The Alabama 4-H Wall of Fame

May 13, 2014

The W. Gaines Smith Environmental Science Education Building

Alabama 4-H Center
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The Alabama 4-H Wall of Fame recognizes individuals and organizations that have had a significant impact on the 4-H and Youth Development program and its members and leaders. The Alabama 4-H Club Foundation, Inc. and Alabama 4-H honors, remembers and pays tribute to those who have influenced the lives of Alabama youth by their commitment “To Make the Best Better.”

Master of Ceremonies
Margaret Lawrence
Specialist, Communications & Marketing
Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Welcome & Greetings
Dan Presley
Chairman, Alabama 4-H Club Foundation, Inc.
Dr. Gary Lemme
Director, Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Recognition of Inductees
James Langcuster
Specialist, Communications & Marketing
Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Closing Remarks
Dr. Lamar Nichols
Assistant Director, 4-H and Youth Development
Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Photos by Donna Reynolds, Editor, Communications and Marketing, and Margaret Lawrence, Specialist, Communications and Marketing
L. O. Bishop
4-H Alumnus and Colbert 4-H Partner

L.O. Bishop has been a fixture with Colbert County’s 4-H and Farm-City programs since he was a 4-H’er in northwest Alabama. Bishop has been involved with 4-H and Extension programming for more than 60 years. Bishop won an Alabama 4-H Safety Award, represented Alabama at the National 4-H Congress, and held the office of 4-H county council president. He has used the skills he learned as a 4-H’er his entire life to carry on the family legacy of farming and running a business. Bishop also has served in numerous leadership positions with the Alabama Farmer Federation. He received that organization’s highest honor—The Alabama Farmer Federation’s Service to Agriculture Award. Bishop also received the 2013 Colbert County Farm-City Committee’s Farm of Distinction.

The Bishop Farm in southwest Colbert County has hosted numerous Farm-City tours and luncheons along with 4-H programs. Bishop’s service to community is like no other. He has served on numerous boards of directors, civic clubs, community events, and his church. His love of people is what makes him special. He said many times, “We are nothing without helping others and we are nothing without other people.”

Bishop is quick to tell you that the leadership skills he learned as a 4-H’er helped him be successful in his career and life.

Nominated by: Marian Beck, Regional Extension Agent
Mike Childers

4-H Alumnus and Morgan County 4-H Resource Volunteer

Mike Childers has been involved in 4-H since he was in high school where he graduated in 1966. As a 4-H’er, he showed cattle in local and regional shows where he always was a winner in one way or another. After Childers was married, he and his wife, Cheryl, managed a cattle ranch in Centre, Alabama, for 10 years. Then they moved to their present home near Hartselle.

The Childers have three sons. As soon as they were old enough, the children began 4-H and continued showing cattle through their high school years. After his sons graduated, Mike continued to be involved in 4-H. He donated money and time in coordinating and participating in the Morgan County Fair 4-H Steer and Lamb Show until it was discontinued in 2011.

Childers has three grandsons and one granddaughter. They will continue the legacy when they reach 4-H age.

According to Ronald W. Britnell, county Extension coordinator, “Mike has always been a leader in his community, church, and farm organizations such as the Morgan County Farmer Federation. He is always quick to vote to sponsor any Extension program especially when it comes to supporting the youth of the county.”

Britnell enrolled Childers’ three sons in 4-H. “They were the glue that held the Morgan County livestock program in place for so many years,” he said.

