

Preeminent Purposeful Progress Health and Harmony

# CARATS

## INCORPORATED

National President's Newsletter  
Volume 1



### CHAPTERS

Atlanta | Baltimore | Chattanooga  
Chicago | Cleveland | Columbus  
Detroit | Macon | Miami  
Montgomery | New York | Philadelphia  
St. Louis | Washington D.C.



*February 2017*

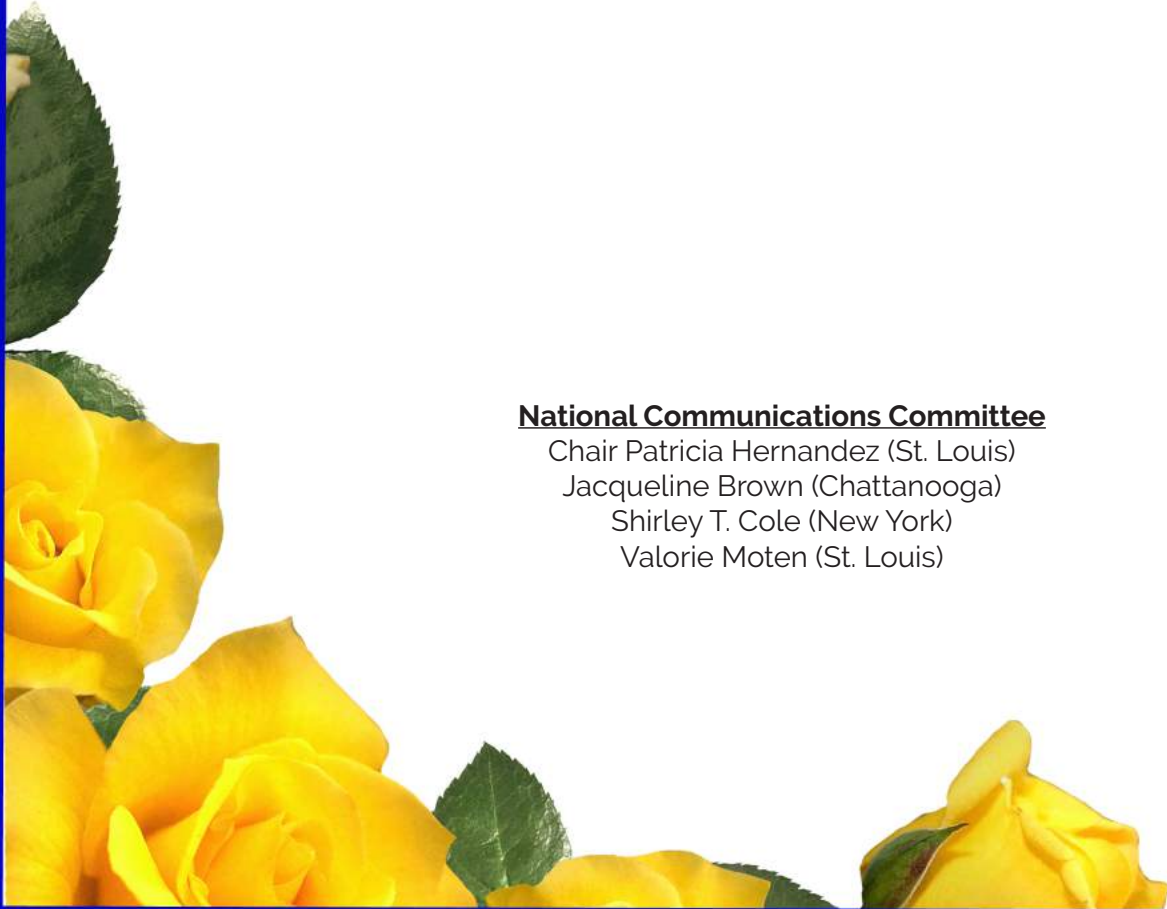
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**National Communications Committee**

Chair Patricia Hernandez (St. Louis)  
Jacqueline Brown (Chattanooga)  
Shirley T. Cole (New York)  
Valorie Moten (St. Louis)





