

Emma Gooch: A Political Activist Ahead Of Her Time

As the responses come in about Outstanding Black Women of Yalobusha County I am encouraged by the strength and fortitude of these women past and present and how we, by now participating in this process, might encourage and motivate our youth of today; how we might support our millennials who are working for equal rights and registering voters across the country in preparation for the November elections. My high school classmate, Emma Faye submitted the essay (below, right) on her grandmother, Mrs. Emma Spencer Gooch, who stood tall for civil rights and equality for women.

My first recollection of Mrs. Emma was from my seat on the school bus as it stopped on Highway 32 to pick up the riders from the Gooch Farm. I recall her

giving instructions to the bus driver, earning my respect that day, not by what she said but how she said it and with such authority and respect.

I also had opportunities to observe her and several other women in leadership roles in church and yet the community has just recently come to appreciate how much they accomplished, and in most cases, with so little. So little education, so little money, so little support and in most cases fighting an uphill battle. It astounds me to think of the courage it took to speak up and speak out. I thank Mrs. Emma Spencer Gooch for speaking up and speaking out.

Alas these accounts continue to enlighten this writer. Regarding the land leased to build Davidson Schools by their great grandfather, Lucious Spencer, the Gooch Family has

Outstanding Black Women Of Yalobusha County



By Dottie Chapman Reed

Reed is a native of Water Valley and graduated from Davidson High School in 1970. She has launched a project to collect bios, pictures and other info about women in the county who have made an impact on the African American community. She can be reached at (678) 825-2356 or reed2318@bellsouth.net

tried unsuccessfully to regain the titles. They are still researching even though the property is now in the

hands of a private owner. More next month on the outstanding Black Women of Yalobusha County!

By Emma Faye

My grandmother, Emma Spencer Gooch was born March 7th, 1906. Her parents were Maude Virginia Carr Spencer and Lucious Spencer, land owners in Yalobusha County, Mississippi. She was the seventh child of 13. Hard working as a child, she often told stories of how Papa (Lucious) taught them that education and hard work was the key to success in life. Her father leased his land to Yalobusha County to build the first colored school in Water Valley, which was known as Davidson school.



Emma Spencer Gooch

Emma married the late Jim Gooch, a sharecropper on the Alexander Farm, better known as the Gooch Farm and they had six children. She was very instrumental in running the household as a wife, mother, cook, seamstress, bookkeeper, Watkins

Saleslady, and Big Mama to all her grandchildren. In 1971, Emma moved from the Alexander Farm to Martin Street in Water Valley. Her life was devoted to her Community and Church. She was a member of Sanders Chapel Church and served as church secretary for many years. She can be best described as a community and political activist, of course way ahead of her time. This is evidenced by her active membership in the Democratic Voter Registration for African Americans, the Homemakers of America, and a member of Queen Ann Grand Chapter Order of the Eastern Star Inc. and Naomi Chapter Number 9.

Our grandmother was blessed with longevity as we have seen of quite a few other black women of Yalobusha County, living to be 97 years old. Transitioning on January 12, 2004, having impacted my life and my siblings and many others and leaving behind a legacy of well-educated and hard-working descendants.



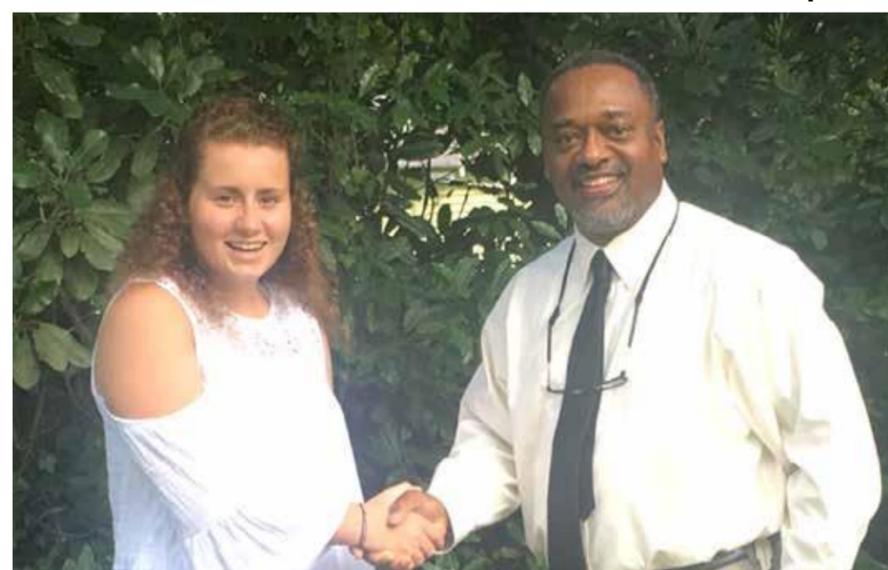
Emma and Jim Gooch

Higdon Awarded Henderson Memorial Scholarship

Hannah Rose Higdon was awarded the 2018 Dollie Henderson Memorial Scholarship. Higdon is a 2018 graduate of Water Valley High School and is pursuing pediatric nursing studies at Mississippi Delta Community College. She is the daughter of Trea and Margaret Higdon.

