The Alabama 4-H Wall of Fame

February 28, 2008
4 p.m.

Jule Collins Smith
Museum of Fine Art
Auburn University
The Alabama 4-H Wall of Fame

The Alabama 4-H Wall of Fame recognizes individuals and organizations that have had a significant effect on the 4-H Youth Development program, 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.”

Cecil Mayfield*

A man of vision, dreams and dedication to youth, Cecil Mayfield touched the lives of an estimated 1 million Alabama youth. Known as “Mr. 4-H,” Mayfield devoted 19 years to bringing the Alabama 4-H Center to reality.

Mayfield was instrumental in raising the first $1 million gift to 4-H, and he worked to ensure 4-H grew to offer programs benefiting both rural and urban children. Under his leadership, the Alabama 4-H program was regarded as among the strongest in the nation.

Mayfield began his career with Extension as assistant county agent in Mobile and came to Auburn in 1961 as 4-H specialist. He was promoted to state 4-H leader in 1970. When he retired in 1989 with 34 years of service, Mayfield continued to volunteer at the 4-H Center, and the Mayfield Recreation Building is named in his honor. He was inducted into the National 4-H Hall of Fame in 2003.

John Lemly (Lem) Morrison*

John Lemly (Lem) Morrison was chairman of the Alabama 4-H Club Foundation, Inc., from 1963 to 1991. The Alabama 4-H Center exists today in part due to his personal commitment and leadership.

As a noted business and agricultural leader, Morrison worked tirelessly and effectively on behalf of Alabama’s young people. When the Alabama 4-H Club Foundation was organized in 1956, Morrison directed the fund drive for the center. His 27-year service on the Alabama 4-H Club Foundation was a period of unparalleled growth and accomplishment. He was inducted in the National 4-H Hall of Fame in 2002.

* deceased

Master of Ceremonies
Ric Smith
Director, Experiential Learning
Department of Communication & Journalism
Auburn University

Welcome
W. Gaines Smith
Director
Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Recognition of Inductees
Ric Smith

Closing Remarks
C. Lamar Nichols
Assistant Director, 4-H Youth Development
Alabama Cooperative Extension System
Bertha M. Jones

Bertha M. Jones began her 38-year 4-H career in Crenshaw County in 1945 with the responsibility of adults and 4-H youth work. She believes that "4-H is life" and that every young person should be exposed to 4-H for their total life skills development. After completing graduate school at Penn State University in 1956, Jones became the state leader for Negro 4-H Girls at Tuskegee University. She was responsible for 4-H publications and 4-H administration for 37 county agents.

Jones wrote many publications, including the "4-H Officer Training Handbook" and "The Clean Look and Youth Health," a series of member and leader guides. She is featured in the book "They Too Call Alabama Home: African American Profiles, 1800-1999" by Richard Bailey. She wrote, with Bailey, the "History of Negroes in Cooperative Extension."

In 1965 when the segregated Extension services were merged, she moved to Auburn University to serve as 4-H specialist. She was inducted in the National 4-H Hall of Fame in 2004.

W. D. (Demp) Jones

During William D. "Demp" Jones' 28-year 4-H career in Walker County, he trained more than 30,000 youth and was credited with instilling in them high moral standards and strong leadership skills. During that time, he had 85 state winners and 15 national scholarship winners from Walker County.

Three brothers — Jerry, Galen and Dorman Grace — each won the national poultry competition under Jones' leadership, the only instance where a family of siblings all achieved this level. Dorman Grace continues his commitment to 4-H taught by Jones, currently serving as vice chairman of the Alabama 4-H Club Foundation, Inc.

Jones organized the first Junior Cattlemen's Association and he also organized the first 4-H club for children with disabilities at North Highland School. "They learned the 4-H pledge and were proud to be able to recite it at each meeting," says Jones. He was nominated for the National 4-H Hall of Fame in 2007.

