

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: C14H-07-0036

HLC DATE: November 17, 2008

PC DATE: December 9, 2008

APPLICANT: Historic Landmark Commission

HISTORIC NAME: Volma and Warneta Overton, Sr. House

WATERSHED: Tannehill Creek

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE: 1403 Springdale Road

ZONING FROM: SF-3-NP

TO: SF-3-H-NP

SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from Single Family Residence-Neighborhood Plan (SF-3-NP) combining district to Single Family Residence-Historic Landmark-Neighborhood Plan (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: Recommended the proposed zoning change from Single Family Residence-Neighborhood Plan (SF-3-NP) combining district to Single Family Residence-Historic Landmark-Neighborhood Plan (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning Vote: 6-0.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: Recommended the proposed zoning change from Single Family Residence-Neighborhood Plan (SF-3-NP) combining district to Single Family Residence-Historic Landmark-Neighborhood Plan (SF-3-H-NP) combining district zoning Vote: 8-0.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:

This rezoning will mark the place where an ordinary man who made extraordinary efforts for social justice lived and cultivated his life's work. Volma R. Overton, Sr. was the Director of the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Austin for 24 years. He was also a deacon of the First Baptist Church in Austin, President of the National Postal Workers Association, and the Post Master for Cedar Creek. The NAACP Federal Credit Union, which later merged with the Greater Texas Federal Credit Union, was started and grew under his leadership. A "read-in" demonstration conducted at City Hall in 1964 resulted in the establishment of a Human Rights Commission with Volma R. Overton, Sr. as a charter member. In 1969, he filed the decisive case in his daughter's name against the Austin Independent School District to follow through on the various mandates to desegregate schools. The U.S. Justice Department and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) joined in this effort to insure a quality education for all Austin children, which was decided in his daughter's favor after a ten year legal battle. His actions took personal sacrifice, bravery and a vision for the future.

CITY COUNCIL DATE: December 18, 2008

ACTION:

ORDINANCE READINGS: 1ST 2ND 3RD

ORDINANCE NUMBER:

CASE MANAGER: Susan Villarreal

PHONE: 974-3524

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION:

METSA Neighborhood Association,
East Martin Luther King, Jr. Neighborhood Association

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

Architecture:

One-story wing-and-gable plan frame ranch house with a side-gabled second story addition to the rear; metal roof; partial-width inset porch with ornamental metal railings.

Historical Associations and:

The first Overton in Travis County came to Texas from Tennessee in a wagon. Her name was Emmaline (Emily), a former slave who had five boys and three girls with Col. John Overton Jr., the second owner of Travellers Rest, a plantation just south of Nashville, Tennessee. <http://www.travellersrestplantation.org/abouttr.html>. Travellers Rest was built in 1799, and continues to function as a historic site and house museum, and in fact hosted a reunion of the African-American descendants of the Overton family at the museum in the summer of 1991. The Overton family was very well connected in Tennessee; John Overton, Sr., along with Jesse Winchester, was one of the founders and financiers of Memphis. In 1873, Emily's family bought land in eastern Travis County and started a relatively prosperous life for an African-American family of the time.

Volma Robert Overton, a great-grandson of Emmaline, was born into this family in September, 1924 in Maha, southeast of Austin. His parents were Nicholas and Eliza Overton. As he grew older, he came into the city to stay with relatives during the week in order to get an education, first at Kealing Junior High and later, Anderson High School, from which he graduated in 1942. (Prior to desegregation, all African-American children had to travel to these two schools to go to school, regardless of where they lived).

Drafted into the Marines in 1942, he was assigned to the Marines' first African-American combat unit, operating in the Pacific. Following his discharge, he faced discrimination at home, and became active in the struggle for African-American civil rights. Eight years after Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama bus, Volma Overton was expected to give up his bus seat for a white man. Rev. Roger Paynter, pastor of First Baptist Church, reported at Overton's funeral that rather than stand after being asked to give up his seat, Volma Overton defiantly got off the bus. The affront to his dignity did not curb his desire to serve his country; however, as he joined the Army Reserves served for another 28 years, retiring with honors with the rank of lieutenant colonel in 1977.

He met Warneta Hill in February of 1946 at Huston Tillotson College and married her two months later. From 1947 to 1950, he attended Huston-Tillotson, and graduated with a degree in chemistry, while also working as a clerk at Goodfriends Department Store at 9th and Congress. Upon his employment with the Post Office in 1952, he bought this house on Springdale Road, which was in the new subdivision of Cedar Valley Addition.

Volma Overton was inspired to action by the speeches and actions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the 1950s, and began to get involved with the local movement for civil rights. His willingness to speak out had consequences for his family as well as himself. Sharlet Overton recalls the hate mail and phone calls the family received, such as the picture from J. Edgar Hoover of her father sitting two people down from Martin Luther King, Jr. with the message, "you met with this man and this man is a communist."

They would receive phone calls saying "We're blowing up your house tonight." She said she could not recall any physical violence, and many times after a threat of some kind, another person or group would call her father and report who was responsible for the action. They would be under FBI surveillance all the time, and reporters were coming by, asking questions, particularly when actions were taking place.

Volma Overton started at the NAACP in Austin as a volunteer, with no office staff. When the Rev. J.L. Dawson, pastor of David Chapel Baptist Church, resigned in 1962, Overton was convinced to accept the job of President by Ashbury Walker, a long-time civil rights worker. The house on Springdale Road was the office for the NAACP for the next four years, until a space became available at 1704 East 12th Street. Mr. Overton would typically work from 3:00 am to 11:30 am at the Central Post Office on 9th Street, then come home and sleep a few hours before heading to the NAACP offices to work until the evening. Some of the first actions organized by Mr. Overton were to hold "sit-ins" at downtown stores and restaurants in order to desegregate these public places such as Woolworth's and Piccadilly Cafeteria.

In 1963, Mr. Overton and a group of NAACP youth went to Bastrop State Park, and swam in the pool there, effectively integrating the facility. He was also instrumental in integrating Lions Golf Course, where he states he and other African-American men used to play golf but initially had to use a maintenance shed rather than the clubhouse.