The scholarship was established by Henderson's children and family to celebrate her outstanding contributions to the educational field and her community. For over four decades Henderson was a model of excellence in education as an elementary school teacher and assistant principal.

Henderson served in numerous positions in the community including as trustee on the Blackmur Memorial Library Board, positions with the Water Valley Housing Authority and other civic and religious organizations in Wa-



Rodney Henderson congratulates Hannah Higdon as the 2018 recipient of the Dollie Henderson Memorial Scholarship.

ter Valley. Her service provided her the opportunity to influence many youth in the community and she will always be remembered by expressing her strong belief that every child is teachable.

Second Annual Oakland Day Is Scheduled Oct. 20

The Second Annual Oakland Day will be held Saturday, October 20, beginning at 9 a.m. This will be a day of fun and entertainment for the whole family, with a breast cancer walk beginning at 8 a.m. (wear pink). There will also be vendors; bouncy castles; face painting; arts and crafts; musical entertainment and an antique car show.

The event will be held in downtown Oakland. The cost of booth space will be

\$30. Vendors are asked to bring your own tent and table. Vendor registration forms may be picked up at Oakland Town Hall, located at 13863 Hickory St., or by contacting the following people: Marzet Bland (662) 647-7750; Margaret Ross (662) 623-7296; Sharonda Jones (662) 589-0040; Vera Walls (662) 709-0440; or Mayor James Swarengen (662) 809-0628.

The deadline for applications to be turned in to reserve a booth is Oct. 16.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Hometown Pizza Invites You To Stop By!

OPEN FOR BREAKFAST

7:00 to 10:30 am
Monday - Saturday

Monday Night
5:30 to 7 PM

~ BINGO ~
& Family Buffet Night

Tuesday Night
5 to 8 PM

FAMILY BUFFET

Thursday
All Day

.50¢ Wings

Friday Night
7 to 10 PM

KARAOKE

Saturday Night
7 to 9 PM

Sounds of Tyme

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SUNDAY
11AM to 2 PM

Sunday Buffet & Plate Lunch

HOMETOWN PIZZA

Great Music, Good Food, and Tons of Fun! Y'all Come!

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pine Valley Reunion Is Sept. 15

The annual Pine Valley School reunion will be held, as usual, on the third Saturday in September (the 15th), so mark your calendar for this event. Everyone is welcome, please come out and enjoy the fellowship, visiting, and entertainment by Bro. Freddie Buchanan and Friends. Those attending are asked to bring a favorite dish to share and enjoy lunch.

10th Annual Art Crawl Is Oct. 6

The 10th Annual Art Crawl will be held October 6 from 5:30 until 9 p.m., with the after party at Bozarts Gallery. Everyone is urged to make plans to come and join the fun. More information on the Art Crawl will be contained in coming issues of the Herald.

Bingo, Dance Scheduled At VFW

Activities for the weekend at VFW Post 4100 will include bingo on Friday night with doors opening at 5 p.m. and the games beginning at 7. Providing music for the Saturday night dance will be the Bobby Hood Band. The dance begins at 8 p.m. VFW Post Home is located at 11535 Highway 315, west of Water Valley.

Historical Society Meets Sept. 20

The Yalobusha County Historical Society will meet Thursday, September 20, at 2 p.m. in its headquarters at the former Coffeeville Presbyterian Church. The speaker will be Grady White, who is an authority on both the Chickasaw and Choctaw Indians during the early times of pioneering and settlement. Refreshments are served afterwards, and visitors are welcome.

Marine Corps League Plans Golf Tournament Fundraiser

The Marine Corps League is holding a golf tournament to raise funds for community service projects. These projects include support for veterans and the Toys for Tots program. The tournament will be held Sept. 29, beginning at 8 a.m., on the Ole Miss golf course. It will be a four-man scramble format. Prizes will be given for first, second, and third place teams, and Closest to the Hole. Lunch will be provided. The cost is \$75 per player; two mulligans for \$5 each. For questions call Mike Brownlee (662) 801-0867, or mail to 211 Woodland Hills Dr., Oxford, MS 38655. Deadline for entry is September 21.

Gospel Singing Is Sept. 22

There will be a gospel singing on Sept. 22, beginning at 7 p.m., in Clear Springs Baptist Church. The guest group this month will be The Trailsmen Quartet. The church is located at the corner of Gum's Crossing Road and County Rod 186, just outside of Coffeeville. A love offering will be taken and refreshments will be served. Everyone is invited to come out and worship with church members. For more information contact Michelle Kendall at (662) 230-2349.

POW/MIA Recognition Is Sept. 21

All veterans and their families are invited to attend POW/MIA Recognition Day on September 21, between the hours of noon and 2 p.m. This event will be held at the Depot in Water Valley. There will be a spaghetti plate dinner and a speaker and entertainment coming from Brandon, with a drawing for small gifts. This will be followed by the Veterans' Balloon Launch.

Summer Clearance

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M-F 8am to 5pm
Saturday 9am - 3pm
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