paulk because the sheriff's position is an elected, constitutional office.

Blackburn continued and said black people have been patient. "It's part of your nature," he said.

No formal comment or decision for any action was made by the commission.

To contact reporter Stacey Green, please call 244-3400, ext. 245.



Paul Leavy/The Valdosta Daily Times

Rev. Floyd Rose speaks to the Lowndes County Commission during their meeting Wednesday afternoon at the County Administration Building.

# Rev. Rose pleads to minor traffic

By Joe Dunlop

THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — The Rev. Floyd Rose pleaded not guilty Thursday to a traffic violation before Municipal Court Judge John K. Edwards Jr.

The leader of The People's Tribunal, formed to protest allegations of misconduct at Lowndes County Jail, was ticketed by Valdosta police Sept. 20. Rose is charged with "driving without headlights in weather."

According to the ticket, Rose was stopped at 8:20 a.m. at the intersection of Blanchard Street and East Hill Avenue. The ticket indicates road conditions were dry, traffic was light, visibility was clear and neither clouds nor rain were present. A box marked "other" was checked under weather conditions.

Rose said a mist required intermittent use of windshield wipers. He was fighting the ticket because the officer initially asked him if he knew how fast he was going, Rose said. Rose said he replied they both knew he wasn't speeding. The officer then looked at his dash and said Rose's headlights were not on, Rose said.

Rose said he replied they were on, and the officer countered he had just turned them on as he passed the patrol car.

About 50 supporters accompanied Rose to the small courtroom at the Lowndes Law Enforcement Complex, but most waited outside.

A few minutes before the 6 p.m. start of court, Rose and Edwards both entered the courtroom, Edwards saying "I just don't want to get the courtroom too crowded."

The courtroom is about the size of a grade-school classroom, with part occupied by the judge's bench and space for court workers.

Rose wanted his supporters allowed inside, but a deputy turned people away who were not on the docket. Rose told the judge his supporters outside felt rules governing attendance had been changed because of them.

"No sir," Edwards said.

"So this was not changed just tonight?" Rose asked.

"Absolutely not," Edwards

# ads not guilty fic ticket

you all to come out," Rose said. "They need to understand always, this isn't just about Floyd Rose."

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To contact reporter Joe Dunlop,  
please call 244-3400, ext. 255.



# City school chief questions state study

## Sam Allen would prefer to dump middle school concept

By Patricia H. Croll  
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — A recently released state study that claims the middle-school concept works is getting mixed reviews from local school system officials.

Preliminary findings released by State School Superintendent Linda Schrenko's office show an increase in achievement among sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders and credits the middle-school concept with those results.

But Sam Allen, Valdosta City Schools superintendent, thinks middle schools aren't all they're cracked up to be, and he would prefer a return to the old junior high system.

"The middle school concept is not one of our more favored ideas," Allen said.

"There is some good in the concept and some parts need further study. I would like the state to give us the opportunity to pick and choose a model to use for children we serve. I feel if we had the opportunity to put together a model that best fits our students, we would serve them much better."

Ron Irwin, Lowndes County Schools assistant to the superintendent, said his system favors middle schools.

"In the year (1979-1980) before we made the change, we looked at research and spent weeks in Gainesville, Fla., looking at middle schools," Irwin said. "It did require adjustment, but overall it has been great.

"We were one of the first school systems in the state to convert and implemented it in 1980-81," he said. "We did a lot of staff development. No one I know wants to go back to the old way."

The state middle-school concept evaluation is designed to help measure student performance using standards established by the Georgia General Assembly.

The first phase of a three-year evaluation indicates students in schools that fully implement the concept are more likely to be academically successful in both reading and

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**Some study findings the first phase of a three-year Georgia Department of Education middle grades evaluation to measure achievement found:**

■ Just 23 percent of Georgia middle grades are fully implementing the middle-school concept. An equal number are making a "good faith" effort.

■ About 16 percent have decided not to implement the concept or are implementing in name only

■ The remaining 38 percent of middle-grade schools studied have only partially implemented the concept. They function somewhere between junior high and the middle-school concept. These schools, according to the evaluation, show the lowest gains for students in academic and socio-emotional areas.

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**"There is some good in the concept and some parts need further study."**

**Sam Allen,**  
Schools superintendent

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math, as measured by the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills. "There is a bigger emphasis on reading in middle school than in junior high," said Vickie Burt, Valdosta City Schools assistant superintendent.

"And with the middle school concept you have a team approach. There is more consistency with parent conferences and the goal is to make learning a team of parents, school and the child. ... There are pros and cons to the concept."

Irwin said Lowndes County conducted a three-year study to evaluate how the concept helped their school system and he said attendance, grades and discipline all improved.