"Many people in our community thought Brown v. Board of Education (1954) was the greatest thing since the Emancipation Proclamation," said Volma Overton, but he worked to integrate Austin's schools, which were based on decades-old housing patterns. Most African-Americans in Austin at that time lived in East Austin, which resulted in segregated schools based upon neighborhood identity. By the end of the 1950s, only 40 African-American students attended white schools, demonstrating the weakness of the Brown decision to affect de facto segregation.

The Johnson administration's efforts with the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act and the Fair Housing Act in the early 1960s helped move the nation further towards equal educational opportunities. When passive adherence to court decisions banning segregation did not result in integrated and equal schools, Volma Overton filed a lawsuit in his youngest daughter's name to end the inequities in Austin's education. The U.S. Justice Department and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund joined the lawsuit a year later. It was beneficial his youngest daughter was named, as the lawsuit took almost 10 years to decide, with Overton winning the battle. In 1980, students were bussed to balance the racial demographics in schools. Within 3 years, Austin gained a favorable rating with the feds and the court order initiating the bussing was ended.

Florence Overton remembers that Warneta Overton also had her own streak of activism. When Florence needed braces, Warneta Overton was told she would have to take her daughter to San Antonio because there were no African-American orthodontists in Austin and she could not go to a white orthodontist's office. Warneta was determined that she would not have to take Florence all the way to San Antonio, and she found an orthodontist in Austin who treated her daughter after hours. Gradually, Florence said, the appointments got closer and closer to normal business hours, until finally, she was seeing the doctor in daylight!

In April, 1964, Volma Overton was one of several African-American leaders who began a "read-in" at the Austin City Council meeting to protest the lack of a body to investigate civil rights complaints. Overton spent much time before the School Board, the City Council, and other groups calling for resolution of various allegations. He read portions of "Black Like Me" while other NAACP members picketed outside the Council Chambers. He was successful in his efforts: the City did set up a Human Relations Commission to hear and respond to civil rights complaints, with Volma Overton as a charter member.

Overton also worked on a regional and national level with the NAACP. In 1965, he marched alongside Dr. King in the march from Selma to Montgomery, he successfully protested the closing of the MHMR center on Rosewood Avenue in 1975, and joined in the Solidarity March on Washington in September, 1981.

However, civil rights activism was not Volma Overton's only passion. He loved golfing and ballroom dancing, and organized an annual golf tournament to fund scholarships named for his mentor, Urisa Violette Christian. He became a deacon at the First Baptist Church in 1967, and served until his death. When he died, the church had a white wreath placed where he usually stood at the church door, with a simple ribbon reading "Volma."

Community Value:

The Overton house became a community center for African-Americans in Austin. Volma and Warneta's oldest daughter, Florence, says Volma was a cub scout and boy scout leader, so all the kids in the neighborhood knew where Florence, her sister Sharlet, and Volma Jr. lived. Her parents were always active in the PTA and the church as well. Florence, Volma Jr., and Sharlet, all remember Booker Bonner, Jake Pickle, Joe Moore, Ralph Yarborough, Browning Ware, Lloyd Doggett and Wilhelmina Delco as a few of the political leaders who came to the house to talk to their dad and to eat. Warneta Overton was well-known for her cooking, her hospitality, and graciousness in serving expected as well as unexpected guests to the house.

Florence Overton talks about the many meetings that occurred at the house on Springdale Road, some formal, but most informal, when people would just gather and talk about what they could do to further the civil rights cause. At other times, the house would be a gathering place for people to go to a picketing site or a sit-in. She also reports there was a standing invitation to family members visiting Austin and any relatives from out of town would always find Volma and Warneta welcoming in their home.

Until his death, the house on Springdale Road continued to be a beacon to others for help in their struggle for justice. People would come over to ask Volma Overton's opinions on how to deal with particular issues or to ask his help in righting some injustice. His wife kept correspondence people wrote as well, asking for his wisdom in strategy and counsel in overcoming prejudice.

In Conclusion:

For all of his efforts on behalf of others and the community as a whole, Volma Overton received many awards and accolades in his lifetime. These included the Arthur B. DeWitty Award for his work in human rights in 1967, and the LBJ Award for Leadership in Civil Rights bestowed by the LBJ School of Public Affairs and the LBJ Library and Museum in 2004. To honor those who follow in his footsteps, the Volma Overton Award was established by the Austin NAACP.

He died on October 31, 2005 at the age of 81. Volma R. Overton, Sr. and his wife, Warneta Hill Overton, were buried with military honors at the Texas State Cemetery, two of only four African Americans to be buried in the State's most honored ground.

