



**February
2012**

**The Henrico County
EEO Committee**

presents

**Reflections of
Henrico County:
Past & Present**

For the month of February 2012, in recognition of Black History Month, Henrico County's EEO Committee honors seven distinguished African-American County employees who have dedicated themselves to serving the citizens of Henrico, Virginia. Individually, each honoree has dedicated more than 36 years of service to the County. Collectively, they represent 298 years of public service.

Freddie E. Bolling

Police Division—36 Years

Current Position: Assistant Chief of Police

What are the duties of your current job?

Operational Commander for Uniform Patrol

What year did you begin working for the County?

I began working for the County on April 4, 1975. I attended the 2nd Basic Police Academy

What was your very first job for the Department?

Patrol Officer

How many positions have you held?

Officer/Investigator:

- Patrol Officer
- Narcotics Investigator
- Narcotics Undercover Coordinator
- Multijurisdictional Task Force Investigator

Promoted to the rank of Sergeant:

- Platoon Supervisor
- Drug Enforcement Agency Group Supervisor

Promoted to the rank of Command Sergeant:

- Platoon Commander
- Commander of the Intelligence Unit

Promoted to the rank of Lieutenant:

- Commander of the Research and Development Unit
- Division General Assembly Liaison
- Commander of the Narcotics Unit (Organized Crime Section)
- Commander of the Property Crimes Unit (Criminal Investigations Section)

Promoted to the rank of Captain:

- Commander of the Central Station (Patrol Operations)
- Commander of the Organized Crime Section

Promoted to the rank of Major

- Operational Commander, Criminal Investigations Section
- Operational Commander, Patrol Operations

What are some specific differences in the County “then” vs. “now”?

Growth—I’ve watched the County grow from the mom and pop pace to a pace that would rival any big city. We’ve seen tremendous growth in shopping centers, strip malls, restaurants and residential communities. The city of Richmond was once the center of everything in this area. That can no longer be said. Henrico County has become a hub for many major businesses, both local and national. Henrico County is now the place to be.



I've seen Broad Street go from a two lane roadway to the six lane highway. When I started in 1975, there was nothing much on Broad past Pemberton Road but woods and the old Ranger Tower. Today the tower and woods are all a thing of the past. Over the years, I've seen the Broad Street corridor evolve greatly... first there was Innsbrook and today we have Short Pump, which has become a city within itself. Unfortunately with this growth has come more traffic. We've gone from a few hundred cars traveling the Broad Street and Parham Road corridors daily to tens of thousands of cars.

What are the most significant changes that you have observed during your time?

Well, I can tell you that the most significant change has been the development and advancement of technology. When I joined the Police Department, computers and cell phones were only things existing in the Dick Tracy comic strips. Portable radios, the few we had, were only issued to the senior officers. Technology has brought about tremendous changes in the way law enforcement functions today. We have cell phones and numerous other ways of communicating. Every officer now has a computer in the car making vital information available to them in a matter of seconds. The 911 reverse systems allow us to send information of imminent dangers to entire communities in just minutes.

When you think about the County "then" vs. "now", what do you miss most? What do you miss least?

I don't know if there's anything I really miss about then versus now. It's like the military—I'm grateful for the experience but I don't want to take that journey again.

What advice would you pass on to those just beginning careers at the County?

Work hard and always put your best foot forward, and don't be afraid to ask for help. To the young employee especially, think about the choices you make because what you do today will determine what you will be tomorrow.

When you reflect on your time with the County, how would you respond to the statement, "If I had known then what I know now...?"

I would have taken advantage of the real estate development in the County and purchased some land.

What are the most valuable lessons that you have learned during your time with the County?

I've learned three very valuable lessons over the past 36 years. The first is to never let anger or emotions cloud your judgment, for when you do you will surely make the wrong choice.



The second lesson deals with management, and for this I refer to the *Bible*. There are three qualities needed to do the job well: the wisdom of Solomon, to make decisions based on your experience and knowledge; the patience of Job, knowing that all is not perfect and mistakes will happen and when they do, use them for learning so they will not be repeated; and the courage of David, to do what is right even when it is not the popular thing to do.

The third lesson came from our former Chief of Police, Colonel Henry Stanley, and that is to never forget your faith, your family, and your friends. No matter who you are or what position you hold, when the pressures and stresses of the job, your personal life, or just life in general, start to weigh you down, your faith, family, and friends will help get you through.

