

# 'Limo-gate' still shadows Greensboro nonprofit

By BRIDGET EVARTS  
THE CHRONICLE Staff Writer

Since late last year, controversy over a soured lease agreement has cast a shadow on a Greensboro nonprofit housing organization.

Project Homestead, lauded for providing more opportunities for home ownership than all of that city's other nonprofits combined, is also being scrutinized for its leader's partnership

in a limousine business.

In April 1996, Project Homestead's president, the Rev. Michael King, entered a verbal agreement with Dale Bledsoe, owner of the defunct East Coast Limousines. The nonprofit would purchase two limos, a 1988 Lincoln Town Car and a 1990 Lincoln Town Car Double Super Stretch, and Bledsoe would lease the cars for his business.

The agreement provided 60

percent of the profits generated from the cars to Project Homestead. Bledsoe and King also agreed to allow Project Homestead the use of the cars, as long as no profits were generated.

Project Homestead, founded in 1991 by King, is also a designated community development corporation (CDC). As such, the organization's charge is to revitalize blighted neighborhoods and stimulate economic

development by forming public-private partnerships.

Project Homestead flew Bledsoe to Michigan in May 1996 to negotiate for the 1990 Lincoln. Project Homestead took out a \$43,500 bank loan to purchase the vehicle; Bledsoe brought the car back and the partners began renting it and the 1988 vehicle.

According to King, that's when the problems began. He said that his partner failed to

file expense reports in a timely manner, and did not maintain the cars properly.

But Bledsoe said that he wasn't aware anything was amiss, until he saw the 1990 Lincoln advertised in the Yellow Pages for a limo company he had never heard of.

The 1990 stretch limo is one of the largest vehicles of its type in North Carolina. It seats 14 passengers, while most limousines

See LIMO ON A2



Dale Bledsoe says Project Homestead planned to cut him out of their lease agreement from the start.

# THE CHRONICLE

WINSTON-SALEM GREENSBORO HIGH POINT

The Choice for African-American News and Information

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 18, 1997

Vol. XXIV No. 3

For Reference

Not to be taken  
from this library

website address: [www.netunlimited.net/~wschron](http://www.netunlimited.net/~wschron)

## Town denies some Enfield residents indoor plumbing



Commissioner James E. Sledge, left, and Enfield Mayor E. Kai Hardaway, stand next to one of the 12 outhouses used by black residents who cannot get the white-controlled board to extend sewer service. Both refuse to attend board meetings.

## Black commissioners boycott town meetings

By PATRICK O'NEILL  
Special to THE CHRONICLE

After several failed tries at firing the town police chief, Enfield Mayor E. Kai Hardaway thought his opportunity had come.

One of the town's three white commissioners was sick, so a vote to fire the chief would be tied 2-2, giving the mayor, who is black, the opportunity to cast the tie-breaking vote to fire the woman who had accused him of being "a crime figure."

Hardaway was never charged with a crime.

To the surprise of Hardaway and the two black commissioners, none of the white commissioners showed up for the commission meeting. Without a quorum, the meeting was canceled.

"I just made a mental note of that tactic," Hardaway said.

Today Hardaway, the savvy mayor who champions himself as an advocate for dozens of the town's poorest residents,

many of whom lack indoor plumbing in their shanty-like homes, has used the same tactic to bring national media attention to this small Halifax County town located 60 miles northeast of Raleigh along the 301

**"This is as close as you can get to being back on the plantation."**

— Mayor Hardaway

corridor near the Virginia line.

Hardaway, 51, and black commissioners Bud A. Whitaker and James E. Sledge have refused to attend a town commission meeting since June 16. The trio, who appear to have strong support among the town's African-American majority, have

See ENFIELD on A6

## Facts on Alderman Candidates for Primary Election

By BRIDGET EVARTS  
THE CHRONICLE Staff Writer

### EAST WARD

Registered voter population: 3,212 white, 8,273 African-American, 112 other races

