

CITY OF VALDOSTA  
MEMORIAL TREE RECIPIENTS  
UPDATED DECEMBER 2017

**Memorial Tree #1**

Judge Thomas Guy Connell (1897 – 1984)

In 1985 a Live Oak tree was planted at City Hall in memory of Judge T. Guy Connell by the Valdosta Tree Commission. Throughout his life, he served as a lawyer, legislator, and judge. He also served on a joint City-County Chamber of Commerce Highway Committee, which was created to review state and federal highway programs and make recommendations to the state Highway Board. Through his leadership, in the summer of 1959 construction started for Interstate 75 in northern Lowndes and on July 15, 1963 Interstate 75 was officially opened into Florida.

**Memorial Tree #2**

Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity

In 1985 a Shumard Oak tree was planted at Fairview Park by the Georgia Sigma Chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon VSC. This chapter was chartered at Valdosta State University (VSU) on October 13, 1973 and gives back through community service in ways such as volunteering at the Crescent, fundraising events, philanthropic kickball tournaments, and much more. As of 2016, SAE is one of 22 active Greek Chapters at VSU.

**Memorial Tree #3**

Area 15 Special Olympians

In 1986 a River Birch tree was planted at Drexel Park on Arbor Day to honor the Area 15 Special Olympians by the Valdosta Jaycees. The Valdosta Department of Parks and Recreation participated in the Special Olympic Winter Southeast Regional Games, which had more than 200 athletes from eight states competing in the Olympics. Coaches from Valdosta helped train athletes and run the event, while several local athletes won medals, including Ray Deloach – Gold medal (Alpine Skiing), D.D. Sapp – Gold medal (Skiing), Cynthia Dubard and Derrick Smith – Gold medal (Nordic Skiing), and Dwayne Harris and Timmy Inman – Bronze medal (Alpine Event).

**Memorial Tree #4**

Clara Belle Koontz Bechtel (1897 – 1995)

In 1986 a Hop Hornbeam tree was planted at Fairview Park in memory of Clara Bechtel. Ms. Bechtel was born in Loysburg, Pennsylvania to John Guyer and Emma Jane Koontz. She married Harry Baker Bechtel and had three children Norbert Burger Bechtel, Dr. H. Bernard Bechtel, and Alma Mountain.



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**Memorial Tree #5**

Wilbur Perkerson (1906 – 1986)

In 1986 a Red Sunset Maple tree was planted at the Police Department honoring the 26 years of service Wilbur Perkerson provided as the Valdosta Chief of Police between 1948-1974. Chief Perkerson's many achievements include implementing an efficient records system, improving the communications system, and establishing a school crossing guard program. In addition, he oversaw the transfer of the police station from S. Ashley Street and E. Hill Avenue to its present location on N. Toombs Street. In 2016, his memorial tree was replaced with a Red Maple tree.

**Memorial Tree #6**

Arbor Day (1987)

In 1987 a Silver Maple tree was planted at City Hall on Arbor Day to recognize Valdosta as a Tree City USA community. National Arbor Day is celebrated on the last Friday in April, but many states celebrate throughout the year based on the best time to plant trees in their area. Georgia's annual celebration of Arbor Day is on the third Friday of February. In 1976, the Arbor Day Foundation created the Tree City USA program, which includes meeting four core standards (1) maintaining a tree board or department, (2) having a community tree ordinance, (3) spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry, and (4) celebrating Arbor Day.

**Memorial Tree #7**

David Lee Horowitz (1956 – 1987)

In 1987 a Florida Sugar Maple tree was planted at Drexel Park in memory of David Lee Horowitz. Mr. Horowitz was the son of Norman and Martha Edwards Horowitz, and members of the Unitarian Church of Valdosta.

**Memorial Tree #8**

Luther P. Shelton (1925 – 1987)

In 1987 a Bradford Pear tree was planted at First Baptist Church in memory of Luther P. Shelton. In 1984, the city formed the Valdosta Tree Commission and Mr. Shelton was one of its founding members.

**Memorial Tree #9**

Margaret E. Reimet (unknown – 1986)

In 1987 a Southern Chestnut Oak tree was planted at the Lowndes County Historical Society & Museum in memory of Margaret E. Reimet.



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**Memorial Tree #10**

Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity

In 1987 a Live Oak tree was planted at Ashley Park in honor of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon (SAE) Fraternity. This chapter was chartered at Valdosta State University (VSU) on October 13, 1973 and gives back through community service in ways such as volunteering at the Crescent, fundraising events, philanthropic kickball tournaments, and much more. Today, SAE is one of 22 active Greek Chapters at VSU.