Nominated by: Morgan County 4-H and Extension

Inductees continued

Sandy Shepard
Barbara Shipman
Scott Skelton
Dan Smalley
Jack D. Smith
Penny Smith
W. Gaines Smith
Ryan Sprinkle
Deborah Stabler
Mildred Stephenson*
Elizabeth Sykora
Carolyn Taylor
Thompson Tractor Company
Ann Thompson
Ralph Thompson
Barbara D. Thorne*

J. Paul Till
Eunice Paige Tibbs
John M. “Bubba” Trotman
Ruth Sherman Underwood
John Ussery
DeKalb County VFW Fairgrounds
Annette Mehurg Wardrup
Martha “Mart” Warren
Milton A. “Buzz” Wendland
Bob Whittenburg
Tommy & Carol Williams
Milton Williams*
Ronny Williams*
Sue Wills
Helen Tibbs Wilson
Shaun Winn
Beverly Mays Young

*deceased
^National 4-H Hall of Fame
This little piggy went to market…” This nursery rhyme came to life for many 4-H and FFA members because of longtime 4-H volunteer Albert “Mann” Miller. Mr. Mann, as he is know throughout Mobile County farming circles, has been helping members bring their pigs to market for more than 50 years.

Approximately 25 years ago, Mr. Mann approached Citronelle High School FFA and vocational agriculture teacher Tommy Odom with a plan that would help his high school students participate in starting a Market Hog Show at the Greater Gulf State Fair in Mobile County.

Mobile County Farmer Federation donated the supplies and Mr. Mann donated the land so that students could have hands-on experience learning about animal care on the farm. The agricultural students built the actual facilities used to house the market hogs. As part of the Citronelle Supervised Agriculture Home Experience Program, both 4-H and FFA members fed, washed, and cleaned the hogs as they learned important lessons about daily swine care.

Mr. Mann traveled to Illinois approximately ten years ago and helped purchase and haul new pens that would be used for the Market Hog Show at the Greater Gulf State Fair in Mobile.

Retired teacher, Tommy Odom, said, “Mr. Mann Miller has been involved in all facets of farm education from the 4-H steer show, from Classroom in the Forest, to the 4-H Hog Show. He touched many lives, thanks to his involvement and volunteering his time to help educate the youth of Mobile County.”

Nominated by: Mobile County 4-H and Extension

*deceased

^National 4-H Hall of Fame
Dr. John Mims
4-H Alumnus and 4-H Community Leader

Dr. John Mims was born in Chilton County, Alabama and grew up in Billingsley. In 1935, he served as the president of his local 4-H club, and the following year, he served as secretary for a Tri-County Area 4-H Club program. During his years in 4-H, he won first place at the Autauga County Livestock Show and placed third in the Alabama Junior Beef Show at the state level. He also won at the state level in the Swine/Hog Show.

Mims moved to Tuscumbia in 1957 and established his practice as a medical doctor. He was instrumental in starting The Classroom in the Forest (CIF) program in Colbert County. He has also hosted several CIF programs at his Treasure Forest.

Since Mims has been living in Tuscumbia, he has been involved in educating youth about the environment, natural resources, and good stewardship of the land. He has provided the use of his farm, facilities, cabins, and lakes for youth groups who are involved in educational programs. His community involvement in this arena has given him recognition at the local, state, and national levels. Mims has given countless hours making a difference in the lives of youth.

Mims has served on the Alabama Treasurer Forest Association Executive Committee to promote The Classroom in the Forest educational program. He lectured to several groups of students throughout Colbert County. He has received the Helene Mosley Service Award for providing service and education to youth.

Nominated by: Marian Beck, Regional Extension Agent

Alabama 4-H Wall of Fame Inductees

Malt F. (Scooter) Conners*  
J.O. Conway  
Michelle L. Craig  
Barbara Crapps  
Deborah Darrington  
Jack & Judy David  
Marjorie S. Day  
Debter Hereford Farm  
L.A. “Tony” Dozier  
The Drummond Company Inc.  
Betty H. Duncan  
Luther N. Duncan*  
Anna Dyer  
James R. Edwards*  
W.A. “Dub” Ellis Jr.*  
Karen Engelman  
Mark C. Espy Sr.*  
Gwinn Ezell*  
FarmLinks  
Emmett C. Farrington*  
Benjamin B. Fields*  
Curtis & Susie Franklin*  
William E. & Vivian Garrett  
Jerry Gibson  
Junior “Wimpy” Gillespie  
Shane Chandler Glover  
Henry & Kathy Gotcher

