

# Jackson Advocate Woman of the Year 2016

## Hinds County Chancery Clerk Eddie Jean Carr

By Meredith C. McGee  
Jackson Advocate Contributing Writer

Eddie Jean was born in Magee, Simpson County, Mississippi to the late Rev. Eddie and Emma Lee Edwards McDonald. She and her siblings grew up on a small plot of land she and her family farmed. During the winter, their house was warmed by a fireplace. However, the walls were not insulated well; therefore, holding heat was challenging. Love and tenderness went a long way. "Daddy use to hold a blanket over the fire, get it warm, and wrap it

things through Christ who strengthens me." She stated, "Our parents were our examples." Even though mamma worked on the farm, at a cleaners and a funeral home, she prepared three meals a day and gave us every ounce of love in her soul. "Daddy, a farmer, a sharecropper, and a full-time pastor, always provided for his family.

"Daddy always told us, 'If you gonna be a garbage man, be the best garbage man on the route; if you're gonna be a painter, be the best painter in town.'" Her daddy said often, "No excuses." He believed be-

can feed eight, you can feed nine." It was her belief that they could always make room for another mouth to feed. Her father was born in Simpson County in 1924. He served in WWII, but never mumbled a word about his military experience.

Carr said her mama inspired her to become the woman she is today because her mother was her shining example of womanhood.

Eddie Jean Carr was intro-

and also must have managerial skills." Carr wins over people with her honesty and caring personality. It is her view that she stands on the shoulders of others who went to great lengths so African Americans could have political power. She feels the lessons of yesterday must be taught to youth for them to appreciate their political opportunities.

While serving as a Human Resource Manager at Jackson

Party engaged in various get-out-the-vote strategies; voter turnout was high; and she obtained an 8,000 vote lead over Pepper. "I was the first Black to hold this office," she noted.

She encourages young women to believe in oneself, set goals, and be humbled. She admonishes women to be mindful they cannot do anything by themselves. A team is required for many goals. "Life is short. Make the best of it,"

told me their vote doesn't count or it doesn't matter who you vote for," Carr noted. She believes more women need to seek public office. "A lot of women are afraid to get involved in politics because they will be put under deep scrutiny; it takes too much time away from family and cost too much money," she added. She insisted, "The Republicans have a super majority in the Mississippi Legislature because we couldn't get voters to the polls in past elections."

Carr said she has been able to help many seniors through her community outreach efforts since she was elected. For example, "When I was first elected in November of 2003, I met many seniors who were paying property taxes when they could have been receiving Homestead Exemption; if citizens are over age 65, 100 percent disabled, and if their home is valued less than \$75,000.00, they could become totally exempted from paying taxes, simply by making an application in person at the Tax Assessor's office.

Eddie Jean Carr said, "There is no place like home. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else besides Jackson." Her final thought was, "This is a great place to raise your children."

The Honorable Eddie Jean came from the cotton fields in rural Simpson County to heading the Hinds County Chancery offices, the largest county in the State of Mississippi. "I thank God for this opportunity," she affirmed. When people remember her legacy someday, she hopes they will be able to say about her public service with conviction: *job well*



Eddie Jean Carr

around each of us every winter night," she fondly recalled.

In addition to raising livestock and farming their land, the family were sharecroppers on the Welches Farm nearby which was once the Welches Plantation during slavery. After her family picked their cotton they had to help her grandparents, who were also sharecroppers. Eddie Jean remembered vividly working side-by-side with her father and them picking three rows of cotton at a time. "I could pick 300 pounds of cotton a day by myself," she noted.

Her motto is, "I can do all

ing prompt was essential. He admonished his children that it was better to arrive at work 30 early than to be late. He told them, "Even if you have a flat, if you leave home early, you can still get to work on time." By the time she was in high school her father left the fields and had obtained a position with the City of Magee reading water meters, and cutting grass.

"My parents were very compassionate, and there were always other relatives living with us," she said. Mrs. Emma retorted, "If you can feed seven, you can feed eight, and if you

duced to the political process at Jackson State College when she ran for *Miss JSC* in her junior year in college. "Three women campaigned for the position. I worked hard and obtained 64 percent of the campus vote and was crowned *Miss JSC*," she said. While at JSC, Eddie Jean met and fell in love with the love of her life, Charles Carr, a Kosciusko native. The two married in October of 1971, and their union has lasted 44 years.

She proposed, "Good leaders possess visionary capabilities

Hinds Comprehensive Health Center, Dr. James Anderson, and Congressman Bennie G. Thompson encouraged Carr to run for Hinds County Chancery Clerk. She initially backed down. "One day my husband said, 'Go for it. You can do as good a job as anyone.'" Charles' encouragement sealed the deal for her and she threw her hat in the ring.

Carr campaigned for the Hinds County Chancery Clerk seat against the incumbent, Glenn Pepper, a White male Republican. The Democratic

she asserted. "We are all born; then; there is a dash – and we die. The life we live between birth and death matters because one's deeds becomes one's legacy," she determined. Then, she added, "This life is not a rehearsal. This is it!"

Carr feels the biggest political roadblocks Mississippi Blacks face is low voter turnout. "We have voters on the rolls, but not enough voters are going to the polls on Election Day. We have to find new ways to energize our base," she said. "Many youth have

*The Jackson Advocate salutes The Honorable Eddie Jean Carr for her lifelong commitment to community. At every turn she is there offering her time, talents and resources to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Hinds County. The office of Chancery Clerk did not make her into a caring and efficient public servant; she made her office a place where citizens can depend on quality service and outreach. Her community service has provided youth and adults an opportunity to expand their horizons and lift them up to continue on their life's journey. This God-fearing woman is a gift to Hinds County and we pray she will continue to be embraced, loved and nurtured by those she serves so gallantly.*

### A WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

salute to

### HINDS COUNTY JUDGES

Tomie Green

Denise Sweet Owens

Pearlie Brown Owens

Tabitha Britton Porter

Larita Cooper-Stokes

Patricia Wise



HONORABLE CHARLES STOKES  
HINDS COUNTY TAX ASSESSOR

*These words only begin to describe my friend, Mrs. Ineva May Pittman*



**Because of her loving, joyous, faithful, strong, giving, soulful spirit, we all rise a little higher.**

—Hinds County Tax Collector Eddie Fair