

**Pat Herndon**  
**2010 Opal Durant**  
**Granbury Woman of the Year Award Recipient**

Pat Herndon is the 2010 Opal Durant Woman of the Year. She was nominated for this special award by multiple friends and co-servants at Mission Granbury where Herndon has worked as a volunteer for many years.

Pat grew up in the small Arkansas town of Jacksonville, about 10 miles from Little Rock. She was raised in a single parent home from about age 5, with a sister and brother. Her Dad was a pioneer in his time—he not only provided basic needs, he provided lots of love and what Pat calls “a binding force” in their lives...the First Baptist Church. “Every Sunday morning, Sunday night and, of course, Wednesday nights we were in church,” Herndon recalled. “I never felt motherless because I knew God loved me and my dad was always there—and he loved me,” she said.

She married, had two children—Natalie and Nathan, and went to college along the way. Herndon has a double B.A. in speech-communications and elementary education.

She served children both as a school teacher and a Sunday School teacher, as well as PTA president several times. As a teacher, Herndon said, she saw a little bit of everything. “Hunger, no socks, no shoes, no homework and many bruises—and the worst of all, no parents,” she stated. “The schools and churches always did a great job and I knew that I could help the children with their lessons, school supplies, homework and by loving them.”

Herndon has made a mark in the Granbury area as an asset and strong advocate in organizing and working in the Mission Granbury auxiliary where she served as its first president for two years.

She arrived in Granbury in 1996 and now calls Granbury First Methodist her church home. She has worked tirelessly to help meet the needs of the battered women and children who became clients at the Ada Carey Center (ACC). To help make these shattered lives a little brighter, she has hosted holiday festivities at the center several times a year, and enlisted her hairdresser to come to the center and give free haircuts. For some, it was the first ever professional haircut.

A tutoring/mentoring program, now known as “The Herndon Mentoring Program,” was initiated. The mentoring program is designed to help children from battered homes with their school homework, provide tutoring where needed, to listen if they want to talk, and to read to them.

She also enlisted the help of the Hood County Library to bring their "Reading Nook" to the children at ACC once a week. In addition, she has headed up "Camp Carey" which has given a week of camp fun in the summer.

Now Pat is the matriarch of her blended family which consists of five children, Dayna (deceased), Elliot, David, Natalie and Nathan (all grown) and her wonderful husband of 27 years, Chuck.

Over the years, Herndon said, she's seen children smile more, grades improve and Moms begin to realize they are God's gift to their children. "Women have completed school, found jobs and learned to love themselves. So this is and always has been my focus to help that little child or strengthen a mom. We have a lot of work to do because Jesus said the poor and needy will always be with us."