PARCEL NO.: 0211200310

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Lot 4 Block 4 Cedar Valley

ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT: \$1,958

APPRAISED VALUE: \$132,522

PRESENT USE: Single-Family

CONDITION: Good

PRESENT OWNER: Volma Overton Jr., executor of the estate of Warneta Overton

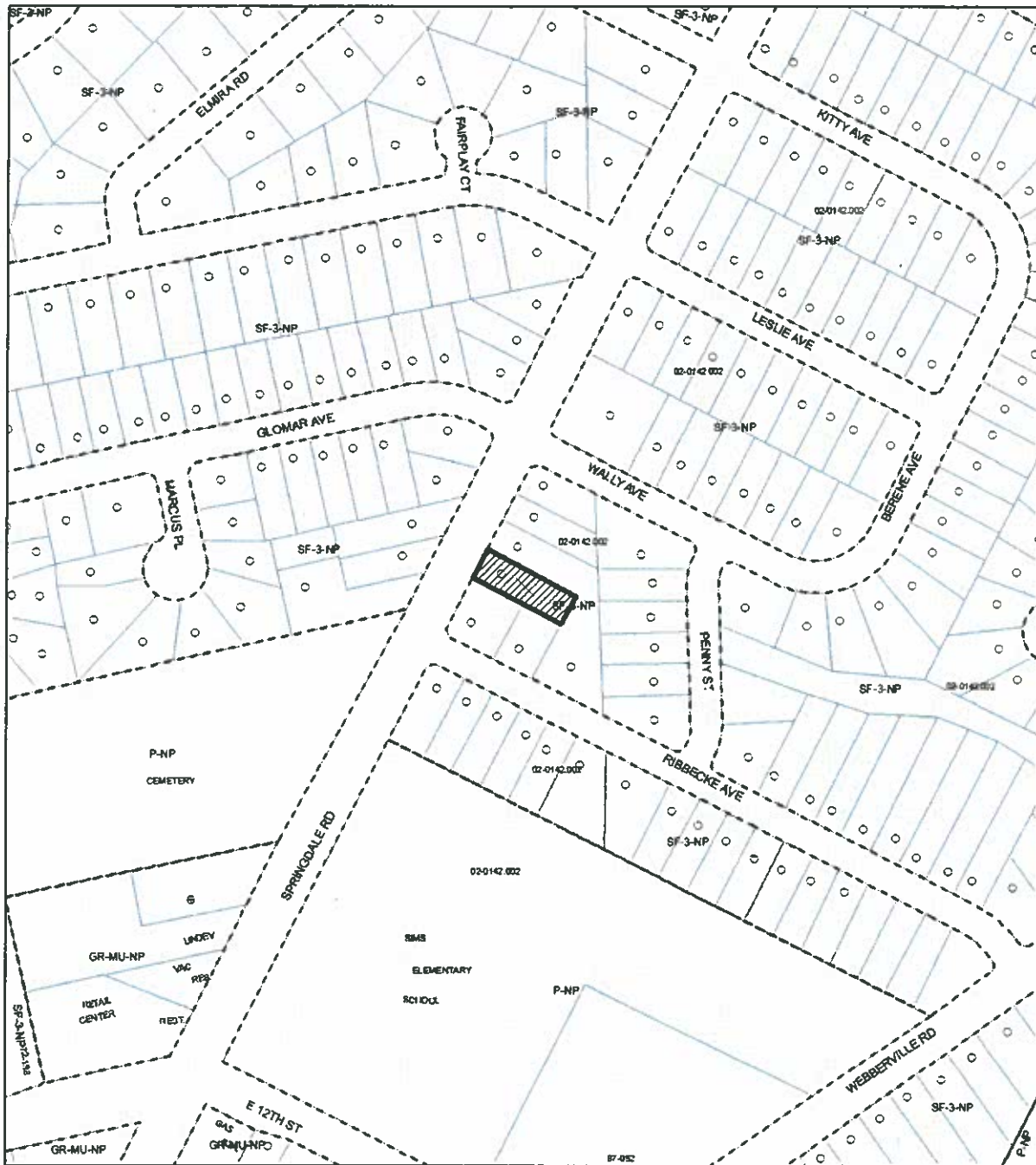
DATE BUILT: ca. 1952

ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS: Rear addition (1962); second-story addition (1979)

ORIGINAL OWNER(S): Volma and Warneta Overton

OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS: None

LOCATION MAP



1" = 200'

SUBJECT TRACT

ZONING BOUNDARY

PENDING CASE

OPERATOR: S. MEEKS

HISTORIC ZONING

ZONING CASE#: C14H-2008-0036
ADDRESS: 1403 SPRINGDALE RD
SUBJECT AREA: 0.000 ACRES
GRID: M23
MANAGER: S. SADOWSKY



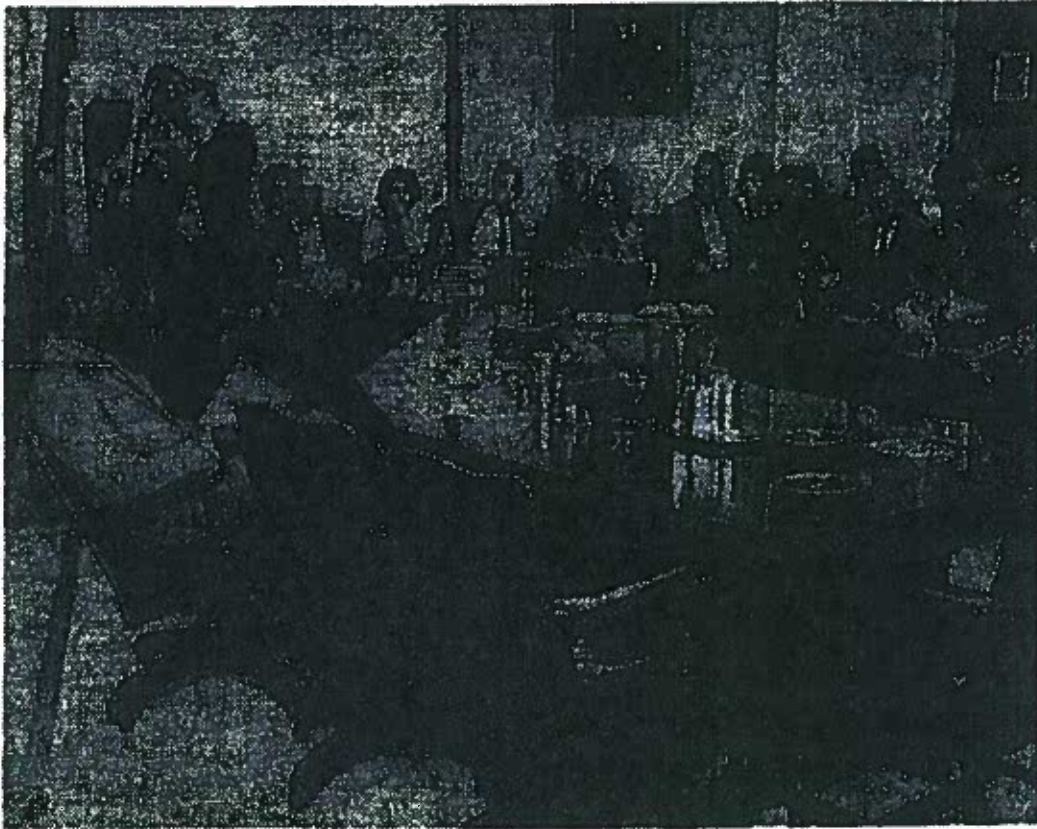
This map has been produced by G.I.S. Services for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.



Volma and Warneta Overton House
1403 Springdale Road
ca. 1952



Negro Cleric Austin Is 'Mayor'; Rights Filibuster Ends



The Rev. Wesley Sims, left, occupying the Mayor's chair yesterday in the Texas capital

AUSTIN, Tex., April 9 (AP)—Demonstrators demanding a strict antidiscrimination ordinance temporarily halted their week-long "speak-in" today. A Negro minister declared himself the acting Mayor of Austin.

