

Northwest Arkansas Oral History Project  
 Juanita Whiteside Interview Abstract  
 October 17, 2018

Interviewee	Juanita Whiteside
Year of birth	1928
Place of birth	Olmitz, Barton County, Kansas
Interviewer	Camille Hatcher
Interview date	2018-10-17
Interview location	Kindley House; Gravette, Benton County, Arkansas
Keywords	Whiteside, Juanita Hatcher, Camille Gravette, Benton County, Arkansas Sulphur Springs, Benton County, Arkansas Olmitz, Barton County, Kansas Dalhart, Dallam County, Texas Billy V. Hall Senior Center; Gravette, Benton County, Arkansas Care and Share; Gravette, Benton County, Arkansas First Baptist Church; Gravette, Benton County, Arkansas Avon Products Cake baking Churches Depression, economic Health care Hospitals Schools Small town living World War II
Description	<p>Juanita Whiteside was not sure about moving to Arkansas from Texas. That happened when her carpenter husband, Cecil, got a job offer in Sulphur Springs. Now, years later, she is thankful for the life she's spent in Sulphur Springs and Gravette Arkansas.</p> <p>Whiteside, born in Kansas in 1928, lived through the Depression. Likely it was one reason the family moved to Texas when she was six weeks old. Though these were hard years, she does not remember the family as being 'really poor.' There was always meat, milk and eggs.</p> <p>Whiteside met her husband after he returned to Texas following World War II. They married when she was 17; her Dad had to sign the papers. A job offer for her husband to construct chicken houses brought the family to Sulphur Springs. Here they raised three sons, farmed, and worked on their home. To help meet people, Whiteside became an Avon lady. She shares stories of customers wanting her to demonstrate Avon products, paying her from grocery money, and hiding the catalogs from husbands. Being the Avon lady was only one of Whiteside's varied occupations. She helped keep the nursery at Gravette's First</p>

	<p>Baptist Church, worked as a ward secretary in the hospital in Gravette, was the baker in the Gravette school's cafeteria, and became an accomplished cake baker. Stories about her baking skills include making 600 cookies for school lunch and for 27 years creating wedding and birthday cakes.</p> <p>Whiteside considers her years in home health care to be her best job. It meant taking a test, but her years working at the hospital helped her pass that test. For one client she arrived each day to prepare breakfast, shared time watching TV or embroidering, and left by 3 pm when the client's daughter returned. In her words 'it was a nice job—she loved the family.'</p> <p>Whiteside is a widow, now living in Gravette. Her three sons and their families live close: one son lives in Bentonville; one farms in the Maysville area; the third son is retired from the Bella Vista Fire Department and teaches welding at the Gravette high school.</p> <p>Most days you will find Whiteside at Gravette's Senior Center. There she enjoys lunch, dominos, exercise, and entertainment. She is a regular volunteer for Care and Share.</p>
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Questions or Comments	<a href="https://nwaoralhistory.org">https://nwaoralhistory.org</a>
Interview sidebar	Whiteside says she has lived so long because 'I've always been active. I've always been willing to do something...I see things that need to be done...I get the urge [to step in].' [00:30:29]