# President's Corner

*Carat*  
**Maureen Black**  
PRESIDENT

Greetings Carat Sisters,

How the time progresses as we transition into the year two thousand seventeen. The first quarter of CARATS, Inc. fiscal year and the holiday season have now passed; leading us to embark upon this New Year with our vision of "Preeminent, Purposeful, Progress, Health and Harmony!" Let me take this opportunity to again recap the intent of the vision statement. The Preeminence characterizes the women of CARATS setting a standard of excellence and leadership within their communities. Our Purposeful Progress in civic, educational and social actions are instrumental in creating positive experiences with associates, colleagues, family and friends. While continuing purposeful progress, it is of utmost importance that we give attention to all aspects of our mental and physical Health. Our friendship, sisterhood and mutual respect will sustain our organization and promote Harmony as "sister-friends."

*The Board of Directors is working diligently for our organization as we prepare for the Mid-Year Board meeting, March 31-April 2, 2017. Our Journey this year in preparation for the Mid-Year Board meeting encompasses:*

- The Communications Committee's first Newsletter for the 2016-2018 administration
- The Audit committee is preparing the Audit Report for the 2014-2016 Carats, Inc. Fiscal Years; Scripting language for Constitution and Bylaws to include a Biennial Audit following each 2 year administration; and scripting language for Policy and Guidelines establishing the Audit protocol.
- The Archives Committee is recommending collection of specific documents and artifacts for our first submission to the Moorland Springarn Research center repository
- Constitution and Bylaws committee is preparing appropriate amendments to include the Archives committee as a permanent standing committee; including the Nominating Committee on the slate for elected positions sent to the Chapters June 1st.
- Policy and Guidelines committee will edit and include proposed language updates
- The Technology Committee will Showcase the Website at the Mid-Year Board meeting and propose Technology enhancements, as well as, propose converting selected hardcopy documents to digital documents
- The Amenities chair has created a Carats Amenities Email address for Chapters to send their amenities notifications, expeditiously acknowledging information received, and sending expressions of sympathy and compassion to our members
- The Cameo has been updated to include new member photos and profiles
- The Budget and Finance committee has reconciled the proposed Budget for FY 2017 (2016-2017) and modified the line-item format
- The Treasurer is modifying the Treasurer's report format to include a column of "actual" expenditures to show the differential from the "proposed"

- The Program committee is preparing for the next induction of "silver Carats;" and will have a Mid-Year on-site demonstration of the "Carats Groovin' " line dance
- The Protocol committee is on "ready" to insure a smooth progression of logistics, business and social, "CARAT style" at the Mid-Year Board meeting
- The Ethics committee is positioned to insure that we operate within ethical standards in the conduct of our business, and personal relationships with each other as members of our organization.
- The Wellness Chair/Advocate is prepared to present the "Wellness Tip" for a healthy lifestyle at the Mid-Year Board Meeting
- The Columbus Chapter is working relentlessly to host and greet our Carat sisters for the National Mid Year Board meeting.

The support that I have received in conducting the business of the organization has been facilitated by the Executive Team of Elected and appointed Officers, Committee Chairs; the wisdom and advice of past National Presidents, Rosalee Johnson, DeVera Redmond and Sondra Few; the Chapter Presidents keeping their membership informed and complying with budgetary and document submission deadlines; and 3 cheers for my local Columbus Chapter for their diligence, commitment and creative planning to host our Carat sisters in superb Carat Style; and of utmost importance, keeping me energized and enthusiastic with their unconditional sister-love and support!

Let us always remember that CARATS, Inc. is about enjoying our Sisterhood, while engaging in FUN, Frolic and SAVVY Social Celebrations!

Many of you know that I am the "Good Witch from the east" with a Halloween birthday! Much love and thanks to the Philadelphia chapter for having a Birthday dinner for me when they realized that I was visiting my daughter in Philadelphia.

I was honored during the holiday season to be invited to the celebrations hosted by the Baltimore Chapter, the Chicago Chapter and the Philadelphia Chapter's post holiday Celebration. Carateer Robert and I were excited that we were available to attend the Baltimore and Philadelphia socials. Please Keep us in mind Chicago for your next event.

