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Interview with Carolyn Montague Laffitte and "Callie" Wienges

Carolyn Montague Laffitte
SC Mother of the Year Committee

Callie Wienges
SC Mother of the Year Committee

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South Carolina Mother of the Year Award Oral History Archives
Interview Transcript

Mrs. O.H. (Callie) Wienges and Mrs. R. (Carol) Montague Laffitte Interview
Members of the SC Mother of the Year Award Selection Committee
May 14, 2015

Dr. Disney: Good afternoon. My name is Dr. Jennifer Leigh Disney and I am honored to be here interviewing a mother daughter team who have both served on the South Carolina Mothers Association, the Mother of the Year Award Selection Committee. The two women we are interviewing now are Mrs. Mrs. Callie Wienges and Mrs. Mrs. Carol Laffitte. Thank you both for being here today.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Thank you for having us.

Dr. Disney: Thank you for having us in your beautiful home as well. So I want to start, I'm going to ask one question and we'll give a chance for each of you, Callie could answer first then Carol could answer, some of it will be overlapping because of your joined experience as a mother daughter family growing up but I think this will be a beautiful way to kind of capture what we're here to talk about, which is women and mothers and families. So let's start with when and where were you born and raised and tell us a little bit about your family, education, and early childhood experience.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: I was born in Barnwell, South Carolina, which they used to call the capitol of the whole state because we used to have a senator from there, a governor from there, and a member of the House of Representatives there and one lived across the street, next door, and one around the corner from us. We were always seeing the politicians' cars driving in and out of the driveway and we'd stand on the picket fence and watch over there and my dad would say, "Y'all quite watching over there" and these big black cars would run in. I'm sure it was somebody who wanted a bill passed and wanted their consent. It was fun to watch all these politicians and they were so nice to all the children there in the neighborhood.

Dr. Disney: That's great, that's a great memory.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: I was born in Columbia – Columbia, South Carolina – and Daddy was in the field farming when Momma went into labor so somebody had to get clean clothes for him to get to Columbia so he could see me. I grew up here, on Singleton Plantation, and just about the best childhood anybody could have. Daddy would let me go to work with him until I started first grade so I rode the combines and the tractors. It just was probably the best childhood anyone could have.

Dr. Disney: That's beautiful, I love that. Tell us about your young adult life and when you started your families.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: When I was married to Arthur Wienges, who lived in St. Matthews on a farm, I never lived on a farm but I had visited people on the farm and I had to get used to a lot of things like if I needed something to do around the house, I would say, "Go out in the field and get my husband" and they said, "We can't stop the whole process of gathering a crop just to see about you." So, I learned quickly that the farming came first, depending on the weather which was so important and still is.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: Well one thing I might say is Momma could fix things better than Daddy, because he was never available so she just figured out –

Mrs. Callie Wienges: - with my screwdriver and my hammers and all –

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: - how to fix it.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Plus my dad would let me follow him around when he was fixing things for Mother so I learned a lot from him and it was fun doing that. But on the farm here, I had to learn a lot in a short period of time. My father in law would say that, "You know when we're busy on the farm, you'll have to take his dinner to the field with him and he'll just get off the combine and come sit in the car with you" and I said, "Okay...well, what do I do really?" Nobody gave me instructions so I just said, "Well" and I took a towel and I wet it on one end and had it dry on the other because actually, when you've been cutting in a field like that, your face is just like soot, with all the dust and things. And he would park and I would give him the towel and he'd clean off his face and then I fixed his dinner and the first thing I took him – and they laughed at me, all the men, all the farmers in town laughed at me for years – I took him some fish and he said, "Uh Callie, I don't know how I'm gonna eat this" and you know he was dirty and he had the towel but he needed to figure out a way to get the meat off the bones. So I said, "Oh, I'm sorry I'll do better next time" and I had a learning experience about taking his meals. One thing he did love was sweet iced tea, all the people in this area don't you think like sweet iced tea? – anyway, I started putting pineapple juice in all his things and course that made him more thirsty I guess, I'm not sure, but he enjoyed having somebody come out there and give him a little break and he worked there side by side with the help, which I thought was a very smart thing to do because if your help sees you working too, working side by side with them and getting dirty like they were and eating a meal in the field like they were, you know, they had a little more respect for you and also they were more willing to do what you asked them to do. So I enjoyed working with the help too and we became good friends, all of them would walk through this road right out here that you see, and all of them would say, "We're going to get the mail" and the mailbox was right down there across the river and they would go get mail. They would come back through there and they would holler at me, we were living in the other house over there and it had a big screen-in front porch, and I would have Carol in there with the door latched and she would have a huge area to play and you know they would watch her and they would say, "Can we come see the baby?" and I would say, "Please do" and they would come over there and I would say, "Now this is Carol, my little girl" and they would pick her up and hold her and love her so we became good friends with all of them. We knew the wash woman, we knew every one of them, and they were always wanting to come down and help do anything, yard work and all that, I didn't know what all we needed done you know, but I would just look around and try to figure out, "Now what can they do? Oh yeah, they can do this." But anyways, they soon learned to wash windows and things like that, they helped me out. I loved the little house, I think Carol liked it as well, 'cause this house – we loved it because it was just like being, you could do anything you want to over there really. One day, Carol says, "I think I'm gonna get me a little pack and put it on my back and leave, I think I'm gonna leave and run away 'cause..." something didn't suit her. And so we stood there on the porch a little while and I thought, "How am I gonna handle this?" So I said, "Well okay, don't stay too long" and I said it like that and I packed her lunch and –

