



From left: APWA-GA Chapter President Terrence Simpkins, Mayor John Gayle, Utilities Director Henry Hicks, City Manager Larry Hanson, and APWA President Elect Bo Mills.

## Valdosta Receives 2017 APWA Project of the Year Award

The City of Valdosta received the 2017 Project of the Year Award from the American Public Works Association—Georgia Chapter for the construction of the Withlacoochee Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) and the 6.2 mile Force Main Project. The award was presented in the category of Small City/Rural Communities Disaster or Emergency Construction/Repair at the APWA-GA Annual Meeting, on July 26, in Jekyll Island, Georgia. For more information, [read here](#).

## Valdosta Receives Budgeting Awards

The City of Valdosta has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for the 31st consecutive year. This Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by the City of Valdosta's Finance Department.

The Finance Department also received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award—the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting—from GFOA for meeting nationally recognized guidelines for effective budget presentation. This marks the 21st consecutive year that the city has achieved the significant award.

For more information, contact the city's Public Information Office at 229-259-3548 or visit [www.valdostacity.com](http://www.valdostacity.com).

## USAF 70th Birthday Celebration



The community is invited to the USAF 70th Birthday Community Celebration at Freedom Park on Saturday, Sept. 16 that will pay tribute to the men and women who serve in the USAF at Moody Air Force Base. Located at 3795 Guest Road, Freedom Park provides the perfect setting for a community-wide fun day that includes a Freedom 5K at 8 a.m., followed by free food, activities and entertainment at the park from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

The celebratory day will begin with a Freedom 5K run/walk at 8 a.m. Registration is free and will begin at 7:30 a.m. at the park. Participants will be able to choose between a regular 5K run/walk and the CrossFit Challenge. The race route will begin at Freedom Park and take participants through the adjacent neighborhoods.

Family and kid-friendly activities and entertainment will take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., along with a variety of fitness competitions such as the rock climbing wall, basketball 3X3, disc golf, and a Winnersville Fitness Challenge, as well as Valdosta Rocks, bounce house, a 21-foot slide and other fun activities.

View the [lineup of events](#), which are updated daily. Organizations and volunteers who would like to sponsor an activity or help out are encouraged to call 229-251-4779 to be a part of this community event.



## Fire Prevention Week begins Oct. 8

In a fire, seconds count. Seconds can mean the difference between residents of our community escaping safely from a fire or having their lives end in tragedy. That's why this year's Fire Prevention Week theme: "Every Second Counts: Plan 2 Ways Out!" is so important. It reinforces why everyone needs to have an escape plan to follow:

- Draw a map of your home with all members of your household, marking two exits from each room and a path to the outside from each exit.
- Practice your home fire drill twice a year. Conduct one at night and one during the day with everyone in your home, and practice using different ways out.
- Teach children how to escape on their own in case you can't help them.
- Make sure the number of your home is clearly marked and easy for the fire department to find.
- Close doors behind you as you leave – this may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire.
- Once you get outside, stay outside. Never go back inside a burning building.

Smoke alarms also play an essential role in fire safety, but it takes regular testing and maintenance to guarantee they are effective. The age of a smoke alarm can be determined by looking for the date of manufacture on the back or side of the alarm. In addition to replacing smoke alarms every 10 years, citizens should remember that:

- Smoke alarms should be installed on every level of the home.
- Smoke alarms should be tested monthly.
- Batteries should be replaced according to manufacturer's recommendations or twice yearly.

For more information on Fire Prevention Week, call Tangela Rowe at 229-333-1835.



## Labor Day Sanitation Schedule

The City of Valdosta will be closed on Monday, Sept. 4 in observance of Labor Day. The Sanitation Division will collect **residential garbage only** on Sept. 4.

Citizens who normally have their sanitation collected on Mondays should place their recyclables and yard waste at the curbside by 5 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 5 for both Monday and Tuesday collections.

The Public Works Department appreciates citizens' cooperation and patience as sanitation workers do their best to pick up both routes—over 7,000 customers—on Tuesday.

Citizens may call the Public Works Department at 229-259-3590 for more information.

## Disasters Don't Plan Ahead. You Can.

### What Do They Know That You Don't?

Don't wait until a disaster strikes to find out. Create a Ready profile on the *Ready Georgia* website or mobile app to:

- Be Informed** about disasters before they happen
- Make a Plan** so your family knows what to do and how to connect in the event of an emergency
- Build a Ready Kit** of emergency supplies with essential items like food, water, first aid and a radio

[ready.ga.gov](http://ready.ga.gov)



September is National Preparedness Month. The City of Valdosta encourages citizens to download the Ready Georgia App to have emergency preparedness tools at the touch of your fingertips!

Now is a great time to make an emergency communication plan for your family. Citizens are urged to spend time with family members and talk about how you will contact each other and where you will meet should disaster strike.

For more information on how to create a family or business disaster plan or for additional preparedness tips, visit [www.ready.ga.gov](http://www.ready.ga.gov).



## DEPOSIT YOUR TOXIC TRASH With Care

A partnership between the City of Valdosta and Care Environmental Corporation that began in 2007 is still working to secure a clean and healthy environment for future generations by providing the proper services to city residents for the disposal of hazardous household waste.

