

HORIS WARD LOOKS AT POLITICS AND DEKALB, BUT HIS PLANS TO STAY OUT OF FIGHT REMAIN

12-19-77 By ED LABORWITZ

Horis Ward has never been the kind of man who plays games with words.

He hasn't changed a bit.

"Miss it? Sure, I miss it, and I still feel like I could do a lot for DeKalb County. That would be the only reason I would think about getting back into politics," says the former DeKalb Commissioner, who dropped out after his unsuccessful attempt to become the chairman of the County Commission.

With the announcement last week that Manuel Maloof would not seek re-election to his at-large post, the question of a Horis Ward return is posed.

"I don't have any plans," says Ward. "I'm still paying off my financial obligations from the last campaign...no, the Maloof announcement didn't change my plans."

HORIS WARD, served on the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners for six years, and, despite his absence, today, there is speculation that his name might appear on a ballot, either for the Maloof seat, or for the chairman's seat, which will be up for grabs again in 1980.

"My family and my employees would like me to stay out of politics for the rest of my time," Ward says. "Mostly, it's for reasons of my health, the worry and the turmoil involved. The pressures put on you to do something, or not to do something, gets real great, and those pleasures can force you to vote against your convictions.

"I've never voted for something I didn't believe in, and I don't want to get into that, now. This is the sort of thing we have in all forms of government...a lot of professional politicians whose only concern is the next election."



HORIS WARD

Ward adds, "We need people who are concerned about reducing the size of government. Somewhere, in some Biblical phrase, is the thought that any nation that is overtaxed will fall. I believe we are on the threshold of this, both locally and nationally.

"We have gotten so big that the people in government are out of proportion to the people being governed. What it amounts to is that the amount of money and power is being switched from the hands of the taxpayer to the hands of the people who are being paid with that tax money.

"It's out of kilter."

FOR YEARS, there were, at least, four main interests in Horis Ward's life—politics, his family, his business and the Golden Barios, not necessarily in that order.

He is out of politics, but he keeps in touch, making the point that he has "heard a lot about spending and little about saving."

His funeral chapel on Candler Road still bears his name and influence, and his wife, Sarah, commands a good portion of his movements.

And, the Golden Barios, the love for the sound, is an outlet for Ward and his friends to share job and friendship.

There are other things for Horis Ward these days, along with his feeling that politics presents "pressure and punishment for some good people, who are wary of being crucified, wary of trying to defend against a charge for the rest of their lives." He is now president of his Sunday School class, and he is more involved in his church work than ever before.

For Horis Ward, there is plenty to keep him busy.

"I'm doing considerable more fishing," he says. "Just say that I'm enjoying living."

The DeKalb News-Forum *W.A.R.V., Horis*
**Rainbow Park AARP Installs
Officers At Holiday Party**

By DOLORES IRVIN

The Rainbow Park Chapter #3671 of the American Association of Retired Persons held its Christmas luncheon at the Rainbow Park Baptist Church.

Officers were installed and Horis Ward and his Banjo Band entertained.

The officers, installed by assistant state AARP director, Mrs. Hazel Hammond, are: President, Harold Wells; vice president, Retha Worley; recording secretary, Evelyn Peck; assistant recording secretary, Lee Bell Dalton; corresponding secretary, Louise Goodwin; treasurer, Meredith Hall; assistant treasurer, John Hall, and nominating committee chairman, Estile Shimp.

The chapter donated \$100 to the DeKalb Reward Department, to help apprehend the person who murdered one of its members, James King, as he left his dry cleaning business in south DeKalb. It also gave \$100 to Atlanta Hospitality House, and contributed to Christian City in College Park, in the name of the Horis Ward Banjo Band.

Horis Ward, who owns funeral homes in Decatur and Stone Mountain, is also a teacher of the Harvester Sunday School Class at Mt. Carmel Christian Church.