Fun Facts: What did you do for fun outside of work, then vs. now?

Back then I liked bowling, movies and outdoor events. Today just give me a recliner, the remote, point me in the direction of the TV, and just wake me up when it's time to eat.

Elvin Russell Cosby

Department of Public Works—65 years
Current Position: Labor Foreman III - East End Road
Department

What are the duties of your current job?

I oversee and schedule day-to-day work of several crews for road maintenance, storm drainage maintenance, and snow removal.

What year did you begin working for the County?

April 23, 1946

What was your very first job for the Department?

I was a Laborer. My main responsibility was to bring water to all the men on the crew. I would also help in loading dump trucks with dirt, stone, brush, and debris—all by hand. We did not have any motorized equipment back then.

How many positions have you held?

Seven positions:

- Laborer (Apr 1946)
- Equipment Operator I (Mar. 1954)
- Equipment Operator II (Jan. 1957)
- Equipment Operator III (Aug. 1974)
- Labor Foreman I (Oct. 1976)
- Labor Foreman II. (Nov. 1978)
- Labor Foreman III (Feb. 1980)

What are some specific differences in the County “then” vs. “now”?

We didn't have the equipment back then that we have now. We had to dig all ditches by hand, cut overgrown bushes by hand; we had to ride on back of dump trucks to spread gravel over tar to resurface roads and had to ride on the back of trucks during snow storms to spread salt over roadways. Now we have the equipment to do all of these jobs. Also, the County didn't supply uniforms for our employees then. Now we are supplied with uniforms and all of the safety gear needed for our job. We also did not have any medical benefits when I started or any paid leave time.

What are the most significant changes that you have observed during your time?

Now African Americans have more opportunities to advance. We now have the opportunity to get training though the County to help learn new jobs and skills. This is the biggest change that I have observed during my time here.

How has technology changed the way you perform your job?

Back then, we only had one office phone, no computer, no fax machine, and no cell phones, so the supervisor had to drive to the Main Office at 21st Street and Main Street to pick up work orders and then drive out to the different job sites or back to our depot on Mountain Road or Parham Road to give the workers their work for the day. Now with all this new technology, it's a lot easier to communicate with each other.



When you think about the County “then” vs. “now”, what do you miss most? What do you miss least?

What I miss the most about back then is that all of us seemed to work better as a team, and we were closer in regards to having friendships outside of the job. We would always have each other’s back and could talk to each other about anything.

What I miss the least about back then is not having to stand on the back of the trucks out in the weather to spread stone in the heat and spread salt and sand out in the cold snowstorms that we used to have back in the early days. Back then when we came to work, the employees had to wait outside of the office to get their work orders for each day, so during the winter months the only way we had to stay warm was to build a fire in a metal barrel and stand by it to keep warm. Those days I can say I don’t miss at all.

What advice would you pass on to those just beginning careers at the County?

I would like to advise those who are just starting their career at the County to be kind and respectful to everyone you come across and carry yourself in a professional manner. Also, I would encourage them to take full advantage of all the training classes that the County offers in order to learn as much as possible.

When you reflect on your time with the County, how would you respond to the statement, “If I had known then what I know now...”?

If I had known then what I know now, I would have taken the time to learn about all the different technology that is present today because I could have created more opportunities for myself and furthered my career.



What are the most valuable lessons that you have learned during your time with the County?

The most valuable lesson that I have learned in my time here at the County is to treat people in the way that you would want them to treat you. You should try to treat every person you come across with respect and kindness.

Fun Facts: What did you do for fun outside of work (then vs. now)?

Back then when I was younger, I enjoyed carrying the family to our church programs, taking them to the zoo, and going on family trips to the beach. Also back then, my wife and I would throw large cookouts and invite all of the neighborhood children. We had six children of our own, so they really enjoyed the opportunity to have their friends come over for dinner.

Now, I get most of my enjoyment out of going to church and sitting at home laughing and talking with my grandkids and great-grandkids. I also get a kick out of watching my grandsons play baseball for their little league teams.

Freeman Pace

Department of Public Utilities—43 years
Current Position: Labor Foreman II

What are the duties of your current job?

