

## The Community Flag

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*Saturday, September 13, 1997*

# Senior adults of the year honored

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*Ed Blochowiak/SNS*

Immanuel Baptist Church honored three "Senior Adults of the Year" in recent services celebrating grandparents'/seniors' day.

A.V. Daugherty was named "Man of the Year" and the first tie in the honor's history named both Lillian Fite and Wanda Gardner as "Women of the Year."

Immanuel Baptist Church's "Senior Adults of the Year" are, from left, A.V. Daugherty, Lillian Fite and Wanda Gardner. The award honors longtime service leaders in the church.

"We started this award several years ago to give us an opportunity to honor those who have been involved in our church life for so many years," said Sam Hendry, Immanuel minister of education and minister to senior adults.

Lillian Fite and her husband, John, have been members since 1990 when they retired from their work at the Baptist Children's Home in Oklahoma City.

"We were house parents for 69 girls in five years," she said. "Then we moved into administrative work and retired after 20 years."

The couple was in the pastorate for 23 years previously, including Sharon Baptist Church and Oklahoma Avenue Baptist Church. They are the parents of two daughters and grandparents of three; numerous others count themselves "adopted" family.

Mrs. Fite is active in the Sarah class, TNT senior adult group, Jesus Heirs choir and other activities at Immanuel. Ballots for the honor cite her "sweet, giving spirit and support of John in his work with special ministries."

Wanda Gardner became a member at Immanuel when she was 16. She and her husband, Cap, were married in the church 54 years ago.

"My parents' example of being active in church for so long influenced

me greatly," she said.

She was director of the college department for many years and helped in the young married class. She was one of the founding members of the prayer chapel ministry and also continues to serve in benevolence committee functions, TNT and Jesus Heirs.

Mrs. Gardner worked in the OBU book store for 28 years. Her husband also is retired from OBU. They have three children, three great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

A.V. Daugherty has been a member of Immanuel for 45 years and has taught Sunday school since he was 19.

"We've had wonderful pastors in those years," he said. "I've loved them all."

Daugherty is in his 41st year as treasurer of the Pottawatomie-Lincoln Baptist Association, his 23rd year as treasurer of Faith 7 Activity Center and his 11th year as teacher of Immanuel's Sanct-uary class.

He is a deacon, a Gideon and former state president of the Gideon Bible Society. He also is a founding member of the prayer chapel ministry, and active in TNT and Jesus Heirs. He has aided in prison ministries and many other church functions.

Daugherty said he was a schoolteacher "until I was starved out." He owned Daugherty Insurance in Shawnee until his retirement.

He and his wife, Lucille, have five daughters, two sons, 21 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

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