Signing Off and wishing you a New Year filled with...-

"Preeminent, Purposeful, Progress, Health and Harmony"

*Maureen S. Black,*

Carat Maureen S. Black, National President



# President's *Photo Gallery*



Chestnut Hill Restaurant "Cin Cin" - National President Maureen Black celebrating her birthday with Philadelphia Chapter



National President attends Philadelphia Chapter's post holiday celebration



Columbus Carats Holiday Party



# Programs and Membership

## *Program Committee*

Members of the Program Committee are outlining activities that will facilitate a smooth implementation of the new initiatives approved during the 2016 Conclave. These activities, designed to enhance the mission of CARATS, Inc., include Networking via Technology; a Signature Dance; a Rite of Passage for Silver Club Members and a specially designed brochure of Silver Club Members. By using technology to network and form new relationships, by dancing together OUR signature dance, and by bolstering the Silver Club we will have ushered in a different era. Carats will be encouraged to mingle more and find Carats with similarities as it relates to membership in other organizations, number of children, years of marriage, birth month, etc. Using social media, Carats will have the opportunity to post these new relationships. It is hoped that this activity will be embraced by our new energetic younger Carats and stimulate senior Carats to become more involved with technology. To dance the dance that is created solely for CARATS, Inc. is phenomenal. Carat Gina Chew-Holman, our competent and lovely Choreographer from the Chesapeake Chapter, is preparing a video and instructions that will be distributed to chapters. We will dance to the Jackson's "Get It Baby!" Additionally, we are designing a brochure of the Silver Club Membership that will include the persons being recognized at the Conclave, and it will also include the previous cohorts that have received their 25 year pin. Inductees this year will be the first group to receive the Rite of Passage from our marvelous president who initiated this special recognition. How cool is that! **Looking forward to Montgomery.**

*Norma Givens*

Norma Givens 1st Vice President,  
Macon Chapter

## *Greetings Carats!!*

First, I would like to introduce you to the Membership Committee: Barbara Gregory (Washington, D.C.); Eliza M. Jackson (Macon); Renee LeGendre (New York); Darlene Britford (Columbus); and I serve as the Chair.

The Membership Committee is hard at work to centralize member information into individual databases for each Chapter. The database will include the member information on the Roster, Per Capita, Conclave attendance and National Eligibility. The goal is to provide Chapters with a single touchpoint for updating member information.

Currently our membership count is 327. The breakdown is 291 Active; 26 Emeritus; 6 General; and 4 Life Members. The following Chapters have 20 or more Active members: Atlanta 22; Chicago 25; Cleveland 20; Montgomery 24; Philadelphia 24; and St. Louis 22.

I am looking forward to serving you and please feel to contact me.

Sisterly,

*Carlotta McCoy*

Carat Carlotta McCoy, 2nd Vice President,  
Chicago Chapter

# Spotlight On Montgomery

## *About Us*

### The History of the Montgomery Chapter of CARATS, Inc.

Although the Montgomery Chapter of CARATS, Incorporated was chartered April 12, 2003, its history dates earlier. With the premise: Friendship is a gift imbued with a lasting spiritual power of wealth, a circle of eighteen close-knit friends formed the Capital City Camellias. We were involved in uplifting and building a stronger, more viable community.

Comprised of members of various organizations including The Links, Incorporated; Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.; and Women Advocating Voting Empowerment, our main purpose was to strengthen our bond through group activities that would enrich not only the community but our inner, spiritual selves. The Montgomery Carats are constantly involved in civic and social activities.

The 18 charter members of our organization were: Wanda Anderson, Alma Jean Baker, Valvier Bright, Brenda D. Coleman, Dr. Tyna D. Davis, Bertha Gadson, Lillie Garnier, Anita Kelly, Esq., Margie L. Lee, Josephine Bolling McCall, Monica Threatt Pitts, Bernice B. Price, Ettra Spencer Seay, Dr. Beverly Stoudemire-Howlett, Maggie Stringer, Cheri White-Hayes, Cathy Wright and Hazel Youngblood.

