

# DIM LIGHTS, SMALL TOWN

By Tony Lee



**A**ccepting a job in a rural community probably means lots of responsibility, low costs...and deadly dull weekends

It's another Friday night at Sundae Ann's pick-up window in Lanett, Ala. Two men and a young boy, all wearing jeans, T-shirts and worn baseball caps, wait in line for soft-serve ice cream cones. A radio behind the counter blares country music, interspersed with updates of local high school football scores.

Across the road, a Southern Pacific freight train hauling timber rumbles slowly through town. Cars cruise by, a few turning off at Video Land, the neon-lit nucleus of a six-store shopping center. Video rentals have been brisk

ever since the town's only movie theater closed its doors last year. Up the road at Bill's Union 76 service station, three old-timers sit in folding chairs, discussing the day's events. A church bell chimes in the distance.

Such is nightlife in Lanett and its sister city, West Point, Ga. Combined, they are "the Valley," an area straddling the Chattahoochee River about 90 miles west of Atlanta. The pace here is slow, or what some locals describe as "laid back." For Deedee Williams, the lack of excitement makes her job a little