

City Beat

City Manager Larry Hanson Retires From Valdosta

Larry Hanson will retire from the City of Valdosta, effective Dec. 8, after 42 years of public service, 22 of which he served as the Valdosta City Manager and five as the Assistant City Manager.

Hanson will assume his new role as the Georgia Municipal Association Executive Director in Atlanta. Hanson is the 10th and longest-serving city manager for the City of Valdosta. He will wrap up his career at the City of Valdosta after approximately 536 Mayor and

Council meetings and 268 work sessions, of which he has had a 99 percent attendance rate, in addition to a long and impressive track record of success.

The Valdosta Mayor and Council appointed Assistant City Manager Mark Barber as the Interim City Manager at the Nov. 9 City Council meeting. Mark, with over 30 years of municipal government experience, will assume the interim position on Dec. 8. [Read more.](#)



Larry Hanson

Christmas Tree Lighting

The annual Valdosta Christmas Tree Lighting will kick off the holiday season in our community at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 1. Santa Clause will be in attendance and will assist with the lighting of the 30-foot Christmas tree on City Hall's front lawn (located at 216 E. Central Avenue). The St. John Catholic Church Youth Choir will lead attendees in the singing of some holiday favorites, and the Valdosta Main Street staff will provide light refreshments.

The Valdosta Youth Council will be accepting donations for the Mayor's Motorcade and hosting a table on which attendees can sign greeting cards for military service members deployed during the holidays. The greeting cards will be mailed through the American Red Cross Holiday Mail for Heroes Program.



The annual Christmas Tree Lighting lights up the City of Valdosta.

After the Christmas Tree Lighting, residents are encouraged to stay downtown for First Friday.

For more information, call 229-259-3577.

Small Business Saturday



The seventh annual Small Business Saturday is Nov. 25. This nationwide movement reminds citizens to support local, small businesses, which serve as the backbone of our economy.

According to the Small Business Administration, 63 percent of new jobs come from small businesses. Citizens should recognize the importance of locally-owned businesses and the special shopping and visiting experiences they provide.

These businesses bring personality to Valdosta's downtown area, and the best way to support them is with our wallets. Remember to shop small and shop local on Small Business Saturday.

Fall E-Recycling Event

Residents who want to get rid of their outdated or unwanted electronic equipment can do so at the Fall Electronics Recycling event on Saturday, Nov. 18 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the Mathis Auditorium parking lot, located at 2300 N. Ashley Street.

The City of Valdosta Public Works Department, in partnership with Keep Lowndes/Valdosta Beautiful (KLVB) and Atlanta Recycling Solutions, will host the community recycling event to help residents reduce unnecessary clutter in time for the upcoming holiday season.

Items that will be accepted are cell phones, computers and ac-

cessories, test equipment, typewriters, cables, video and audio equipment, scanners, cameras, and more. Televisions will also be accepted; however, there is a \$20 charge per television and a \$10 charge per CRT monitor to cover the costs of disassembling for the recyclable parts.

Items that will not be accepted include vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, washers, dryers, gas-powered equipment, non-electronic equipment and other non-recyclable items.

For more information, call the Public Works Department at 229-671-3640. [View event flyer.](#)

Bring one for the **CHIPPER**

Residents who are looking for an environmentally-friendly way to dispose of their used Christmas trees may take them to the "Bring one for the Chipper" Christmas tree recycling event, sponsored by the City of Valdosta and Keep Lowndes-Valdosta Beautiful, Tuesday, Dec. 26 through Saturday, Jan. 6 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Drop-off sites are located at The Home Depot on Norman Drive, the Super Walmart on Inner Perimeter Road, and Mathis City Auditorium on N. Ashley Street.

"Tip Line" Helps Solve Crimes

The Valdosta Police Department Investigative Bureau welcomes the continued assistance from the general public in keeping the community safe during the holidays.

Residents have played a vital role in crime prevention by providing crime tips that have helped solve past and present crimes and may also help prevent future criminal activity.

It is important to remember that crime prevention is a two-way street between law enforcement and the community. Those who are willing to provide these tips have the option to remain anonymous.

When providing information about criminal activity, please be as detailed as possible. Give as much information about the crime, such as the people involved, the location, the time and date that the crime occurred, as well as any other information to effectively help



solve the crime.

