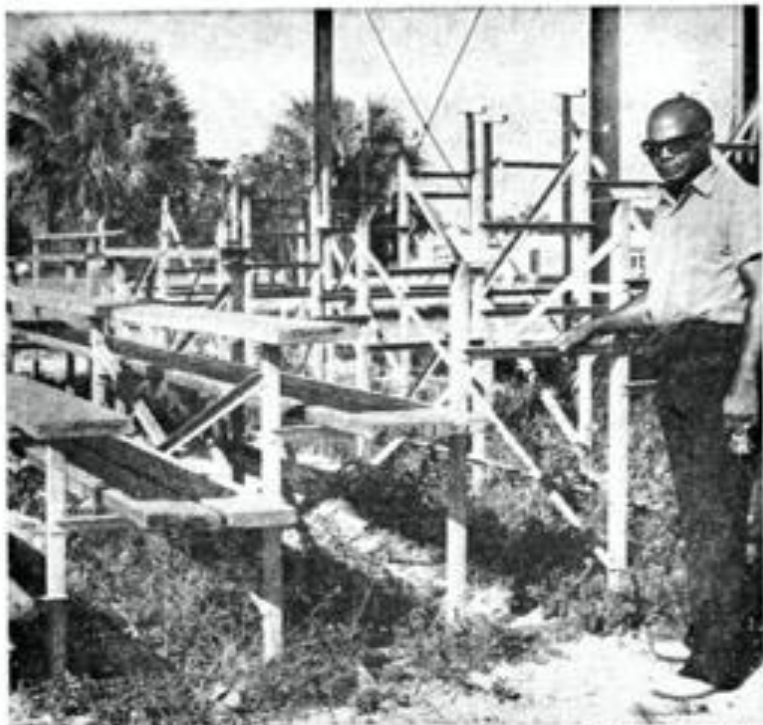


Tampa Tribune - Sept 18, 1972



Staff Photo by Francis Brush

Ed Dorsett Views Broken-Down Stands At The Field

Ed Dorsett's Fight To Save A Ballfield

Francis Brush Writer

TARPON SPRINGS — If Ed Dorsett has a favorite cause it's the softball field on Harrison Street in this city's predominantly black area.

Developed there during the Fifties, the area has deteriorated, with bleachers rotting and grass growing on the field.

DORSETT SAYS the field is in disrepair because it cannot accommodate proper play. He blames the location of the power poles on the field. And they are on the field, inside the dugout areas and situated in such a way as to be a hazard to a runner, he says.

A local barber and an active member of several civic committees through the years, Dorsett has been involved in getting a ball field in that area since he came back from World War II. Back then he was trying to get a field so black boys would have a place to play.

Now he wants the field developed for all of the city's young people.

There were times when he

was growing up here that the boys from his side of town and those across town would play ball together at Slater Field.

"**THOSE** were some good ball games," he recalls nostalgically, naming some of the now middle-aged businessmen he and his group used to challenge to games when they were all much younger.

He remembers also, and with understandable bitterness the time when one of the town's leading citizens put a stop to the integrated ball game with some racist remarks.

So when Dorsett came back to town after the war he started efforts to get the ball field and eventually was successful. He worked with several city managers and it was during H. M. Solley's term as city manager that the city acquired land on Harrison Street for a recreation area.

A ball field was developed there and this was good, Dorsett said, until Pinellas County decided to build a new

school in the area. School officials came up to look over the land situation and the baseball field site caught the eye of Floyd Christian, then school superintendent.

"**WE KEPT** trying to get him interested in this piece," Dorsett said, with a grin referring to the present ball park, "but he wanted the other one and the city let him have it."

So a new ball park was opened east of the first one.

Now Dorsett stresses the need for improving the ball field. Not one for just the people in his section of town but for everybody who wants to play ball. Recreation space is becoming scarce in many areas and it could happen here.

So he frequently brings up the subject at the Community Council board meetings and occasionally at city commission meetings.

He estimates the cost of making the necessary improvements will not be much, but the benefits to the community will be sizable.



Source 2: Letter to Tarpon Springs Board of Commissioners

Note: Union Academy was a segregated African American school in Tarpon Springs with deep historic ties in the community. A Dorsett family member, Gladys Dorsett, worked as a teacher at Union Academy.

Tarpon Springs, Florida
March 6th. 1962

Board of Commissioners
City of Tarpon Springs, Florida

Dear Sirs:

The committee organized to secure a new school for the southeast section of Tarpon Springs have made a thorough survey of the citizens affected as to their desire regarding a trade with the school board for Union Academy.

A large majority of those contacted, request the City of Tarpon Springs to trade the east ten acres of the recreation park for the property known Union Academy, and dedicate this site as a Community Center.