**Memorial Tree #11**

Bette Bechtel

In 1988 a Magnolia tree was planted at Drexel Park honoring the service of Bette Bechtel for her many efforts to beautify our city. In 1972, Ms. Bechtel was the first woman elected to serve on the Valdosta City Council and through her leadership successfully achieved the adoption of the first Tree Ordinance in 1978 to preserve, protect and enhance the city's tree canopy. In 1984, the city formed the Valdosta Tree Commission and Ms. Bechtel was a founding member who served until 2004.

**Memorial Tree #12**

Hugh K. McIntyre, Sr. (1911 – 1987)

In 1988 a Live Oak tree was planted at Central Avenue Church of Christ in memory of Hugh K. McIntyre, Sr. Mr. McIntyre was a Valdosta native who attended Valdosta High School and loved to fish every Saturday. He began working at Citizens & Southern Bank, later known as Nations Bank, and continued until he retired in the 1970's. He was a faithful church member and served as the treasurer at Central Avenue Church of Christ for 37 years. He was a devoted husband to his wife Sarah for 47 years and wonderful father to their two children, Hugh McIntyre, Jr. and Sarah Dasher. In 2016, his memorial tree was replaced with a Live Oak tree.

**Memorial Tree #13**

James F. "Jim" Hanahan (1907 – 1987)

In 1988 a Magnolia tree was planted at Drexel Park in memory of Jim Hanahan. Mr. Hanahan was a member of the Valdosta Rotary Club and served as president from 1968-1969.

**Memorial Tree #14**

R.L. Clark, Sr. (unknown – unknown)

In 1988 a Red Sunset Maple tree was planted at Olympic Park in memory of R.L. Clark, Sr. by his caring friends. In 2016, his memorial tree was replaced with a Red Maple tree.



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**Memorial Tree #15**

Terry Ronald "Ron" Cowart, Jr. (1968 – 1988)

In 1988 a River Birch tree was planted at Taylor – Cowart Memorial Park in memory of Ron Cowart, Jr. Ron attended Valdosta High School and was a cherished member of our community. He and Travis Taylor are the namesake for Taylor-Cowart Memorial Park on the corner of Bemiss and Habersham roads. The park was dedicated in their memory in 1990 and is notable for being among the first to serve the northeast section of the city near Valdosta High School.

**Memorial Tree #16**

Travis Taylor (unknown – 1988)

In 1988 a River Birch tree was planted at Taylor – Cowart Memorial Park in memory of Travis Taylor. Travis attended Valdosta High School and was a well-respected youth in our community. He and Ron Cowart, Jr. are the namesake for Taylor-Cowart Memorial Park on the corner of Bemiss and Habersham roads. The park was dedicated in their memory in 1990 and is notable for being among the first to serve the northeast section of the city near Valdosta High School.

**Memorial Tree #17**

Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Howell, Sr.

In 1990 a Shumard Oak tree was planted at Drexel Park in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Howell on Arbor Day. The Howell's were actively involved in the Valdosta community and members of the Lee Street Baptist Church.

**Memorial Tree #18**

Robert A. Goddard, Jr. (1943 – 1989)

In 1990 a River Birch tree was planted at City Hall in memory of Robert Goddard, Jr. by the Valdosta Tree Commission. Mr. Goddard served as City Auditor from 1970 – 1988, was a Valwood supporter who served on the board of directors from 1985 – 1988, and was known as the "Voice of the Valiants" for calling the football games.

**Memorial Tree #19**

William H. "Bud" Bridges, Jr. (1944 – 1990)

In 1991 a River Birch tree was planted at Valdosta State University – North Campus in memory of W.H. "Bud" Bridges, Jr.

**Memorial Tree #20**

Clarence E. Ryan, Sr. (1917 – 1992)

In 1992 a Silver Maple tree was planted at Hyta's Park in memory of Clarence E. Ryan, Sr.



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**Memorial Tree #21**

Penny Michelle Branan (1969 – 1992)

In 1992 a Drake Elm tree was planted at Lowndes High School in memory of Penny Michelle Branan. The book, "Penny for Your Thoughts", is beautifully written by her father, John M. Branan to honor her life.

**Memorial Tree #22**

Richard H. Hahn (1924 – 1993)

In 1993 a Red Maple tree was planted at Drexel Park in memory of Richard H. Hahn. Mr. Hahn served during World War II as a staff sergeant with the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force in the European Theater. He was a member of the Philadelphia Plumbers Local Union 690, the Leighton Area School Board, and First Evangelical Free Church in Bradenton, Florida.

**Memorial Tree #23**

Shannon Elizabeth Hill (1972 – 1991)

In 1993 a River Birch tree was planted at Shannon Hill Memorial Park in memory of Shannon Elizabeth Hill.

**Memorial Tree #24**

Lester Greene Youmans, Jr. (1916 – 1986)

In 1994 a Florida Maple tree was planted in memory of Lester G. Youmans, Jr. along College Street near Christ Episcopal Church. Mr. Youmans was the son of Lester Greene Youmans, Sr. and Marie Holt Greene Crockett. He was an artist who was born and raised in Valdosta along with his brother Dr. John G. Youmans, and was a member of the Christ Episcopal Church.

