



GRACIE NEWBORN NEAL

Gracie Newborn Neal is a 1963 graduate of Peake High School and has lived an exemplary life of Service above Self. In 2003 when the Peake High School Alumni Foundation Incorporated was established, Gracie accepted the responsibility of Secretary and served through August 2018. Gracie served as secretary under four Peake High School Alumni Foundation presidents. In her position, she was dedicated to making the organization the very best that it could be by being a good team player; compiling data, reporting, and meeting goals and standards wherever called upon. It was often noted if accurate records were needed, Gracie could be called upon. In April of 2022, Willard Reed, Peake High School Treasurer, became ill to the point of turning the bookkeeping over to someone else. Gracie Neal and Gary Hunter accepted the responsibility. Gracie maintained the bookkeeping records in Excel Microsoft files through August of 2018. Additionally, Neal and Hunter have gone back and brought the records up to date from August 2018 to April 2022 in Excel Microsoft files. Gracie was a key player in the organization of the Mount Morriah Rural School Reunion from its origin to its ending. She served as secretary for the organization.

Mrs. Neal was the first minority to join the office management group at Howard's Discount Center. From 1974 - 2005, she worked for International Paper Company where she received several promotions. During her tenure, she did a lot of traveling in and out of the state of Arkansas, and Gracie's on-the-job training was sometimes intense. She was given the responsibility to initiate computers in their local office. The Manager for whom she worked at the time, assured her they she could do the job and they both enrolled at Henderson State University in the same computer class where she became confident that she could accomplish her goal. Her final position, with international Paper Company, was Regional Office Manager with management facilitation for 132 employees in the Arkansas Region. Her key strengths were noted in her Annual Performance Evaluation Assessments as being dedicated to accuracy, productivity, clear communications, and presentations, and a well-organized team player dedicated to the goals of the organization. After 31 years of service, due to reorganization, relocation and consolidation, International Paper Company Arkansas Regional Office relocated in Shreveport, Louisiana. Mrs. Neal was offered a position in Louisiana and Memphis, Tennessee but chose to stay in Arkadelphia, Arkansas.

For several years she volunteered for the Community Family Enrichment Center in Arkadelphia, Arkansas as a Family Resource Specialist and Bookkeeper/Treasurer volunteering many years with the same responsibilities and dedication. She is a member of the non-profit organization, The Sunshine Service Club, dedicated to spreading Sunshine throughout the Arkadelphia area. Gracie has served as President, Vice-president, Secretary, and she is currently serving at as the Treasurer of the Sunshine Service Club.

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Gracie is a member of the Clark County Democratic Committee; the Board for United Way of Clark County, Secretary for Abused Women and Children, and is currently a member of The City of Arkadelphia Board of Zoning and Adjustment and Planning Commission. Gracie has received certificates, plaques, and trophies from the following organizations for Community Service, Volunteering, and Service above Self Awards: Mount Olive A.M.E. Church - Dalark, Arkansas; The 12th Episcopal District - Hot Springs District of the African Methodist Church; The Sunshine Service Club - Arkadelphia, Arkansas; Peake High School Alumni Foundation Incorporated - Arkadelphia, Arkansas; The Community Family Enrichment Center - Arkadelphia, Arkansas; Men United of Clark County, Arkansas; The Beard Family Reunion Committee; The Newborn Family Reunion Committee; and the Neal Family Reunion Committee. In 2016 Gracie was selected as Mother of the Year at Mount Olive A.M.E. Church. Gracie began her education at the Mount Morriah Rural School. Ms. Fannie Bell DeLamar Knox taught grades 1- 4 and Mr. Hosea M. Cotledge was the Principal/Head Teacher and taught grades 5 -8. Even though Gracie was the only student in her 8th grade graduating class, she had classmates along the way who relocated or dropped out of school.

Attorney Robert Lawrence Wilson remarked many times about how impressed he was that Gracie presented the entire program for her 8th graduation, covering everything, as if she had several classmates. In 1963 Gracie graduated from Peake High School in Arkadelphia, Arkansas. Determined to continue her education she worked for a year and enrolled at Henderson State University the fall semester of 1964.

Gracie Newborn Neal is the third oldest child born to the blended family of L. C. and Roberta Newborn in the Mount Morriah/Arkadelphia, Arkansas Community. She has been married to Mr. Albert Neal since December 3, 1966.