



Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame
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Credentials Released for 2017 Ag Hall of Fame Inductees

(Lebanon, TN – March 24, 2017)

In 2007, a group of concerned Wilson Countians came together to form the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame. Since Wilson County was founded back in 1799, Agriculture has been a cornerstone of this community. To recognize the contributions of the many folks involved in agriculture to our community, the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame was organized. Each year, at least four (4) Wilson Countians are recognized during a banquet designed to bring attention to Agriculture's prominent place in our county.

The eleventh annual Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame Banquet will take place on April 4, 2017 in the new Wilson County EXPO Building at the Ward Agricultural Center in Lebanon with a reception at 6:00 pm and the actual banquet at 6:30 pm. Area FFA and 4-H Members will serve as ushers for the evening. The following individuals will be part of the tenth class of inductees into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame:

Dr Sam McFarland

Sam Bradshaw McFarland was born in 1906 in the Palmer House on the McFarland Family Farm on Coles Ferry Pike. The Palmer House was the second home the McFarland Family built and, in 1912, Sam's father Dr. Jerry McFarland built the current house across from Friendship Christian School. In addition to his medical practice, Dr. Jerry was a farmer and Sam and his brother James helped raise cattle, hogs and chickens on the family farm. Sam was a teenager working in the hayfield when he saw a farmer seriously injured when he fell off a haystack onto a pitchfork. It was then that he decided he wanted to follow in his father and grandfather's (Dr. Billy McFarland) footsteps and become a doctor. Sam graduated Lebanon High School and attended David Lipscomb for his pre-med degree. He met, courted and married fellow Lipscomb student Gwendolyn Moss of Tusculumbia, Alabama. Sam obtained his medical degree at University of Tennessee at Memphis and came home to Lebanon to open his practice. Thereafter, he was affectionately known by his patients, friends and even family as "Dr. Sam".

Dr. Sam was kept busy throughout the 1940s with his practice and growing family. He and "Ms. Gwendolyn" had three children, Gay (Chamberlain), Sam Grady, and Jerry Allen McFarland. He also decided to take over operation of the McFarland Farm and concentrate primarily on Guernsey dairy cattle. His goal was to produce the richest milk with the highest buttery fat content at the largest volume possible. He traveled the United States purchasing the highest quality Guernsey and even bought cattle in Oregon and Washington State and had them flown to Nashville on an Eastern Airlines flight! The cattle from Robin Roost Farms gained a reputation as

having the best appearance for showing purposes and for producing rich milk in high quantity. At the time, Robin Roost Farms boasted of having the most modern milking parlor in the Middle Tennessee area. Several of Dr. Sam's cows won state awards such as First Place in the National Junior Guernsey Show in 1953 and the Gold Star Sire Award. Robin Roost Ruby was heralded as the best dame ever sired at the farm and she won awards across the State of Tennessee, the Southeast Championship, and showed at the National Championship. In the 1960s, the market for high fat milk hardened and that, coupled with the fact that factories moving to Lebanon had siphoned off most of his farm help, prodded Dr. Sam into changing Robin Roost farms from a dairy farm into a beef cattle farm. He raised Angus for several years before turning the farm over to his son, Jerry, who still raises Charolais beef cattle.

Hale Moss

Hale Moss was born on October 12, 1948 at the old McFarland General Hospital in Lebanon. Hale is a lifelong resident of Wilson County. He graduated from Mt. Juliet High School in 1966 in a class of 63 students; most of whom started together in 1st grade at Mt. Juliet Elementary. Hale and his sister, Susan, were active in 4-H and showed beef steers and heifers for many years on the county and state level. In high school, Hale became very involved in FFA where he served on many judging teams and officers including Chapter President. At the annual FFA convention in May of 1966, he was elected state FFA President. In the fall of 1966, Hale entered the University of Tennessee, Knoxville to pursue a degree in Agriculture. He joined the Alpha Gamma Rho (AGR) Fraternity, a social and professional organization for college students interested in careers in agriculture. He served AGR in many capacities including Noble Ruler. While at UT, Hale was a member of Professor E.R. Lidvall's livestock judging team and was the high scoring individual at the Southeastern Collegiate Livestock Judging Contest at the University of Georgia in 1969. He then graduated with a BS in Animal Science in 1970. After graduation Hale continued his commitment to AGR by serving as Regional Vice-President from 1973 – 1998. Hale married Brenda Horton on June 16, 1973. In the fall of 1970, Hale accepted the job as the VoAg teacher at Lebanon High School. After teaching for 4 years, he accepted an appointment with the TN Department of Agriculture as Director of Fairs & Livestock Show in the summer of 1973. This was the start of a passion and years of tremendous success with the Wilson County Fair. Hale served as the Beef Cattle Superintendent of the Tennessee State Fair Advisory Board from 1977 -2005. In 1977 Hale returned to Mt. Juliet to manage the family business of Moss Bros Seed Co. and along with Brenda, his mother, Ilene, and his aunt opened Moss' Florist and Garden Center. The family continued to work here for 39 years until their recent retirement in 2016. However, not much down time, son Joe and daughter in law Lauren have opened the next generation of Moss' Florist at a new location. Hale and Brenda, along with Joe, and Lauren, dogs CJ and Jasper, cat Neylee enjoy spending time on their family farm "Knobblehurst" in Mt. Juliet where they raise Hereford based, black baldy beef cattle. In 2016 Hale was inducted into the AGR National Hall of Fame as only the second Tennessean to be awarded this prestigious honor for his years of service. Hale Moss' name is synonymous with the Wilson County Fair. Hale helped to form Wilson County Promotions in 1977 and has served as President of the Executive Committee for 35+ years. Ask Hale why he has spent thousands and thousands working and improving the Wilson County Fair; his answer is very simple: "It is all about the kids".

