

The Meigs' Philosophy Carried On

Shalimar Has Never Held Public Election or Experienced Heavy Taxes

By JERRY TOLIN Staff Writer

Government on any level is usually thought to be synonymous with taxes, elected officials, various administrative agencies and the like.

Most everyone probably takes it for granted this is always the case—but it's not, especially in the government operations of several small communities around the country.

In fact, the Playground area has its own communities that are unique in this respect.

A case in point is the tiny community of Shalimar, lying between Fort Walton Beach and Eglin Air Force Base.

Incorporated 10 years ago, Shalimar has never experienced a public election, burdensome taxes or complex administrative units.

Founded and developed by the late Clifford Meigs, the majority of the property in the town is still owned by the Meigs family.

Meigs' philosophy for the development of the area ran contrary to most of those of other communities in the Playground area.

Instead of gauging the future success of the town on the basis of growth, he attempted to sacrifice rapid growth for quality development.

By selling just a small part of the approximately 100 acres that now compose the town's boundaries, Meigs was able to keep down the growth.

When the town was incorporated, Meigs appointed himself as mayor and a council to help him administer the necessary municipal operations. Since that time, no deviation from the procedure has developed. If a vacancy occurs on the council, the same body selects a successor. No election has ever taken place.

The town derives its operational income from a utility tax levied on its nearly 300 residents. A flat water rate of 85 is also levied on all residents.

Shalimar has only two salaried municipal officials — a night watchman and a part-time bookkeeper. A city clerk, employed by Preferred Homes, a holder of the Meigs estate, is equipped with hand tools and moving to keep the streets and yards in proper shape.

The heart of Meigs' development philosophy was to limit only one type of each commercial enterprise into the town. In accordance with terms of his estate, this screening process is still practiced.

Commercial firms in the town now include a service station,

liquor store, cleaners and laundries, real estate offices, a mattress and gravel company.

Three churches, a high school and dentist office are also located in the community.

According to Councilman David Hanks, Meigs' policy was, "to keep the operation of the city simple and inexpensive with a flat fee basis."

Hanks said this is exactly what is trying to be done, and the council has found it to be very effective.

He said by more or less screening the community, the town now boasts of a very high-caliber citizenry.

However, Hanks said Meigs sold much of his property before he died, and there are now nearly 100 freeholders in the town.

He said as yet there has been no pronounced clamor from the freeholders to hold popular elections, but the subject has been discussed with him several times recently.

"We are not politicians," he said, "but only interested in seeing that the town's operations remain efficient and inexpensive."

This cannot be done if the present structure of the government is changed, he added.

Two weeks ago, Clyde Meigs, brother of the founder, was named by the Shalimar council to succeed his brother as mayor. He pledged to continue to operate the town in the same tradition as his brother.

In Marital Disputes

Police to Issue Subpoenas To Complaining Parties

City Judge Joseph Anderson appeared mildly frustrated in court last week in dismissing a case against a man charged with assault and battery on his wife.

When the man's wife failed to show up in court to prosecute, Judge Anderson told police to start issuing subpoenas to the complaining party in marital disputes.

"That's how low is—you can turn it off and on like a hydrant," the judge ruefully added.

In another case in City Court, two brothers brought before Judge Anderson on different charges were given a 60-day suspended jail sentence provided they left the county.

The pair indicated to the court they would leave.

City Court cases last week were: Leon Oliver, Carson Drive, charged with public drunkenness, fined \$25 or 10 days in jail.

Orell McNabb, 87 Germany Drive, charged with public drunkenness, fined \$10 cash bond forfeited.

Lewis Fee, 48 Windham Drive, petty larceny of gas tank, case dismissed.

W. L. Perdue, 287 Brooks Street, petty larceny of check in amount of \$30.32, given 60-day suspended sentence provided he leaves the county.

James Perdue, Brooks Street, charged with vagrancy, 60-day suspended sentence provided he leaves the county.

Willie Thomas, general delivery, assault and battery on Mary Campbell, \$25 or 10 days in addition to 10 days at hard labor.

