



Elderly Mt. Pleasant Lady Proves You're Never too Old to Learn a New Skill

Name: Annie Woodson

Location:
Mt. Pleasant/Maury County

Innovative Insight:
"Everything is going to computers, and it's good be competitive no matter what your age is."

Importance of Technology:
"It's imperative to know how to access a computer nowadays."

For More Information: Visit the Mt. Pleasant Community Foundation online at www.mpacf.org.

Mt. Pleasant, TN – When Annie Woodson decided to enroll in a continuing education course, more than 50 years had passed since she had received her high school diploma. In June, the 91-year-old student became the oldest person to complete the course sponsored by the Mt. Pleasant Community Foundation. Woodson, who was born before computers were invented, took a course that taught her how to operate the devices. "I wasn't able to take any of those classes when I was in school," said Woodson. The grandmother worked as a secretary for Maury Regional Hospital for 30 years but never had extensive training with computers.

Family members said they resorted to some coaxing to get Woodson to enroll. "She had some opposition to it," her son Leland Webster, 67, said with a chuckle. "But then she got a computer which her grandkids set up for her. After that she wanted to learn more about it."

Webster, who along with his sister Ruth Mayes had taken the classes at the town's community center, nudged his mother along. After starting the class, Webster said his mother loved it. "I think it's fine for anybody and great for her to do it at that age," he said. "Everything is going to computers, and it's good be competitive no matter what your age is."

Woodson, who enjoys fishing and doing church work in her spare time, said she tries to stay active. "I try to be there," she said. "People keep telling me I'm not that old."

Derek Church, who is on the community foundation's board, said the foundation offers 3-4 classes per year which last for 10 weeks. He said the next batch of classes will start after Labor Day. The classes were started for people in their 50s and 60s who want to learn now to use computers, Church said. The course begins with basic skills, such as turning on a computer, and progress to e-mail and the Internet. "It's imperative to know how to access a computer nowadays," he said. "The graduates we've had have given us nothing but positive comments." More than 70 people have graduated from the adult classes, and there is always a waiting list, Church said. The community center also hosts classes for people trying to obtain their GED. Church said he got a chance to meet Woodson before she graduated.

"She's full of life, and I hope I can make it that long. She would be my role model," he said.

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