



# The Village Voice

Vol. 3, No. 11

Indian Springs Village, Alabama

February 8, 1994

## INDIAN SPRINGS VILLAGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Indian Springs School Town Hall  
Tuesday, February 15, 1994 7 p.m.

### Agenda

- I. Mayor/Council Committee Reports
- II. Resolutions or Ordinances
- III. Citizen's Forum

### Editor's Notes

*The Village Voice* is the official organ of Indian Springs Village, AL, established October 16, 1990. The primary purpose of this newsletter is to report the monthly deliberations of the mayor and the council in town council meetings as well as to give the mayor and council members the opportunity to communicate with the electorate. In addition, your editor's hope is to foster a spirit of community and cooperation along with fun and fairness. Good neighbors need less legislation. Expenses are covered by the efforts and donations of ISV volunteers. Deliveries are also made at no charge by volunteer couriers.

Address letters to the editor and appropriate news articles to: Olivia Weingarten, Editor, 1617 Indian Crest Drive, Indian Springs, AL 35124 (988-5417). Newcomer information should be reported to Patricia Crapet (985-9205).

*The Village Voice* is published the second Tuesday of the month. Articles for publication in the March, 1994 edition should be submitted by Tuesday noon, March the 1st. The editor reserves the right to edit all materials submitted for publication. *The Village Voice* will publish letters to the editor if space permits. Letters may be edited for length and other considerations; however, the meaning will be preserved. All opinions are those of the author, unless otherwise indicated. All articles not attributed to other writers are written by the editor. Any opinions she expresses are her own and should not be attributed to the mayor or the council.

### Editor's Appreciation to:

The donors who subsidize printing expenses  
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## A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

### The State of the Town

By Mayor Hub Harrington

In keeping with the times, it seems appropriate that our citizenry be subjected to another "state of" address, this time for Indian Springs Village. You will all be delighted to know that since the beginning of my present administration the town has maintained virtually full employment. Furthermore, we are to be credited with steady economic growth, while at the same time, the consumer price index has remained level, interest rates are at record lows, and inflation is negligible. There are numerous other events that have occurred during my administration, not the least of which is the fall of communism in the Soviet Union. I trust that you are all proud of the excellent job that we are doing.

While others brag of tiny reductions in deficit spending, our town has become debt free. Furthermore, we are expecting to more than double our general fund by the end of this month as annual business license fees are received from the various utilities who supply services within our corporate limits. We anticipate receiving proposals for upgrading the street signs on Highway 119 so that attractive, uniform readable signage is provided. Our volunteers on the pothole crew, litter-walk crew, recycling program, staff and couriers of *The Village Voice*, various boards and committees, and the town officials continue to work untiringly and without reward or accolade. There is, however, much more that could be done if we had more volunteers.

A main goal of incorporation was to preserve the nature and character of our community and to prevent further commercial encroachment. ISV citizens played an important role in preventing Pelham's installation of a 300-foot communications tower in Oak Mountain State Park. We have taken the lead in opposing the many rezoning petitions made to the Shelby County Planning Commission for garden homes, mini warehouses, and other high-density or unsuitable commercial development in our area. One result of this neverending work is that the property values in our town have not only stabilized, but they have risen at an exceptional rate. A most pleasant result of our steadfast opposition to unwanted rezoning can be seen at the intersection of Bishop Lane and Highway 119, Cahaba Valley Farms. This property was once being planned for an "upscale" trailer park. It is now the site of some prestigious estates, as well as the location of Michael Stephens' Resting S Ranch, where he breeds and trains beautiful national championship Arabian horses. Our efforts to preserve other parcels may not produce such dramatic results, but we will continue to work to ensure that other such opportunities are always available.

Our success has not gone unnoticed. It may be that some "immigration" laws need to be considered in the future. Since Hoover's recent sales tax increase, the annexation calls have risen dramatically. For the past year the annexation committee has no doubt worked harder than any other. As our boundaries grow, so does our influence over areas within our police jurisdiction.

Indian Springs Village can also boast of influence in other areas. Our residents hold many prominent political and civic positions, including the governor's legal

advisor, a seat on the county commission, the Superintendent of Shelby County Board of Education, two members of the Shelby County Planning Commission, two judges, the Fire Chief of the North Shelby Fire District and two members of their Board of Trustees. The civic posts are too numerous to mention and vary from Special Equestrians to art associations and Boy Scouts.