As a result of this partnership, City of Valdosta residents may bring their “toxic trash”-- paint cans, aerosols, pesticides, paint thinner, motor oil, car batteries and almost anything that should not typically be thrown into the city garbage cans --to

Care Environmental, located at 714 Gil Harbin Industrial Boulevard, each Friday, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Although Care Environmental is a full-service environmental waste management corporation for industry, government and residential establishments, the free service is offered to Valdosta residents only. Do not place household hazardous waste items in your recycle bin or storm drain.

For more information, call 229-242-6565.



## Volunteers Needed

If you, your business or organization is interested in making a positive impact in our community and environment, consider volunteering for the following cleanup events, coordinated by Keep Lowndes-Valdosta Beautiful:

### Rivers Alive

Oct. 14, from 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

### Make a Difference Day

Oct. 28, 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

### Bulk Trash Amnesty Day

Oct. 28, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

The Neighborhood Development Division will host a city-wide Bulk Trash Amnesty Day, in conjunction with the nationally-recognized Make-A-Difference Day, on Saturday, Oct. 28, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. This event, funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant program, allows Valdosta residents to dispose of unwanted household items and other bulky trash items at no cost. Residents who bring their trash for disposal must bring a copy of their Valdosta Utilities statement and a photo ID as proof of residency. Valdosta residents with cars, trucks and standard-sized trailers are allowed only one trip to the Public Works Department drop-off, located at 1015 Myrtle Street. City employees and volunteers will be available to help residents unload. Call 229-671-3617 for more details.



Kara Hope Hanson’s “Balancing the Scales of History and Progress” (pictured above), won the Best in Show award at the 9th Annual Valdosta People’s Choice Photo Contest reception held at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts on July 17.

Winning photos have become part of a traveling display that may be viewed until December in various city locations.

Visit [2017 Photo Contest Winners](#) to see the photographs and to learn where the photos will be on display next.

# City Announces Public Service Opportunities

Citizens who seek a rewarding public service role in the community are encouraged to apply for the 11 positions currently vacant on the city's boards, commissions, authorities or advisory committees. These volunteer positions, requiring only a few hours each month, are designed to give citizens a voice in their local government and allow them to influence decisions that shape the quality of life for residents in the community. Anyone who has been a resident of Lowndes County for at least six months prior to the nomination is eligible to apply.

The Mayor and City Council will evaluate the applicants and appoint individuals to the vacancies at the Nov. 9 City Council meeting. Interested citizens have until Nov. 1 by 5 p.m. to review the membership requirements, complete an application and sign the Code of Ethics form for any of the following positions:

- **Greater Lowndes Planning Commission- 1 appointment**
- **Central Valdosta Development Authority/Downtown Development Authority- 3 appointments**
- **Valdosta Housing Authority- 1 appointment** (The Mayor will make this appointment)
- **Valdosta-Lowndes County Conference Center & Tourism Authority- 2 appointments** (One of these slots is for a City Council appointee)
- **Valdosta Housing Board of Adjustments & Appeals- 2 appointments**
- **Valdosta-Lowndes County Construction Board of Adjustments & Appeals- 2 appointments** (Applicants must have construction experience and one of these slots must be filled by a General Contractor)

For more information or to obtain the necessary forms, visit [www.valdostacity.com](http://www.valdostacity.com) or contact City Clerk Teresa Bolden at 229-259-3503 or at [tbolden@valdostacity.com](mailto:tbolden@valdostacity.com).



## Never Leave Children Alone in a Vehicle

Leaving a child alone in a vehicle is extremely dangerous. Especially in the heat of summer, children are at risk of serious injury or death if they are forgotten or left behind in a car.

Even with the windows rolled down, the temperature in a car can rise very quickly, and the heat can be deadly. Eight children in Georgia have died of heatstroke in cars since 2010.

To learn more, watch the ["Look Again" Public Awareness Video](#).



## Valdosta Remembers 9/11

The City of Valdosta will host a 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony on Monday, Sept. 11, at 8:45 a.m. at Valdosta Fire Station #1, located at 106 S. Oak Street.

Valdosta Fire Chief Freddie Broome will preside over the ceremony in remembrance of those who lost their lives that day 16 years ago and in honor of the continued efforts of public safety professionals.

City leadership, public safety person-

nel, city staff and other citizens will pause to remember the innocent victims and honor the brave heroes who perished during the tragic event.

The combined Valdosta Honor Guard and the Valdosta Fire Department Pipe and Drum Corps will perform, and a special flag presentation by the Woodsmen of the World will also take place during the ceremony. For more information, contact the VFD at 229-333-1836.

# A Fireworks Reminder

Georgia House Bill 727, effective in 2015, legalized the use of fireworks in the state of Georgia. Valdosta residents should remember that there are state laws and local ordinances that provide guidance on the usage of fireworks. These laws and ordinances exist to protect residents from injury and to also respect the rights of our neighbors.