*deceased  
^National 4-H Hall of Fame
**Bess Fleming Wright**

*State 4-H Leader for Girls*

Bess Fleming was born in Brundidge, Alabama, in 1900. After graduating from Brundidge High School, she went to college at Montevallo where she earned a bachelor’s degree in home economics. Later, Fleming received a master’s degree in home economics from Alabama Polytechnic Institute, now Auburn University.

She became a teacher at Dothan High School in 1923. The next 2 years found her teaching math and English in Auburn. In 1928, Fleming became a home demonstration agent and soon became a state specialist for Extension. Perhaps her greatest distinction was serving as the state’s first 4-H leader for girls.

Described by co-workers as a terrific person, Fleming was always cheerful. Her son remembers her overriding characteristic being her love of people. “She made friends easily and devotedly; she admired intellectual accomplishment and gentle manners.” The combination of her pleasant personality, intelligence, and high moral character proved effective in her leadership role.

Fleming set an outstanding example for the young 4-H’ers she led. Parents, teachers, and community leaders all appreciate the hard work that brought success to her many projects. At the time of her marriage to Emil Wright Sr. in 1934, Fleming resigned from her position with Extension.

Nominated by: Alabama 4-H

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**Dennis Peterson**

*Baldwin County Extension Agent (Retired)*

Dennis Peterson began working as a 4-H agent in Dale County. He moved to Mobile and Butler counties before transferring to Baldwin as the 4-H forestry and natural resources agent. He also coordinated 4-H field trips and camps. He recruited volunteers, secured donations for the program, and arranged for transportation to many activities including camp, district, and state competitions.

One of the parents of a 4-H member, Ronald Koptis, said, “I had the confidence in Dennis to know that my child was taken care of throughout the whole trip. He was involved in all the activities with the 4-H members. Dennis is a leader with the heart of a teacher that truly cared about the 4-H members and how they learned and contributed to society. His leadership was a positive influence on my son and his career decisions.”

Beth King, a 4-H leader, said, “He truly brought out the best in every child he met in our club. They always looked forward to seeing him. They loved 4-H and what it stood for—clearer thinking, greater loyalty, better living, and larger service for their club, community, country, and world. I think Dennis lived this motto and it showed in his actions. The boys all wanted to be like him and the girls all liked him. He made sure that many of them had opportunities in their lives that they would have never had. They learned to compete in a good way and help each other in other ways.”

Many former Baldwin County 4-H members now range in age from the 40s to early 20s. They remember Dennis Peterson and are grateful for the experience of 4-H that he shared with them.

Nominated by: Baldwin County 4-H and Extension

*Deceased*
Inez Mims Petty*

Lawrence County Extension Coordinator (retired)

Inez Mims Petty started her career with Extension as a negro home demonstration agent in Lawrence County working with both youth and adults in 1947. According to former 4-H’ers, she had a deep passion for her work as an agent. She conducted 4-H club meetings at local schools for minority students in the Courtland, Moulton, Town Creek, and Hillsboro communities. She did numerous home visits and one-on-one sessions where she taught the 4-H girls how to cook and can food from the garden. She also taught them how to sew, starting with an apron. Petty impressed upon the 4-H’ers the importance of having good leadership and communication skills through projects in public speaking and leadership activities.

Petty took numerous young ladies to Tuskegee Institute to compete in the state 4-H competitions. Many of her 4-H’ers received high honors and recognition as a result of her guidance and assistance. She emphasized to the 4-H’ers the importance of education as a means to improve personal economics and quality of life. In fact, several of Petty’s 4-H’ers followed her same career path to become Extension agents or educators. According to many who knew Petty, she was an outstanding role model based on her intelligence, poise, skills, and self-confidence.