**Memorial Tree #25**

Marie Greene Youmans Crockett (1892 – 1981)

In 1994 a Ginkgo tree was planted at Drexel Park in memory of Marie Greene Youmans Crockett. Marie was born in St. Clair County, Alabama and later attended the Teachers' School of Dance at Columbia University in New York City. She moved to Valdosta in 1913 to work at South Georgia Normal College, currently known as Valdosta State University, and served as the Department Head of Music, Physical Education and Voice. Ms. Crockett taught dance in Valdosta for more than 50 years and was very engaged in the community. She was actively involved in bringing the arts to Valdosta, supported women's rights, helped build the Woman's Building, and founded the Empty Stocking Fund.



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**Memorial Tree #26**

Thomas Davis Shelton (1917 – 1993)

In 1994 a Red Maple tree was planted at the Lowndes County Historical Society & Museum in memory of Tom Shelton. Mr. Shelton was born in Indianola, Georgia, graduated from Emory University in 1938, and served in WWII. In 1952, he founded South Georgia Oxygen Service and was president of the Valdosta Rotary Club from 1979-1980. He also served our community through the Boy Scouts of America, Lowndes County Farm Bureau, Lowndes County Historical Society (Charter Member), Ocean Pond Fishing & Hunting Club, and Valdosta Entertainment Association. He was an active member of the Azalea City Baptist Church.

**Memorial Tree #27**

Christopher “Seth” Cassotta (1991 – 1994)

In 1995 a Willow Oak tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Christopher Seth Cassotta. He was the son of Donya Leigh Jones and Maurice Cassotta.

**Memorial Tree #28**

Valdosta Junior Woman’s Club

In 1996 a Live Oak tree was planted at Olympic Park by the Valdosta Junior Woman’s Club. The Valdosta Junior Woman’s Club is a non-profit organization that was established in 1954 for women who enjoy volunteering in the Valdosta – Lowndes area.

**Memorial Tree #29, 30, 31**

Lee Medler Bennett (1915 – 1996)

In 1997 three Ginkgo trees were planted at Valdosta State University – Main Campus (Fine Arts Building) in memory of Lee Bennett. In 1997 the Lee M. Bennett Art Scholarship was established at Valdosta State University. Professor Bennett began her career at VSU in 1953 as a part time instructor and retired in 1985. She loved the arts and taught art history, ceramics, drawing, graphics, painting and printmaking. She also served on the Valdosta Tree Commission from 1987 – 1996. She was a member of First Christian Church.

**Memorial Tree #32**

Patricia “Pattie” Sanders (1942 – 1997)

In 1997 a Bradford Pear tree was planted at First Baptist Church in memory of Pattie Sanders by her friends at General Motors Acceptance Corporation.

**Memorial Tree #33**

Serra Emilie Wisenbaker (1979 – 1996)

In 1997 a Red Maple tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Serra Emilie Wisenbaker.



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**Memorial Tree #34**

Dr. Wayne R. Faircloth (1932 – 2008)

In 1997 a Red Maple tree was planted at Valdosta State University – Main Campus in honor of Dr. Wayne F. Faircloth for his service as a Tree Commission Member from 1984-1997. Dr. Faircloth received his B.S. in Biology from Valdosta State College and later served as a faculty member at Valdosta State University, while also earning a PhD in Botany from the University of Georgia in 1971. In 1984 he became the Head of the Biology Department and held this position until he retired in 1996. Dr. Faircloth was well respected and served on the Executive Board of the Georgia Academy of Science, Advisory Board for Reed Bingham State Park, member of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Advisory Commission on protected Plant Species, and was a founding member of the Valdosta Tree Commission.

**Memorial Tree #35**

L.P. “Buck” Thomas (1914 – 1998)

In 1998 a Silver Maple tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Buck Thomas by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Thomas worked for the Lowndes County Board of Elections and joined the Rotary Club in 1963. In 1944, as the Wildcat Head Coach, he worked closely with George Morgan and J.A. Cooley to help provide financial support to the players of the football program, which resulted in the creation of the Valdosta Touchdown Club in 1945. He also served as principal for Valdosta Junior High School and W.G. Nunn Elementary School. He enjoyed camping and fishing, was inducted into the Valdosta Lowndes County Sports Hall of Fame, and was a member of Lee Street Baptist Church.

**Memorial Tree #36**

Dr. Richard Kinnebrew Winston (1915 – 1998)

In 1998 a Red Maple tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Dr. Richard “Dick” Winston by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Dr. Winston served in World War II and began working in Valdosta in 1953 as an Ophthalmologist until 1986 when he retired. He served as president of the Rotary Club from 1955 – 1956 and on the Valdosta City Council during the 1980’s. He was also active with the Boy Scouts, Boys & Girls Club Valdosta, Lowndes County Mental Health Association, Lowndes-Valdosta Arts Commission, Habitat for Humanity, and First United Methodist Church.

