

Winston Campbell Avera, Jr.

I was born in Bay City, Texas on December 24th on my maternal grandmother's birthday. Mother asked if she could bring me home to spend Christmas with our extended family. Dr. Greenwood, Compatriot Bill Greenwood's father, lived two (2) houses away, gave Mom the okay and discharged us to come home to West Columbia.

West Columbia was a good small town to be raised in; no one locked their doors, the school was across the street, the woods and old earthen oil storage ponds were at the end of the block and the Methodist Church was three (3) blocks away. The oil had been pumped out of the ponds and held rainwater and fish, so fishing in them and hunting in the woods with my BB gun spawned my love of the outdoors and conservation of our planet for future generations.

As a teen I worked on Dad's stock farm just outside of town, mowing pastures, baling hay, repairing equipment, building & repairing fences, and feeding & working cows. At 16 years old, I bought my own small herd of cows.

After graduating from Texas A&M University Commerce, previously named East Texas State University, with a BS major in business and minor in economics, I married my amazing wife, Connie Hood. We have been blessed with two (2) daughters, Susan Holt and Merryann Avera.

Foregoing a honeymoon, two (2) days after we married, I began my career with The Dow Chemical Company in Freeport, Texas. Within a year at Dow, I was evaluating product and project economics for the polyethylene business which Compatriot Arnold Seidule managed. To gain more knowledge about making polyethylene, I was assigned as an engineer in one of the plants.

Much of my career at Dow was spent supervising the various logistical operations for plastic manufacturing plants. There I designed the first computerized systems to manage these operations. This experience led to a two (2) year assignment in Ontario, Canada to assist in the design and implementation of Dow's worldwide logistics system.

Service to my community has included serving as West Columbia City Councilman, 1970-1971. Additionally, I lobbied Texas Legislators for equitable state-wide distribution of the limited number of Home and Community Based Services slots for Texans with special needs. For this effort I was recognized by Representative Dennis Bonnen on the floor of the Texas House of Representatives in 2001; by *Image Magazine* as one of its 2001 "Image Eight Honorees"; and by *The Facts* newspaper as a finalist in its annual "Citizen of the Year" awards in 2002.

After retiring from Dow's corporate Technology and Licensing Department as a business analyst, like many retirees I pursued my avocations of fishing, sailing, birding, and genealogy. At the same time, I volunteered to assist the homeowners associations of our primary home in Lake Jackson and our secondary home on Carancahua Bay.

In 2001, Brazoria County Commissioners Court appointed me as a Trustee for the County to The Gulf Coast Center Board of Directors. The Center administers Galveston & Brazoria Counties' Mental Health & Mental Retardation services for the Texas Department of Health & Human Services. While serving on the board, I initiated the implementation of a unified, central computer system for managing MHMR services at the Center.

In 2010, I was elected to the Board of Directors of the Columbia Cemetery Association where I spent the next nine (9) years researching the Association's paper records from the mid-1850s, digitizing them and implementing a state-of-the-art professional cemetery management system.

About 2001, Compatriot Arnold Seidule called and asked about some of my ancestors. During his genealogy research he found that we are 3rd cousins. He offered to assist me in applying for membership in SAR. At the time, I was fully involved with other endeavors and declined his invitation. However, after relinquishing my trustee position at the Gulf Coast Center, I asked Arnold for help with my SAR membership. With minimal effort on my part, Arnold completed and submitted my application. After taking the SAR pledge, Don Pugh, Russell Dart, and Arnold mentored me and took every opportunity to increase my involvement in the Chapter.

My patriot ancestor, William Goff, Sr. was born in 1761 in Duplin County, North Carolina and died about 1847 in Jefferson/Madison County, Florida. He served nine (9) different tours during the Revolution.