



Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame
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Credentials Released for the 2025 Wilson County Ag Hall of Fame Inductees
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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 18th Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame Banquet will take place on April 1, 2025, in the Farm Bureau 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 18th class of inductees into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame:

Stratton Bone

Sam Stratton Bone, Jr, was born in Lebanon, TN on April 12, 1938, to parents Sam Stratton Bone, Sr, and Margaret Frances Talley Bone. Stratton had two brothers, Dr. Robert Carver Bone and Harold Gordon Bone. Stratton married Martha (Marty) Smith on February 20, 1974. They

have one son, Doug Bone. Stratton graduated from Lebanon High School. He received his associate's degree from Cumberland College in 1958 and bachelor's degree in animal husbandry in 1961 from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville where he was a member of the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity. He is a lifetime member of the First Presbyterian Church in Lebanon. Stratton farmed all his life primarily focusing on raising beef cattle, worked in Residential Construction and was a member of the Tennessee Air National Guard. He served on the Wilson County Commission from 1969-1978 and 1982-1996. He was one of the commissioners that recommended the purchase of the land for the James E. Ward Agricultural Center in 1974. In addition, he served on the James E. Ward Center Management Committee 1993-1997. He was elected to the Tennessee State House of Representatives representing the 46th District (Cannon, Trousdale, and part of Wilson Counties) from 1997 to 2010 in the 100th through 106th General Assemblies. He served as Chair of the House Agriculture Committee as a member of the House Finance Ways and Means Committee and the House Calendar and Rules Committee and the Joint Committee on Pensions and Insurance. In 2001, he started the first Ag Day on The Hill to draw attention to the importance of Agriculture in Tennessee. He arranged to bring "Millie" the first cloned calf in the United States from the University of Tennessee to the Capitol for the event. In 2005, he sponsored the legislation creating the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program (TAEP). Since its inception, this program has provided over \$289 million to farmers in all 95 Tennessee Counties to conduct over 92,500 projects for the purpose of making long term investments on farms and rural communities.

Ruth Correll

Ruth is the daughter of Harold H. and Carmine Wilson Cunningham. She and her sister, Helen Cunningham McPeak, grew up on the family farm which is near the Greenvale and Norene communities in Wilson County. The family farm, established in 1808, is a recognized Century Farm. It was like the many other family farms at that time, a "diversified" farm, which meant that farmers had several types of livestock and/or crops. They fed their families as well as marketed what they produced for family income. The farm produced beef cattle, operated a dairy, also had sheep and goats. Tobacco and hay were the main crops. The farm activities of milking, feeding and caring for the animals, gardening, growing tobacco and harvesting hay drove her decision to major in agriculture in college. Ruth attended schools at Greenvale and Watertown, graduating from Watertown High School where she played basketball and was a member of the 4-H Club. She also attained a BS (1969) and a MS (1972) degrees from Middle Tennessee State University. Her majors were Animal Science, Biological Sciences and Microbiology. Ruth married Lanny Correll in 1971. Lanny was pursuing a career in the USAF. As a military spouse, Ruth taught secondary level science and math in North Carolina, Arkansas and Guam. After Lanny's retirement from the USAF, they decided to make their home in Wilson County. After returning, Ruth had an opportunity to work with the University of Tennessee Extension. She had never considered a career in Extension, but this opportunity turned out to lead to the career of a lifetime. Ruth worked in several different positions while working for UT Extension. She worked in the Expanded Food and Nutrition program, the 4-H program, and as an agricultural agent and County Director. Ruth has volunteered with the Wilson County Fair since 1993. She is a life member of the TN Agricultural Agents and Specialists and the National Agricultural Agents and Specialists. She is a member of TN 4-H Alumni, the Wilson County Livestock Association, the TN Cattlemen's Association and the Wilson County Farm Bureau Women.