Members of the band are Putnam Head, Bob Hagee, Jim Hany, Bill Balcum, Frank Geiger, Joe Kelly, and Rocky Ball.

They do not charge a fee for performing, but ask that contributions be given to Christian City, home for the elderly, or the Handicapped Home on Glenwood.



**HORIS WARD AND
BAND PERFORM**

Horis Ward and his popular banjo band provided entertainment at the Christmas luncheon of Rainbow Park Chapter, AARP.

1-4-89

DeKalb News/Sun 3-20-91
Mortician, Musician Horis Ward

To Star at 'I Remember' Hour

Horis Ward, long time South DeKalb businessman, former DeKalb County commissioner, gospel singer and banjo player, will be the "I Remember Hour" speaker for the DeKalb Historical Society Thursday, March 28. The event will be held in the Old Courthouse on the Square in Decatur at 4 p.m. The public is invited.

"Although I've lived and worked a long, long time in South DeKalb I was born just a mile across the line in Henry County and raised on a farm," he said. "I can remember as just a little kid, going with my father in a wagon peddling stovewood, muscadines, vegetables, watermelon or anything we had. We'd get up at 4 a.m. and go through the East Atlanta and Fulton Bag area. We heated a flint rock in the fireplace and wrapped it in a tow sack to carry in the wagon for warmth.

"My father was killed when I was in the seventh grade at Mt. Zion Elementary School. As I was the only boy still at home I became the man in the family and had to quit school and go to work. I tell people that I have an MP (mule plowing) degree as the first money I made was plowing for 75¢ per day. My three sisters caned chairs for 8¢ a chair."

Best known for his funeral home of the same name, Mr. Ward realized a life long ambition when he established the Horis Ward Funeral Home on Candler Road in 1958. "My sisters and I were all musical and sang at all the Mt. Zion Methodist Church functions as children," he said. "This included every funeral held there. I decided as just a kid that I wanted to be a funeral director when I grew up."

His first step in that direction was to establish a cemetery on the family farm adjoining the church burial ground where his ancestors lie. For some 20 years he worked selling insurance in

South DeKalb thus getting to know all the early residents there.



Ward

"We lived on Morgan Place for 22 years," he said, "with our front porch in the city of Atlanta and the back porch in the county. That made life a bit complicated, but that's where we raised our family and got established in DeKalb."

Mr. Ward was a member of the DeKalb County Commission for five years during the '70s and served on the county Merit Council for another six years. As a commissioner he was instrumental in establishing an emergency medical system for the county. "Before that," he recalled, "the two funeral homes, mine and Turners - had to furnish ambulances for all emergencies in the county. DeKalb was growing so fast that this became impossible."

The Candler-Glenwood Shopping Center, where he first located, was the first suburban mall to be built in DeKalb. Mr. Ward founded the Glenwood Hills Masonic Lodge there in 1951 and was active with the Glenwood Hills Business Association and the South DeKalb Kiwanis Club for many years. He has been active with the White Oak Hills Baptist and Mount Carmel Christian churches.

He and his wife, the former Sarah DeBardelaben, now live across the line in Gwinnett near Snellville. He has established a second funeral home in the Stone Mountain area. All of their children attended Baylor University and now there is another generation there.

Horis Alec Jr. is an ordained minister and with his brother, Richard, is in the family business. The daughter, Diane Gatewood, now lives in Mississippi. There are eight grandchildren.

Mr. Ward's music has lately centered on his banjo band that specializes in music of the "Roaring 20s" and "Depression 30s." They play for churches, retirement homes and other groups.

The "I Remember Hour" is the oral history program of the DeKalb Historical Society with Chandler Bridges as chairperson. The speakers are video-taped and added to the archives of first person accounts of DeKalb history.

A social hour will follow the program with Belva Cleveland and Ruby Zumbrook as hostesses. Phone 373-1088 for additional information.

Subject File: Biographical & Genealogical - WARD, Horis