

Business

Jonesboro's Prime Insurance Co. recent recipient of awards

By Beverly D. Harvey
Staff writer

JONESBORO — A sincere, neighborly approach to their customers and special attention to younger drivers has recently earned Prime Insurance Agency of Jonesboro several awards and increased recognition.

Prime Insurance was featured in the October 1993 issue of the trade magazine "Rough Notes" as Marketing Agency of the Month, complete with a cover picture of agency president Alfred Dingler and vice-president Karl Thomason standing in front of Stately Oaks.

In January they were selected by the more than 40,000 subscribers of the magazine to be Marketing Agency of the Year for 1993 as well.

Dingler, recently named the Clayton County Chamber of Commerce's 1993 Small Business Person of the Year, said he began the agency eight years ago based on the principle of treating people as individuals and not just as an account number.

Even after years of continued success in the industry, he said he hasn't lost sight of that original idea.

Dingler and Thomason, who insist on being called by their first names, feel the extra attention to personal detail is the main reason for the agen-

cy's success through the years.

To encourage meeting customers on a more personal level, face-to-face, Prime does not give price quotes over the phone. Instead, they ask potential clients to come in for a visit as a chance to get to know them before discussing business.

"We spend time with (clients), help them understand insurance," Dingler said. "We explain Georgia insurance laws to each client. We make every effort to help them... 99 out of 100 insurance agencies are not giving that added service to their customers."

Prime makes a special effort to befriend young drivers. The agency takes time to educate teen-age drivers about auto safety and gives them driving tests prior to adding them to their parents' policies.

"We show them how their actions affect their parents' pocketbook," Dingler said.

The lessons include what to do if an accident occurs, information concerning the hazards of drinking and driving and common sense tips such as not letting a friend drive their car.

The driving test involves a brief drive around Jonesboro, which includes a trip through a drive-thru window to pick up a soda or ice cream cone.

"We listen to their music on the radio, discuss their interests — we're their best friend for 15 minutes," Dingler said.

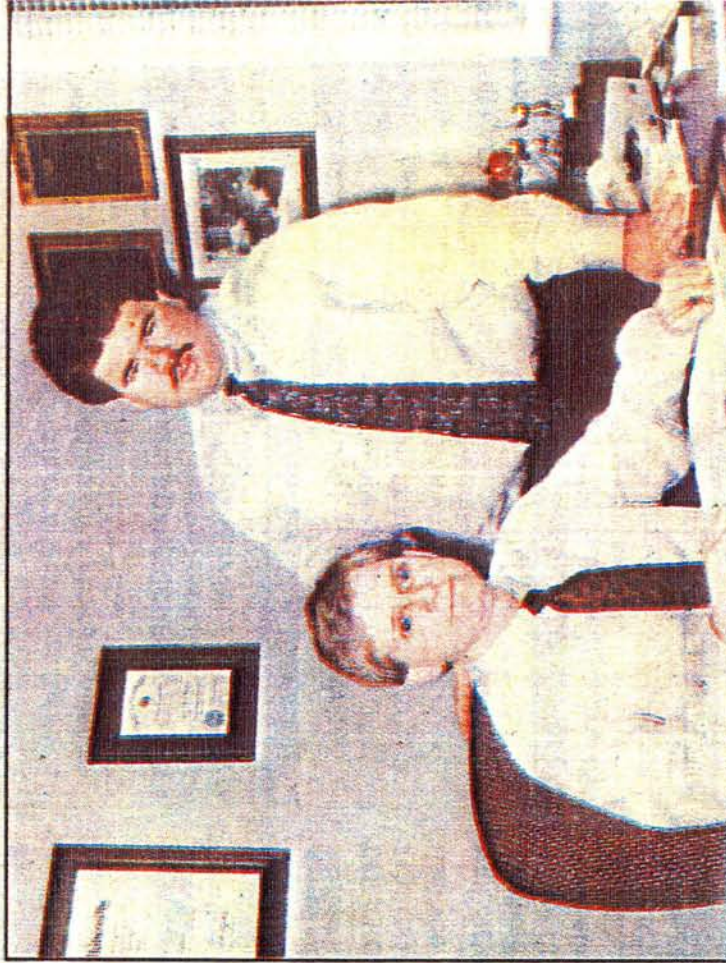


Photo by Beverly D. Harvey

Prime Insurance's Alfred Dingler (seated) and Karl Thomason have accepted several awards for their company's customer service.