**Memorial Tree #37**

Robert “Bob” Belcher (1906 – 1999)

In 1999 a Silver Maple tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Bob Belcher by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Belcher owned and operated a local drug store and joined the Rotary Club in 1943. He was originally from Morven, GA, enjoyed fishing, and was a member of First Baptist Church.



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**Memorial Tree #38**

Charles F. "Wink" DeVane (1941 – 1999)

In 1999 a Red Maple tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Wink DeVane by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. DeVane was a Valdosta native who over the years served as editor of the Valdosta Daily Times, publisher and editor of the Valdosta Magazine, publisher for the Mailbox Post, and many others. He held board positions with both the Rotary Club and Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce, as well as volunteered his time as coach for the Valdosta Boys Club.

**Memorial Tree #39**

Dr. James E. Dennard (1941 –2000)

In 2000 a Live Oak tree was planted at the Boys & Girls Club on Lake Laurie Road in memory of Dr. Jim Dennard by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Dr. Dennard was born in Atlanta, Georgia and served in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War. He completed his residency in otolaryngology at Emory, was in private practice in Valdosta for a number of years, served as senior partner in ENT and Allergy Associates of South Georgia, and served as chief of staff at South Georgia Medical Center. He enjoyed traveling with his family, was active in Rotary International, and served at Christ Episcopal Church.

**Memorial Tree #40**

Travers White Paine, Jr. (1917 – 1999)

In 2000 a Live Oak tree was planted at the Boys & Girls Club on Lake Laurie Road in memory of Travers Paine by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Paine was born in Lowndes County and later attended Georgia Tech where he played football. Over the years he worked for Southern Bell as an engineer in Albany, Atlanta, Augusta, Macon, Savannah, and Valdosta. He and his wife Dorothy Dalton Paine were married for 60 years and members of First Christian Church.

**Memorial Tree #41**

William Jeter Culpepper (1909 – 2001)

In 2001 a Live Oak tree was planted at the Boys & Girls Club on Lake Laurie Road in memory of Bill Culpepper by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Culpepper was born in Valdosta and graduated from Valdosta High School. He worked for Georgia Fertilizer Company from 1926 until the late 1960's when the company closed. During his lifetime, he served as volunteer chairman of the Red Cross during WWII, joined the Rotary Club in 1938 and actively served until his 90's, and was named "Young Man of the Year" by the Jaycees in 1943 for his volunteer work in Valdosta. He joined First Christian Church when he was 11 years old, where he later served as a Sunday school teacher, trustee, board member, and Elder. In the 1950's, he and Harold Bennett were the church members tasked with overseeing the construction of the current sanctuary and building that is located at the corner of Alden and N Patterson Street.





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**Memorial Tree #42**

William H. Morris (1917 – 2001)

In 2001 a Live Oak tree was planted at Dewer Elementary School in memory of Bill Morris by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Morris was born in Bradley County and served in World War II. He graduated from the Merchant Marine Academy in Sheep Head's Bay, New York and attended Chillicothe Business College in Missouri and Penn State University. He became a resident of Valdosta in 1968 and actively served our community through the Rotary Club, Boy Scouts of America – Alapaha Area Council, and the Boys and Girls Club of Valdosta. He was also a member of the Valdosta Country Club and the Westminster Presbyterian Church.

**Memorial Tree #43**

Robert Jefferson Marsh (1912 – 2001)

In 2001 a Pin Oak tree was planted at the Boys & Girls Club on Lake Laurie Road in memory of Bob Marsh by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Marsh was born in Parkersburg, West Virginia and nationally known for his skills in hospital administration. While living in Savannah, Georgia, he served as an administrator, president (1961-1977) and CEO of Candler Hospital. In 1988 he moved to Valdosta where he was a Mason and a member of First United Methodist Church. Over his lifetime, he was a member of Rotary Club for 60 years.

**Memorial Tree #44**

Jacob Linkous - Stewart (unknown – unknown)

In 2001 a Bald Cypress tree was planted at Drexel Park in memory of Jacob Linkous - Stewart.

**Memorial Tree #45**

Keith E. Roush (1931 – 2001)

In 2001 a Live Oak tree was planted at Dewer Elementary School in memory of Keith Roush by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Roush was born in Kuna, Idaho and a veteran of the U.S. Air Force. He was a real estate appraiser and a resident of Valdosta for 50 years. He was an avid fisherman, member of the Rotary Club and Park Avenue United Methodist Church.

**Memorial Tree #46**

Edgar W. Scott, II (1972 – 2002)

In 2002 a Red Oak tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Edgar Scott, II. Mr. Scott was born in Huron County, Ohio and later moved to Valdosta in the late 1990's.