I am responsible for running sewer lines. I am a supervisor of sewer jets and main line sewers. I open sewers and take a jet hose and run it from one line to the other. Other duties include sewer stoppage, installation of cleanout caps, and resolving problems for customers.

What year did you begin working for the County?

1968

What was your very first job for the County (and agency)?

Trash Collector

How many different positions have you held?

Foreman (Trash Truck, Sewer Jet, Operator II)

What are examples of specific differences in the County “then” versus “now”?

Back then, there were no bathrooms. I picked up trash at Lakeside where the fire department is now. I worked out of a little shed behind the Fire Department office. The shed did not have any lights. We had to open the door for lighting. Back then when I entered the Fire Department building, I had to use the back door. There was no air conditioning in the trucks back then, and the starting salary was \$1.64.

Back then, we wore whatever clothing we wanted to wear on the job. There were no uniforms or earplugs available. This was challenging because the sewer jets are very loud. Now there is a requirement to wear earplugs. In terms of the equipment back then, the dump trucks did not elevate. We had to load trucks by hand and remove items by hand. When we had a mainline stoppage back then, we had sewer rods and used ratchets to push the mainline to stop the stoppage by hand. Now we have trucks to accomplish this.

Back then, the process of collecting trash did not take as long as it does now. With all the new developments and additional houses, it takes much longer now to collect trash.

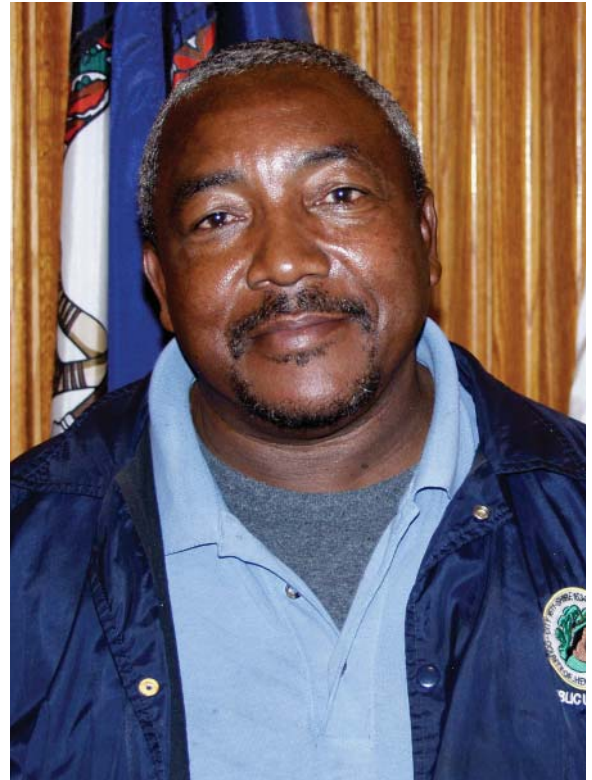
What are the most significant changes that you have observed and experienced during your tenure with the County?

The amount of equipment available to do the job has increased. We now have jack hammers, sewer jets, gas detectors, and safety protective gear such as harnesses. Back then, we used to just jump down a manhole. Now we must wear protective gear, use a gas detector, and sign a standard form.

Technology is another big change. Everything used to be completed on one sheet of paper. Now you have to document work on multiple forms. Another change is that every manhole in the County has a manhole number. Once you type in the manhole number, you can see the location and work history on the manhole.

When you think about Henrico “then” versus “now,” what do you miss most? What do you miss least?

What I miss most is former coworkers and friends from the County that have passed away. Back then, it was different. People were not as hard-headed. Staff didn’t stay on cell phones talking and texting. Back



then, I worked with staff that had their minds on the job.

What advice would you pass on to those just beginning their careers at the County?

For individuals in my department, I would stress the importance of using the safety gear that the County provides. I would encourage all employees to be professional and carry yourself in a professional manner on the job and when greeting the general public. Also, just do your job. Don't do anything to fire yourself. Don't say that you are not going to do this or that. Just do your job.



When you reflect on your tenure with the County, how would you respond to the statement, "If I had known then what I know now...?"

I would have taken advantage of more job-related training offered through the County.

What are the most valuable lessons that you have learned during your time with the County?