We assumed the eighteen of us would always be together, but that was not to be. Carat Ettra Seay became a Forever Carat in May, 2006. Carat Bertha Gadson, first to acclaim emeritus status, became a Forever Carat on April 29, 2011.

#### ***Since 2008 we have embraced 14 new members:***

LouDale Bryant | Tamara Young Lee,  
Patricia Pinchback | Dorothy Thomas,  
Helen Willis | Dr. Sheila Austin,  
Gloria Good | Ann Carol Sippial  
Cathy Martin | Dr. Patricia Robinson  
Dr. Deborah Thomas | Monica Arrington  
Susan Yvette Price | Juanda Maxwell.

The Montgomery Chapter of the CARATS, Incorporated is actively planning to host the 42nd Annual Conclave and We are ready to receive each carat and her family. Each visitor will experience southern hospitality at its finest. The sights and the sounds of the city and surrounding area and Star quality vendors will be made available.

The 24 Carats of the Montgomery Chapter are a diverse group of accomplished professional women who have woven their skills and talents into fun-loving events that will titillate the senses and motivate the spirit.

We welcome you to the Renaissance Hotel and Spa on or before July 13, 2017. We invite you to experience southern hospitality as you bring the stars of CARATS, Incorporated to Montgomery, Alabama.

In addition to celebrating the 42nd Annual Conclave, the Montgomery Carats are celebrating 15 years of conclave attendance.

The 42nd Conclave will not disappoint, COME ON DOWN!!!



*Come Early and Stay Late.*

## The 42nd Annual Conclave of The CARATS, Incorporated: Stars Fell on Alabama

Montgomery, the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement, home to the arts, drama, poetry, science and music welcomes you to the 42nd Conclave of the CARATS, Incorporated. The weekend of July 13-16, 2017 promises to be filled with glitz and glamour as the members of the Montgomery, Alabama chapter of the Carats, Incorporated host the 42nd annual Conclave. We are delighted to invite Carats and their Carateers as we convene at the Renaissance in historic Montgomery, AL



Carats Tyna Davis, President; Jean Bibb Baker, Vice President; Bernice Price, chair of the 2017 Conclave and all of the members of the chapter anxiously await your arrival. Thursday evening will provide attendees the opportunity to get into the city for sights, food, fellowship and fun or to take an excursion to one of several Casinos or simply relax and take in the view from our scenic downtown hotel overlooking the Alabama River. Friday through Sunday will have you on the move through an array of exciting



events planned just for you.

Montgomery has the distinction of being both the cradle of the confederacy and the birthplace of the civil rights movement. Although astronomers know that a meteor storm in 1833 that showered the earth with thousands of falling stars, Alabama is home for scores of stars from musicians to actors; sports figures to politicians and scientists; and star studded events. Alabama Stars include, but are not limited to:

**Rosa Parks**-Civil rights activist Rosa Parks who refused to surrender her bus seat to a white passenger, spurring the Montgomery boycott and other efforts to end segregation.

**Mary Elisabeth Vroman**-Vroman grew up in the British West Indies. Following in the footsteps of three generations of women educators, she prepared for a teaching career at Alabama State University and graduated in 1949 She taught 20-years in Alabama.

**Percy Julian**-Percy Lavon Julian was born in Montgomery, Alabama. He earned international acclaim by synthesizing physostigmine from the calabar bean to create a drug treatment for glaucoma. He continued his biomedical work and was also lauded for his synthesis of cortisone, which became used in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis.

**Martin Luther King**-King Memorial Baptist Church minister and civil- rights activist, had a seismic impact on race relations in the United States, beginning in the mid-1950s in Montgomery, Alabama.

**Rev. Ralph David Abernathy**-Pastor of the Historic First Baptist Church in Montgomery Alabama was a civil right activist and Dr. King's Right hand associate.

**Dr. Tommie Stewart** -Renowned Television actress

# Sweet Harmony

## *"Before every New York Chapter*

meeting I try to present a meditation that is spirit filled and uplifting to underscore our sisterly purpose for gathering together. I would like to share one of my Favorite verses."

