

Outstanding Black Women of Yalobusha County: The Project Continues The Powerful Love of a Grandmother:

Margie Wilson Avant

This project brings back many memories for me and I hope for you as readers. I do miss the good ole days, but as we feature outstanding black women of Yalobusha County, perhaps we can bridge some gaps, peak curiosity, or inspire positive actions while paying homage to those who have set great examples of unconditional love and kindness. This week we learn about a radiant personality and longtime friend of my family, Margie Wilson Avant, from her granddaughter, Patricia Avant-Pate.

have mutual respect even in that day and time when she was required to go and come through the back door. She worked for the Ross family and the Herman Wright family, owners of Wright's Grocery on Calhoun Street. My father worked at Johnson Chevrolet for a few years and at Larson's Big Star Grocery for almost 39 years. Her youngest son, my uncle Leslie, is retired and lives in Victorville, Calif.

My grandmother worked long hours every day but as soon as she got home, she would tend the flowers she planted in pots



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 compile and share info about women in the county who have made an impact on the African American community. Her column appears bi-monthly, with occasional exceptions. She can be reached at (678) 825-2356 or reed2318@bellsouth.net

dusting, etc. I was earning my own money and learning the satisfaction you feel after doing a good job.

My grandmother had wonderful friends. She would light up with joy

to treat people the way you would want to be treated.

My grandmother gave my brothers and me valuable life lessons. Even all these years later I see myself using the tools she taught me as a child. Although my grandmother is not here with me anymore I can still hear her voice and remember the good times we had together. I am so blessed and thankful to have had such a woman in my life.

Patricia's description of Mrs. Margie warms my heart as my family also belonged to Miles CME Church. I grew up seeing her in action.

She had a gift, a special countenance, a beautiful smile and such a radiant and pleasing personality. Mrs. Margie set an example that I and many others emulated. She did not drive but often accompanied my mom to church programs across the county. I remember the sidewalk that led to her front door being lined with beautiful aromatic flowers matching the persona of the gracious woman within.

Patricia and Ron Pate retired and recently moved to Olive Branch, Mississippi from Stockton, California. Danny is also retired and resides in Sierra Vista, Ariz. Ray lives in Water Valley.

If your life has been significantly influenced by a black woman of Yalobusha, let me hear from you!



Margie Wilson Avant

on her front porch. Her immaculate front yard further attested to her love of gardening. She loved fishing just as much and took us kids on many fishing trips. Today my brother Danny is an avid fisherman, while my brother Ray and I fish on occasion. One day we were on the creek bank and my grandmother caught a snake which frightened me, so I was done with fishing for a while.

When Ray was just a toddler, my grandmother would stand him in a chair teaching him to cook, and I would stand at her side watching. To teach me the value of hard work - rather than just giving me a grandmotherly allowance - she would have me over every Saturday to earn a little money by washing dishes, mopping floors,

when they came to visit, when they chatted by phone or when she visited with them on the street. Her obvious pleasure in these friendships taught me that having good friends and family is truly a blessing in life. She taught us to always be respectful of others and

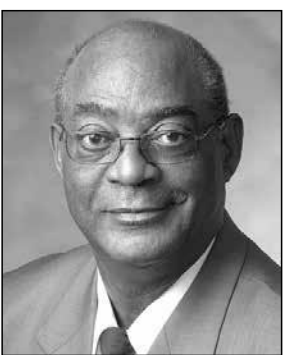
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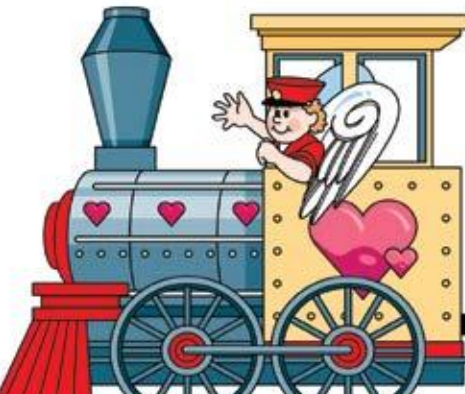
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