Petty was a trailblazer within the Extension organization. In 1977, she was promoted to the position of county Extension coordinator—a position that had never been held by a female or black within the state of Alabama. She made numerous positive accomplishments in this role and influenced many families in Lawrence County. She retired in September 1985.

Nominated by: Lawrence County Extension

Robert Williams

Mobile County 4-H Volunteer

There’s something special about a good old-fashioned county fair! County fairs provide 4-H youth a public forum to showcase many talents and help educate the public about the impact of agriculture on the community.

For more than 34 years, farmer Robert Williams has been right there along with the smell of corndogs, noise of carnival rides, and excitement of live animal shows at the Mobile Greater Gulf State Fair. In those years, Williams served as a 4-H volunteer with the Mobile County 4-H Animal Science Steer Club. He worked to help weigh-in steers and line them up for shows, and also served on the rules committee for the 4-H Show. During those years, Williams, only missed volunteering at two steer shows.

Williams has been in the farming business all his life. He helped his family run a successful dairy business for 60 years in the Tanner Williams Community of Mobile County. He and his wife attend Tanner Williams United Methodist Church and have two children and seven grandchildren.

Williams’ newest adventure is working at the Seward Farms Corn Maize as he continues to educate 4-H’ers and the public about the importance of growing food in Alabama. Robert Williams believes you’re never too young or too old to learn about 4-H.

Nominated by: Mobile County 4-H and Extension

*Deceased
Ed Tunnell  
*Baldwin County Extension Agent (retired)*

Ed Tunnell came to Baldwin County in January 1973 as an assistant county agent to work with 4-H. In 1981, his responsibilities included agriculture and natural resource programs with an emphasis on horticulture. He became the county agent coordinator in 1984. Tunnell worked with 4-H agriculture programs throughout his career. He was always willing to work with the 4-H livestock programs and dairy judging programs. In the fall each year, he was involved in the livestock programs and exhibits at the Baldwin County Fair. He enjoyed seeing the young people he had worked with throughout the year, participate in county, district and state 4-H events.

Dawn Hopper, 4-H leader, said, “Willie Street, Mark Creamer, Chuck Penry and myself, truly became his children through 4-H. We could identify every dairy from Baldwin County to Auburn because we judged there by appointment or through a casual intentional opportunity. Many miles he drove us to practice and competitions that ultimately afforded us the privilege to represent Alabama at nationals in Madison, Wisconsin in 1980-81. What I know now is that I wouldn’t be in the career of teaching Family and Consumer Science without his commitment and leadership. He believed in us and our ability to communicate and evaluate what we saw in those animals we judged.

“The best of both worlds is having my three sons, nieces, and cousins on the Alabama 4-H judging teams and having the honor to work alongside Mr. Ed as a volunteer 4-H parent. Mr. Ed is a genuine man of integrity. He is a man I will forever be thankful to God for, by allowing my life to be intertwined with his through 4-H. Thank you Mr. Ed Tunnell and your late wife, Mrs. Adelle, for many enjoyable memories. I hope my life is a testimony of that wonderful 4-H pledge you so eloquently taught us and that God will continue to bless your life as much as you have been a blessing to so many.”

Nominated by: Baldwin County 4-H and Extension

William L. (W.L.) Royston*  
*Tallapoosa County Extension Agent*

Before joining Extension, W.L. Royston taught in the Clarke County High School system and was an elementary teacher for Randolph County schools. He came to Extension as a negro county agent in Greene County and then transferred to Tallapoosa County. He was known for his particularly outstanding educational work in 4-H, community development, and agriculture.

He initiated the Tallapoosa County Dairy Show with emphasis on 4-H participation. His 4-H members took first place prizes in all nine Piedmont District Cattle Shows. He also started the Miss 4-H Dairy Queen event. The Tallapoosa County 4-H judging team for dairy cattle took top honors at the state level. At that time, there were 20 4-H clubs with 372 boys and 756 girls in the county.