While I am very proud of the state of the town, we have many challenges ahead. We cannot relax our guard if we expect to preserve the character and natural beauty of our community. We must prepare to deal with the problems caused by the rapid growth of the area, such as increased traffic and crime.

We must be willing to work with our county leaders to improve education and to provide security for our families and our children. We must be ready to stand against intrusion by developers and surrounding municipalities that continue to threaten the financial stability of our county and our fire and library districts.

Working together, we have been able to boast of many accomplishments, the most prominent being the mere existence of our town. Our early critics gave ISV no chance of survival and were unequivocal in their predictions of failure. Nevertheless, we remain with (and read my lips) no new taxes. Though we have proven that the town can succeed, we must work to continue its success. This we promise to do, but we need your help. Please contact us to volunteer your time, energy, and expertise for the betterment of your community.

Thank you for your continued support of Indian Springs Village.

## **Odds & Ends from the Shelby County Commission**

By Commissioner Lindsey Allison

With the financial crisis of the past year somewhat tamed, the Shelby County Commission has been able to turn its energies to more positive projects for the county. By Summer, 1994, through joint efforts of the Shelby County Planning Commission and the County Commission, a long-range plan should be complete. The plan will include, among many items, the needs of the county's infrastructure, proposed industrial developments, and a blueprint for the county's park and recreations facilities.

Some of you may be aware that a group of individuals, corporate representatives, and county officials have attempted to purchase real estate in North Shelby County to develop a recreational facility. Hopefully, in the coming year, the effort will allow the county to pursue a more comprehensive park system.

The County Commission in November, 1993, due to legal considerations, had to decrease services to several outside agencies (S.C.A.T., Shelby Senior Services, and Family Connections). Funding to the outside agencies was not affected. Services such as making payroll checks, paying their creditors, audits, legal advice and automobile maintenance were discontinued. Unfortunately,

the action by the Commission was politically unpopular with some. From a legal and financial perspective, the Commission made a good decision.

Shelby County Medical Center continues to be controversial, with the annual vote before the Commission coming soon for the hospital rate of ad valorem taxes. Currently, SMC pays for a large portion of mental health care in the county; all of the county prisoners' medical care, including dental and prescriptions, and meets its indigent health care requirements by providing medical services to those citizens who are unable to pay. In addition, the hospital is the second largest employer in the county. Since we can document close to a million dollars that the hospital either contributed to the county's budget or tax benefits in 1993, it would be very difficult not to support the continued rate of four-mil for another year. The county is not in a position to replace those monies in our budget either through growth or a new tax.

Finally, the County Commission would like to reorganize certain county offices. Currently, there are three different entities in the tax collection business: County Commission, sales and rental tax; Probate Court, license and tags; and Tax Collector, ad valorem taxes. Some progressive counties have organized a revenue department to consolidate their tax collection efforts. In addition to streamlining revenue collections, it would save the county a lot of money. The down side is the possible lack of checks and balances. I personally support the idea.

Please do not hesitate to call me should you wish to discuss these or any other issues. (Home - 985-7179, Work - 991-6367).

## **Oak Mountain Elementary Is Nominated for Blue Ribbon Award**

By Evelyn Blake, Principal OMES

Oak Mountain Elementary School is one of seven schools nominated by the State Department of Education for the U.S. Department of Education's Blue Ribbon Schools program. The purpose of the program is to give public recognition to outstanding public and private schools across the country. According to State Superintendent of Education Wayne Teague, the seven schools getting special recognition "have all the characteristics needed for a successful learning environment: dedicated teachers, solid administrators, active parents, and students who are eager to learn".

It is a tribute to the outstanding staff and community support to be nominated for this recognition after having been open only three years. I am especially proud of the standardized test scores which reflect that children are achieving at high levels for their abilities. The school environment is child oriented and instruction is geared to individual needs of students. This community and the school mean a lot to each other. I have not seen a community anywhere that works as hard to provide the best for its children.

# Town Council Highlights

January 18, 1994

By Councilwoman Patricia Crapet

The Indian Springs Village Town Council met in the town hall of Indian Springs School at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 18, 1994. The meeting was presided over by Mayor Hub Harrington, with Council Members Patricia Crapet and Art Johnson present.