To contact reporter Patricia Croll, please call 244-3400, ext. 237.

Monday, November 23, 1993, Page 12

# 'Love one another'

## Hundreds urged to look past race at special Sunday service

By Patricia H. Croll  
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — Black and white, rich and poor, young and old came together under one banner Sunday night: "To love one another."

More than 500 people gathered at Park Avenue Methodist Church for a Community Thanksgiving Service sponsored by the Valdosta Area Ministerial Association, a cooperative of about 25 area churches.

The Revs. Clay Morgan and George H. Bennett reminded listeners of Jesus' biblical mandate to love, emphasizing its power to heal.

Bennett spared no punches, calling for black and white segments of the community to find common ground through loving their fellowman.

The First Christian Church pastor told of a black woman who asked, "Why do people hate me when they've never met me?"

"This puzzles me, too," Bennett said. "As a kid in 1956 in Valdosta, I would go with other boys and throw water balloons. I had no idea the terror that created for blacks at night in Valdosta. ... It puzzles me where we come from and where we are... The power of love is our theme here."

Bennett emphasized God created humankind from dust of the earth, and everyone is made of the same DNA.

"He made us brothers and sisters, the myth is race," Bennett said. "There is one race, the human race. God's love made us all one family."

Lining pews of the sanctuary was a mixture of light and dark faces, all concentrated on the message each preacher sent.

The Rev. Floyd Rose, leader of The



Bridgette Wiggs, left, a member of Morning Star Baptist Church, shares a hymnal with Park Avenue United Methodist Church member Catherine Daughtery Sunday night at the Community Thanksgiving Service at Park Avenue United Methodist. The friends are also co-workers at Lomax-Pinevale Elementary School.

Mike Tanner/The Valdosta Daily Times

People's Tribunal, was in attendance and said he and his wife thought the service was beautiful.

"I have never heard a white preacher speak as frankly to a white audience," Rose said. "I thought his message was on time, and thought-provoking."

The Rev. Morgan of Morning Star Baptist Church encouraged the congregation to practice the words of Jesus Christ.

"It's good for us to be here," Morgan said. "I'm reminded tonight of the eleventh hour of Jesus spending time on this earth. When he died for our sins... He said we need to love one another as I love you."

Morgan noted how self-serving

ambition causes strife, dispute and division. People need to love those working with them and are charged by God to serve others, he said.

"It's not enough to talk about love," Morgan said. "We have to show love."

V.L. Daughtery, Park Avenue pastor, said attendance increased this year for the annual event.

"I've been in Valdosta for 12 years and this has been the best turnout for an interracial worship service I've seen," Daughtery said. "The community service rotates among the churches which have membership in VAMA."

Barbara Griffin, a member of First United Methodist downtown, was struck by the service's ecumenical

tone.

"I thought it was wonderful," Griffin said. "To see all kinds of people worshipping together is wonderful, because we all have one father."

Shuader Smith, Pineview Baptist Church member, traveled from Brooks County to attend the community Thanksgiving service.

"I think it was enlightening and enriching," Smith said. "It gives us the opportunity to check ourselves and realize you have to accept people as brothers and sisters if there is going to be a change in the mishappenings going on in the world today."

To contact reporter Patricia Croll, please call 244-3400, ext. 237.

2A — Tuesday, Nov. 24, 1998

## OUR WORLD

### Indonesia's Chinese minority seek safety from ethnic, religious riots

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Rina Taufan peers fearfully through the steel gates that barricade her store in Jakarta's Chinatown, where mobs ran riot, burned churches and businesses and killed at least 14 people.

Many fear the violence could unleash deep-seated ethnic and religious divisions that have been heightened by Indonesia's worst economic crisis and political turmoil in 30 years.

"I heard that they are not satisfied yet," the 38-year-old Chinese immigrant said Monday. "If they come back, I will be here too. If they burn next door, I will be dead."

Next door is a gambling house she says has the same owner as one that was the first target of Sunday's ethnic and religious violence. Muslim mobs set fire to the building and a neighboring Protestant church. They hacked and beat to death Christian guards from the eastern Indonesian island of Ambon. More burned to death inside.

The violence triggered rioting and attacks on other Christian churches, a Roman Catholic school and Chinese businesses in the district, one of the most violent in Indonesia's capital:

Wednesday, November 25, 1998

# People's Tribunal seeks to pool buying

By Lowell Vickers Jr.

THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — The People's Tribunal this week unveiled an economic policy linking patronage of local businesses to employment of the African American population and support of the organization's goals.

Businesses that fail to heed the group's demands can expect to lose the financial support of the black community, Tribunal leader the Rev. Floyd Rose said. The policy is tied to the group's demands, "for equality and justice."