David M. Tomlinson

David Means Tomlinson was born on February 24, 1948, in Lebanon, to Frank and Nettie (Lemons) Tomlinson. He was born a 7th generation Wilson Countian, and farming was his family's business. On December 21, 1955, he moved from his grandparents' Beasley's Bend farm along with his parents to their newly purchased farm located off Hartsville Pike. Tomlinson has resided on the farm, now known as Tomlinson Place, for almost 60 years, and has lived intermittently in one of two houses located on the property ever since. He began farming at age ten, and raised sheep, sows, and chickens. He had his first half-acre tobacco crop at age thirteen. He was an active participant in 4H and FFA. He was educated in the Wilson County School System, and graduated from Lebanon High School in 1966. Tomlinson married Anne Buehler, of Carlyle, Illinois, on April 20, 1968, and reported for basic training at Fort Campbell, Kentucky on June 3, 1968. He served as a door gunner and first echelon crew engineer of the Bell UH1H helicopter flight line at Vihn Long Airbase, Vihn Long, Vietnam from November, 1968 until November, 1969. He served with meritorious distinction in the United States Army Air Cavalry and flew approximately 700 combat flight hours. After returning stateside, he was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas from November, 1969 until April 3, 1970, but was granted a two-month agricultural deferment, to

return home to plant more than one hundred acres of crops for the 1970 season. In 1973, he was honored by the Wilson County Jaycees as Outstanding Young Farmer. During the 1970's, Tomlinson served eight years on the Wilson County Farmer's Co-op board of directors, and "seconded" the motion to build the current Co-op building at its 107 Babb Drive location. In his last years on the board, Tomlinson served as vice president, and then president *pro tem*. He also served as a director for the Wilson County Farm Bureau, and was an active member of the Wilson County and Tennessee Cattleman's Association. During his farming career, Tomlinson was a producer of beef cattle, hay, corn, soybeans, and tobacco. He and his beloved wife, Anne, will soon celebrate 49 years of marriage, and they have one daughter, Lisa Anne Tomlinson. He continues to raise hay and cattle, and is an active member of St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church, Blackhawk Vietnam Veteran's Association, and he is an avid sporting clays shooter.

A.C. Wharton

A.C. Wharton was born July 22, 1913 in rural Wilson County as the eldest son of Jim Wharton and Estella Hearn Wharton. There were nine siblings for whom he served as surrogate father after his father passed at an early age. His father was a sharecropper or tenant farmer which meant that as a young boy he had to assume the responsibility of providing for the family. He often commented on how this affected his opportunity to attend school on a regular basis. AC married his loving and caring wife, Mary Alice Seay on April 22, 1939 on the Public Square in front of General Hatton. They lived on the Johnny Smith farm in the Spring Creek area in a two room cabin with a leaky roof. They were blessed with the birth of two daughters, Mary and Ruth while living there. AC possessed an overwhelming desire to provide better living conditions and educational opportunities for his family so he began looking for work in Lebanon. Later, AC bought a farm in Linwood and raised sheep and calves and Mary served as midwife during the birthing of new animals. Agriculture was always a family affair for the Wharton's in that there were always feedings, pickings of produce, herding calves and hogs from one place to another etc.. His last farming purchase was only one half mile from his home where he raised calves and hogs and a large garden. He had a pond stocked with fish and had an old tractor seat mounted so that he could sit, think and fish. AC was one of the first to raise Duroc hogs which were considered one of the best breed of hogs. Mr. and Mrs. Wharton were actively involved as members of the Market Street Church of Christ and demonstrated their Christianity by always taking care of the less fortunate regardless of their need. He was a member of the Chamber of Commerce, Wilson County Civic League, McFarland Hospital Board of Trustees, Lebanon Housing Authority and the Emergency Communications 911 Board. Although AC did not have a formal education he was a master of human relations and admired by all who knew him. The success of his five children brought him so much joy in that they graduated from universities and have successful careers.

"The purpose of the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame is to recognize citizens of Wilson County who have made a significant impact on agriculture in Wilson County, Tennessee, nationally or worldwide" states Ben Powell, the Chairman of the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame. "We feel the time is right to pay tribute to these very deserving individuals. As you can tell, each has made significant contributions to Wilson County Agriculture, as well as Wilson County in general."

Other members of the Board of Directors of the Wilson County Agriculture Hall of Fame are Keith Harrison - Vice Chairman, Jeffrey Turner-Secretary, Diane Major-Treasurer and Ruth Correll. The organizers have established a non-profit status for the organization to enable them to raise money to be used for a building on the Ward Agricultural Center to be dedicated to the individuals inducted into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame. "Any funds raised over and above the costs of putting on the annual banquet will be set aside for the building," states Diane Major, Treasurer of the Hall of Fame,

Tickets for the April 4 banquet can be purchased from Diane Major by calling 444-1890 ext. 3. The cost is \$20 each. Jordan's Catering will be preparing the meal that evening, which is another reason to join in on the festivities. "We want folks to come together to recognize these deserving individuals on April 4," says Powell. "We owe these folks a great deal of gratitude for everything they have done for agriculture as well as Wilson County."

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