**Memorial Tree #47**

Gene Peacock (unknown – unknown)

In 2002 a Live Oak tree was planted at Dewer Elementary School in memory of Gene Peacock by the Valdosta Rotary Club.



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**Memorial Tree #48**

Douglas Lyman Mutert (1970 – 2003)

In 2003 a Live Oak tree was planted at the Boys & Girls Club on Lake Laurie Road in memory of Doug Mutert. Mr. Mutert was born in St. Petersburg, Florida and raised in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. He attended Birmingham Southern College and the University of Virginia School of Law. He was an attorney with Barham, Dover, Bennett, Miller and Stone until 2001 when he opened a law practice. He proudly served as a volunteer soccer and baseball coach for both the Boys & Girls Club and Parks & Recreation.

**Memorial Tree #49**

Douglas Lyman Mutert (1970 – 2003)

In 2003 a Drake Elm tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Coach Doug Mutert. Mr. Mutert was born in St. Petersburg, Florida and raised in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. He attended Birmingham Southern College and the University of Virginia School of Law. He was an attorney with Barham, Dover, Bennett, Miller and Stone until 2001 when he opened a law practice. He proudly served as a volunteer soccer and baseball coach for both the Boys & Girls Club and Parks & Recreation.

**Memorial Tree #50**

Coney and Marene Carter

In 2004 a Live Oak tree was planted at McKey Park in honor of Coney Lee (1925 – 2008) and Marene Hutchinson Carter (1925 – 2007) by their family and friends.

**Memorial Tree #51**

Felton Davis, Sr. (1898 – 1987)

In 2004 a Live Oak tree was planted at Drexel Park in memory of Felton Davis, Sr. by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Davis was born in Statesboro, Georgia, attended Georgia Tech and served in WWI. In 1921 he came to Valdosta as a young Atlanta architect to serve as the resident architect for the Valdosta High School on Williams Street. Throughout his 60 years in Valdosta, he designed a number of homes and other buildings, with First Christian Church on N Patterson Street being his favorite.

**Memorial Tree #52**

Isaac Harmon Boyette (1907 – 2002)

In 2004 a Laurel Oak tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Harmon Boyette by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Boyette was born in Lakeland, Georgia and graduated from Valdosta High School. Following his completion of Valdosta Business College he began working for Jewel Tea Company in 1939. In the 1940's he founded Boyette Motor and was a developer of the Dairy Queen franchises in Georgia. He joined the Rotary Club in 1944 and served our community through positions with the Valdosta Boys Club, Boy Scouts of America, First State Bank, Valdosta Lowndes County Planning Commission (1961-1976), and was a member of New Bethel Baptist Church.



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**Memorial Tree #53**

Henry "Tot" Amon (1916 – 2002)

In 2004 a Live Oak tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Henry "Tot" Amon by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Amon was originally from Columbus, Georgia and attended the University of North Carolina. He came to Valdosta in 1956 as the executive director of the Valdosta Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce until 1965. He worked closely with Moody Air Force Based and served as president of the Rotary Club from 1960-1961. He was actively involved in organization such as the Valdosta Country Club, Kiwanis Club, Georgia Industrial Developers Association, and attended Christ Episcopal Church.

**Memorial Tree #54**

John Henry May (1922 – 2002)

In 2004 a Live Oak tree was planted at Drexel Park in memory of John "Jack" May by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. May was a CPA who was born in Buffalo, NY, but later came to Valdosta during WWII when stationed at Moody Air Force Base and where he met his wife Lilla Mae West. Together they became actively involved in the community. He joined the Rotary Club in 1953, served as a Valdosta City Councilman, and worked with other organizations such as the Lowndes County Board of Elections, Chamber of Commerce, Valdosta Parks and Recreation, United Way and the American Red Cross. He was a water safety instructor, who enjoyed golf and swimming, and attended Christ Episcopal Church.

**Memorial Tree #55**

Michael F. Paoletti (1936 – 2004)

In 2004 a Live Oak tree was planted at Valdosta Middle School in memory of Michael F. Paoletti by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Paoletti was originally from Orange, New Jersey and joined the Rotary in 1975 and served as president from 1983-1984. He was a securities broker with Robinson Humphrey Company who also served our community through the Chamber of Commerce, Boys Club, and the YMCA.

**Memorial Tree #56**

Tarpley Rouse Vallotton (2002 – 2003)

In 2004 a Live Oak tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Tarpley Rouse Vallotton by the Valdosta Junior Service League (VJSL) Class of 2003. In addition, the VJSL also dedicated new handicapped accessible equipment to McKey Park in memory of Tarpley who enjoyed playing at the park.