"They will comply," Rose said. "If they don't,

they risk losing the black business. This is not a game with us."

After months of hints about an economic plan linked to its political goals, the protest organization this week released its "Cooperative Reciprocity Program." Organizers have said they would exert pressure on the business community to reach its goals since a political solution has not been forthcoming.

The organization was created in September in response to the death of a Lowndes County Jail inmate, Willie James Williams Sr. Tribunal members believe Williams was beaten to death by deputies and have expressed dissatisfaction

with the pace of the investigation into the death. The State Crime Lab reported Williams' death was a homicide caused by blunt force trauma.

The organization's demands include the resignation of Lowndes County Sheriff Ashley Paulk; immediate release of a coroner's report; and immediate convening of a public inquest.

While the death of Williams was a rallying point for the organization, The People's Tribunal also has pursued an agenda of improving the financial and social standing of the African American community in Lowndes County.

Rose said organizers will send out more than 2,000 copies of its economic plan. These are to be

mailed out beginning

Rose said a list is being compiled of businesses "that depend on African American support" and their margin of profit. The organization wants them to do three things:

- 1) Employ African Americans at the rate of their African American population. We will expect 30 percent of their total workforce to be African American.
- 2) Stock goods that

Continued from Page 1A

## Rose: Three-point policy should help African-Americans

wholesaled by African Americans, whenever possible. Also, "advertise with African American-owned and/or African American-oriented media, i.e. radio and newspapers." The group will provide a list of recommended media.

3) Hire African American security guards in proportion to the ratio of their African American trade, and use African American-owned janitorial and lawn services, whenever possible.

The policy also makes the point that "no business is expected to fire whites to make room for African

Americans." But Rose said as vacancies occur, they should be filled from the under-employed black population.

According to a release explaining the policy, "businesses that depend on the African American community for their survival will be expected to contribute to the survival of the African American community. Money that is spent (by us) and (for us) must be returned (to us) through increased training, education and employment of us."

To press its point, the organization is continuing its plans for a

third protest march. The Dec. 5 march will end in front of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce. Organizers said since politicians have failed to meet their demands, they instead would put pressure on the business community to affect change.

Chamber Chairman Curtis Fowler said he's not sure what the chamber can be expected to do, since the board has no political authority over its membership. But as a policy, the chamber endorses racial equality.

"We encourage people to be fair

in their employment," Fowler said.

To contact reporter Lowell Vickers Jr.,  
please call 244-3400, ext. 246.

# Power

Monday, he said.  
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Businesses will be asked

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Please see ROSE on Page 7A

# THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Thursday, November 26, 1998

50 cents

Continued from Page 1A

## Inquest

Federal Bureau of Investigation by Monday.

"Those statements from the FBI are critical, and I'm taking them to their word that they're going to have those to me by Monday," Miller said.

Miller said he would not make the report available in this case, or in "any pending investigation in which there's a possible criminal investigation which is going to result."

Miller added that a Lowndes County grand jury will likely review the investigation report regardless of what is determined at the inquest.

To contact reporter Shelby Spires, please call 244-3400, ext. 254. To contact reporter Joe Dunlop, use ext. 255.

Please see **INQUEST** on Page 7A

# Williams inquest set for Wednesday

By Shelby G. Spires  
and Joe Dunlop

THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — An inquest into the death of Willie Williams Sr. will be held Wednesday, the Lowndes County coroner said.

"This is a hearing or judicial inquiry into the facts — and I stress that this will be about the facts — surrounding a death, and everything pertaining to that death," Lowndes County Coroner Charles Exum said.

The public inquest will be held at 9

a.m. Wednesday in the main courtroom of the Lowndes County Courthouse.

Williams died Sept. 2 while in the custody of the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department. Under Georgia law, an inquest could not be called until the official investigation was complete. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation released its report to District Attorney David Miller Nov. 20. Miller said his first opportunity to review the report was Monday.

It will be an official hearing, the coroner said, bound by laws applying

to courtrooms. "Anybody creating a disturbance can and will be held in contempt of court," the coroner said.

In a coroner's inquest, a jury of six — five jurors and one alternate — will hear the facts. "It is up to them to decide what may or may not be done legally afterward," Exum said.

The Rev. Floyd Rose's first reaction upon hearing of the scheduled inquest was to laugh heartily.

"Really interesting," said the leader of The People's Tribunal, formed following Williams' death. The group has protested alleged miscon-

duct at the Lowndes County Law Enforcement Complex.

"We were getting ready to get a caravan of cars up there, over a hundred cars to the coroner's office," Rose said.

He said the inquest will have no impact on a planned march The People's Tribunal is organizing for the Saturday following the inquest.

