

Sisters named Amory's outstanding citizens

by Chris Wilson/Monroe Journal
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AMORY - The look was shock, bordering on disbelief. When two longtime former educators were named Amory's Outstanding Citizens of the Year at opening ceremonies of the Railroad Festival Thursday afternoon, their faces revealed that it came as a total surprise.

Amory Junior Auxiliary named sisters Karen Cox and Marcia

Archer its 2011 Outstanding Citizens of the Year based on their commitment of volunteer service to their community. In making the award, JA member Heidi Nelson said the sisters were chosen as outstanding citizens based on the fact that they give of themselves for the betterment of their community.

The women are regular volunteers not only through their church's ministries, but also at the Amory Food Pantry and in visiting local nursing homes and hospitals. They also generously give of their time to transport the area's elderly and the physically handicapped as needed.

"Karen and Marcia choose to invest their time by encouraging and helping the needy in our community by giving unselfishly to the underserved and physically impaired," said JA's Misty Oswalt.

"As teachers, Karen and Marcia are giving by nature, that's why Junior Auxiliary of Amory chose them as its Citizens of the Year," Oswalt told the crowd.

Both of the women have been residents of Amory since 1964 when their late parents, National Guard Major Army Advisor Fred Tabbert and his wife, Mary, moved their family to Amory.

Karen is a graduate of Amory High School where she was valedictorian of her class. She earned her teaching degree from Delta State University and taught math in the Amory Schools 10 years and in Okolona Schools for 13 years. She is married to John Cox and they have two children, Heather Cox Goza, who is married to Bunky Goza, and Jon Issac Cox and his wife, Farris. She also has one grandchild, Kami Goza, age 6.

Marcia Archer is a graduate of Amory High School where she was an honor student. She received her teaching degree in language arts at the Mississippi State College for Women. She is a retired teacher, having

taught sixth grade in Amory Schools for 35 years. She was married to the late James Archer and has a daughter, Leigh Anne Archer Erikson and husband Chris, and two grandchildren, Campbell Erickson, age 6, and James Christopher, age 2.

When Marcia and Karen are not traveling the world, they are involved with their children, grandchildren and volunteering. They are both members of St. Andrews United Methodist Church in Amory where Karen is the chairman and Marcia is the co-chairman of Social Events. Both regularly help with the church's Angel Food ministry that provides low-cost food each month to anyone who wishes to purchase it.

Cox said the award came as a total surprise to her. "I had no clue," she said. "It means a lot to me. A lot of people do a lot more than I do so I really appreciate this award."

Archer also said she was surprised by the announcement of the award. She said their family had coaxed them down to Frisco Park using a fib about another family member supposedly up for an award. Archer, dressed in jeans, said her first thought when her name was called out was, "Oh my gosh, look what I'm wearing."

"I'm overwhelmed. There's so many more people who deserve this more than I do," she said. "We get more blessings than the people we help when we volunteer."