Inductees

Alabama Farmers Federation
Corporate Partner

Created by farmers, led by farmers and dedicated to serving farmers, the Alabama Farmers Federation first emerged from the Alabama soil in 1921. Its mission is to promote the economic, social and educational interests of rural Alabamians.

By holding fast to the simple idea of strength through unity, the Alabama Farmers Federation has grown to become the state's largest, most active and most diversified farm organization. With more than 440,000 members statewide, the federation's "one voice" delivers a powerful message, whether at the Statehouse in Montgomery or on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Through its commitment to be an integral part of the communities it serves, Alabama Farmers Federation and Alabama 4-H have forged strong ties for more than 50 years, working to strengthen farmers and their families. As President Jerry Newby says, "Alfa Insurance and the Alabama Farmers Federation are proud to support 4-H'ers as they learn by doing. Our commitment to 4-H is our way to help 4-H fulfill its metto and we are proud to play a part in that."

Alabama Power Company Foundation
Corporate Partner

Alabama Power Company and the Alabama Power Company Foundation have been among the most philanthropic supporters of Alabama 4-H for more than 60 years, committing resources, finances, educational programs and volunteer leaders.

Willard Bowers, vice president of Environmental Affairs for Alabama Power, knows Alabama Power sees the benefit of partnering with 4-H. "Alabama Power has, as its mission, a commitment to be a part of the community and work to help those in the community, and 4-H has that same objective."

Alabama Power provides reliable, affordable electricity to more than 1.3 million homes, businesses and industries in the southern two-thirds of Alabama. It is one of five U.S. utilities operated by Southern Company, one of the nation's largest producers of electricity.
Helen Bauer*
Baldwin County 4-H Volunteer
Helen Bauer was a 4-H club leader in the Sonora Community of Baldwin County beginning in the 1950s and spanning several decades, where she worked with 4-H members. She was considered a mentor and second mother for many 4-H'ers and worked on various projects including sewing, baking, food preservation and public speaking. She assisted with bike rodeos, county contests, 4-H summer camps and was involved with the county fair, where she encouraged 4-H'ers to enter individual exhibits.

Bauer also served on the Extension Leadership Council. She received a leadership award in 1973 and an award for Outstanding 4-H Leader in 1997.

Malta F. (Scooter) Conners*
Houston County 4-H Volunteer
Malta Conners served as a volunteer 4-H leader for the boys' elementary school 4-H clubs at Wicksburg High School for 37 years. During that time, Conners helped educate and train 4-H boys as well as many young 4-H agents.

Conners contributions included training youth about 4-H programs and monthly meetings, planning fishing and wildlife days, working with 4-H'ers to showcase 4-H at about 50 Peanut Festival Fair exhibits and serving on the county 4-H council. Conners also held the first 4-H Autootive Club in Houston County at her home, coordinated 4-H competitions and provided judges for events and activities.

After retirement from public school, Conners continued her involvement in the Houston County 4-H program and even expanded into Jackson and Pike counties.

Thomas M. Campbell Sr.*

Thomas Monroe Campbell is a legendary figure in the nation's Extension history. Through study, hard work and perseverance, the sharecropper's son earned his degree at Tuskegee, and, in 1906, was America's first black Cooperative Extension agent, serving Macon County.

After 12 years in Macon County, he was appointed field agent in Extension with USDA, located at Tuskegee Institute. He served as a leader in Extension until he retired in 1953, after 47 years of Extension work. He was inducted in the National 4-H Hall of Fame in 2011.

George Washington Carver*

George Washington Carver's horticultural talents were recognized at a young age. In 1891, he became the first black to enroll at Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts. His studies exposed him to the hands-on methods of teaching youth and farmers and to his potential for serving his fellow man. He graduated from Iowa State College in 1894 and accepted a position there as a botanist.