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: - tied it in a handkerchief, tied it on a stick, and handed it to me and said, "Don't stay too long," she didn't say, "Don't go!"

Mrs. Callie Wienges: I said, "Be careful!" and I was hoping I was saying all these things that would draw her back and she got out a little bit and looked back, and then she'd walk a little bit further and look back and I think you said, "I don't think I'll go today" or something like that and so I said, "Well come on back" and so you just have to keep doing that, you have to play

momma for your child and whatever, which I did do, I'd wash little dishes with her in her playhouse and I'd said, "She's gonna have a playhouse" and a man came to build the playhouse and he was gonna, we lived in the little house over there and we may have seen him coming, but that house had been a home for so many of the family members who had lived in the country who had yet not built their home and my father-in-law would let them live in the house until the next person needed it, until they built their home, and they finally said, "My son's coming home, you got to move out!" So, we came, when we came home, we moved in and the big front porch is a playground for my child and when the people would go through there getting the mail, just right there over the railroad track, they would holler at me, "Hey Mrs. Callie" and I'd say, "Hey" and they'd say, "We're coming over there to see the baby" and I said, "Well come on" and I don't think they had been treated with that kind of invitation to come in your home like that because obviously there weren't any young children out there at the time and I said, "Come on by" and they said, "We can come in?" and I said, "Come on in" and they'd all pick her up and hold her up and look at her, hug her and love her, you know that was the beginning of my relationship with the people who grew up here on this farm. They were so proud to be asked to come because their parents had known my husband's parents and grandparents so this was a kind of going thing and we became real close and like they said, "We can come over there and speak to you?" and I said, "Yeah, I want you to come see my baby" and so they would come and they became a part of my life as much as anybody else. I invited them down and gave them breakfast sometimes, it was great. You know, it was just a wonderful thing.

Dr. Disney: And you lived in that home while this home was being built, is that correct?

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: Well we lived there until I was ten, ten or eleven. It was a fun house to live in.

Dr. Disney: Why don't you each tell us what were you dreams, goals, and aspirations as young women? Before you were married, after you were married, some of both.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well we had some dance teachers that would come to our school in the afternoon and sign up for us to take dancing lessons, it was almost completely apart from the school but they used the school auditorium for their reviews and all that and so Mother said, "Y'all wanna take dancing?" and I said, "Oh yeah!" I could visualize my sisters and I dancing on the stage in New York and all this kind of stuff, we were just building dream after dream. So, Mother said, "Well you can take dancing as long as y'all are interested in it" and we could tap and all that and we had a special number for each one of us to do, you know, the members. We had a wonderful time taking dancing lessons and finally that became old hat so we said, "We need to hang this up, Momma and Daddy" so we did, but it gave us a sense of rhythm and music and appreciation for those who could dance. I was amazed and loved those tap shoes and all those fast dancers. We would take ballet, too. So we had a little bit of that, dancing lessons. And that was in my high school too. So I enjoyed being introduced to all that. I don't know that later on, I would have ever had the nerve to get up and dance with other people, particularly when you're here with real teenagers, you know.

Dr. Disney: Exactly. How about you, Mrs. Carol?

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: Like Mrs. Watson, I am a Columbia College graduate. I had a good friend in high school who had a speech impediment and my goal was to become a speech therapist, which I did, so it's nice to be able to have a goal and to meet it. I always wanted to be a mother and a grandmother and I am.