When the City Council walked out on the demonstrators earlier today the Rev. Wesley Sims took over the Mayor's chair. A demonstration spokesman said he did this so the "city will not be void of city government."

Policemen trained for riot duty massed at City Hall but there was no violence. Some shouting occurred in the council chamber and hallways when the council walked out.

"Forgive this sinful city,"

Mr. Sims, minister of Bethany Christian Church, prayed in ending the filibuster.

Volma Overton, chairman of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said the demonstration would be recessed until the city council met again.

The demonstration began a week ago when whites and Negroes demanded a strict ordinance specifying heavy

fines and jail sentences for racial discrimination.

Many Austin facilities have been integrated for years. Austin was one of the first cities in Texas to integrate its schools voluntarily.

A series of speakers carried on the filibuster. Mr. Sims spoke all day Tuesday. The council session was recessed then until today when Mr. Sims was given the floor again.

The New York Times

Published: April 10, 1964

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Austin Branch NAACP
1704 East 12th Street
Austin, Texas 78702
March 9, 1976

Mrs. Frank McBee, Jr.
705 San Antonio
Austin, Texas

Dear Mrs. McBee:

The Appreciation Banquet sponsored by the Citizens of Austin held on February 13 honoring Volma Overton, President of the Austin Branch of NAACP for 14 years, was an overwhelming success. It was highly significant to observe that many of the people who came to pay tribute to Volma were the people who had struggled with him and the Organization during the early 1960's in OPENING DOORS of opportunity to Black people who had been denied privileges based solely on race.

As you are aware, OPENING DOORS is the title of the NAACP Film Documentary that we are producing as our Gift to the Nation to commemorate our Bicentennial. It describes achievements of great Americans, Black and White, who are responsible for promoting legislation and making changes that bring all of us closer to the attainment of rights and liberties described in the Constitution of the United States of America. The film focuses on challenges of the Texas and Austin Branches of the NAACP and all our struggles for freedom and human dignity.

You have demonstrated your support for the freedom and human dignity of all Americans. Therefore, we are inviting you to serve as a member of our Steering Committee to assist in fund raising and other matters which will make this film a noteworthy production nationally as well as locally. As a member of this Committee, we are asking permission to use your name in printed matter, and for a substantial contribution. This is a tax-deductible donation. The enclosed card and envelope are provided for your convenience in responding to our invitation. Please return the card before March 26, 1976.

Should you have questions, please call me after 5:00 p.m. at 926-1424, or Volma Overton after 3:00 p.m. at 476-6230.

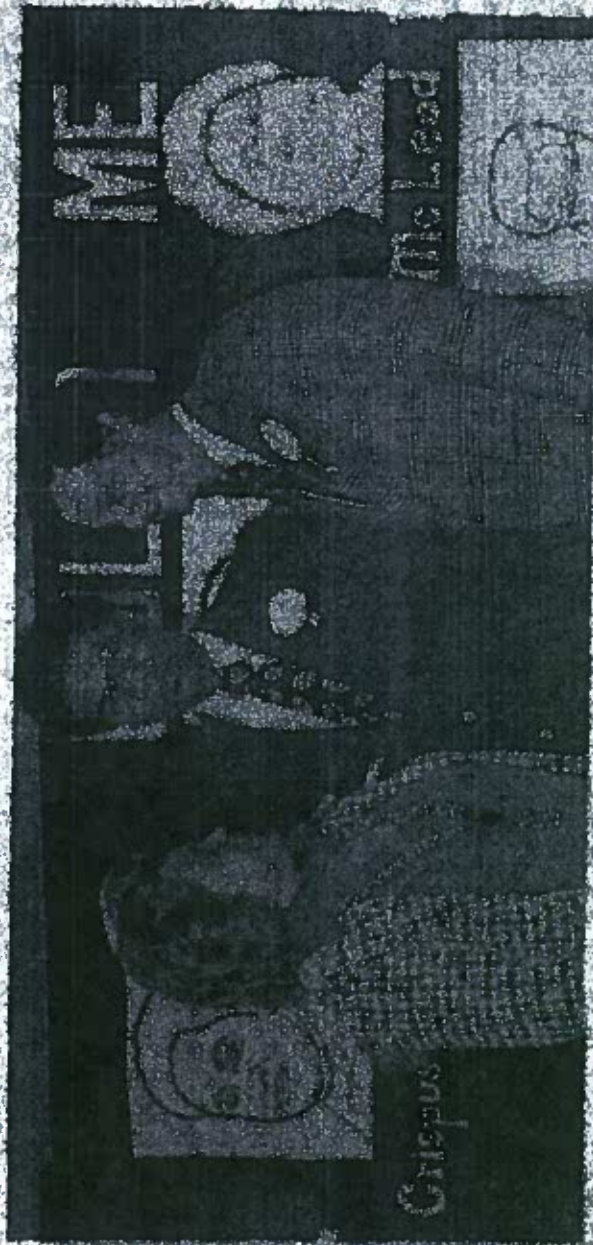
Sincerely,

Bertha
Bertha E. Means
Project Director

Enclosures - 2

Austin History Center

AF-Bio:
Overton, Volma



SCHOOL TRUSTEES CAROLE KETTON McCLELLAN AND WILL DAVIS AT CAMPBELL
... Volma Overton was honored during Black History Week

Austin History Center -- AF-Bio - Overton, Volma

VOLMA R. OVERTON

Overton assumed leadership of the Austin Branch NAACP in 1962 after the resignation of Rev. J.L. Dawson, then pastor of David Chapel Baptist Church. Never considering himself a leader, Overton reluctantly accepted the job in 1962 after some gentle persuasion from a local branch emeritus, Ashbury Walker. Walker, a long time civil rights worker convinced Overton that the NAACP could grow under his guidance. HE WAS RIGHT

For the first four years Overton operated the office out of his home. In 1967 the office at Mt Carmel Lodge Building, 1704 East 12th Street was rented to be used for a voter registration drive ended up being used for the NAACP office.

For the first 14 years, a typical Overton day began at 2:30 a.m. when he arose and drove to the Central Post Office which was then on 9th Street, where he worked as a mail clerk from 3:00 to 11:30 a.m.. He was back at his East Austin home by noon; slept until mid afternoon. Then, it's to the NAACP Office where ^{he} worked into the evening.