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**Memorial Tree #57**

Wesley Renijah Christie (1918 – 2002)

In 2004 a Live Oak tree was planted at Drexel Park in memory of Wesley “Ren” Christie by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Dr. Christie retired from the Marine Corps after more than 20 years and served in WWII and the Korean conflict. He was head of the speech and drama department at Valdosta State College, which he suggested be changed to communication arts. He assisted with a number of changes including expanding the program and implementing internships so students could have on-the-job training. He joined the Rotary Club in 1971 and held several positions – including president (1980-1981), Valdosta Touchdown Club member, and was very actively involved at First United Methodist Church.

**Memorial Tree #58**

Wilbur Dekle Rountree (1910 – 2002)

In 2004 a Live Oak tree was planted at Drexel Park in memory of Wilbur Rountree by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Rountree was born in Adrian, Georgia and was an industrial engineer. Prior to moving to Valdosta, he lived in Peachtree City and enjoyed golf, fishing, and traveling. He joined the Rotary Club in 1993, served in the Twelve Old Men’s Club, and was a member of the First United Methodist Church.

**Memorial Tree #59**

William Goronwy Eager, Jr. (1915 – 2002)

In 2004 a Laurel Oak tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of William G. Eager, Jr. by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Eager was a graduate of Georgia Tech and was an Aeronautical Engineer. He returned to Valdosta in 1955 and opened the Robinson Humphrey office in 1960. He was president of the Rotary Club from 1958-1959 and served the community through organizations such as the Valdosta Food Bank and United Way. He was also an active member of Christ Episcopal Church.

**Memorial Tree #60**

Willis L. Miller, Jr. (1915 – 2004)

In 2004 a Live Oak tree was planted at Valdosta Middle School in memory of Willis L. Miller, Jr. by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Miller was born in Lakeland, Georgia and served in the U.S. Coast Guard in WWII. He moved to Valdosta in 1947 to open Miller Hardware Company and in 1973 purchased Whitehead Hardware Company. He served our community through the Hospital Authority, Elks, Rotary Club (1948) and was a member of First United Methodist Church.

**Memorial Tree #61**

Cecil M. Pitts (1916 – 2005)

In 2005 a Drake Elm tree was planted at Valdosta Middle School in memory of Cecil M. Pitts by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Pitts served in management for Winn Dixie and joined the Rotary Club in 1962. He enjoyed golfing and fishing and served as a deacon at First Baptist Church.



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**Memorial Tree #62**

Dr. Franklin Gooding Eldridge (1905 – 2005)

In 2005 a Drake Elm tree was planted at Valdosta Middle School in memory of Dr. Frank Eldridge by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Dr. Eldridge was a Roentgenologist who was originally from Gainesville, Texas and served in World War II. He later moved to Valdosta where he was the first practicing radiologist in Valdosta and founded Radiology Associates. In 1945, he joined the Rotary Club and served as president in 1952 – 1953. He was actively involved in the community through organizations such as the Valdosta Board of Education, YMCA, Valdosta Elks Club, Valdosta Boys Club, and was a strong supporter of the arts. In addition, he enjoyed playing golf and gardening and was a member of First United Methodist Church.

**Memorial Tree #63**

Sherwood Chandler Dennis (1913 – 2005)

In 2005 a Drake Elm tree was planted at Valdosta Middle School in memory of Sherwood Dennis by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Dennis was an interior decorator and was originally from Onancock, Virginia. He served in the Navy during WWII for two years and spent the rest of his life in Valdosta. He was with C.C. Varnedoe & Co for 63 years until his retirement. His goal was to leave Valdosta a more attractive city and his greatest achievement was the construction of the Sanctuary for the Park Avenue United Methodist Church, of which he served as Chairman of the Building Committee and was a charter member. He enjoyed teaching Sunday school, golfing and traveling. He served on several boards with the Chamber of Commerce and Central Development Authority, was a member of the Rotary Club, and attended First United Methodist Church.

**Memorial Tree #64**

Carole Rice Pinson (1940 – 2006)

In 2006 a Drake Elm tree was planted at Shannon Hill Memorial Park in memory of Carole Rice Pinson, also known as Lady Bug. Ms. Pinson was born in Valdosta and graduated from Valdosta High School. She was a realtor for 26 years and employed by ERA Joyner Realty. She was actively involved in the Valdosta Board of Realtors and received the 2005 Spirit Award.

**Memorial Tree #65**

Catherine Ganas Yale (1932 – 2006)

In 2006 a Drake Elm tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Catherine Ganas Yale. Ms. Yale was a lifelong resident of Valdosta and retired from Valdosta High School. She was a member of the Church of Christ.



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**Memorial Tree #66**

Dr. Thomas Whitney Gandy (1919 – 2006)

In 2006 a Drake Elm tree was planted at Valdosta Middle School in memory of Dr. Thomas W. Gandy by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Dr. Gandy worked for Valdosta State College and served as Dean of the School of Education from 1971 – 1974, as well as Director of Public Services from 1971 – 1985. He enjoyed traveling, serving others through Habitat for Humanity, Volunteers in Mission, and supporting the American Heart Association. He joined the Rotary Club in 1961 and was president from 1981-1982.