Dr. Disney: So that's what I want to ask you next – tell us about how you met your husbands and about having children and that part of your lives.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Oh well I'll tell you I met my husband at the University of South Carolina and actually I met him through a good friend who was a good friend of his, too. So we started all going out together and it sort of dwindled down to he would come over, my present husband, he would come over to the sorority house and visit all our sorority members and we just had fun. He liked to dance and he was interested in all sorts of things, he liked horseracing and everything, you name it, his interests were just wide open. We had a wonderful time when I'd go out with him, he didn't just sit in a movie and drive around the block and all that sort of stuff, he always had something interesting for us to do. He would find out if a horse show was going on in Columbia or we would go out of town to something, every time he had something interesting for us to do. That was fun.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: I met my husband on a blind date. My husband's father, Daddy and the good friend that got us the date were all fraternity brothers and so I met him on a blind date. We dated for several years, got married our senior year in college and he went to medical school and we were in Charleston, went to Greenville for residency, and have never come back home.

Dr. Disney: So you live in Charleston?

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: No, we live in Greenville. He went to school in Charleston and we moved to Greenville and we got three children. Most of the men in my husband's family are bankers or doctors and our boys are bankers and our daughter works for the South Carolina Bankers Association.

Dr. Disney: Wow, that's great. You must be very proud. So how about you? Tell us about the early part of your marriage and having children and that kind of thing.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well when we were first married, my husband said, "Now you know we'll be living on a farm" and I said, "Yeah, that's right, you told me." So the house wasn't ready that we were gonna live in temporarily so we moved in with his parents after we came home, we moved in with them for about, well it started out to be about a week but it turned out being three months. I was trying to adjust to a new husband and some new in-laws and farm life and my husband getting up at the crack of dawn to go out to work and I'm sitting in the little house over there, "What do I do now?" I made these elaborate breakfasts, he loved to eat too, so that kept me busy.

Dr. Disney: So let me ask you about this, what does motherhood mean to each of you?

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well, it made me realize what my mother had gone through in raising us and it make me realize when she said, "No", she meant it and I respected that and so did my sisters. I had two sisters, one older and one younger, and we all three, my dad always told us, "You be sure you do what your mother tells you to do – you better listen to her" and so we had that hanging over our heads all the time, of course not speaking how you better listen to your dad too. He laid down some laws which we abided by and they were good, not too strict but you knew he cared about you. Later on, you could look back and see that.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: But y'all didn't learn that cause y'all were really strict with me!

Dr. Disney:

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well they made us strict!

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: The way you misbehaved! Well I think motherhood is a privilege. For me, it's the most special relationship you can have and it's just, that was another goal of mine – to be a mother and grandmother – I just don't think it can get any better than being a mother and a grandmother. But it is a privilege and you do go through lots of hard times and lots of joyous times as we all know and I'm just very blessed to have the three children that I do have.

Dr. Disney: How did you both become members of the South Carolina Mothers Association – the selection committee for the South Carolina Mother of the Year?

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well, Leslie McNair was more or less in charge of some of those selections, but my husband was on the board of trustees at the University and they were looking around all through the state trying to find people to represent almost all of the areas in the state which led them to all these people that ended up on the committee, which I thought was a good thing, not just to pick a name. These were people that were more or less interviewed because I remember when I was on the committee selecting, I realized the trouble that had been gone through to select – these were people who were special mothers. I mean, think about South Carolina and all the wonderful mothers, you really had to find these with a fine-tooth comb and it really was fun to look into the lives of all these people and to know what they had done and here we were, rubbing backs and talking to each other, didn't know all the things they had accomplished as being on that selection committee and so you waded heavily when you selected somebody, there were too many wonderful mothers out there to choose from. You know, we just – it was tough cause there were a lot of good mothers.

Dr. Disney: How many years did you serve Callie? Do you remember when you first became a committee member?

Mrs. Callie Wienges: I can't really remember, we were first started under Mrs. McNair. Do any of y'all remember? Well, y'all probably don't remember that either cause I was on before anyone in this room.