To report criminal activity, call the VPD "Tip Line" at 229-293-3091 or email crime tips to crimetips@valdostacity.com. The Valdosta Police Department wishes you a safe and happy holiday season.

Holiday Sanitation Schedule

The City of Valdosta will be closed on Thursday, Nov. 23, in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday. The Sanitation Division will collect residential GARBAGE ONLY on Thanksgiving Day. Recyclables and yard waste for Thursday and Friday routes will both be collected on Friday, Nov. 24.

Residential garbage, recyclables or yard waste will NOT be collected on Dec. 25 or Jan. 1 for the Christmas and New Year's holidays. Citizens who normally have their sanitation collected on Fridays should place their garbage, recyclables and yard waste at the curbside by 5 a.m. on Dec. 26 and Jan. 2. For more information, call the Public Works Department at 229-259-3590 or visit the Public Works page at www.valdostacity.com.

3 Opportunities To Bring Cheer To Others

Mayor's Christmas Motorcade

The City of Valdosta is doing its part to make the holiday season special for persons with developmental disabilities and behavioral health needs who reside at the Parkwood Developmental Center. On Wednesday, Dec. 6, at 10 a.m., Mayor John Gayle and members of the Valdosta Fire Department will deliver gifts to the 117 patients—ages 7 to 73—who reside at the facility.

Monetary donations will be used to purchase uncollected items on the list. Unwrapped donations and checks made payable to the Valdosta Fire Department will be accepted through Tuesday, Dec. 5, at 106 S. Oak Street. Additional drop boxes for non-monetary donations are located on the first floor of the Valdosta City Hall and the Valdosta City Hall Annex. For more information, contact VFD Battalion Chief Johnny Henry at 229-333-1835.

Shop with a Firefighter

The Valdosta Fire Department is also bringing holiday cheer to children through its Shop with a Firefighter program, which will take place Dec. 12 at 7 p.m. at the Walmart Supercenter located at 340 Norman Drive. The program seeks to identify and help Valdosta youth who are survivors of recent fire home fires.

This program also relies solely on monetary donations. Checks can be made payable to "City of Valdosta Shop with a Firefighter" and may be dropped off at the VFD, Station #1 (106 S. Oak Street). Contact VFD Battalion Chief James Clinkscales at 229-333-1835.

Shop with a Cop

The Valdosta Police Department is collecting donations for its Shop with a Cop program, which will take place on Monday, Dec. 18, at 7 p.m., at the Walmart Supercenter located at 3274 Inner Perimeter Road. This program aims to brighten the holiday season for Valdosta children and their families by providing selected youth with some holiday shopping money.

This program relies solely on monetary donations. Checks can be made payable to the "City of Valdosta Shop with a Cop" and may be dropped off at the Valdosta Police Department (500 N. Toombs Street). Contact VPD Officer Randall Hancock at 229-292-7785 for more information or to donate.



Hurricane Season: Don't Let Your Guard Down

The 2017 Hurricane Season is officially over on November 30, but citizens should not let their guard down. Emergencies can happen any time of the year, and the same principles observed during Hurricane Season should be practiced all year long.

Visit www.ready.ga.gov for tips on how to maintain your emergency plan for the safety of you and your family throughout the winter months.



Happy Birthday Valdosta

In the year 1860, the City of Troupeville was moved four miles closer to newly constructed railroad tracks and renamed Valdosta. With a population of 166 people, Valdosta thrived as the county government seat of Lowndes County and the inland capital for Sea Island cotton. In its first 10 years the city grew 622 percent with a population of 1,999.

Today, Valdosta's future still looks bright. Dec. 7, the city's birthday, will mark 157 years of agriculture, growing business and industry, and the remarkable quality of life that has made Valdosta South Georgia's regional city.



Citizens Graduate from CFA

After nine weeks behind-the-scenes with the Valdosta Fire Department (VFD), 17 participants graduated from the VFD Citizens Fire Academy, on Oct. 24.

The program, in its fourth year, educated participants and the business community about the history of the department, CPR and first aid training, search and rescue operations and live burn and firefighter rehabilitation.

In photo: Brittany Carter, Cheryl Acree, Darrell Carter, Dolores "Jill" Bohannon, Dominic Henry, Edward Doherty, Hannah Lansburg, Jimmy Sirmans, Joadele Sirmans, Melanie Audain, Pascale Adams, Phillip Hubbard, Ramada Fuller, Ron O'Meara, Shalonda Sanders, Teresa Worley, and Alana Worley (not pictured).