**Memorial Tree #67**

Tree Commission

In 2006 a Willow Oak tree was planted at John W. Saunders Memorial Park in honor of all the Valdosta Tree Commission members who served from 1986 – 2005.

**Memorial Tree #68**

William Chris Blane, Sr. (1928 – 2006)

In 2006 a Drake Elm tree was planted at Valdosta Middle School in memory of William Blane, Sr. by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Blane's parents emigrated from Greece and were the owners of the Green Turtle Restaurant in Valdosta. He was called Bill by many, an entrepreneur throughout the southeast, and known for his movie theatres in Valdosta. He loved his family deeply, enjoyed the outdoors, had a lifelong passion of photography, and was a member of the Greek Orthodox Church.

**Memorial Tree #69**

Arbor Day (2007)

In 2007 a Drake Elm tree was planted at J.L. Lomax Elementary School (previously known as Pinevale Lomax Elementary School) on Arbor Day. National Arbor Day is celebrated on the last Friday in April, but many states celebrate throughout the year based on the best time to plant trees in their area. Georgia's annual celebration of Arbor Day is on the third Friday of February.

**Memorial Tree #70**

Felton Davis, Jr. (1925 – 2008)

In 2008 a Drake Elm tree was planted at Valdosta Middle School in memory of Felton Davis, Jr. by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Davis served during WWII and was a graduate of Emory University. He worked for 33 years with Ciba-Geigy Pharmaceuticals in Summit, New Jersey. In 1983 he retired and moved to Gainesville, Georgia where he lectured at Brenau University and founded the Brenau News Forum. He served in the Rotary Club for 40 years.

**Memorial Tree #71**

Judge Vernita Lee Bender

In 2008 an American Elm tree was planted at the Municipal Court property in honor of Judge Vernita Lee Bender for her fair and caring service.



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**Memorial Tree #72**

Arbor Day (2009)

In 2009 a Chinese Sweet Gum tree was planted at the Valdosta Board of Education in honor of Arbor Day. National Arbor Day is celebrated on the last Friday in April, but many states celebrate throughout the year based on the best time to plant trees in their area. Georgia's annual celebration of Arbor Day is on the third Friday of February.

**Memorial Tree #73**

Robert S. Young (1929 – 2009)

In 2009 a Drake Elm tree was planted at Valdosta Middle School in memory of Robert Young by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. Young was known as Bob and sold both residential and commercial real estate. He loved meeting new people and helping them through the very important process of purchasing property. He enjoyed fishing and gardening, volunteered with organizations such as the Boys & Girls Club of Valdosta and Red Cross, and attended First United Methodist Church.

**Memorial Tree #74**

City of Valdosta Sesquicentennial

In 2010 a Laurel Oak tree was planted at John W. Saunders Memorial Park in observance of the City's Sesquicentennial 1860-2010.

**Memorial Tree #75**

Dr. Thomas Harding Smith, Jr. (1928 – 2010)

In 2010 a Drake Elm tree was planted at Valdosta Middle School in memory of Dr. Thomas H. Smith, Jr. by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Dr. Smith was an Ophthalmologist who graduated from Emory University School of Medicine in 1954. Known by many as Dr. Tom, he practiced in Valdosta from 1961 until 1998 when he retired. He was a Valdosta native who enjoyed the outdoors and actively served at First Presbyterian Church.

**Memorial Tree #76**

Raymond Earl Dasher (1931 – 2014)

In 2014 a Live Oak tree was planted at Central Avenue Church of Christ in memory of Raymond E. Dasher. Mr. Dasher was born in Valdosta and graduated from Valdosta High School in 1949. He worked for Miller Hardware prior to serving in the U.S. Air Force and National Guard. Between 1952 and 1975 he was employed by REA Express Agency and in 1955 he established Dasher Service Company. Mr. Dasher loved his family deeply, enjoyed serving his customers, fishing, entertaining, and traveling.



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**Memorial Tree #77**

Margaret Ashley Greene (1859 – 1943)

In 1994 a Ginkgo tree was planted in memory of Margaret Ashley Greene (Gold Star Mother, WWI) on Jane Street at the American Legion Post #13. Ms. Greene was married to James T. and mother of seven children – Otis, James Gardner, Evelyn T., Ethel A., Marie H., Nelle C., and John B. In 2016, her memorial tree was replaced with a Ginkgo tree.

**Memorial Tree #78**

Carson Hubert McLane (1909 – 1996)

A tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Carson McLane by the Valdosta Rotary Club. Mr. McLane was the founder of Carson McLane Funeral Home, which was established in 1936. He joined the Rotary Club in 1941 and served for more than 50 years, while also giving back to our community by serving on the Board of Directors of the Valdosta Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce, Masons, Shriners and as a charter member of Park Avenue United Methodist Church. In 2016, his memorial tree was replaced with a Winged Elm tree.