Dr. Disney: Of anyone in this room, you were the earliest member? You were the first in this room, that's great.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: I wondered what it was gonna entail and Josie McNair, the governor's wife, was a good friend and her husband had known my husband. I think they were in college part of the time, they were a little bit older than I but they had been college at the same time and they had known each other earlier in life, in college life and so they would let me in on all the things that they had done and tried to tell me when I transferred from a girl's school to Carolina, I was at Limestone College and transferred down to the University of South Carolina. My sister was already at the University of South Carolina. I wanted to leave and I didn't want to leave. I wanted to know what it was like to live in a girl's school and it was absolutely wonderful and I almost cried when I was going to transfer but I said, "I've got to do it, it's one of my goals. I'd like to go to a co-educational school." So I transferred and my sister was already in a sorority so I joined her sorority and the rest in history. I met my husband there.

Dr. Disney: What field did you study at USC?

Mrs. Callie Wienges: I was in retailing, I wanted to be a buyer. My dreams were to go – I loved fashion and I took a lot of courses at Carolina which introduced me to it and made me like it even more. I was thinking about going to Atlanta, I had an opportunity to go out to Atlanta and start out decorating windows and get into a little bit of selecting clothes, particularly women's fashions – that's what I liked. So when I decided to do that, my husband would take me to work there. You know, it just grew – our relationship grew. He would pick me up after work and we went out together. He loved football, I did too – we had a good time. I think the university was just the right rounding off for my college – to be able to go to a girl's school and then to a co-educational school.

Dr. Disney: Right, that's great. You got the best of both worlds.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: I did, I really did and my sisters enjoyed it likewise.

Dr. Disney: So Carol, when did you get involved in the Mother's Association?

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: Gosh, I don't know how long ago it's been but the Greenville representative resigned and she was nice enough nominate me to be on the committee. I'd heard Mama talk about it and I was delighted at the opportunity that we could serve on the same committee together. Mama usually did the tea at the mansion and y'all were nice enough to let me do the tea too, so I got to work with her on that.

Dr. Disney: I'm so glad you mentioned that because I wanted to ask you. So I'm going to ask you a broader question and you can give specifics. How did your membership on the committee impact you, your family, and your community? And maybe in that, you could talk a little bit about the activities, like the teas at the Governor's mansion and the things you were directly involved with.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well, I inherited the teas for the mansion so I went early and said, "Can we always have the tea here?" because what a better place than to introduce all these mothers, these previous mothers plus their friends, to the Governor's mansion? They were so pleased to come as well as to see the Mother of the Year, they were pleased to see the rooms and I could take them to all the rooms and tell them what rooms were used for and they said, "We can walk around in here?" and I said, "Yes" cause I had gotten earlier what permission I had to take them where - always guided by one of us to take them in other parts of the house, never upstairs but downstairs, we were free to go around to all the rooms.

Dr. Disney: Not everyone gets that opportunity to spend time in the Governor's mansion.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: Mama certainly knows how to plan a party, down to the last detail and it was fun, it was fun to work with her on that so I think we can plan a good party if we need to.

Dr. Disney: That's what I've heard, I've heard great stories about the detail that Callie, the care and attention that you would give to the teas, the food and the sandwiches and everything.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: I had a meeting with the staff at the mansion, they said, "We'll fix a good tea" and I said, "No, I wanna know what you're gonna be serving and am I free to make suggestions?" I said, "I've seen -"

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: She felt free to tell them exactly what to do.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Amen! Cause they'd served biscuits that big one year and I said, "How do you eat that? We'll have to cut that one." I had a few suggestions for them to make. I even went in the kitchen and told them, but anyway. If you're gonna put me in charge of it, I don't wanna put my name on it if it's all done wrong.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: You made sure it was all done right, down to the flowers too. I think there was one incident when the florist didn't come through and Mama went in the garden at the mansion and just sniped a few branches and before you know it, it was beautiful in there.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: We put it in the dining room and I said these were my flowers from my new florist. Anyway, I didn't say much more and finally they we had gone out in the yard and picked all her pretty flowers and she didn't care really, she probably didn't know what flowers were out there but anyways. We had a real good time having those teas because I said, "You have got to put it down on a level where it's not so stiff and people can enjoy themselves." I said, "Talk when you go through the receiving line" and they started doing that and you could hardly get through the receiving line but I thought it was more about visiting with the people who came, who gave up their time to come meet this mother and enjoy meeting her friends. We stood around and went from room to room, trying to help people feel welcome. I know one lady from China was there and she was sitting in a dining room chair up against the wall and I said, "What are you doing sitting there?" She said, "I don't know everybody here!" I said, "You don't have to know but one person, get up." So we went around the table and before we left, she had a big

smile on her face and I said, “A lot of people are just like you, they don’t know anybody else here too. Weave your way around and have a good time.” I said, “Go around the porch back there and get ice water or tea, come get coffee here” and you know if you just give them the go-ahead to feel free and enjoy people as well as food. Some people concentrated on the food, other people didn’t want to do anything but visit, which is wonderful.