*We must talk until there are no more words  
We must explain until every thing is understood  
We must be honest until nothing is hidden  
We must listen until every thing is said  
We must question so that we know why  
We must be fair so that everyone's basic needs are met  
If there is no communication there will be no bond  
If there is no bond there will be no friendship*

(Susan Polis Schutz)

*Shirley Cole*

New York Chapter

Contributing Author  
**Dr. Monique. N. Coleman**  
Clinical & Forensic Psychologist  
*Atlanta Chapter*

## *In The New Year*

### RECLAIM, RESTORE, RENEW

Going into a new year is a good time to reflect on what has happened over the past year. Ask yourself what has happened good and what has happened that was difficult to endure. As you think of these things there are of course occurrences that were of your own doing and there again others that you had completely no control over. Perhaps you chose to make a change in career by advancing, pulling back on some responsibilities, or retiring altogether. There may have been a passing of a loved one in your family or a close friend or an addition to the family through birth or marriage. Despite your ability to control these life event or not, it is important to acknowledge that these can be experienced as stressors. We often think of change as something negative or unplanned, but something we chose to change and this can have an overwhelming impact on our daily functioning.

If you find yourself experiencing excessive fatigue, tearfulness, confusion or clouded thinking, irritability, or even unexplained physical symptoms, pay attention to these signs and symptoms. These are often signals that you may be experiencing some emotional distress and this should not be taken lightly. Left unchecked, these symptoms can lead to more serious life difficulties that could affect you and those around you.

In this New Year, take time to reclaim, restore, and renew. The three primary areas that you might consider as you begin this process are mind, body, and spirit.

- **Psychological/Mental Health:** Our mind is where our thoughts begin. This propels our feeling and actions. If not careful, negative thoughts can take hold and disrupt our entire existence, where isolation and loneliness manifests. Keep your mind healthy through communication, which can take the form of talking, reading, or engaging in other types of active media. Know that you are not alone in your thoughts and feelings. Others are having similar experiences and it is often helpful to process your thoughts with trusted others as a way to remain rational, accountable, and connected.
- **Physical Health:** The body is well connected to the mind and will respond to our psychological functioning. Our ability to combat infections, illness, and disease has been associated with our mental strength. Take time to exercise your body. This does not mean you must take on a full exercise program. Do what you can. That could mean a walk around the block, simple stretching, or deep breathing that can exercise and rejuvenate vital organs in the body. Try and eat healthy. This can be challenging at times, but if you can commit to make just one health conscious choice a day you will be amazed the impact it can have. Whatever you chose, a combination of exercise and healthy food is almost certain to give you a newly added sense of energy.

- **Spiritual Health:** Last, but certainly not least, start your day with prayer, affirmations, and quiet meditation. This is a way to connect with that inner voice that gives guidance and peace. Keep a notebook or journal and document your thoughts during that time. Writing is a good way to process your thoughts while creating a place where you can go back and remind yourself of the insights you've gained.

