News Article
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August 31, 2007

Championship 4-H Team Honored at Five Star Plantation

Recently the Coosa County 4-H Wildlife Team returned from Cedar City, Utah after having won the 2007 National Championship in the 4-H Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Program Invitational. The team consisting of Anna Vines, Elijah Phillips, Samuel Cordner and Treavor Abrams were coached by County Extension Coordinator, Roger Vines and chaperone Kristy Abrams. To honor these young people an Awards Program was held at Five Star Plantation in Kellyton on August 30, 2007.

After a brief welcome and introduction of guests, a slide show was presented highlighting the team and their activities on the road to the national competition. Next, 4-H alumnus and 1992 Wildlife Champion, Phillip Neighbors came forward to present the 4-H Clover Award to Elijah Phillips and the Championship Team plaques to all the team members. Neighbors stated "It's an honor for me to help recognize this year's team, because I have been in their shoes and I know how much the 4-H program meant to me back then. Now I am in a position to give back and I am glad to do so".

Several county and state officials were also on hand to make presentations and remarks. Coosa County Commission members, Todd Adams, Randall Dunham, Unzell Kelly, Anthony Thornton and County Administrator, Sherry Kelly were on the program next to read a Resolution signed by all the commission members (Corey Thomas was unable to attend). Chairman, Todd Adams said "I know I speak for all the Commissioners, that we are all very proud of you and how well you represented our county."

Roger Fennell, representing the Coosa Action Network, then presented the team members with embroidered team jackets and congratulated them on how well they represented Alabama and especially Coosa County. He was followed, on the program by Ed Dickinson who was representing the Alabama 4-H Foundation. He stated that "the 4-H Foundation is in the business of raising funds to support 4-H at the state level and it is club members and accomplishments like this that make these efforts so worthwhile."

Greetings were then extended to State Representative, Barry Mask who had made the long drive in the rain to come and honor these four young people. Representative Mask, who was previously recognized himself as the 2007 Conservation Legislator of the Year by the Alabama Wildlife Federation, said "He believes in conservation and he believes in young people!" He presented each team member with a certificate from the State Capital

and then each was given an Alabama Wildlife Federation tote bag and a copy of the book "Alabama Wildlife Management".

To wrap up the program, Auburn Extension District Director, Dr. Paul Waddy, made comments on how well Alabama has done in national 4-H forestry and wildlife competitions. He stated, "The fact that Alabama has won more national titles than any state in the country is a real testament to the commitment and dedication of a lot of people including extension staff, volunteers, parents, sponsors and of course the 4-H members themselves."

Lastly, each member of the Coosa County 4-H Wildlife Team was given a chance to say a few words and tell the audience their plans from here. Treavor Abrams plans to go to Auburn and eventually hopes to go to work for Extension. Samuel Cordner leaves next week for Idaho where he plans to study Aerospace Engineering. Elijah Phillips goal is to enroll at Auburn University in Wildlife Biology. Anna Vines also plans to go to Auburn and major in Veterinary Medicine. One thing for sure, these young people have the study skills and perseverance to make their dreams come true.

Photo: Coosa County Commission presents Resolution to National Champion 4-H Wildlife Team (L-R) County Administrator Sherry Kelly, Coach Roger Vines, Commissioner Unzell Kelley, Anna Vines, Commissioner Anthony Thornton, Elijah Phillips, Commissioner Randall Dunham, Samuel Cordner, Commissioner Todd Adams, Treavor Abrams.