Dr. Disney: I sure feel like I missed out because I have never participated in a Mother of the Year Award Tea at the Governor’s mansion.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well you know, when they first said we could have it there, I said, “I wanna know what they’re gonna do and what they’re gonna serve.” I said, “You’re not gonna put those pull down coffee machines up there, are you?” I did, I asked them that.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: Well, they put some inappropriate stainless steel things on the table and Mama went back there and polished a few trays and put out the good silver.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: They showed me where the silver was in the closet and I said, “You should have been using that instead of this.” She said, “Are you gonna be in charge of the tea next year?” I said, “Maybe.”

Dr. Disney: Do you know how long the teas at the Governor’s mansion continued and when they stopped?

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: They stopped two years ago, didn’t they? But I’m not sure how long they’ve been there.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well the first time they had it, I said, “Can we have it here again, Josephine?”

Dr. Disney: So who was the governor the first time when the tea started?

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Bob McNair.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: That was when you first on there.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Bob McNair and Josephine, we had known because she lived about 16 miles from our hometown, Barnwell, and I had known her and my family had known her. We knew them more than just meeting them.

Dr. Disney: I want to switch gears a little bit and start asking you all some general questions about women and mothers. So I’m gonna get your opinions on these. What do you think are the most important issues facing women today?

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well I think women have come into the world a little bit more, year by year, have eased in to more positions that only men knew. And now they’re speaking out and I think they have something to say. Being a woman, I would think that naturally, but still that’s not just because I’m a woman, I think they really have something to say and they haven’t been heard for a long time and now they are. I just think it’s beginning to be more equal about opinions and things like that for men and women.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: We were talking about this last night and what Mama said last night was she thought the hardest thing facing women was balance between their careers, because most women work now, but that balance between career, family, church, and then she added, and your husband. Husband is a different category all together but we agree on that, we feel the same way about that.

Dr. Disney: Well I had that exact question so you guys led right into what I was going to say which is what are some of the challenges that you both face working inside the home, work outside the home, volunteerism, community, family, husband, children, and how do you think the women of today – do they have the same challenges, different challenges? Talk a little bit about that, that question of balance.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: I think they face maybe more challenges because more women work. My daughter-in-law went back to work after her children – well after her first two were born but now she's able to stay home. I was fortunate that I worked until I had children. You know life is real different now than it was then.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Yes, I think it is too because I can look back through my life and hear what my mother had to say and look through Carol's life and now her children, the families that they have.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: And your great grandchildren.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: Oh yeah, can't leave out the great grandchildren. But anyway, it's just wonderful, each step I think is wonderful. You think being a wife – oh I've got to do everything for my husband, this, that, and the other. Then you have children and your children, between the two of you, children become so important – at least it did with us. We wanted to take them everywhere we went. In fact, we'd play cards at night with our friends, bridge, and we would take her on a blanket and put her on when she was too little to crawl off of it and stay there when we played bridge. You know, we included them with every area of our life. If we started somewhere and we didn't Carol with us, I didn't want to leave her in the home. We got to the place where we just had to have a little separation between mother and daughter and you know, grow that way too.

Dr. Disney: That's so important as well. Do you think women's work and women's roles as mothers are adequately recognized by society?

Mrs. Callie Wienges: I'm not sure about that. So many women have careers now and I don't know, I guess they're recognized more than they were in the past but I don't know how I feel about all of that.

Dr. Disney: Maybe more now but maybe not as much as they should be.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well so many of them have all these careers and a lot of people don't even know about it until it's introduced to society in a different way and they say, "I didn't know women could do that." You know, I think it's grown by leaps and bounds a little bit, I think. I don't know what you all think, but I think women are stepping out more than they ever have and are able to see their careers because their husbands help and a lot of other reasons.

Dr. Disney: Do you both see yourselves as working mothers?

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: Always. Always the engineer.