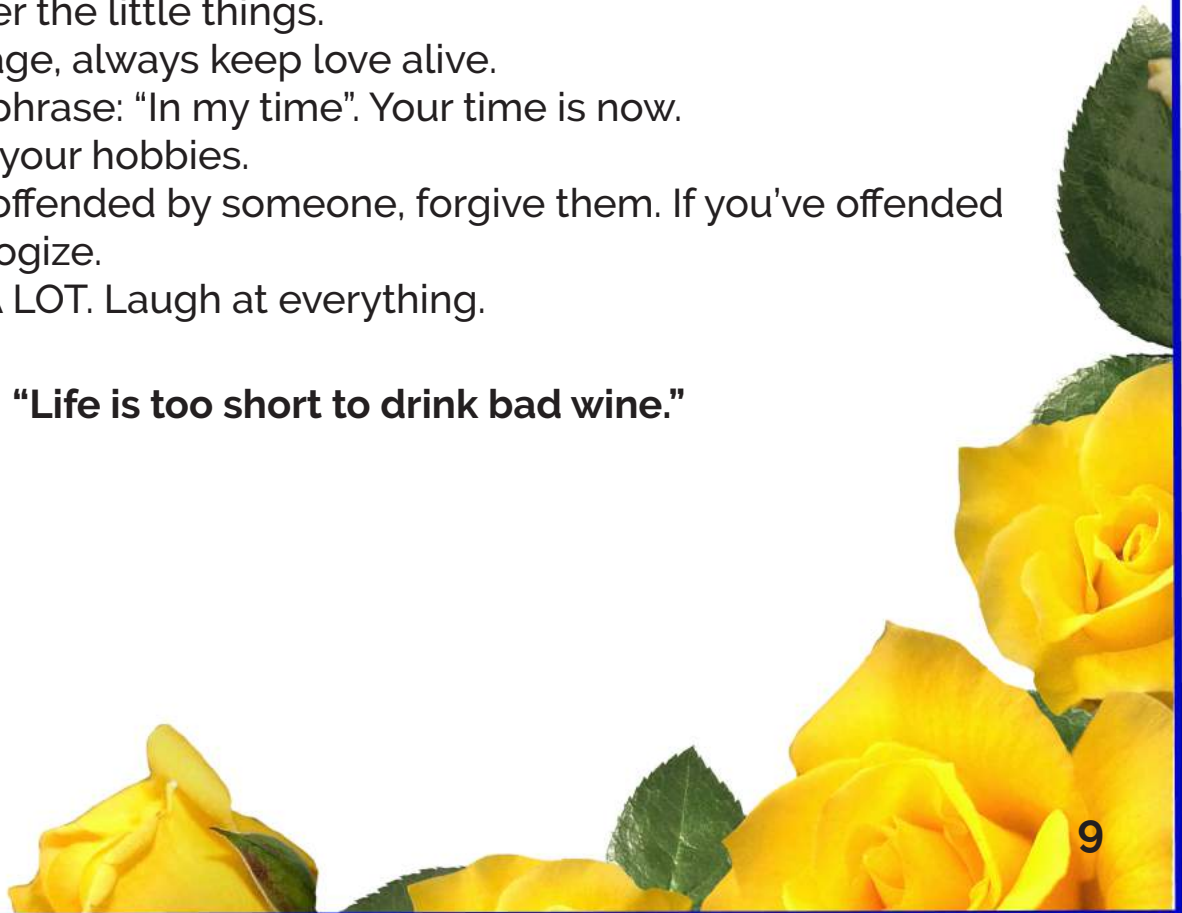
Finally, be gentle and kind to yourself. Allow yourself to be in the moment. Experience the full gravity of life, be mindful, and relish the joy of sound mental health, wholeness, and holistic well-being as you reclaim, restore, and renew in the New Year.

## *7 Ways To Love Yourself*

**Valorie Moten**  
*St. Louis Chapter*

1. It's time to use the money you saved up.
2. Don't stress over the little things.
3. Regardless of age, always keep love alive.
4. Never use the phrase: "In my time". Your time is now.
5. Don't abandon your hobbies.
6. If you've been offended by someone, forgive them. If you've offended someone, apologize.
7. Laugh. Laugh A LOT. Laugh at everything.

AND REMEMBER: **"Life is too short to drink bad wine."**



# Things That People Are Talking About

## *The President's Theme:*

### **“Preeminent, Purposeful, Progress, Health & Harmony”**

The **Baltimore Carats** had a fabulous Christmas party on December 2, 2016, at the beautiful Martin's West. We were so happy that our National President, Maureen Black, and husband Carateer Bob, joined us for an evening of dancing, delicious food, and fellowship. Our Annual Holiday party officially opens the holiday season in the Baltimore area and was the talk of the town!



**Atlanta Carats** take the month of October to plan a fun social activity with the Carateers. This year we had a fun night of bowling, food and games. Carateers thoroughly enjoying the friendly competition to see who was going to win the coveted trophy and metals.



The St. Louis CARATS celebrated the holidays with its annual Christmas brunch held at the Norwood Hills Country Club. The ballroom was beautifully decorated with a Christmas theme. The CARATS and their guests began the brunch with libations of bloody Marys, mimosas, and wine. A scrumptious buffet was enjoyed by all. Afterwards, everyone danced to music by one of St. Louis's top DJs.

