



NEWS RELEASE

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Wayne and Berneice Oneal Awarded American Hometown Service Award

Alliance Bank salutes Wayne and Berneice Oneal as shining lights in our small community for their dedication and hard work as community volunteers. Wayne is a "Charter Member" of the Oxford Lions Club; a member of the Oxford Library Board; Committee Member of the Community Action Program. Wayne has been a very active volunteer at Benton Community Schools: Wayne was the chain gate keeper at the Varsity Football games for 36 years, before passing that honor on to someone else. Wayne has been score keeper for the Varsity and Jr Varsity Basketball games for the past 32 years. He said he has kept the score for over 1500 games. As active members of St. Patrick's Parish, Wayne traveled to Mexico five times to build houses for the needy ; he cleans the church 1-2 times a week as needed ; rakes the leaves in the fall; changes out the candles. Wayne and Berniece both work the majority of the funeral dinners at St. Patrick's Church. As a Charter Member of the Oxford Lions Club, he is an active volunteer for all the Lions events, Dan Patch Days, Pancake Breakfasts; he also cleans The Oxford Lions' Den and is in charge of renting out the building for events. Berneice said her biggest role in volunteering is allowing Wayne to do all the things that he does.



Wayne and Berneice Oneal are both lifelong residents of Benton County born and raised in this small community. They have been happily married for 58 years and the good Lord blessed them with 8 children: Mark, Matt, Tony, Vince, Denice, Chris, TR, and Maria. They have 27 grandchildren, and 5 great grandchildren. Berneice says "They are all GREAT in our eyes." Wayne and Berenice's' claim to fame is they are the oldest living married couple of St. Patrick's Church where both spouses are still alive.

Twelve years ago Wayne retired from Tate and Lyle after putting in 25 years of dedication. On his last day of work to celebrate his retirement he wore a tuxedo to work. Berneice is a retired lawyer, teacher, taxi driver, chef, nurse, accountant; not just a stay at home Mom. She is also retired from Asgrow where she worked part time for 10 years. Their life has been like a roller coaster ride with lots of ups and downs. There were times when Wayne worked as many as three jobs just to make ends meet. Their big family "treat" was going to McDonalds to order hamburgers for the entire family...with a limitation of one burger each. When the kids would misbehave or fight, they would have to run around the outside of the house 10 times plus their age. This helped the younger ones learn to count "1...2...3...Mom- Mark is not running."

When asked why do you volunteer? Wayne said "to keep busy; I love people and enjoy getting out and helping others". Berneice quoted: "We take pride in their community". If Wayne sees a branch on the Town Square that needs to be cut up and hauled off; he will do that. If he sees a sign hanging by only one chain; he will go home get his tools and fix the sign.

When asked what keeps them going each day...to keep giving back? Since retiring, "We like to start each day off right by going to mass every morning, and we just enjoy helping others!"

The best advice the Wayne's would like to share is: "don't expect financial payment for the service that you do. You'll be rewarded in your heart knowing what you have done. If you get the chance to help others, just do it. You don't know when you will be the one needing the help." Berneice's advice comes straight from Pope Francis: four little words "Please, Thank You, and Sorry." "These are the keys to any successful relationship or marriage!"

Alliance Bank salutes Wayne and Berneice Oneal with The American Hometown Service Award. Their willingness to give of their time, energy and talent is duly recognized and truly appreciated.

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