Dr. Disney: How about do you see yourselves as feminists? And what does feminism mean to you? Let's start with that one.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well you know, I was thinking about that when you asked that earlier, when I read about it a little bit. It just means a lot of things I think, it's hard to really put a fine definition on it because a woman wants a career, she wants to be her right husband's wife, she wants to be the right mother, a lot of them, most of them do. I'm not sure how I feel about all of that.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: I think feminist used to have a bad connotation and today, I don't think it does. It's just being yourself and trying to achieve the goals that you want.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: And you can speak out some more without being so criticized for it.

Dr. Disney: I agree with you, I think you're right. I think it's moved from potentially having a negative connotation to being about choice, to women having the choice to be mothers, to have careers, to not be mothers, to not careers, to feel that they have a voice that they can share with their husbands and their society and to set goals and to achieve them and at least strive for equality in society.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well I worked a little longer, while I was out of school I was in retailing, and I just thought it would be wonderful to follow that career, but you know, it really didn't last that long because there was so much other in this world to look forward to. Just joining the clubs around my hometown here and just knowing what all these women had done for the women's groups here, I thought it worked out real good to have the women be a part of that.

Dr. Disney: What kind of women's groups were you involved in in your community?

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well just like my husband was the American Legion, of course we had to be the American Legion Women's Club and it's that kind of thing. The Lion's Club, you have to be the Lion Ladies and while it was a good thing, I didn't especially want to have a meeting just because they had a meeting but we did that anyway and I'd go sit with some of the other men's wives and I said, "We've got to do something about this" and we formed a bridge club and did other things.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: Mama also, well you also started the Brownie Scouts.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Oh yeah, when she came of age, I said, "Do y'all have a Brownie Scouts around here?" "No." I said, "Okay, I'll be it because nobody else would take it." Not because it was a choice but because nobody else would take it. I just moved up the same way with her in Sunday school, they didn't have a little Sunday school class for her so I went in and taught her class. When she moved to the next class, I went with her because there wasn't a teacher there so they had to fill the needs of the class before her because they weren't getting me back unless I could take my daughter and teacher. It was fun to follow her through everything like that, Brownie Scouts, Girl Scouts, in Sunday school, Bible too, all those things. We participated in all of that.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: And the other thing you didn't say was Mama's been President of the Women of the Church for probably over fifty years.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: That's because nobody else will take it.

Dr. Disney: So a great leader in your church and community and families.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: Yes, she is.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well I won't say that but I'll take a job when nobody else will and I'm afraid it'll fall apart. I'm afraid it'll fall apart and our church is small anyways, I can't let that do that.

Dr. Disney: Well that's commitment and leadership.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: I came from a big Baptist church so coming to a little Presbyterian church, I said, "When are all the members coming to church?" "This is it for today." I said, "Oh my gosh, well I can't go to the Baptist church next week, I'll have to come back here and help this church." I never, I never - this is the honest truth, I never left the Presbyterian church to visit the Baptist church or any other church in town, I felt like, I'm just one less in this little church and it's about to fall apart anyway. But it really wasn't about to fall apart, there'd always be small membership and those members stuck hard so I stuck to them.

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: Small, but strong.

Dr. Disney: Small, but strong. Are there any questions from our guests in the room who might want - anything I've left out in terms of mothers, committees, mothers of the year? Is there anything I left out? Anything I need to follow up on? And if not, how about you guys, is there anything else, any questions you have for us, any comments, anything else you want to share about your experience being mothers, being on the Mother of the Year Committee?

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well I think every phase of life is so wonderful, you think you know it all about the one you've come into, but you don't know anything. And Mom and Dad don't know

anything, because I'd go sit at the foot of their bed and ask them a question and Daddy would almost be asleep and I'd say, "Please listen Daddy, I'm asking you a question." But you know it was just fun just sitting there on their feet at the foot of the bed, talking to them and I felt free enough to talk to my family about any situation when I'd go out on a date and we would sit and talk and that's good.

Dr. Disney: That's right, that is good. Anything else?

Mrs. Callie Wienges:

Mrs. Carol Laffitte: It's just been a wonderful experience, I've met so many new friends and Martha and Boo and meeting the Mothers of the Year, it's been a special experience, a lot of friends I wouldn't have met otherwise.

Dr. Disney: That's wonderful. Thank you both, thank you for opening up your home and your time and your lives, sharing with us today. I feel like I've become a part of the Mother of the Year family, the association.

Mrs. Callie Wienges: Well you have!

Dr. Disney: Thank you for inviting me in to join, it's been a wonderful experience. I've met many new friends I would not have otherwise met, thanks to this woman right here – Martha and Shirley! She brings us together, they both do. Thank you both very much, thank you.