There was definitely a chill in the air from the intensely cold weather, with most of those in attendance remaining in their outerwear for the entire meeting. The conversation was nonetheless well-heated by the evening's guest speaker, Russ Allison, Board Member of the North Shelby Fire District, who spoke to townspeople on the issue of the City of Hoover's suggestion of a "merger" of their fire department and our own Fire District. Also on hand to answer any concerns of the citizens were North Shelby Fire Chief Winston Boutwell and Shelby County Commissioner Lindsey Allison, who is also the attorney for the North Shelby Fire District.

After outlining the key elements of such a move by the City of Hoover and discussing the current disposition of the North Shelby Fire District, both Mr. Allison and Chief Boutwell expressed deep concern over the quality of service that non-Hoover residents might receive from the City of Hoover if such a plan were adopted. Initial discussions have intimated that the City of Hoover would like to take our men, money and facilities and in return charge non-Hoover residents for service on an annual basis. The main problem with this, as expressed by Chief Boutwell, is that North Shelby Fire District has the newest state-of-the-art equipment and technology available today, along with the expertly trained personnel to administer these services.

According to Chief Boutwell, 80 percent of the calls responded to by the North Shelby Fire District involve Advanced Life Support (ALS) systems. North Shelby Fire District has three ALS units, one for each of the stations in the district. These three units are operational twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Therefore the NSFD can handle three of these such emergencies simultaneously at any hour of the day. Chief Boutwell's main concern is that if the district is merged with Hoover, our services could, and most likely would, be greatly diminished. The City of Hoover has only three such ALS units and personnel in place throughout their entire city for such emergencies. There would be nothing to prevent the City of Hoover from "transferring" our men and equipment to other areas in Hoover that would serve solely Hoover properties, and more importantly Hoover voters, while leaving the non-Hoover "stepchildren" at their mercy. According to Chief Boutwell and Mr. Allison, the NSFD has worked very hard for many years to build up the quality of the services rendered with the bill for these services having been paid by all of the NSFD residents. We should therefore be guaranteed to retain the quality of the services to which we are accustomed. They promised to keep the town informed of any further developments, while welcoming calls, questions, and comments.

Town Clerk Paul Stephens reported that revenues for the month were beer taxes \$594.32, aluminum can recycling \$35.00, building permits \$740.00, resulting in a balance in the general fund of \$27,000. The road fund garnered \$637.38 from gas and oil revenues with the balance being \$16,233.

Assistant Town Clerk Jim Wyatt presented a request from the Shelby County Board of Education to the town for a bed for the Special Education Facility which is located in Alabaster. The school serves the needs of the county's children who are in some way handicapped or disabled. The bed is needed for some of the more severely disabled students who require rest at different times during the school day. The cost is reported to be around \$200. After discussion, the Mayor, council, and citizens in attendance agreed that the town would donate the money for the purchase of the bed.

## Fire Chief Boutwell Is Honored

North Shelby Fire District Chief Winston Boutwell was recently honored by the City of Prichard, Alabama, in the naming of its new million dollar fire station for him. The new station replaces Prichard's central station, which was torn down when a connector road between Mobile and Interstate 65 in Prichard was built.

Chief Boutwell moved to Prichard at the ripe old age of eight years. He became a firefighter, serving the citizens of Prichard for 28 years. As Fire Chief for the City of Prichard, Chief Boutwell served eight years. Upon retiring in 1978, he came to North Shelby County to set up the newly-created North Shelby Fire District.

Chief Boutwell's reaction to this honor was an expression of humility. Speaking as one of his neighbors, your editor commends the City of Prichard for having remembered and honored such a deserving and dedicated man.

## Exemplary Superintendents Congress Invites Dr. Rogers

Dr. Norma Rogers was invited as one of the 20 superintendents throughout the nation to participate in a program "Leading the Nations Schools - Leadership in a Continually Changing World". Dr. Rogers spent January 13-15 at the Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix, where she networked with other superintendents, college professors, and legislators. The congress was sponsored by Harvard University and the University of Texas at Austin. This was the Third Annual Congress for Exemplary Superintendents, and Dr. Rogers has been invited to attend for the past three years.

# North Shelby Fire District Update

By Councilman Ron Luster

Indian Springs Village was well represented by your Town Council, along with a group of Indian Springs Village residents, at the January 25th meeting of the North Shelby Fire District Board of Trustees. Art Johnson and I, along with members of the board, were very pleased to see the interest displayed by our citizens.