He went to Tuskegee Institute in 1896 at the invitation of Booker T. Washington to establish an agriculture school. At Tuskegee, he gained an international reputation in research, teaching and outreach; his work in agriculture and nutrition is legendary. Carver brought the Iowa State Extension concept to Alabama in 1906, creating the "Jesup Agricultural Wagon," which brought practical agricultural knowledge to farmers. His teaching at the institute and outreach into farms brought new scientific agricultural principles to farm life and formed the foundation for modern day Extension and 4-H. He was inducted in the National 4-H Hall of Fame in 2011.
Heard was chosen Calhoun County Outstanding 4-H Volunteer in 1983, 1984 and 1985. She was named Alabama’s Outstanding Volunteer Leader in 1985 and has been a member of the Alabama Parent Volunteer Association since 1984, currently serving as a regional representative.

**Earl and Rosalie Kennamer**

*Extension Fish and Wildlife Specialist and Head of Extension Duplication Service*

Earl Kennamer was an Extension employee noted as having a colorful personality. He became Extension’s fish and wildlife specialist in 1948. At one time he served as fish and game editor for “The Progressive Farmer” and had an “Outdoors with Earl” newspaper column, magazine articles and television shows featuring Extension.

Earl established the 4-H Fish and Wildlife Camp at Camp Tukabatchee where young men learned about hunting and fishing and other outdoor activities. That camp later grew into the present day Alabama 4-H Center on Lay Lake.

Rosalie Kennamer’s association with Extension began in 1948 and spanned more than 50 years. Rosalie was head of duplication services for Extension and took great pride in producing quality materials including 4-H project information that was circulated statewide.

**Vicki Linley**

*Morgan County 4-H Volunteer*

4-H became part of Vicki Linley’s life when she was 10 years old. She was an active member for eight years, five at Owens Junior High in Athens, and three at West Limestone High School in Salem. During those years, she held every local club office several different times.

As an adult, she has been a 4-H club volunteer for 20 years, which began as a desire for her two children to participate. She formed clubs at Eastwood Elementary and Oak Park Middle School. When Linley returned to teaching she started a 4-H club at Woodmeade Elementary, and, for the last 16 years, she has organized 4-H clubs at Austinville Elementary School. She has been recognized by Morgan County as its Volunteer of the Year.

* deceased

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**Bob Whittenburg**

*Extension Specialist, 4-H Livestock*

A native of Pleasant Hill, Tenn., Bob Whittenburg became a 4-H member at 10 and immediately became active in the beef breeding project. He began his project with one heifer, which was purchased with borrowed money, and he exhibited bulls and heifers at county, district and state shows. He concluded his 4-H program with a herd of 15 registered Polled Hereford cows and one bull.

With the exception of four years of undergraduate school, Whittenburg has been involved in some phase of 4-H livestock work, first in Tennessee as an adviser, leader and assistant county agent. For nearly 30 years, he was the familiar face at every 4-H livestock event across Alabama as the 4-H livestock specialist.

When Whittenburg joined the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, the only active 4-H livestock program focused on market steers, and the program was revamped under his guidance, and the market hog program was reactivated.

He also added new dimensions to the livestock programs, which included the beef heifer, horse and lamb shows as well as livestock judging competitions. Thousands of youngsters participated in the livestock programs he coordinated, and he has been recognized nationally for his leadership in 4-H animal science.
Alabama Representatives and Nominees in the National 4-H Hall of Fame

Ann Barr
Ann Barr began her Extension career in Alabama as an assistant home demonstration agent in Talladega County, but is most noted as state 4-H leader for girls from 1951 until retirement in 1984. Her 33-year tenure as state 4-H leader for girls was crucial in the progress of modern Alabama 4-H, especially the areas of leadership development and citizenship. For two decades, she was the greatest single motivational force in Alabama 4-H – influencing, at all levels, more than 1 million young lives.

She served on the National 4-H Congress planning committee 33 times and as chair six times. From 1984 to 1994, she worked with National 4-H Council and National 4-H Congress. She was inducted in the National 4-H Hall of Fame in 2002.

Tom Burnside*
T.F. “Tom” Burnside Jr. began his career in Extension in 1960 as an assistant agent in Randolph County. He was promoted to county Extension coordinator in 1983, a position he held until his retirement in 1993. Burnside’s career established a high benchmark for county agents in Alabama. During his tenure, he built one of the state’s strongest 4-H programs.