In 1978, Overton was promoted to Postmaster. His assignment Cedar Creek Post Office, Cedar Creek, Texas. At this time he worked during the day, but he kept his same daily hours at the NAACP Office during the evenings.

After 35 years of Federal Service, 33 of ^{them} ~~them~~ spent with the Postal Service, Overton retired, October 1, 1985.

During his 20 years as president of the Austin Branch NAACP, Overton spent many hours investigating civil right complaints appearing before the School Board, City Council, and before other groups in an effort to eliminate civil rights violations.

In 1963, Overton participated in the march on Washington for job opportunities.

April 2, 1964
~~In August, 1963~~, Overton led a group of NAACP members to city hall where he staged a 'READ-IN' demonstration in support of a civil rights ordinance. While ten members rallied and picketed outside, president Overton was on the inside reading to the council from a book BLACK LIKE ME. This marked the beginning of NAACP Demonstrations in Austin. This demonstration was an effort to get the city to set up a Human Relations Commission.

In September, 1981, Overton participated in the SOLIDARITY MARCH IN WASHINGTON to protest President Reagan's budget cuts and demands for more jobs.

During his 20 years as president, Overton worked for the National in various capacities and attended all state and national meetings. He still attends these meetings.

Along with taking care of the NAACP business, Overton took care of the evening business of the NAACP FEDERAL CREDIT UNION. This was possible because until 1990, the NAACP shared the office with the NAACP FEDERAL CREDIT UNION.

In 1985⁸⁵ Overton decided to attend SOUTHWEST CREDIT UNION NATIONAL ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT SCHOOL in order to give the credit union guidance and direction for growth. This was made possible through a partial scholarship from the Credit Union and various other scholarships. In July, 1988 Overton graduated from SOUTHWEST CREDIT UNION NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, of the University of Houston, Houston, Texas.

The NAACP FEDERAL CREDIT UNION has grown from its humble beginning in 1969 to assets of 225 thousand dollars. Overton has served as secretary/treasurer since 1975.

Overton's wife, Warneta, is to be commended for being so supportive of her husband's work. The Overtons are the proud parents of four children.

From this historical background, one can see why we honor these outstanding men with an Awards Banquet.

Overton: retiring activist thrilled with final city victory

By [illegible] Staff Writer

Overton, 64, said he was "thrilled" with the city's decision to allow him to remain in his job as executive director of the city's public works department. He said he was "thrilled" because he had been in the city for 30 years and had been through many changes. He said he was "thrilled" because he had been able to see the city through its darkest days and emerge as a stronger, more unified community. He said he was "thrilled" because he had been able to see the city through its darkest days and emerge as a stronger, more unified community.

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Overton, executive director of the city's public works department, is shown in a photo.

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5/16/76

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[illegible]

and the American people, says Legal Defense Fund (LDF) attorney Joseph R. Sullivan in the 400-page book. LDF attorneys were denied in the six-year-old civil action.

Doel's name, however, is the one that appears on the court documents. The latter individual, possibly a former co-defendant, directed the group to "temporarily" leave the state of Illinois.

[illegible]

4

Crossing color line

From back-of-buses to school buses, Overton breaks Austin barriers

By RONALD POWELL

Soft-spoken Volma Overton, president of the Austin NAACP chapter for 14 years, has seen the old and new Austin.

The old Austin was divided strictly along black and white lines, he says. The impact of being black or white was as dramatic as the contrast between those spectral lines.

Overton, 55, served as a physical line of demarcation, a kind of line separating the American Dreamers from a people haunted by a nightmarish American existence.

In 1950, old Austin, black police officers could arrest only blacks. Blacks sat in the back of the bus and were not allowed to drive public transportation vehicles. Blacks could not run for public office. Teachers and restaurant owners catered to white clientele only.

But that was in old Austin. The new Austin, Overton says, began deep part, reminders of those earlier years, but the face has changed.

For better or worse, Overton and the NAACP have been instrumental in changing the new Austin.

Overton assumed leadership of the NAACP after the resignation of Rev. J.L. Dawson, then pastor of David Chapel Baptist Church. Never considering himself a leader, Overton reluctantly accepted the job in 1953 after some gentle persuasion from local branch president emeritus Aubrey Walker. Walker, a long-time civil rights worker, convinced Overton that the NAACP could grow under his guidance. He was right.

"For the first four years of my presidency, we operated out of my home," Overton revealed. "We rented this office in 1957 to run a voter registration drive and ended up staying."

The office is in the Mt. Carmel Lodge Building, 704 E. 12th St. In an area known to white blues here as the "East Side," once the hub of black Austin activity when the 1930s gave the theater changed 15 cents and Kealing Junior High School and various small clubs and businesses were thriving.

THE SMALL office is not plain. It is a cubicle crisscrossed with the cubicle, bookshelves and a huge desk that occupies most of the available space.

Overton, 55, with salt-and-pepper hair, works as severely behind the desk as he did in the days when the major racial issues here were public accommodations.

"We had sit-ins at Woodward's (department store) and picketed Piggly Wiggly," Overton said. "We also demonstrated in front of City Hall to make the city council do something."

Before the demonstrations ended, Overton said, the first Human Relations Commission was established with Overton a charter member. In compliance with the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Woodward's was compelled to allow blacks to sit and eat at their counters.

FOLLOWING Woodward's policy change, the Piggly Wiggly opened its doors to black customers, a day Overton remembers clearly. "At that time, E.L. Hunter and a Rev. Sims were the first blacks served at the Piggly Wiggly in 1964."

During the same period, Overton and the NAACP working separately, began integrating Austin's public parks. Because of their efforts, blacks were permitted to swim in the park, 30 miles east of Austin.

Overton, a slender 5-foot-11, is not a sturdy build-and-a person. He is a quiet, thoughtful man. He is a man who has seen the change in Austin and black life in the city.

A TYPICAL Overton day begins at 7:30 a.m. When he rises and drives to work, he takes a small car. He works as a small clerk from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Back at his post Austin home around noon, Overton stops until mid-afternoon. Then, it is to the NAACP office where he works into the evening.

He has followed that schedule for 14 years and admits, "I am a little tired." He has considered retiring from the NAACP post at the end of 1976. "I will have to see what the political climate is at that time," Overton said. "I will be 60 then."