Some of the most valuable lessons that I have learned include: be open-minded and willing to use new equipment that can make your job easier; be clear in your expectations of people that you work with; don't rush and do things—allow plenty of time to do the job correctly; don't risk breaking your neck trying to get from one job to the next; plan ahead and allow sufficient time for your job tasks.

Fun Facts: What did you do for fun outside of work (then versus now)?

Back then, work was my hobby and my source of joy. I also enjoyed doing work around the house. On weekends I enjoyed going dancing.

Now for fun I still enjoy dancing and listening to James Brown. My job at the County is still fun for me now.

DaRon Jackson Parker, Sr.

Department of Information Technology—38 years
Current Position: Technology Support Specialist

What are the duties of your current job?

Currently, I write and maintain computer programs for a telecommunications database. The database was created for the Director of Information Technology to help manage, monitor, and reduce costs of the County's landline phones and wireless devices.

What year did you begin working for the County?
1973

What was your very first job for the County?

My first job was as a Draftsman in the Department Of Public Works in the Road Design Division.

How many different positions have you held?

I have held two positions: Draftsman and Analyst/Programmer.

Now, the position title of Draftsman is called Drafting Technician, and what used to be Analyst/Programmer is now Technology Support Specialist.

What are examples of specific differences in the County "then" versus "now"?

Back then, the County Administration Building was located at 21st Street and Main Street in the City of Richmond. There was one custodian, one security guard, and one part-time cafeteria/break-room director. Now these positions have been departmentalized. Back then, there was no dental or vision plan, and the credit union was run by two ladies in the Administration Building basement (no ATMs). Now, there are multiple HFCU locations. Back then, there were no cubicles and no individual phones. The County offices hardly ever closed back then.

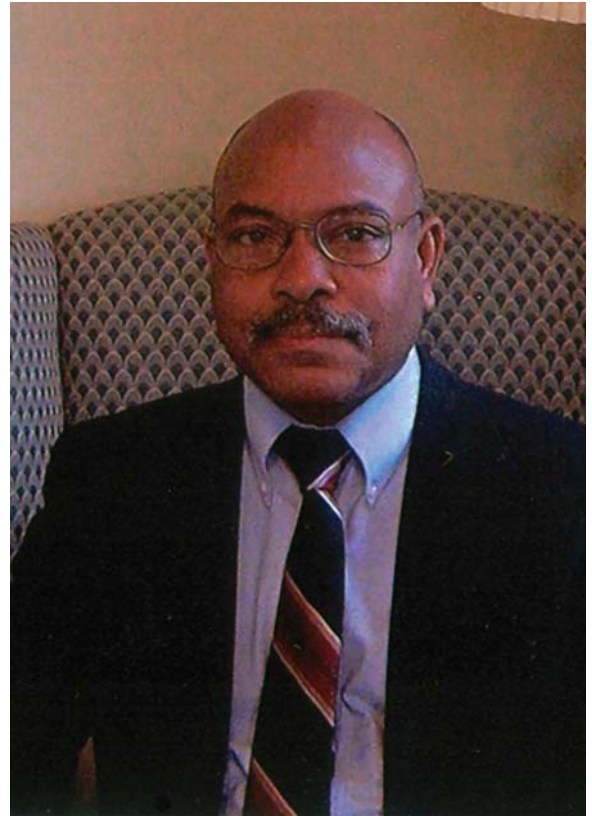
What are the most significant changes that you have observed and experienced during your tenure with the County?

Without a doubt, computer technology has played the most important role in changes within Henrico County. When I started with the County, we manually filled out payroll timecards. Office staff used typewriters and hand-held calculators to process data. With the advent of PCs and the Internet/Intranet, that way of doing tasks is now obsolete. PCs have replaced terminals and computer networks have replaced the old mainframe computers.

When you think about Henrico County "back then" versus "now," what do you miss most? What do you miss least?

I miss working downtown. The atmosphere, dining, and shopping were great.