Stormwater Tip

Holiday Dinners Stick to Your Ribs and Your Pipes

The holidays are a time for family and feasting, but when the meal is over are you properly disposing of your fats, oils, and grease (FOG) waste? Many of the foods today have some form of FOG in them that can impact both the sanitary sewer and stormwater systems if not disposed of correctly. Here are a few tips on how to safely dispose of FOGs:

- Never pour fat, oil or grease down the drain.
- Allow the oil to cool completely.
- Decide whether the oil needs to be discarded or recycled. Oil used for deep-frying can usually be reused several times.
- To properly discard oil, carefully place it into a strong sealable container, and then place it in the trash.

For more information, contact the Stormwater Division at 229-259-3530. Remember, only rain goes down the storm drain!

Valdosta Main Street

14 Days of Christmas



It's the most wonderful time of the year in historic downtown Valdosta! Celebrate the season all month long with 14 different days of events to put you in the holiday spirit! Details at valdostamainstreet.com

<p>Nov 25</p> <p>Small Business Saturday</p> <p>Plein Air Art Contest 8:30 - 11:30 am</p> <p>Farm Days 9 am - 12 pm</p>	<p>Nov 29</p> <p>Wine Wednesday @ Birdie's Market 5:30 - 7:30 pm</p>	<p>Dec 1</p> <p>Miss Kate's Daytime Dining 10:45 am Samples & Sips 5:15 pm</p> <p>City Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony @ City Hall 5:30 pm</p> <p>Art Walk 5-8 pm</p> <p>First Friday Contemplative Service @ First Presbyterian Church 5:30 pm</p> <p>First Friday 6-9 pm</p>
<p>Dec 2</p> <p>Visit with Santa @ The Urban Garden 10 am - 12 pm</p> <p>Miss Kate's Daytime Dining 10:45 am Samples & Sips 5:15 pm</p> <p>Christmas Parade 5 pm</p> <p>Live Music by Azalea City Jazz Quartet @ Steel Magnolias 6:30 - 9:30 pm</p>	<p>Dec 7</p> <p>Girls Night Out 5 - 8 pm</p> <p>A Christmas Spectacular @ The Dosta 7:30 pm</p>	<p>Dec 8</p> <p>Hapy Hour @ Jessie's Restaurant 3 - 7 pm</p> <p>Live Music by David Griffin @ Steel Magnolias 6:30 - 9:30 pm</p> <p>Outdoor Movie Night @ Behind Historic Courthouse 5:30 pm</p> <p>A Christmas Spectacular @ The Dosta 7:30 pm</p>
<p>Dec 9</p> <p>Breakfast with Santa @ Jessie's Restaurant 9 & 11 am</p> <p>Sign Making Party: Joy & Home @ Cottonwood Market 5:00 pm</p> <p>Make Your Parents a Present @ Home of 10,000 Picture Frames 12 - 2 pm</p> <p>A Christmas Spectacular @ The Dosta 2 & 7:30 pm</p>	<p>Dec 10</p> <p>Kids Christmas Canvas Party with Santa @ Cottonwood Market 4 - 6 pm</p>	<p>Dec 15</p> <p>Miss Kate's Daytime Dining 10:45 am</p> <p>Happy Hour @ Jessie's Restaurant 3 - 7 pm</p> <p>Boards & Beers @ Red Door Records 6 - 9 pm</p> <p>A Christmas Spectacular @ The Dosta 7:30 pm</p>
<p>Dec 16</p> <p>Miss Kate's Daytime Dining 10:45 am</p> <p>Paint Party: Christmas Ornament @ Cottonwood Market 6 - 8 pm</p> <p>A Christmas Spectacular @ The Dosta 7:30 pm</p>	<p>Dec 19</p> <p>Paint Party: Snowman @ Cottonwood Market 6 - 8 pm</p>	<p>Dec 22</p> <p>Miss Kate's Daytime Dining 10:45 am</p> <p>Happy Hour @ Jessie's Restaurant 3 - 7 pm</p>
	<p>Dec 20</p> <p>Pub Theology @ Red Door Records 7 pm</p>	

Tickets on sale for 2018 Bird Supper

For over five decades, the Lowndes County Bird Supper has been bringing together hundreds of state officials and local business, professional and government personnel for a dinner of quail and important conversation. The 2018 Bird Supper is scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 31, at the Georgia Railroad Depot, in Atlanta, at 5 p.m.