In addition to his county Extension youth work, he helped organize the Alabama Junior Cattlemen’s Association and was one of the first to establish a county chapter. He received many awards including the Extension 4-H Distinguished Award (both nationally and in Alabama), the Extension Award for Excellence in 4-H, the Golden Gavel Award and the Alabama Cattlemen’s Hall of Fame Award. He was nominated for the National 4-H Hall of Fame in 2005.

Thelma and John Gottler*
Baldwin County 4-H Volunteers
John Gottler lived his life in Elberta, and as a youngster left school to work on the family farm. 4-H clubs and programs played a vital role in his young life.

Growing up in Dadeville, Thelma Sheppard was involved in the 4-H clubs of Tallapoosa and Macon counties, first joining the only 4-H clubs available, the boys’ corn clubs. Thelma and other family members started a 4-H club for girls, where she served as club secretary, vice-president and president.

As an adult, John served as Elberta’s postmaster and continued his involvement with 4-H as a volunteer. Thelma joined Extension as an employee in 1947, working as an assistant home demonstration agent in Baldwin County assigned to 4-H club work. The two met at a 4-H gathering in Fairhope, were married, and, in 1950, Thelma resigned her Extension position but remained an active volunteer for 4-H.

The couple served as 4-H club leaders in Baldwin County from 1960 to 1964, and then with the Elberta Community 4-H Club for 10 years. More than 100 youth received state and national awards under their leadership.

Alice Needham Heard
Calhoun County 4-H Volunteer
Longtime 4-H volunteer Alice Neeham Heard has been involved in 4-H most of her life, as a 4-H’er, teacher leader in Calhoun County schools and a volunteer following her retirement. As a 4-H’er, Heard was a delegate to the National 4-H Leadership Conference and a member of the collegiate 4-H program.

From 1980 until 1996 as a teacher leader, Heard started 4-H after-school clubs at Oxford middle and high schools, where she enrolled more than 300 students, leading 64 students to district competitions and 25 to state competitions. She also organized a unique 4-H club, the “Luckies” clown troupe, which performed for nursing home residents, participated in parades and conducted a seminar for the Alabama 4-H Volunteer Leader Association. Through this group, 4-H’ers learned leadership, public speaking, organizational skills and community involvement while having fun.
James A. McLean
Pike County Extension Agent

James A. (Jim) McLean positively changed lives, especially the lives of young men in Pike, Russell and Coffee counties. He began his Extension career in 1954 as an assistant county agent in Coffee County. He later transferred to Russell and then to Pike County where he worked until his retirement in 1981.

He continued to serve after retirement by judging exhibits, demonstrations and other activities as well as contributing time and support for 4-H members.

Throughout his 4-H career, McLean spent hours teaching 4-H’ers skills in good record keeping, selection of show calves, good beef management, public speaking and citizenship skills.

Jack Odle
Chairman, Alabama 4-H Club Foundation, Inc.

Many have done much to contribute to the strength and effectiveness of 4-H in Alabama. Jack Odle ranks high among those. For the past several years, Odle has lead the Foundation Board of Directors to a successful level, remaining solidly on target with unwavering leadership.

Odle grew up on a diversified farm in east central Kansas. In 1976, he joined "The Progressive Farmer" and, in 1982, was named managing editor to oversee the day-to-day operation of the magazine, including the planning, placement and proper illustration of all articles. In 1985, he became editor, adding to his responsibilities long-range planning and growth of Progressive Farmer, Inc. His current title is editor in chief. Odle continually upholds the 4-H motto: "To Make the Best Better."

Deborah Stabler
Lee County 4-H Volunteer

For more than 25 years, Deborah Stabler has used her "Head, Heart, Hands and Health" for the betterment of Alabama 4-H. From 1978 to 1996, she served as an Extension specialist, designing curriculums and promoting youth development.