Respectfully submitted

Edward Dorset
Chairman

HOMETOWN
 BUILDING COMMUNITIES
 EXPLORE THE CITY

ST. PETERSBURG TIMES MAY 29, 1995
 Tampa Bay Edition

A little bit of Mayberry

■ This is one in a series exploring communities through the eyes and lives of individual residents and visitors.



TRADITION: James Dorsett II, left, watches his grandfather, Ed Dorsett, cut Ricardo Crockett's hair. The younger Dorsett left Tarpon Springs, but returned when he missed the water and the familiarity of the small town. He hopes to take over the family business some day.

By ERIKA N. DUCKWORTH
 Times Staff Writer

Lisa and Rolan Yanchar were living on Roosevelt Boulevard near U.S. 29 when they began the search 13 years ago for a neighborhood filled with oak trees. As they ventured into downtown Safety Harbor, they discovered a sense of calm and a small town feeling that didn't seem to exist farther south.

"They also found plenty of oak trees."

"It was actually farther north than we wanted to go, but when we saw the trees, that was it," said Yanchar, 36, who now runs an art framing studio on Safety Harbor's Main Street. "I wouldn't imagine living any other place now. It's like Mayberry down here."

There is a little bit of Mayberry in many of the towns and communities along North Florida Coast. Quiet streets. Friendly neighbors and sleepy eyes. Familiarity.

Here is a look at some of these communities through the voices of the people who call them home.

Tradition is everywhere this morning in Tarpon Springs. It's in the old brick buildings, the small, quaint shops downtown and the historic, imposing old homes lining the streets.

Down at the Brown Springs Dock, the sidewalks are filled with vendors selling fresh-packed crates of all-soft oranges for sale. A man looks toward the camera, shouting "All around! All around! Anybody else want to go?"

James Dorsett II never had much desire to venture outside his hometown of Tarpon Springs. He says it was, and still is, a small, friendly town where he knows everybody and everybody knows him.

"Most of the people you see here are generations of people who have lived here a long time. This is its own little area," said Dorsett, 32, standing outside his family's barber shop and snack stand on quiet, shady Lincoln Avenue. "It's a good place to grow up."

It was a bad place to find a job though, Dorsett discovered. So he left Tarpon Springs and lived in Denver for eight months, doing machine and clerical work at a dairy. Now he's back home, going to barber school in Tampa and working at the family business.

Living away from home gave Dorsett a new perspective about life in Tarpon Springs. Some things he missed, like the water and the familiarity. But he didn't miss the lack of opportunities and more awareness of racial prejudice.

"I think here and there a lot of people aren't happy



QUAINTNESS WITH AN EDGE: Downtown Dunedin's old-fashioned street lamps and brick accents add charm and character.

There were more professional black people there (in Dunedin) so more black people working, more black people buying big houses," he said. "A lot of blacks and whites lived in the same neighborhood. Here, this is it. This is where the black people live."

Like Dorsett, other black residents of Tarpon Springs are torn in their affection for the town. While they say they like the close-knit nature of the area, they are concerned about racism and the lack of jobs.

Dorsett believes things are changing in Tarpon Springs to help the black residents contained in one area. Even in St. Petersburg, there are more black and white people living in the same neighborhoods. Perhaps more like resident businessmen in Tarpon.

"Sprints would even things up a bit, for sure."

"They've got a little ways to go," Dorsett said. "I don't think that the opportunities are there for black people. You have discrimination everywhere you go. It's never perfect here."

Once he is financially secure, Dorsett said he plans to move south to Safety Harbor. It's still a small town,



Mayberry from 1B

but closer to other Tampa Bay area cities and opportunities.

Brian Fowler, 25, also is unemployed and sees little hope of finding a good job in town.

"I think about moving all the time," Fowler said. "I love this place, but there are not that many opportunities. Here, all the whites and the Greeks get the jobs."

Ed Dorsett, the shop's proprietor, jokingly dubs the lanky, ebony-skinned young man "the sandraiser." But Fowler insists that he enjoys the quiet and calm of Tarpon Springs.

He isn't crazy about life in a bigger city like St. Petersburg or Tampa. Those are cities where he wouldn't feel comfortable being alone, he says. Too scary.

"It's just so violent down there in St. Pete. Everything is so much faster down there," Fowler said. "I don't go hang out in Tampa. Both of those places are too fast."

As a parent, Karen Roberts says she has other worries. She says there is still too much police harassment in the black community. Young black men, like her 13-year-old son, too often are stereotyped as drug dealers and trouble-makers.

"It's not even safe at night for young boys," Roberts said. "It's a hassle constantly from the Police Department. Anytime it's a party down here . . . the cops are going to keep the area surrounded."