The event, sponsored by the City of Valdosta and Lowndes County, allows local professionals the opportunity to have an impact on the legislative agenda through face-to-face conversations with state leaders who will make important decisions impacting our local area and entire state.

Tickets may be purchased for \$50 each on the first floor of the Lowndes County Judicial Building or at Valdosta City Hall. Don't miss this opportunity to meet on an informal basis with top state leadership and to have a voice on issues



The 2017 Bird Supper allowed local business, professional and government personnel to meet with state officials for a dinner of quail and important conversations.

affecting our area. For more information about tickets or the event, contact Lowndes County Public Information Officer Paige Dukes at 229-671-2400 or City of Valdosta

Public Information Officer Semantha Mathews at 229-259-3548. You may also send your request to birdsupper@lowndescounty.com.

VYC Learns about Community Planning



Matt Martin was the guest presenter at the Valdosta Youth Council (VYC) Nov. 9 meeting. Martin, who is the Planning and Zoning Administrator for Valdosta and Hahira, led the members in an activity and a discussion on the three-step process in community development.

"Planning for a community is the process of thinking ahead to address the future needs of the community," Martin said.

Three questions to ask when planning a community are (1) Where are we? – What are our current needs and expectations? (2) Where do we want to be? – Where do we want to be 10 to 30 years in the future? and (3) How do we get there? – How do we get to where we want to be in terms of accommodation for population, etc.?

Valdosta has been growing since Dec. 7, 1860, when it was chartered as a city and was nothing but a farm field. After a donation of 100 acres of land, Downtown Valdosta was born. Today, Valdosta has a population of over 57,000 people and over 19,000 acres of land. Thank you to all city planners who study land use patterns, community facilities, infrastructure, and the preservation of resources before designing the way our city will move forward.

For more information, visit the <http://www.valdostacity.com/valdosta-youth-council>.

Lt. Ply named 2017 Firefighter of the Year

Lt. Justin Ply of the Valdosta Fire Department was named the 2017 Firefighter of the Year by the Exchange Club of Valdosta. Lt. Ply has served in the firefighting career field for 20 years, during which he has exceeded expectations and set an example of how to be a leader.

As the training manager for the Valdosta Fire Department, Lt. Ply oversees and conducts training for 106 personnel.

Lt. Ply's bravery and dedication to his career were most recently exercised when he intervened during a domestic-related assault on the roadside, possibly saving a woman's life. The City of Valdosta congratulates Lt. Ply on an outstanding achievement. [Read more.](#)



Holiday Safety Tips from the VFD

The VFD wants residents to be aware of common safety hazards that are more prevalent during the holiday season. When it comes to being safe during the holidays, here's what the VFD has to say:

Christmas Tree Care

- Water your Christmas tree daily to keep it fresh and safe.
- Never put candles on or near a tree.
- Keep trees at least 3 feet away from any heat source or direct flame (including cigarettes).

Lighting

- Be sure your lights are UL, ETL, or CSA tested for safety.
- Check and replace lights with cracks, frayed wires and general damage.
- Put only as many light strings together as the manufacturer recommends as safe.
- Unplug all lights before leaving the house or going to sleep.

Decorations

- Use flame-retardant or nonflammable decorations whenever possible.
- Keep decorations 3 feet away from any heat source or direct flame.
- Beware of decorations hanging on, from or above stoves and fireplaces.
- Remember to dispose of your tree promptly and properly.

Miscellaneous Tips

- Be sure all smoke detectors are properly working.
- Keep all matches and lighters out of sight and out of reach.
- Be sure candles are away from decorations, kids, pets and trees. Never leave them unattended.
- Never leave the kitchen when using the stove top. If you must leave, turn the heat off first.
- Never block off home exits with Christmas decorations. For example, do not place holiday trees, lights or other decorations in front of doors in such a manner that it prevents them from using an exit.
- Have a home escape plan for your family that you practice at least twice a year.

Heating Homes

- Never use the oven to heat your home.
- If using space heaters, be sure to have a 3 ft. buffer zone around them and always turn them off before leaving the room or going to bed.
- Have your heating and air system inspected by a licensed professional HVAC technician.
- If you have a working fireplace, have it cleaned and inspected annually by a professional chimney sweeper.