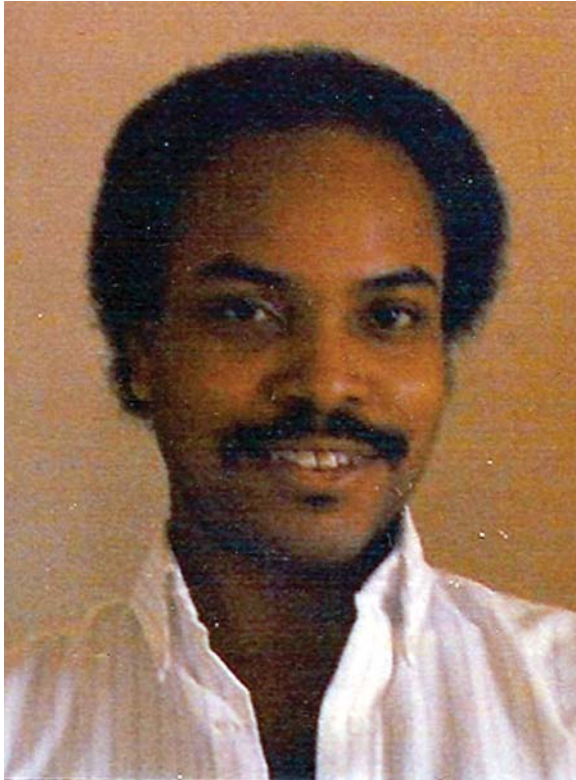
Parking at the administration building was not good. There was one lot in back that only had about twenty spaces, so you either had to park on an incline toward Church Hill or down by the river. There were no flood walls. Luckily, parking was free.



What advice would you pass on to those just beginning their careers at the County?

Try to find a job that you enjoy doing. If at all possible, get a college degree. Keep a positive attitude. Never give up. Never believe you can't tackle any task you are assigned. Never bring your problems at home to work. Never take your problems at work to your home. Try talking less and do more listening.

When you reflect on your tenure with the County, how you would respond to the statement, "If I had known then what I know now "?



I would have returned to college sooner. I did not graduate from college until 1995. I had changed majors from Civil Engineering to Computer Information Systems and could only attend college part-time. By then, I was 42.

What are the most valuable lessons that you have learned during your time with the County?

There are no guarantees in any job. Always factor in your benefits when evaluating your compensation. I had opportunities to leave the County to work in the private sector. The base salary was more than the County paid at that time, but the value of the County's health and retirement benefits caused me to turn those offers down.

Try to keep your skills current and take advantage of any training courses offered.

Fun Facts: What did you do for fun outside of work (then versus now)?

Then, I played guitar in a local band. Now, I enjoy listening to all types of music. I do a lot of cooking at home, both inside and outdoors, and I work on a lot of home improvement projects.

Gwendolyn S. Roney

Circuit Court Clerk's Office—42 years

Current Position: Deputy Clerk Supervisor

What are the duties of your current job?

I supervise the Land Records Section of the Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

What year did you begin working for the County?

November 24, 1969

What was your very first job for the Department?

I was responsible for the indexing of deeds that were recorded, but I was classified as an Accounting Clerk. This was due to the fact that fees had to be calculated and collected for the recording of various documents. The record room also had the only cash drawer for the Clerk's Office, and all the monies that came into the Clerk's Office for all cases, fines, costs, and license fees, were deposited in the record room cash drawer.

How many positions have you held?

Not many different positions—they have just evolved from my position as an Indexing Clerk. I gradually learned to record documents and assist with various duties of the record room. I helped the public look up documents and answered questions and concerns about properties.

About three to five years later, the Clerk, Margaret Baker, made my position a Deputy Clerk. Not everyone in the office was a deputy clerk. Most employees were clerk typist, secretaries, stenographers, or accounting clerks. There were only three staff in the office (the Clerk, her Chief Deputy and one other deputy who worked in the record room) that could go to court and sign documents, licenses, etc. When they all had to go to court, which was frequently, there was no one left in the office to sign marriage licenses, certified copies, marginal releases, and other items that only a clerk could sign. I was promoted to a Deputy Clerk in order to fill the void in the office and handle anything that needed to be signed or attested.

Shortly after moving to the new courthouse, all employees were made Deputy Clerks. In 1998, the present Clerk, Yvonne G. Smith, promoted me to Deputy Clerk Supervisor. Even though I have worked in the same office for all these years, I have performed all duties associated with the record room and still help work regularly at the recording counter. It stays interesting because you are always learning something new.

What are some specific differences in the County "then" vs. "now"?

1. Technology: I started indexing on a Royal manual typewriter. I used that for about six months to a year. We went to electric typewriters, and then in the mid- to late-1970s, we started indexing using early forms of computer programming. We hand-wrote all receipts up until about twenty years ago, when the current Clerk took office.