SCHOOL BOARD President Gus Garcia remembers Overton in the early years of the civil rights struggle. "Volma has always had a strong dedication to help people," Garcia said, a member of the Human Relations Commission from 1964 to 1971. "He always had the courage to stand up and draw the line. He is at individual with great strength."

State Rep. Williamson Delo also served with Overton on the Human Relations Commission, and he recalls his disappointment with the outcome of Austin desegregation efforts.

"Volma and the NAACP were always pre-desegregation," Delo says. "Volma was very vocal on the board. He was very vocal on the point that integration involved a two-way street, meaning that blacks AND whites should get on the bus."

Overton admitted that one-way busing marked a low-point in his NAACP career. "The media," he said, "published a distorted picture of East Austin that brought about fear in whites."

The one-way busing that followed, Overton contended, led to the deaths of Earl Austin and the Rev. James Earl Ray.

"The changing of Kealing Junior High School disrupted the entire life of the black

community," Overton said. "The Austin school district placed the burden of desegregation on blacks causing all kinds of problems."

In the aftermath, Overton began making weekly appearances before the school board, addressing issues such as the epidemic of black students from schools and placed living conditions in the Austin Independent School District.

Mayor Cande McGowan, who says "the NAACP and Volma Overton are synonymous in Austin," was convinced by Overton that he and again while she served on the school board.

"EVEN THOUGH we have had our differences on many issues, I have always found him open to discussion," the current mayor and former school board president said. "We have developed a healthy respect for each other, despite our different value systems."

Those philosophical differences surfaced again last year when the federal courts ordered desegregation here. Overton directed the NAACP to fight the court's order to the highest court.

"We put publicity and pressure over the desegregation matter and I found him cooperative and willing to give and take," McGowan said. "Although we disagreed, but I still consider him a friend."

Overton wanted to improve police community relations in 1974. He took a hard line on police brutality and called for an open public force.

"VOLMA WAS instrumental in the hiring of a new police chief," said former mayor Jeff Friedman, a practicing attorney here. Friedman considers Overton "one of the more effective NAACP leaders in the country."

Overton is coordinating NAACP committees, each with a specific job. The Employment Committee is attempting to find jobs for blacks in the Austin area. The Housing Committee seeks to end housing discrimination and made a statement recently supporting the original Fair Housing Ordinance (which was passed by the city council in a divided form).

ELIMINATING discrimination and investigating problem areas such as school attendance of black students is the job of the Education Committee. The Political Action Committee has requested funds from the national NAACP office to run voter registration and education drive.

Black military veterans can receive aid through the NAACP Veterans Committee, which offers information on housing, medical and educational rights.

The Youth Action Committee sponsored an exhibit in Highland Mall last weekend displaying past and present accomplishments of the NAACP. Black public school students who are having problems adjusting in the classroom can obtain help through the "Ombudsman" program, through which the youth committee hopes to provide counseling and referral help.

Overton "places little restrictions on our group," said Rosalind Alexander, a freshman music major at the University of Texas. "He is a very humble person and always talks of what the chapter has done and not his own accomplishments."

"The NAACP has been a life-long vocation for him."

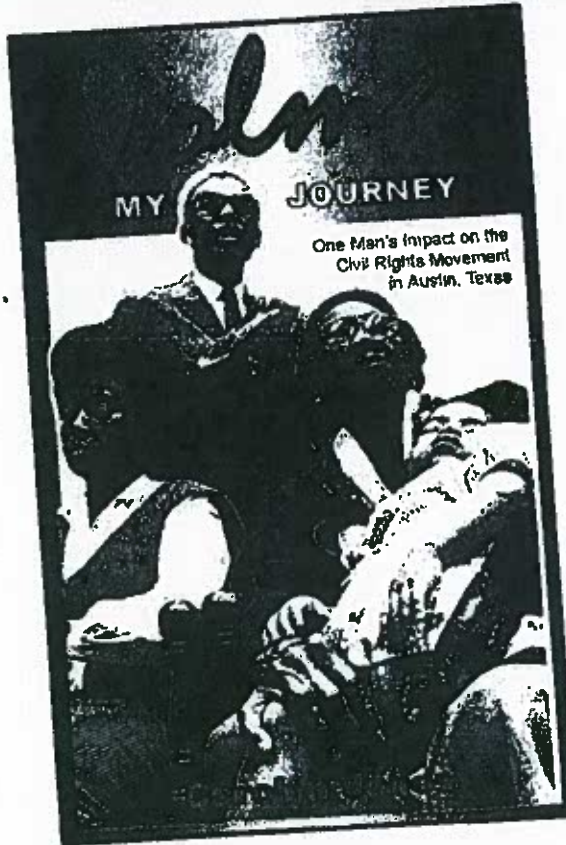


VOLMA OVERTON
NAACP president through many changes

AF B106 Overton, Volma *Austin History Center*



You are invited to a special
Book signing and reception



To reserve your autographed copy, contact:

EAKIN PRESS
PO Box 90159
Austin, TX 79709
1-800-880-8642

Volma Overton

signing his new biography

Volma, MY JOURNEY

**One Man's Impact on the
Civil Rights Movement
in Austin, Texas**

**Sunday, Feb. 22, 1998
3p.m. to 5 p.m.**

**First Baptist Church
9th and Trinity
Austin, TX
in The Great Hall**

Born in 1924 to a land-rich but money-poor farming family, Volma Overton became a noted civil rights leader and community activist. He became a marine, but, along with other Blacks, was not allowed to fight. He returned home to standard Jim Crow discrimination. With numerous others, he decided to fight back. He took his first leadership role when he was elected president of the National Alliance of Postal Workers. Then he became president of the Austin branch of the NAACP during a period of intense civil rights activity. He held the position for over twenty years, achieving a number of notable accomplishments, including the integration of the Austin Independent School District. Currently retired, he is a deacon at the First Baptist Church in Austin. Carolyn Jones, a career government worker, has one daughter and makes her home in Austin.

"The story of the civil rights movement from the perspective of those most involved in what history might have considered a backwater area. 'While the entire country seemed to be breathing the smoke of some riot or near riot, Austin was amazingly calm' is a fact that can be credited to the work of a soft-spoken activist who never forgot that he was first a Christian. Volma's journey is history that must be remembered."