Please see HOMETOWN 4B

Times at

Source 4: Names Study

In this study, researchers sent job applications to employers hiring advertisements. Applications had names that signaled that the applicant were a racial or ethnic minority. The exact applications would be sent to those employers while only “whitening” the name (for example: changing the name from a traditionally African American name like Jamal to traditionally “white” name like Matthew). A third duplicate application would be sent with the original name but with a “whitened experience.” Any part of the application that could signal a minority status was removed and replaced with something neutral (For example, a background working for the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) would be replaced with working for a neutral organization). Finally a fourth application was sent with both a “whitened” name and “whitened” experience.

Figure 1. Callback rates for black applicants.

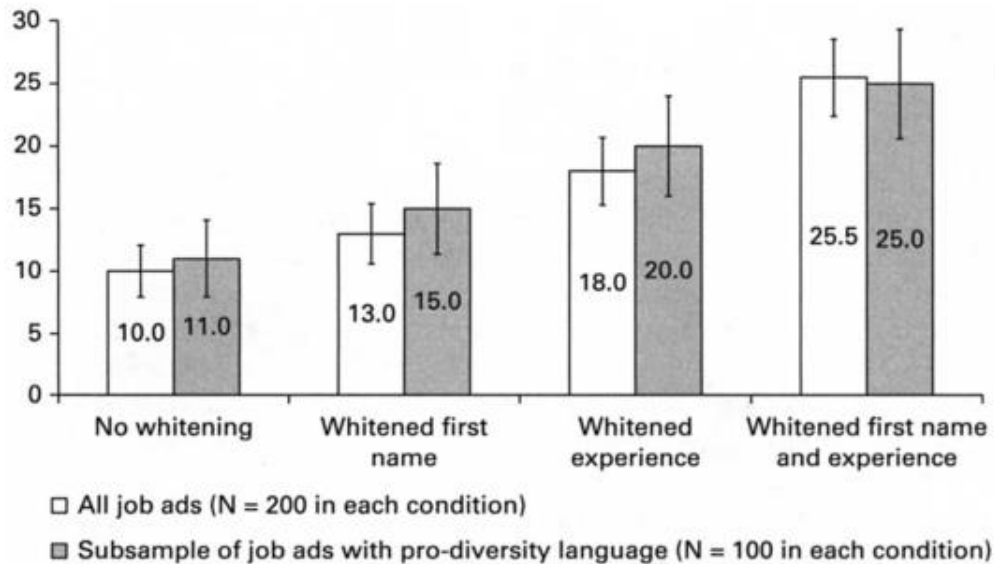
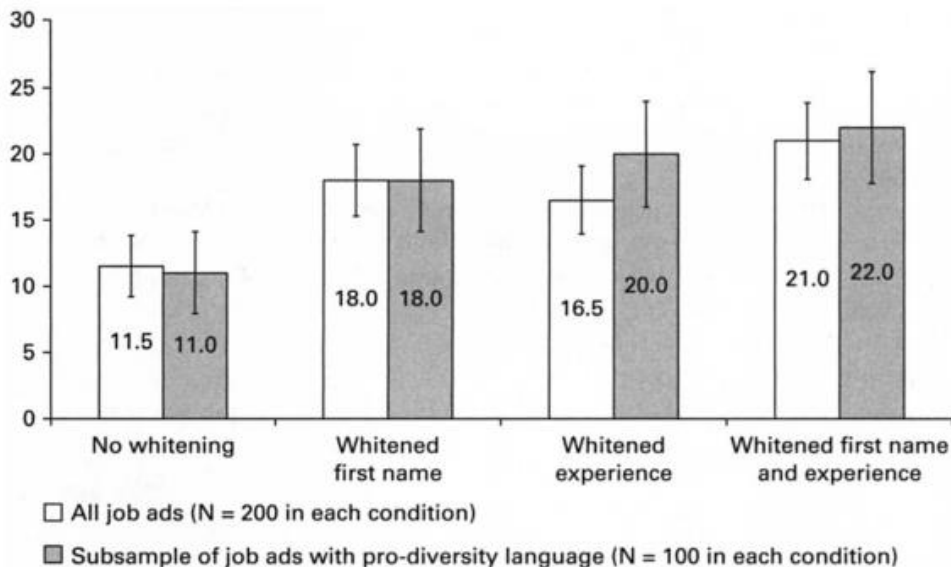


Figure 2. Callback rates for Asian applicants.



Resolution

99-14

City of Tarpon Springs, Florida

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF TARPON SPRINGS, FLORIDA, NOTING WITH DEEP REGRET THE PASSING OF EDWARD DORSETT.