Debbie Joines

Debbie Brakefield Joines was born March 31, 1961, to Walter and Sue Brakefield (Bales) in Miami, Florida. Early childhood involved feeder pigs and exploring on her pony, Blackie, in rural Franklin County, TN. Her father was an electrician which required moving to different communities throughout childhood. Eventually the family settled in southeastern Davidson County, TN near Long Hunter State Park. Her agricultural influences came from 4-H, her dad and a favorite uncle, Jack West who farmed hundreds of acres in Indiana. As a teenager, she traded her pony for a horse which strengthened her love of horses and the beginning of training. Debbie graduated from DuPont High School in Hermitage then enrolled in the fall of 1979 at Columbia State Community College for a degree in Animal Hospital Technology. Believing a higher education was key to a better salary, she enrolled at University of Tennessee at Knoxville upon her associates degree (AS) at Columbia State. In December 1983, she graduated with a bachelor's degree (BS) in Agriculture, majoring in Plant & Soil Science. After graduation, she went to work at the University of Tennessee Soil and Forage Test Laboratory in Nashville writing lime and fertilizer recommendations for farmers and producers across the state. In 1987, she married Jeff Joines of Hermitage. They moved to a small farm in southern Wilson County where she and Jeff bought 30 bred Holstein heifers to blend in with others already being milked in Woodbury, TN. Their daughter came a few years later and Debbie left UT to be a stay-at-home mom and raise bottle calves. During her time away from UT and moving to Gladeville, their son Cole came along, and she and Jeff built a greenhouse where she grew annual flowers and vegetables and perennial plants. She also trained horses for the public along with a few of her own. She was hired back at UT in 1996 to run the lab. After 26 years at the UT Soil, Plant and Pest Center, she retired in 2016. During her career, she traveled across Tennessee presenting the virtues of soil and forage testing to county agents, farmers, producers and homeowners. University travel also led to opportunities not only in TN but throughout the Southeast. She traveled to the country of Kosovo to help scientists and county agents set up a soil testing facility to help their struggling farmers. She received a master's degree (MS) in 2008 from UT-Martin in Agriculture studying the effects of sulfur on forage bermudagrass. Since retirement, she has worked part-time at the Ward Agricultural Center while training and competing horses with her daughter, Audrey under 4J Barrel Horses. She and Jeff maintain a flock of 35 Katahdin ewes at their farm in Shop Springs.

Quintin & Vicki Smith

Quintin and Vicki met at MTSU in the Fall of 1974 at an AGR Fraternity party. It was not quite love at first sight, as Quintin brought another woman to their first date, but after tasting Vicki's home cooking he knew she was the one. The two began their married life in March of 1975 with their first daughter, Jamie, born in 1976. Sonya and Robbie were soon to follow. It would take another nine years for Callie to make her appearance into the world. James Quintin Smith was born in Lebanon, Tennessee to James Ray and Dorothy Jean Hankins Smith. He was the oldest of four boys. Quintin, along with Dintin, Lanias, and Allen grew up on the family farm on Cainsville Road where his mother still resides. They raised cattle, tobacco, and corn. He attended Shop Springs School and Lebanon High School where he was on the Wilson County 4-H Livestock Judging Team which competed in Chicago at the International Livestock Expo. After graduating high school, Quintin attended Cumberland College, then transferred to MTSU where he received his B.S. with a double major in Animal Science and Plant and Soil Science. While at MTSU he was active in the Block and Bridle Club, Apha Gamma Rho Fraternity and a member

of the MTSU livestock judging team where he received several high individual awards. Vicki Kay Walker was born to W.C. and Robbie Hardin Walker in Lincoln County, Tennessee. She was the youngest of four siblings. She grew up on the family cotton farm in Elora where schools were closed for "Cotton Pickin Vacations," these were the days before fancy mechanical pickers. Vicki attended Elora elementary school and Central High School in Fayetteville. She began college at MTSU in the fall of '72. She graduated with a B.S. in Sociology and minors in Agriculture and History. Vicki was one of the first 30 women to participate in the Army ROTC program at MTSU, marching, repelling, and shooting rifles. They attended Bethel Church of Christ where Vicki taught Sunday School and was a teacher with the World Bible School Correspondence program. Both Quintin and Vicki were members of the Lebanon Jaycees chairing various projects such as the annual Christmas Shopping Trip for underprivileged children. Quintin served on the MTEMC nominating committee, the Farm Bureau, and as Chairman of the Junior Show at Agribition. Quintin was a charter member of the Wilson County Ag Management Committee and served on the board until he took over as the James E. Ward Agricultural Center's director in 2017.

"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 Keith Harrison, the Chairman of the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame. "We feel the time is right to pay tribute to these very deserving individuals. 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 Jeffrey Turner, Vice Chairman; Neal Oakley, Secretary; Diane Major, Treasurer; Ben Powell: Louis Fletcher; Isabel Hall & Lucas Holman. 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 Jeffrey Turner, Vice Chairman of the Hall of Fame.

Tickets for the April 1 banquet can be purchased by calling 444-1890 ext. 3. The cost is \$30 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 1," says Harrison. "We owe these folks a great deal of gratitude for everything they have done for agriculture as well as Wilson County." For information, please visit www.wilsoncountyvghalloffame.org.