# *Congratulations from Carat Lora Dawson* **Chattanooga Chapter**



**Chattanooga** Carateer Llewellyn and Carat Mary Barrow were married on December 10, 1966.

They met the end of their freshman year at Tennessee State University. It's interesting to note that they were in the same graduating class at Howard High School, but never met until college. (Dad said he thinks he remembers seeing her in high school. Mom says she never noticed him.) They both agreed that the secret

to a lasting marriage is to never give up. Dad added that cooperation is important. Mom said she followed the model set by her own parents who always showed joy and love to each other. They celebrated 50 years of marriage on December 10, 2016.

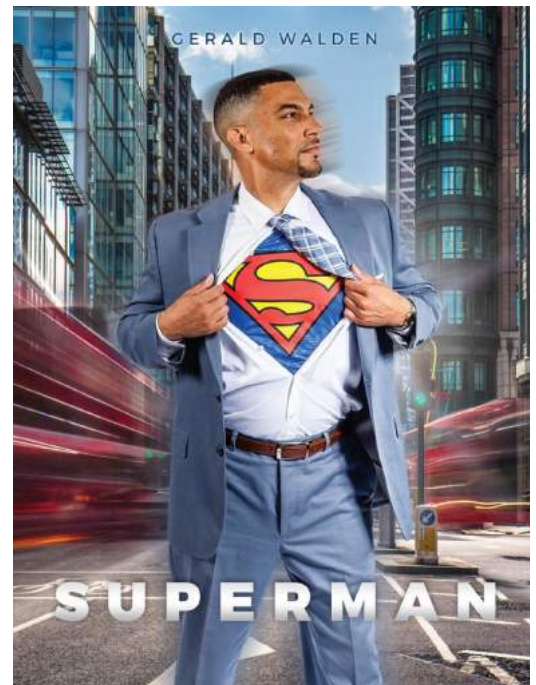
**(written by Charita Barrow)**

Carateer Irvin Overton and Carat Joyce Overton, "51" years of marriage are God's external expressions of his grace, mercy and love we have shared towards each other. When things got tough or appeared unsettling we just remembered it was not about I but us. These expressions contributed to keeping our marriage strong through all of these years and will help sustain us in the future.



## *Gerald L. Walden, Jr.*

The son of **Chesapeake** Carat Janice Grace and step-son of Carateer Bill Grace, has been chosen as North Carolina Legal Elite Counselor for 2017. In recognition of this award, Gerald was interviewed and featured in the NC Business Week. During the interview, he was asked to choose his favorite comic hero and, as shown above, Gerald selected superman. Gerald has a BS in Mechanical Engineering from North Carolina A&T State University, a MBA from Elon University, and a Law Degree from North Carolina Central University. Gerald is employed at The Fresh Market, Inc. headquarters, located in Greensboro, North Carolina, as their Assistant General Counsel.



## *Miami Chapter*

**On December 11th The Miami CARATS and their guests started the Holiday Season with a scrumptious Brunch at Council Oak Steaks & Seafood Restaurant, in the Seminole Hard Rock .CHEERS for a Bless New Year!!!**



Left Side to Right: Carateer Michael Harris, Carateer Fred Rodgers, Carat Eddy Rodgers, Family Guests. Right Side Carat Florence Simpkins Brown, Carat Paula Bain, Carat Ingrid Cheeseborough and Guest



Left Side Carateer Anthony Armbrister, Carat Juanita Armbrister Family Guest. Right Side Carateer Kris George, Carat Lisa George, Carateer Alonzo Jackson, Carat Carmen Jackson, Family Guest and Carat Rosa Nesbitt.

# *The New York Carats exemplifies:*

## **Determination, Diligence, and Dedication**



True Divas! From Long Island with the Nautical mile, to Westchester with the Ritz, and all points in between, we come together once a month to fellowship, celebrate, and collaborate. This is sometimes challenging in that navigating through New York City to the suburbs is not quite the walk in the park as seen in picture books. Why do we do it because simply put we enjoy each other's company and like our monthly reservation for US time.