We now have the land records available online by subscription. We can and do communicate by e-mail. We are about to go paperless with our paychecks.





2. Rural to suburban development within the County: When I started working here, there was very little development past Willow Lawn and Libbie Avenue. Parham and Broad was a bus stop for Trailways bus going west. The growth of the County has been tremendous.

3. Employees: As far as I know, the bulk of County employees came from the eastern half of the County back then. After moving west, the employees are more diverse.

When you think about the County “then” vs. “now,” what do you miss most? What do you miss least?

The “family” was smaller, so everyone knew everyone—maybe not closely, but you knew that they worked for the County.

What advice would you pass on to those just beginning careers at the County?

Take advantage of benefits. One benefit in particular for me was deferred compensation. When you are younger, you don’t think of retirement. Deferred compensation is something I wish I had started from the beginning but didn’t, and I missed out on a few good years.

Chief Edwin Smith

Division of Fire—37 years

Current position: Fire Chief

What are the duties of your current job?

I serve as department head for organization of over 500 personnel. I am responsible for setting the direction and vision for providing emergency services for a community of over 308,000 citizens and visitors.

What year did you begin working for the County?

1974

What was your very first job for the County (and agency)?

Firefighter

How many different positions have you held?

Firefighter, Fire Inspector, Fire Lieutenant, Fire Captain, Deputy Fire Marshal (Captain), Battalion Chief, Division Chief, acting Assistant Chief, and now the Fire Chief.

What are examples of specific differences in the County “then” versus “now”?

One major difference is the growth and development that has occurred within the County. When I started working in Henrico County, Broad Street was not fully developed. The retail establishments along Broad Street basically ended at Glenside Drive. There were no major retail developments beyond Glenside Drive leading all the way into Goochland County. That stretch of area along Broad Street was remote. The West End, Wyndham, Short Pump, etc., were simply nonexistent.

What are the most significant changes that you have observed and experienced during your tenure with the County?

One of the most significant changes that I have observed is the lack of face-to-face interaction and communication among employees. Since everything today is completed through e-mail or other modes of communication, there is definitely a decreased amount of face-to-face communication.

How has technology changed the way you perform your job duties?

When I started my career in the Fire Department, fire reports were completed using IBM cards. Today, fire reports are completed by computer. Technology has significantly changed how we do business. We now have the convenience of drop down boxes, automatic fill-ins, etc. Automation has had a huge influence on not only the emergency side of our job, but also the preparation side. Through technology, we are now able to predict different outcomes in order to prepare for emergency situations. For example, with hurricanes we can utilize technology to predict how a hurricane might affect Henrico County and then plan accordingly.

When you think about the County “then” versus “now,” what do you miss most? What do you miss least?

One thing that I miss about Henrico County “back then” was the suburban County. Back then, Henrico was traditionally identified as a suburban County. Now, with growth and subsequent expansion, we have become more of an urban County with new challenges, such as congestion. I miss the days when we did not have the enormous traffic congestion. I also miss the ease of moving around the County more freely.



Back then, Henrico County also encouraged departmental basketball, softball, and co-ed volleyball teams. It was competitive, fun, and a great opportunity to meet staff from different departments within the County. Each department had different themes, and for departments with a majority of male staff, our wives also participated on the sports teams. I miss that interaction and camaraderie.

One thing that I miss the least is filling out a piece of paper requiring numerous signatures to take a day of leave. I don't miss the old leave slips or the multiple layers of approval needed for taking off a day of work.

What advice would you pass on to those just beginning their careers at the County?

There is a lot to be said for looking out for each other. It is essential to treat others the right way. I would encourage others to stay focused and determined. Good things do come to those who wait.



When you reflect on your tenure with the County, how you would respond to the statement, "If I had known then what I know now...?"

If you are seeking advancement, stay ahead of the curve. Don't become complacent in your field. Know as much about your career as possible and all that it encompasses so you will be better prepared when the time comes for advancement or the opportunity to advance.

What are the most valuable lessons you have learned during your time with the County?

Some of my most valuable lessons learned relate to my experiences in working with people. People are important. You never know who you may need in the future. Therefore, it is very important to treat others as you would want to be treated.

Fun Facts: What did you do for fun outside of work (then versus now)?