**Memorial Tree #79**

Donald R. Aldrich (1925 – 1997)

In 1997 a tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Don Aldrich by the Valdosta Rotary Club. He attended First Methodist Church and enjoyed fishing, traveling, woodworking and HAM Radio. In 2016, his memorial tree was replaced with a Winged Elm tree.

**Memorial Tree #80**

Ivey Plair, Sr. (1921 - 2011)

In 2016 a Drake Elm tree was planted at Valdosta Middle School in memory of Ivey Plair, Sr. by the Valdosta Evening Lions Club. He was a Valdosta native who served in WWII. He returned to Valdosta in 1945 and began a career in men's retail clothing, most notable – Ivey's / The Man's Shop. He served our community through a number of organizations such as the Jaycees, Valdosta Chamber of Commerce, Valdosta Touchdown Club, Valdosta Evening Lions Club. He loved to travel and attended Azalea City Baptist Church.

**Memorial Tree #81**

George Eston (Red) and Elizabeth (Lib) Sikes

In 2016 a Live Oak tree was planted at Central Avenue Church of Christ in memory of Red and Lib Sikes.





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**Memorial Tree #82**

William E. "Rett" Moore (1974 – 2016)

In 2016 a Trident Maple tree was planted at Freedom Park in memory of Rett Moore. Mr. Moore was a lifelong resident of Valdosta, who was an Honor Student at Valdosta High School. He graduated from Valdosta State University with his Masters in Public Administration and worked at VSU for several years in the Financial Aid Office. He was an outdoor enthusiast, who loved spending time with sons, and was a member of First Christian Church.

**Memorial Tree #83**

Bobby Evans (1939 – 2016)

In 2016 a memorial marker was placed at a Live Oak tree in McKey Park in memory of Bobby Evans.

**Memorial Tree #84**

Brad and Brenda Woodall

A Live Oak tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Brad Woodall and in honor of Brenda Woodall by the Stone Creek Garden Club.

**Memorial Tree #85**

Howard Wright and Kim Boutwell (JHOC)

A Live Oak tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of Howard Wright and Kim Boutwell.

**Memorial Tree #86**

James David Eunice (1993 – 2011)

A Live Oak tree was planted at McKey Park in memory of James Eunice. James was a senior at Valdosta High School where he played football and baseball and was a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA). He was actively involved at Crosspointe Church and loved spending time with his family, friends, and being outdoors. To further his legacy of investing in others, the James Eunice Scholarship Fund, the James Eunice Memorial 5K, and the non-profit "The Clock is Ticking" 7 mile swim event were established and proceeds are used for scholarships, as well as search and rescue equipment.

**Memorial Tree #87**

James Robert Reeder (unknown – unknown)

A Drake Elm tree was planted at Langdale Park in memory of James Robert Reeder.

**Memorial Tree #88**

Joseph Edgar Patten (unknown – unknown)

A Drake Elm tree was planted at Langdale Park in memory of Joseph Edgar Patten.



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**Memorial Tree #89**

Valwood School

A Pin Oak tree was planted at McKey Park in appreciation of the teachers and staff of Valwood School.

**Memorial Tree #90**

First Responders

In 2017, a Winged Elm was planted during Arbor Week at McKey Park in honor of our community First Responders.

**Memorial Tree #91**

Moody Air Force Base

In 2017, a Trident Maple was planted during Arbor Week at Freedom Park in honor of Moody Air Force Base for all that they do for our community and country.

**Memorial Tree #92**

Molly Huckaby Hardy (1946 – 1998)

In 2017, a Drake Elm tree was planted on Arbor Day at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts in memory of Molly Huckaby Hardy. Molly was born in Valdosta to Clayton and Jayne Huckaby and was a graduate of Valdosta High School and Valdosta State College. Molly joined the State Department where she was an employee for more than 25 years; working at Foreign Service posts around the world, including Asia, South America and Africa. In 1998, Molly was stationed at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya when truck bombs exploded outside the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania killing more than 200 people. Years later, it was revealed that Molly was actually working undercover for the CIA as a budget officer and is believed to be one of the first CIA officers killed by Al-Qaeda.

**Memorial Tree #93**

Matthew Nehren Kaeck (1985-2015)

In 2017, a Little Gem Magnolia was planted at Shannon Hill Memorial Park in memory of Matthew Nehren Kaeck. Mr. Kaeck was a Valdosta native who attended Sallas Mahone Elementary, Valdosta Middle School, Valdosta High School and Valdosta State University. He was a proud supporter of animal rescue and an active member of the Valdosta Yacht Club. He was an avid gardener, chef, musician, artist and sailor. He was the best son, brother, and uncle anyone could ask for and had a heart of gold.