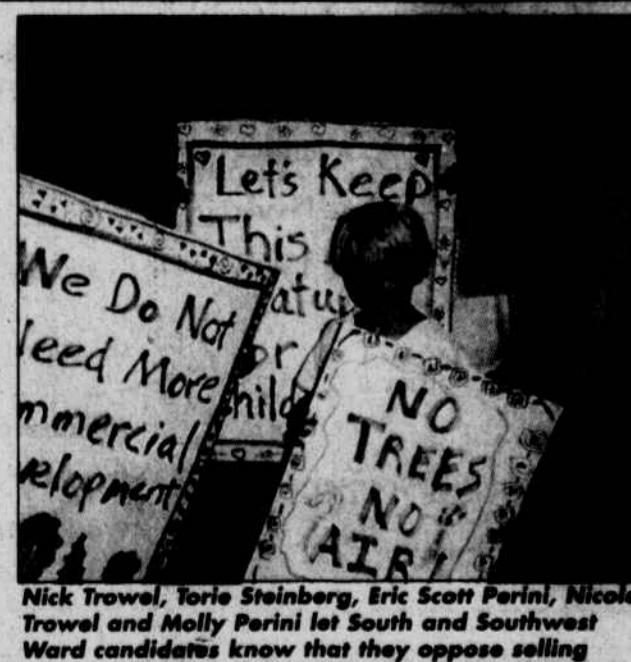
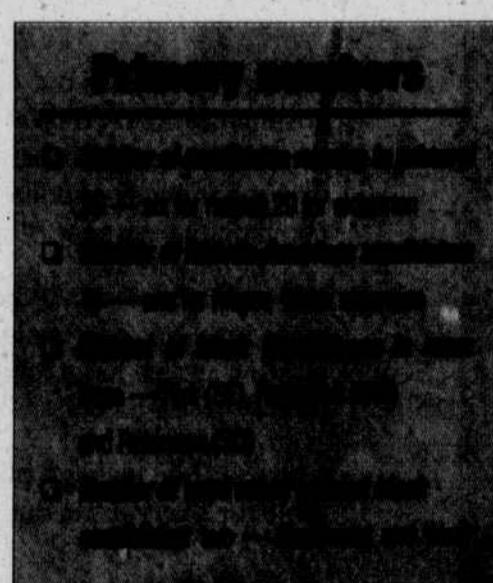
Majority Democratic ward  
No Republicans filed to run in the East Ward.

Incumbent Democrat Joycelyn V. Johnson works for Baptist Hospital as a social worker. She replaced Winston-Salem State University professor Virginia Newell on the board of aldermen in 1993. Johnson wants to see the Martin Luther

King Jr. Drive extension finished, which will serve as a bridge from East Winston to University Parkway. She is also an affordable-housing advocate, and serves on the board's Public Works Committee and is vice chair of the Community Development/Housing/General Government Committee.

Her opponent, Thelma Westbrook, is a nursing student at WSSU. Westbrook admits that she lacks political experience, but says she will "listen to the elders" of the community for guidance. She is concerned with the lack of well-paying jobs in East Winston, and wants to address issues of red-lining. Fighting crime is also

See ELECTION ON A12



Nick Trowel, Torie Steinberg, Eric Scott Perini, Nicole Trowel and Molly Perini let South and Southwest Ward candidates know that they oppose selling park land for commercial development.

## Bolton Park hot topic in South, SW races

By BRIDGET EVARTS  
THE CHRONICLE Staff Writer

One of the most controversial issues debated by candidates vying for aldermen seats in the South and Southwest Wards may be moot.

Two weeks ago, the Board of Aldermen listened to a proposal by a developer who wished to turn a portion of Bolton Park, located in the South Ward and bordered by the Southwest Ward, into a strip mall. Since then, residents have passed out petitions and held meetings to stop any potential

development.

Some of the youngest residents protesting the proposal visited a forum held Sept. 10 by the Ardmore Neighborhood Association at Moore Elementary. A group of children held up signs supporting the park's preservation during the forum.

Torie Steinberg, Nicole Trowel, Nick Trowel, Molly Perini and Eric Scott Perini are part of a home school group and visit Bolton Park every Wednesday as part of their education. When their parents told them about the proposal, the children went to

work to save the park they love.

"We want trees," said Nicole Trowel. She and her friends had just finished a clean-up project at Miller Park that day. Steinberg said that the home schoolers particularly liked Bolton, though, because of the creek that runs through the park.

South Ward contender Vernon Robinson called the youngsters "early vigilant citizens."

"We can see that there's bipartisan support to keep the park," said Robinson, who will face fellow Republican Jere Dailey in the

See PARK ON A10