Back then I enjoyed playing basketball and softball for fun. However, now I play golf and avoid all contact sports.

Charles E. Woodson

Department of Recreation & Parks—37 years

Current Position: Laborer

What are the duties of your current job?

I am responsible for cutting grass and providing maintenance for County parks, schools, and ball fields; weed-eating, mulching, checking restrooms, and making certain that everything is clean.

What year did you begin working for the County?

1974

What was your very first job at Henrico County?

My first job was as a Laborer for the Public Utilities Sanitation Division. I was responsible for picking up leaves, bunker waste, and trash.

How many positions have you held?

I have always worked as a laborer, but I worked in different departments for the County—first the Sanitation Division and then Recreation & Parks.

What are some specific differences in the County “then” vs. “now”?

Back then, there weren't a lot of parks in the County. Cheswick, Meadow Farms, and Three Lakes Park were all open back then, but many of the other parks were not. Now the County has grown a lot, taken on many new developments, and added a lot more parks. Back then, there were three districts—the east end, west end, and central district. Now there is just the east end and west end.

What are the most significant changes that you have observed during your time?

When the districts were divided there were more supervisor positions added to cover the two districts. The workload also increased as the County grew. We have much better equipment now, such as tractors and backhoes, which make the job much easier.

How has technology changed the way you perform your job?

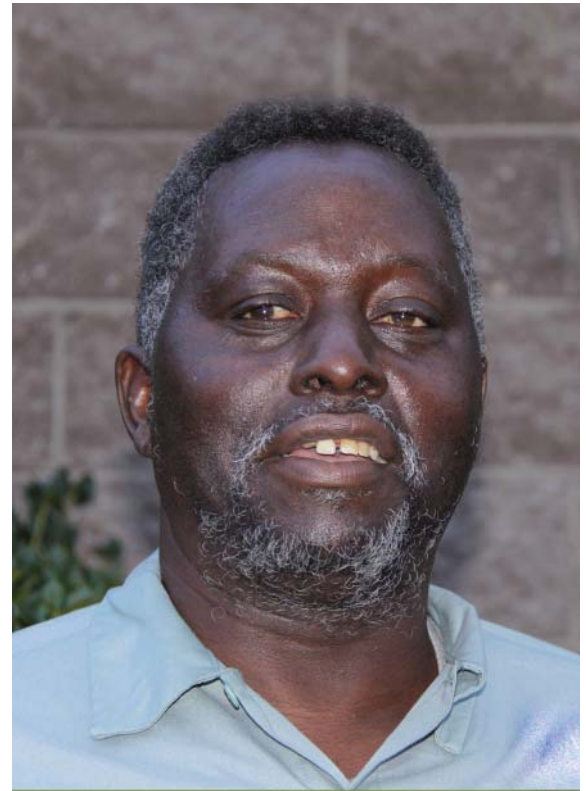
Back then, I never had to use the computer in my job. Now, we have to complete timesheets on the computer. I prefer the old way of filling out my time and leave on paper.

When you think about the County “then” vs. “now”, what do you miss most? What do you miss least?

I miss having the three districts. When we had three districts to cover, there were three smaller groups covering three sections of the County. Now with only two districts there is a larger area of the County for two groups to cover. Now we can't go any further than certain boundaries. I miss not being able to work in areas outside of my district.

What advice would you pass on to those just beginning careers at the County?

When starting a new job, be willing to give the job a chance. It might not be easy, but hang in there. Keep a cool head. Maintain a good personality. If there is something that you don't like, walk away if needed, but don't lose your control and risk your job. You don't have to like everything, and you can keep some things



to yourself. Keep a smile on your face. You don't have to show feelings of anger.

When you reflect on your time with the County, how would you respond to the statement, "If I had known then what I know now..."?

I would have taken more computer classes and taken advantage of more training classes offered by the County.

What are the most valuable lessons that you have learned during your time with the County?

Some of the lessons that I have learned are obey your supervisors and do what you are told to do. When in public, be professional and answer questions the best way possible. Be kind to others and offer information as needed.

Fun Facts: What did you do for fun outside of work (then vs. now)?

Back then, I used to go fishing and hang out with the guys playing basketball, football, and horseshoe. Now, I have more responsibilities at home and spend time outside doing work on my house. I also enjoy helping people in my neighborhood. Sometimes I am just too tired to do anything.