In 1996, Stabler founded the Learning Clovers 4-H Club, where she has mentored scores of 4-H’ers. She has helped 4-H’ers organize workshops (photography, public speaking and pet care) and has coordinated several community service projects, teaching 4-H’ers to be caring and responsible citizens by giving back to their communities.

The sentiments of appreciation for Stabler’s efforts are echoed by another 4-H family: "Mrs. Stabler combines everything it takes to be a great 4-H leader," says Linda Rankin. "She’s fun, knowledgeable, energetic, encouraging, cheerful, and organized, but most importantly, has a heart full of desire to minister to others."

Ryan Sprinkle
Fayette County 4-H Alumnus

Ryan Sprinkle’s term as president of the Alabama 4-H State Council (2005-2006) will be remembered as significant: the state 4-H program was implementing its new volunteered, out-of-school delivery methods, and he enthusiastically supported the new vision among his fellow 4-H’ers.

In his 10-year span as a 4-H member, Sprinkle held every club office and participated in 4-H contests at every level. Public speaking was the 4-H project that he excelled in, especially persuasive speaking. Leadership experience was gained through his involvement in the Fayette County Youth Committee, Bankhead Region 4-H Council and the 4-H State Council. He also participated in several 4-H leadership events, including Citizenship Washington Focus, National 4-H Congress and National 4-H Conference.

Sprinkle has been committed to 4-H since the third grade when the “4-H lady” came to his school. Currently a freshman at the University of Alabama, he is vice president of the Alpha Kappa Psi pledge class, a member of the Freshman Forum Public Policy Team and serves on the University of Alabama Relay for Life Executive Committee. He also co-chairs the State Farm Southern Zone Youth Advisory Board.
Ann Thompson

Director, Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Ann Thompson was an active 4-H’er in Tallapoosa County, where she took pride in showing dairy animals in county, district and state shows. Her career came full circle, beginning and ending with Alabama 4-H, and she has been dedicated to improving families and 4-H through Extension education.

Her first Extension position was assistant county agent in Coffee and Houston counties after graduating from Auburn in 1954. In 1956, she received a National 4-H Fellowship, and a year later, she joined the Florida Extension State 4-H staff. After earning her master’s degree from the University of Maryland and a doctorate in education from Oklahoma State University, she moved up the Extension career ladder holding a number of positions in Florida and Virginia. She was the assistant director of the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service when she was nominated for the director’s position in Alabama.

In addition to serving as the only woman director, Thompson served as vice-president of Extension and associate provost for Auburn University. She retired in 1994 after serving 10 years as director. She speaks proudly of Alabama 4-H: “4-H has been a part of my life. I love it and it is the greatest organization for youth development.”

John E. Jones

Shelby County Extension Agent

John E. Jones, retired Extension Agent in Shelby County, spent his 30-year career molding and shaping 4-H’ers into responsible, productive adults. Jones’ positive effect on those youngsters is still being recognized 20 years after his retirement.

Jones’ most outstanding 4-H program area was livestock. He organized the first 4-H horse club in Alabama in 1966. His success at the local level prompted state leaders to develop a state horse program, and he played a major role in creating the state-wide program.

4-H’ers under his leadership also participated in beef, dairy, swine and lamb projects and shows, and it is estimated that more than 3,500 youth participated in these programs during his career. During his tenure, Jones had 21 state winners in various projects and numerous state-winning 4-H livestock and dairy judging teams.

John D. McCrorie*

Jefferson County 4-H Volunteer

In his 24 years of service in 4-H, John D. McCrorie loved serving the youth of Jefferson County as a teacher and 4-H leader. He was a dedicated 4-H leader beginning in 1968 at McNeil Junior High. After several years, he began teaching school at Woodward Elementary in Jefferson County and became a 4-H leader there until his retirement in 1992.

His accomplishments include being named Outstanding Leader in Alabama for nine years, serving on the Jefferson County Extension Council 4H Committee and chaperoning 4-H’ers attending Citizenship Washington Focus.

* deceased