Evans Finkley, 211 Third Street, charged with gambling and permitting gambling at the Light House Cafe, \$50 or 25 days.

Lewis Smith, 69 Windham Drive, gambling, \$25 or 15 days.

Katie Thornton, general delivery, public drunkenness, \$20 or 10 days.

Matthew Thornton, general delivery, public drunkenness, \$20 or 10 days.

Jessie James Fantroy, 126 Washington Avenue, assault and battery on Nora Fantroy, \$75 or 30 days.

Joe Louis McCovey, 77 Germany Drive, assault and battery on Helen McCovey, case dismissed.

Willie Frank Mount, 13 Germany Drive, assault and battery on Gwendolyn Mount, \$10 or 10 days.

Myrtle Logan, Fort Walton Beach, assault and battery on St. George, case continued to November 22.

George Clark Cornovich, 559 Brooks Street, passing worthless check, case continued to November 22.

TRAFFIC COURT Jimmy Glenn Oliver, Box 782, running stop sign, forfeited \$5 cash bond.

Harold R. Turner, 589 Signal Corp, Fort McPherson, Ga., reckless driving by weaving and excessive speed, \$50 cash bond forfeited.

Ray Daniel Settiff Jr., 123 Maple Street, reckless driving by excessive speed, fined \$10.

Raymond Joseph Skowronski, Carter Apartments No. 2, reckless driving by excessive speed, \$25 cash bond forfeited.

Benjamin James Voytek, Bench Trailer Court, Apt. No. 2, reckless driving by excessive speed, fined \$10.

Jessie Lee Young, post office box 733, reckless driving by speeding and driving with no license, fined \$10.

Robert E. Melien, 2204th M.S., Eglin Air Force Base, driving without a driver's license and reckless driving by speeding, fined \$10 for speeding.

Harry Benjamin Nowlin, post office box 353, Mary Esther, reckless driving by speeding, fined \$10.

Eddie Lee Wilkinson, 20 Gibson Drive, reckless driving by speeding and having improper muffler, fined \$10 for speeding and \$25 suspended providing muffler is changed.

Allen Clarence Kossow, 66 Garter Drive, reckless driving by excessive speed, \$15 cash bond forfeited.

Henry Thomas Carroll, 1225 East Lloyd Street, Pensacola, reckless driving by following too close and improper passing on double line, fined \$5 for improper passing.

Wilbert Branch, 27 Windham Drive, driving without a driver's license, case continued to November 22.

John Edward Price, 114 Windham Drive, reckless driving by speeding, \$15 cash bond forfeited.

John Louis Maris, Box 100, Hurstfield, reckless driving by failing to yield right-of-way, fined \$10.

Louis Frank Pestaglio, 114 Windham Drive, reckless driving by speeding, \$25 cash bond forfeited.

Steady P. Smith, 59 Second Street, driving while intoxicated, fined \$125 and driver's license revoked for three months.

Baligh Jetson Perry, 30 Germany Drive, driving while intoxicated causing accident, case continued to November 22.

Jaycees Hear Talk by SBA Representative

Junior Chamber of Commerce members were told last week the primary purpose of the Small Business Administration is to put independently owned businesses on a sound economic basis so they can give better services.

Marvin Cross, supervisory financial specialist in the SBA office, Birmingham, Ala., was the featured speaker at the weekly Jaycee luncheon meeting at the Staff Restaurant.

He said SBA does not function as a bank, but makes loans over a long period of time to those businesses that need more than just 60 or 90 days to pay off their notes.

Cross said in order to put a community on a stable basis, citizens in communities should encourage businesses to locate there prominently. He said SBA figures prominently in this arrangement by lending a community up to 80 per cent of the price of the land and building for lease to a manufacturer.

Also during the meeting, A. De Lynn Asher, Chicago, Ill., a weather observer at Eglin Air Force Base, was honored as the "Airman of the Quarter" by the Jaycees.

Miss Asher was selected for the honor by a panel of Judges who based their decision on performance of duty, attitude, knowledge of current events and customs of service.

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