According to the state law, fireworks are allowed on New Years Eve from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.; July 3 from 9 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.; July 4 from 9 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. On

all other days of the year, fireworks are allowed from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. However, if the fireworks used are not violating the county or municipal noise ordinance, they may be enjoyed up to midnight.

In addition to those time restrictions, the law bans people from igniting fireworks on roadways, right-of-ways, highways and within 100 yards of hospitals, nursing homes and prisons. Please respect your neighbors. Read more about the Georgia fireworks ordinance at [House Bill 727 Firework Regulations](#).



The last event dates for the 2017 Farm Days season are: Sept. 9, Sept. 23, Oct. 14, Oct. 28, Nov. 11, and Nov. 25. Farm Days takes place on the 100 block of Valley Street behind the historic Lowndes County Courthouse in downtown Valdosta, from 9 a.m. to noon.

The month of October puts the Main Street office in planning mode for the upcoming holiday activities, which includes the 12 Days of Christmas and Greater Valdosta Community Christmas Parade, on Saturday, Dec. 2.

Citizens and businesses interested in participating in the parade should contact the Main Street office at 229-259-3577 or visit [www.valdostamainstreet.com](http://www.valdostamainstreet.com) for additional information.



## GPP Students Gain Financial Literacy

Six of the 17 high school student employed at the City of Valdosta through the Great Promise Partnership have opened their very first checking accounts with First Commerce Credit Union. Though not an official part of the GPP program, the program coordinators at the city have included financial literacy as part of their mentoring commitment.

Most of the GPP students this year are high school seniors who will be graduating next May, then going off to college, the military, or just starting to work in their chosen career.

"Financial literacy is a very important component to our mentoring program,"

said Vanassa Flucas, Neighborhood Development Director who also coordinates the GPP program at the city. "For many of the students, these have been their first formal discussions on money and credit management, the importance of saving, and the benefits of establishing a relationship with a financial institution."

The GPP student are learning a lot about careers in local government and about the importance of having a good career that provides an income for living expenses. Now, they are also learning how to manage money and credit to be successful in life. For more information about the GPP, call 229-671-3617.



## City Sets Hours for Trick-or-Treating

Halloween will be here before you know it. This year the fun activity will take place on Tuesday, Oct. 31, from 6 to 9 p.m.

When planning for your costumes and decorations, don't forget to plan for safety as well. The Valdosta Police Department will have extra police patrol during the Trick-or-Treat event to ensure the evening is both safe and enjoyable.

For more information, contact VPD at 229-242-2606.



## Courtroom Etiquette: What you Should Know

When you arrive at court, your appearance, dress, and actions can affect how the court sees you and how successful you are in presenting your case. By order of the Valdosta Municipal Court, violations of these conduct rules may result in your removal from the courtroom.

### Rules of Conduct:

- Be on time. If you are late, your case may be rescheduled.
- Do not talk at the same time as the Judge, court officials, opposing counsel, or witnesses.
- Racist, sexist, obscene, or profane language and gestures are prohibited unless it is pertinent to a case, elicited, and quoted from facts in the case.
- No clothing depicting violence, sexual acts and/or content, profanity or illegal drugs.
- Do not enter and/or exit and disrupt the courtroom excessively.
- Do not disturb or distract the court, counsels, witnesses, or other court officials.
- Children must not create a disturbance or they will be kept out of the courtroom.
- Do not approach the Judge's bench without permission.
- Rise when the Judge enters and remain standing until the Judge or Bailiff announces to be seated or until the Judge is seated.
- Rise when the Judge exits the courtroom.
- No food or drinks are allowed in the courtroom.

### Prohibited Items:

- Weapons of any kind, including pocket knives or blades of any kind.
- Electronic equipment such as cell phones, video, voice recorders, cameras, or laptops (unless approved by the court).
- No bags, pocketbooks, briefcases, boxes or other containers will be allowed in the courtroom (unless approved by the court).

### Security Precautions:

- Before entering the court, be prepared to go through a security checkpoint.
- You will be asked to walk through a metal detector and/or an officer will use a wand to check for prohibited items.
- An officer will search any personal belongings that will be taken into the courtroom. If you refuse to cooperate, you may be denied entry to the facility.
- No hats, scarves or head-covers allowed in the courtroom unless worn for religious or medical reasons.

## Painting the Town!



The City of Valdosta, Valdosta Main Street, the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts and the Public Art Advisory Committee have teamed up for the Second Annual Dumpster Art project.

Artists and artist teams have been selected to paint original designs that celebrate life in the city on at least three trash dumpsters located in the downtown area on Saturday, Sept. 23, from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Paints and supplies have been provided by Whitehead Industrial Company, also located in downtown Valdosta. Dumpsters will be steamed cleaned by the Valdosta Public Works Department and will receive a coat of primer and base paint by the Valdosta Youth Council members prior to the start of artists' work.

Citizens are invited to Dumpster Art on Sept. 23 to watch the dumpsters transform into beautiful pieces of public art. For additional information on Dumpster Art Project, visit [www.valdostacity.com/dumpster-art](http://www.valdostacity.com/dumpster-art), or attend the Sept. 23 event.