"Why should it?" Rose asked. "If something good comes out of (the inquest), we'll get to talk about it. If something bad comes out of it, we'll get to talk about it."

Rose said the group would have

members at the inquest, but couldn't say how many people would be there.

"I don't have any idea, because we have to get the word out," he said.

The Thomasville Regional Office of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation furnished a copy of their investigative report to Miller's office.

Miller said the report was substantially complete, but added that two or three out-of-state witness statements were being gathered. Those statements have been promised by the

# Health gaps between blacks, whites persist

## Public health experts say disparities exist even among middle class blacks

ATLANTA (AP) — Decades after the civil rights movement forced America to confront racial inequities, disturbing disparities remain on one of the most basic human levels: Blacks get sick, stay sick and die sooner than whites.

From day one, a black baby's life expectancy is six and a half years shorter than a white baby's. Blacks are more likely to be born too little and less likely to survive their first year.

At work and in schools, blacks have made impressive gains. Poverty has fallen. Still, disparities in health remain and in some cases are worsening — even among middle-class blacks with health insurance and college degrees.

Asthma, hypertension, cancer. Name the disease and chances are blacks face a higher risk. They're nearly twice as likely to die of a stroke than whites, 40 percent more likely to die of heart disease. Blacks' cancer death rates are 35 percent higher.

Other racial minorities also face disparities — Vietnamese women have five times as much cervical cancer, and American Indians have twice as much diabetes than whites. But among African-Americans, the gap cuts across nearly every major disease.

"We have been — and remain — two nations: one majority, one minority — separated by the quality of our health," said Secretary Donna Shalala, whose Department of Health and Human Services has launched a \$400 million program to attack the problem. "The time has come to stop accepting disparities with resignation."

### Down in the trenches

It's 9 a.m. and 26 people wait at the West End Medical Center in a poor part of Atlanta.

"We're in the trenches here," says Dr. Miguel Stubbs, who like most of the staff and patients is black

## Unequal death

Statistics paint a disturbing picture of disparities between the health of black and white Americans. A white baby born in 1996 can expect to live for 76.8 years, while the average black baby will live 70.2 years. A look at other comparisons:

Age adjusted, per 100,000 (1996) ■ Blacks □ Whites

### Stroke\*

■ 44.2

□ 24.5

### AIDS\*

■ 41.4

□ 7.2

### Heart disease\*

■ 191.5

□ 129.8

### Prostate cancer (not age adjusted)

■ 17.1

□ 12.8

\*Includes both men and women

### Infant mortality

by race of mother,  
rate per 1,000  
live births

14.7 ■

6.1 □

### Sudden Infant Death Syndrome,

rate per  
100,000 births\*\*

137.5 ■

57.9 □

### Breast cancer

15.2 ■

10.7 □

\*\*Preliminary  
1997 figures

Source: Department of Health and Human Services

AP/Amy Kranz

**"You're trying to deal with everyday survival — with everyday issues of food, clothing and shelter — and someone wants to tell you how to prevent a problem 20 years from now? That's not going to be a priority."**

— Dr. John Maupin  
President of Meharry Medical  
College

nearly twice as likely to be without health insurance. That means they're less likely to see a doctor.

Health care, particularly preventative, has to compete with so many other things, said Dr. John Maupin, president of Meharry Medical College in Nashville, which has

trained 40 percent of the nation's black doctors and dentists.

"You're trying to deal with everyday survival — with everyday issues of food, clothing and shelter — and someone wants to tell you how to prevent a problem 20 years from now?" he said. "That's not going to be a priority."

Still, health problems go beyond the ability to pay. Hispanics are less insured and poorer as a group, yet the health gap between Hispanics and whites is not as dramatic.

### Middle class blacks aren't exempt

In fact, health disparities persist even among blacks who are in the middle class. Health improves for all races as income and education increase, yet the gap between blacks and whites remains.

Why? Public health experts note that even middle-class blacks face extra stresses of living in a white-dominant society that still contains racism. •

On the first floor, pediatricians give immunizations with a shot of advice about reading aloud to children. Upstairs, nutritionists counsel diabetics to avoid sugar. Midwives encourage pregnant women to stay away from cigarettes.

The problems are multifaceted. It's poverty and the poor access to care that comes with it. It's nutrition. And it's a health system that blacks don't always trust — and that's not always trustworthy.

### **Health care is the last thought**

Standing in West End's gray hallway, Lillian Boodle waits to talk with a nutritionist about her diabetes. She doesn't always take her medicines because they're so expensive.

"I take it one day and not the next," she says. "I don't discuss it with the doctor because I know he wouldn't agree."

It's not unusual for poor patients to take medicine every other day to stretch out a prescription, doctors say. And blacks are more than twice as likely as whites to be poor and