WHEREAS, THE PASSING OF EDWARD DORSETT, takes from our midst the presence of an actively interested community leader and activist in the cause of human and civil rights and most benevolent citizen of Tarpon Springs, who is held in high esteem by all with whom he enjoyed acquaintance; and

WHEREAS, EDWARD DORSETT devoted a great portion of his life, time, and finances to establish recreation for African American youth in Tarpon Springs when there was none and in 1984 a city park was re-named ED DORSETT PARK in his honor. He was a member of the business community working both as a barber and a sponge stringer. He served the Mount Moriah AME Church as a member, trustee, steward, and sang in Choir #1; he was affiliated with St. Safford Lodge #67 F. & A.M.-PHA; Sunshine Consistory No. 40, St. Petersburg, FL; Harram Temple No. 23, Tampa, FL.; W.E. James Court #76, H. of J. P.H.A. He was Worshipful Master of St. Safford Lodge #67 F. & A.M.-PHA for a number of years and dedicated himself to the lodge; Rose Cemetery Association, Old Timers of Tarpon Springs, Pinellas County and Tarpon Springs Pollworkers, NAACP, and the Chamber of Commerce;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF TARPON SPRINGS, FLORIDA, that we bow to the will of Him who governs wisely and well the affairs of men, and express our heartfelt condolences to his wife: Cora Lee, his sons: Charles, James, and Ikegus, his daughters: Clotilda, Beverly, and Tunecia, and their families.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be spread upon the minutes of the City Commission; and copies be transmitted to the family of EDWARD DORSETT and to the Tarpon Springs Historical Society.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 6th day of April, 1999.



ATTEST:

Cindy Dominis _____ *Jim Auler* _____
COMMISSIONER COMMISSIONER

Beverly Bellino _____ *D. D. O. A.* _____
COMMISSIONER MAYOR PRO TEMPORE

Keray M. Cleary _____
CITY CLERK & COLLECTOR

L. F. DiDonato _____
MAYOR

Source 6: Oral History Transcript

Sherry Williams Oral History Transcript

This oral history was given by a Tarpon Springs member who was the former treasurer and the president of Rose Cemetery Association, which is a board of trustees that takes care of Rose (Hill) Cemetery. Rose (Hill) Cemetery is an active, segregated cemetery in Tarpon Springs Florida. Rose (Hill) Cemetery has deep roots in the local community, with major local figures like Ed Dorsett being on its board.

When I was in college, I raised my son, and they tried to encourage me to take assistance from the government. But I found that when people take assistance they come in your home and they want to invade your privacy just because they are giving you money. I'd rather work two jobs. So I rejected their offer, I opted to work two jobs to raise my son. Today he has a master's degree in business so I did something right hopefully in that department. . .

. . . I was the first black receptionist on the front desk in Pinellas County government at 315 Court st. I moved up to finance in the lower position and I stayed there in the 31 years I was there I moved from lower level up to Assistance Finance Supervisor in Accounts Payable Division. So we payed all the bills for the county. The county mindset structured my life.

As a supervisor in my department, I made sure minorities, no matter what color you are, had an opportunity to interview for that position. Cause I was finding that many minorities like me, or even Chinese, Greek, Puerto Rican, I wasn't seeing this people come across our platform to be interviewed. So with me in a position like that I said "Well what can I do?" So I started making sure that we interviewed all people.

One time I had a candidate that, if had I not gone behind someone's back and called her, to see if that phone call was made, she would have never got that job. I was told that she wasn't answering the call. This one particular lady said she had called the candidate three or four times. The supervisor that was above me said "I called her but she never answered the phone." And I thought, hmm, I don't know about that because I interviewed her and when I talked to her she was very interested in this job. So I have to think about, should I go and call this lady on a personal level to see if she got that phone call? I troubled me that much that I made that phone call and jeopardized myself to see if she got that phone call. She didn't get that phone call. She said "nobody called me." So now I have to go back to [the supervisor], who was telling me they called her and I had to ask "Can I see a record of the days that you called her? Can I see a record of the times you called her? If not, did you leave her a message? May I have an opportunity to reach out to her myself?" And knowing all the time I've already called her, I know you're lying to me and I just want to see what you're going to tell me.

I was told by one of my employees that our division in the county government was a rainbow coalition—that made me feel good. We bounce people around so that people get a chance and there are still people working there that thank me because they are going to get a retirement.

When I retired I wanted to help my community with some of my time. I decided that being in finance so long in government, and how I was structured for finance for 31 years, I decided to help by being treasurer for Rose Cemetery [Association].

-Sherry Williams
President of Rose Cemetery Association

Graphic Organizer

Employment



Community Action



SYNTHESIZE

How are the ideas in boxes 1 & 2 related?

What does the ideas in 1 & 2 suggest about challenges faced by African Americans in Tarpon Springs?