Royston was instrumental in securing land and funding to construct the Tallapoosa County Community Center in Dadeville. It housed the Extension offices, a branch library, and an auditorium.

At his death, one month before his planned retirement in 1968, the Auburn University Board of Trustees recognized him with the following resolution (in part):

WHEREAS, his work was particularly outstanding in 4-H Club activities and in community development, resulting in improvements in both areas to benefit all concerned and reflecting credit upon himself and Auburn University…..

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Auburn University expresses its appreciation for the excellent service performed by Mr. Royston and the sorrow it feels over his death.

A secretary who worked with Royston for 10 years said he was a second father to her. He gave encouraging words when most needed and always gave good advice in a kind and gentle way. He was quick to help—giving shoes and food to those who needed them.

Nominated by: Dr. Lloyd L. Royston

*Deceased*
Cynthia Tubbs
Cullman County 4-H JMG Volunteer

Cynthia Tubbs began her involvement with Extension in the Master Gardener class in Cullman County. Charles Pinkston told her about Junior Master Gardener (JMG) in 2005. Tubbs started a JMG program in 2006 at the Child Development Center. Since then, she has coordinated about 15 volunteers to deliver JMG programs in four Cullman County schools and a homeschool group. This past year, 12 JMG clubs met 34 times during the school year. This registered more than 7,300 volunteer contacts for Cullman County.

Her work with JMG has greatly influenced the youth in the clubs. They move from thinking that food comes from the grocery store to appreciating gardening and farmers. Youth also have a greater respect for the environment.

The remarkable thing about Tubbs involvement with JMG is that it seems to be constant. Not just helping once or twice a year on an event, she is in the office weekly and in the schools throughout the year. No volunteer in Cullman can count as many hours as Tubbs. She is one of Alabama’s most productive JMG volunteers.

Tubbs has worked to improve her skills as a JMG leader by attending a national training in Dallas, Texas. She is now a JMG specialist. She also has attended volunteer events at the 4-H Center in Columbiana and Regional 4-H Volunteer Conference at Rock Eagle 4-H Center in Georgia.

Nominated by: Jay Conway, Regional Extension Agent and Luci Davis, Alabama JMG Coordinator

C.E. “Ed” Teague*
Alabama 4-H Partner

A native of Danville, Alabama, Ed Teague grew up loving the land and its people. His favorite part of farming always was working with the dairy cows. When he went to Auburn to study agriculture, he focused on dairy production. Years later that background would help him attain the position of state dairy specialist with Extension and agricultural director for the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce.

Teague received a bachelor’s degree from Auburn in 1930 and a master’s degree from West Virginia University in 1932. Upon completion of his master’s degree, he worked 3 years for the Dairyman Cooperative Sale Association, gaining valuable experience, which he would apply to his Extension work. He joined the Alabama Extension Service in 1935 as an assistant county agent in Greene County, soon moving to Tuscaloosa County, and then to Pickens County in 1942.

His dedication to his work in 4-H with dairy and steer shows helped bring him to the state staff as a dairy specialist in 1944. He left Auburn in 1948 and joined ranks with the Birmingham office of the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company in their agricultural department.

In 1952, he joined the staff of the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce as agricultural director. It was in this position that Teague made his mark on Alabama agriculture. As the Chamber’s representative, he helped build the Montgomery County Cattlemen’s Association from a small organization into one of the largest county associations in the United States. He also served as executive secretary of the board of directors. Also as the Chamber’s representative, he directed various agricultural events in Montgomery, such as the cattle shows, horse shows, and dairy shows at the Montgomery Coliseum. A dairy barn was named in his honor.

Teague had a positive influence on youth. He especially loved boys and girls involved in Junior Livestock shows. He will long be remembered by thousands for his many years of hard work.

Nominated by: Alabama 4-H