Jack Hightower, Former U.S. Congressman, Texas Supreme Court Judge, Ret.

"This very important contribution to the consciousness and collective memory during a historic period in Austin."

Wilhelmina Delco, Texas State Representative

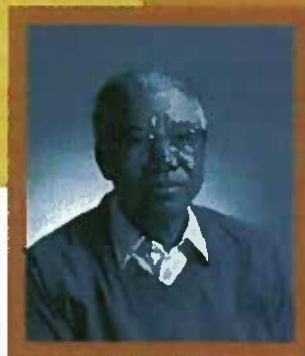
"A priceless witness to the lives of all who stood at the center of events in Austin's search for racial justice. The story makes absorbing reading, as its author successfully develops the interplay between the local and national Civil Rights efforts."

William R. Neiberger, Professor of Classics, The University of Texas

"A story of courage, character and faithful persistence...one man's conviction that constitutional equality is the manifestation of the theological truth that all people are created equal and have a God-given right to live in freedom."

Rev. Roger A. Paynter, D.Min., Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church, Austin, TX

The Many Faces of Social Justice



Presented by the
Principalship Program of
The University of Texas at Austin
May 31, 2006



Volma Overton, Sr.

"... and justice for all."

Volma's allegiance to these words framed a life's journey spent in pursuit of social justice and equity for all people, regardless of race. A follower of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and veteran of many civil rights marches in Alabama and Georgia, Overton advocated for interaction between groups to combat stereotyping and prejudice. In 1971, he filed a lawsuit to desegregate the Austin schools. After more than a decade of struggle, the case was finally settled.

Volma Overton, Sr., a graduate of Huston-Tillotson College, also served as president of the Austin National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for over twenty years. Volma believed in working through community and faith-based organizations to achieve particular milestones of academic success for the neediest of Austin's children. Six years ago, Overton founded the Upsilon Violette Christian Foundation to raise funds for scholarships for African American students, an endeavor his son, Volma Jr., now continues.

Volma Overton, Sr. died October 31, 2005 at 81 years of age. He is survived by his wife Warneta and their four children. It is a tribute to his memory that the work Volma started has continued in his absence.



Volma Overton (1924-2005)

Volma Overton Elementary School Mission Statement

As a community of learners, Volma Overton Elementary School will ensure the academic and social growth of our students by empowering them with knowledge and respect.

To learn more about Volma Overton, read his biography:
Volma-My Journey: One Man's Impact on the Civil Rights Movement in Austin, Texas, by Carolyn Jones

Schedule of Events

Morning Assembly

Slide show biography of Volma Overton Sr.

Presentation of goods to Caritas of Austin

Performances by the Volma Overton Choir

Public display of art from the Art After School Program

Presentation of birthday card from students and faculty to Volma Overton Jr.

Moment of silence in memory of Mr. & Mrs. Overton

3rd, 4th, 5th grade Choir

Carezma Brown	Artasia Clark	Janishia Coleman
Mariela de la Garza	Sherice Grant*	Ebonie Henderson
Frahnkee Jones	Robby Joseph	Ashley Knight*
Jayla Lane Blevin	Ashley Lovejoy	Paul Mendoza
Deja Moffett*	Vancia Moore	Keira Neal
Maria Olea	Rachel Paniagua	Diana Ruiz
Liyha Slotts	Martae'yah Walker	Keanna Whitley

*Decant

Art After School Program

Ricardo Alvarez	Alexis Benitez	Ariel Campbell
Otis Campbell	Danna Ceballos	Thomas Crawford
Christian Cavarrubias	DeAndre Wytaske	Irvin Loyola
Bonifacio Martinez	Dennez Martinez	Julianna Pool
Michael Recinos	Micayla Rowe	Johnnie Williams

Farewell to a Civil Rights Hero and Credit Union Advocate



It is with great sorrow that the Board of Directors and staff of GTFUCU say goodbye to legend and friend Volma R. Overton, who passed away recently. Mr. Overton, a civil rights leader in Austin, started the Austin NAACP Federal Credit Union. This credit union was later merged with GTFUCU and led the way for the establishment of the full-service location on Airport Boulevard. Mr. Overton was very involved in the credit union on many levels, and his spirit, enthusiasm and passion will truly be missed.

Tommy Seargeant, GTFUCU President and CEO, and Volma Overton enjoyed a round of golf, their favorite pastime.

... of ...

METRO & STATE

... of ...

... of ...

He overcame; so shall we!

Overton remembered for his courageous battle for equality



During the funeral service, Overton was remembered for his courageous battle for equality. The service was held at the ... of ...

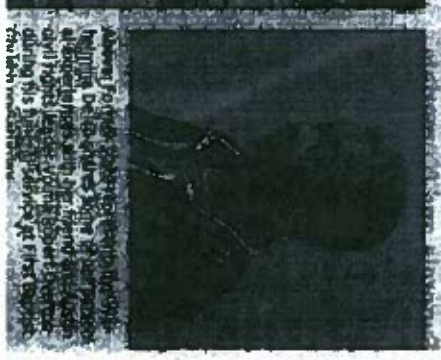
AF Biography Overton, Volina

FUNERAL: Overton filed desegregation suit

Continued from B1

U.S. District Court in the ... of ... Overton filed a desegregation suit ...

North American States METRO & STATE Smith, November 4, 1955



... of ...

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Volma Overton (1924-2005)

Volma Overton was born on September 31, 1924, in Maha, Texas. Mr. Overton moved to Austin as a child to live with relatives as he attended Austin Independent School District's Kealing Junior High and old Anderson High School. A World War II veteran, he was drafted to the U.S. Marines in 1942 and served for two years. Mr. Overton returned to Texas and from 1947 to 1950 attended Huston-Tillotson College where he received a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry.

After retiring from the Marines, Mr. Overton joined the Army Reserves and in 1977 retired with honors in the rank of lieutenant colonel. He began his professional career with the U.S. Postal Service in 1952. In 1979, he was appointed postmaster in Cedar Creek, Texas, where he served until retirement in 1985.



In spite of his demanding career, Mr. Overton worked to ensure the rights of African-American Austinites by serving as President of the Austin National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) from 1963 to 1983. He led the NAACP in demonstrating against segregated businesses, integrating Bastrop State Park, and leading a campaign to institute single-member districts for Austin City Council elections. As NAACP President, Mr. Overton is best known for his successful federal lawsuit to desegregate Austin schools, creating the diversity that is valued in our schools today.