What was the primary reason for this interest? Hoover has made what should be most probably called a "preliminary proposal" for "merging" the Hoover and North Shelby Fire systems. The major reason Hoover is interested in "merging" is that the North Shelby property owners who have annexed into Hoover are required to pay ad valorem taxes to Hoover for fire service as well as dues to the North Shelby Fire District.

The basic provisions of the proposal are:

- \* \$100 per year non-resident fee ( not guaranteed)
- \* Duration of 99 years (also not guaranteed)
- \* District employees would become City of Hoover employees (no guarantee that all current employees will transfer to the City of Hoover)
- \* City of Hoover will attempt to include any NSFD employees in the city retirement and benefits plan (not guaranteed)
- \* No expansion of the current district
- \* No future debt would be allowed
- \* Any and all legal matters would be under complete control of the City of Hoover
- \* The District would be required to retire all debt and convey all assets to the City of Hoover to be applied to the City of Hoover's Employee Retirement Fund (to which NSFD employees are not guaranteed to be able to participate in)

Some questions raised by members of the board:

- \* Can the board legally merge the district with some other entity?
- \* Why doesn't Hoover just contract with NSFD for the protection instead of allowing their properties to have a duplication of services?
- \* Why call this a "merger"? Doesn't Hoover simply want to take over the District?

County Commissioner and NSFD Board Member Larry Dillard has been the spokesman for the merger since he has done the communicating with the City of Hoover's representatives. Mr. Dillard's "concern" for the district was supposedly prompted by the district's constantly changing demographics. Hoover has annexed into and currently comprises 15 to 20% of the North Shelby Fire District. If Hoover property owners are allowed to withdraw from the district, the financial stability of our district cannot be guaranteed. Eventually, as more businesses and residences annex into Hoover, the revenue available to the district would be severely reduced.

This is a major concern for all of us in Indian Springs Village, as well as other non-Hoover areas of the district, since with a re-

duction of revenues, services would also be drastically reduced. As a worst case scenario, if the district were to go out of business, we would then be forced to provide our own system or contract with another municipality for service.

I addressed the board, letting them know that we were very pleased with the level of service ISV receives from the NSFD. I also stated simply that based on past experience with the City of Hoover, we would have to be unconditionally guaranteed that Hoover would look after our interests equally to that of their own residents. However, our experience from past dealings with the City of Hoover proves that our interests are not considered.

The issue was tabled in order for the Board to seek legal opinion on the proposal. The issue will be considered again once it has withstood the test of legal review. We will continue to monitor the situation and keep you informed on this important issue.

All concerned citizens are encouraged to attend the next meeting of the North Shelby Fire District Board of Trustees, which will be held on Tuesday, February 22, 1994, at 7:30 p.m. at Fire Station #3 located next to the Meadowbrook Post Office on Highway 119.

## Adopt-A-Mile and Recycling

By Councilman Art Johnson

The good news in January after the December rain-out was that the weather permitted us to complete the Litter Walk on January 22nd. But there is also some bad news: only six dedicated picker-uppers, Virginia Rancont, Emily McAdory, Jim Wyatt, Herbert Joiner, Jackie and Art Johnson participated. This compares with 13 just a year ago.

Indian Springs Village is able to perform town functions by utilizing volunteers for fixing potholes, keeping town records, enforcing zoning, writing and distributing *The Village Voice*, and cleaning up litter along roadways. The volume of litter we remove from Highway 119 is declining and tells us we're doing better. But, unless the town's citizens participate, maybe it means we are doing something no longer desired. I hope not. As a town, we have the unlimited resources of our citizens, but they must be willing to invest in that effort. The town must continually identify the right things we ought to be doing and do those things the best we can.

If you like seeing a litter-free highway, come to the Mormon Church parking lot on Highway 119 at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, February 19. You'll enjoy the fellowship, and you'll like special glow of community pride when the job is done.

On January 19, two trucks manned by Jason Durbin, Jackie Johnson, Gene Weingarten, and Art Johnson collected 152 pounds of cans. Recycling helps in three ways; it saves energy, saves landfill space, and helps fund *The Village Voice*.

Please bag your recycled aluminum cans in white or clear plastic bags and secure with a knot. On Wednesday night, February 16th, place the bags on your driveway before 8:00 p.m. opposite Thursday morning's BFI garbage pick-up.