The civil rights leader also played an integral part in establishing the Austin NAACP chapter's first credit union for the local African-American community. It would later merge with what is now the Greater Texas Federal Credit Union.

Mr. Overton's dedication to the First Baptist Church of Austin began in 1963 where he served as deacon from 1967 until his death in 2005. As a Christian lay leader, he was committed to supporting missions and ensuring the church's involvement in the social ministries of the entire Austin community.

For his contributions and service, Mr. Overton received many honors in his lifetime including the Arthur B. DeWitty Award in 1987 and the LBJ Award for Leadership in Civil Rights from The University of Texas at Austin in 2004. After his death, the Austin branch of NAACP established the Volma Overton Award in honor of his commitment to civil rights.

Volma Overton, Sr.

people information:

Full Name: Volma Robert Overton, Sr.
Location: Section: Monument Hill, Section 1 (H1)
Row: S_Number: 27
Reason for Eligibility: Approved, Texas State Cemetery Committee
Birth Date: September 26, 1924
Died: October 31, 2005
Buried: November 5, 2005
Biography:

VERTON, SR., VOLMA ROBERT (1924 ~ 2005). Volma Robert Overton, Sr. was born on September 26, 1924, to Nicholas and Eliza Overton of Travis County. He attended public schools in the Maha Community and then at L.C. Anderson High School where he graduated in 1942.

Six months after graduation, Mr. Overton was drafted into the military. He joined the United States Marine Corps and served two years in the Pacific Theatre. He returned home and met his future wife, Warneta Hill in February of 1946, at Huston-Tillotson College. They were married two months later in April of 1946, and eventually had four children.

Mr. Overton was honorably discharged from the Marines but continued to serve his country for twenty-eight years as a United States Army Reservist. He was honorably discharged at the rank of lieutenant colonel.

After his honorable discharge from the Marines, Mr. Overton attended Huston-Tillotson College from 1947 to 1950 and graduated with a B.S. in Chemistry. Two years later, in 1952, Mr. Overton began his career with the Post Office and in 1979, was appointed Postmaster at Cedar Creek, Texas. He served there until his retirement in 1985.

While attending to his duties at the postoffice, Mr. Overton continued to face the central core issues of segregation and discrimination. Martin Luther King, Jr. was making his speeches and marches during this time and Mr. Overton decided to participate.

In 1963, Mr. Overton became president of the Austin Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In that same year he attended the March on Washington. Two years later, in 1965, he marched alongside Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. in the Selma to Montgomery March.

No Portrait Available
No Headstone Photograph Available

Headstone Text

During Mr. Overton's twenty year tenure as president of the NAACP, he organized picketed marches on segregated businesses, integrated Bastrop State Park, organized a credit union to serve East Austin, led a campaign to institute single member districts for Austin City Council Elections, and served on the newly created Commission on Human Rights, which developed from his efforts.

Mr. Overton was an ardent advocate for quality education for all students. He was most vocal on the issues surrounding public schools. In 1971, he merged his two passions of ending discrimination and public schools and fought for desegregation. He became meticulously involved in the landmark federal lawsuit to end segregation in AISD. With victory in hand, Mr. Overton continued to champion the cause for AISD by lobbying for funding, quality teaching materials and parental involvement. He mentored, tutored, and prepared young students for college – believing education was the key to freedom.

Because of Mr. Overton's outstanding efforts in the cause for Human Rights, the NAACP bestowed upon Mr. Overton the Arthur B. DeWitty Award in 1967. And, because of his ardent efforts to further the cause of education and civil rights in Austin, the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs and the LBJ Library and Museum conferred upon Mr. Overton the LBJ Award for Leadership in Civil Rights on March 25, 2004. In addition to his awards, the book *Volma – My Journey: One Man's Impact on the Civil Rights Movement in Austin, Texas* by Carolyn Jones, was published to recognize and chronicle Mr. Overton's achievements and dedication to the causes of equality and education.

In addition to his many services to his country and community, Mr. Overton served Christ as a deacon and a Christian Lay Leader at the First Baptist Church in Austin. He continually supported missions and insured the church's involvement in the social ministries of the entire Austin community.

Mr. Overton passed away October 31, 2005, at the age of 81, and was interred with military honors five days later at the Texas State Cemetery.

Sources: Austin American Statesman via www.legacy.com;
letter to the Governor's Office

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Dr. Pat Forgiione, Jr., Superintendent

August 25, 2008

Mr. and Mrs. Volma R. Overton, Jr.
7704 Latta Drive
Austin, Texas 78749

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Overton,

On behalf of the Austin School District and Board of Trustees, please accept our deepest condolences on the loss of your wonderful mother, Warneta Overton.

Our city and schools are better places to live and to learn because of the courage and commitment of both of your parents, Volma Overton, Sr., and Warneta. Their dedication to ending immoral segregation and ensuring educational opportunities for all children taught us to always stand up for what is right and just. Their vision became ours — and our schools today are learning environments enriched by the broad diversity of our students and teachers.

Mrs. Overton, while caring deeply for the welfare of all children, was also devoted to each of her own, and provided a home grounded in love, spirituality, and a respect for learning. Young people succeed who have been blessed with strong and sound parenting, and Mrs. Overton lived that principle to the fullest. Surely, her example will strengthen your family for many generations to come.

Please know that, in the weeks and months to come, as you mourn the loss of your family's matriarch, that your grief is shared by a school district which truly recognized her greatness.

Best regards,

Pascal D. Forgiione

Pascal D. Forgiione, Jr., Ph.D
Superintendent

Mark J. Williams

Mark J. Williams
President, AISD Board of Trustees

*My deepest sympathy to
your family.*

September, 2008

To the Overton Family—

When I think of the people and families who made a real significant contribution to the development

of Austin, your family has always been at the top of those who made a very positive and significant impact.

Your father always stood for civil right, never wavering in his commitment to bringing justice to people in the need.

Your mother always supported him, making it possible for him to carry out his mission. We will always remember them fondly; especially as we express our deep condolences at the passing of your mother. With much love and affection

Antonio L. and Maria G. Garcia