

# Landmarks

SPRING 2015

The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources



*"I'm only 54 years old, and I have  
such a passion for what I do.*

*I enjoy going to work every day."*

*Tommy Wilkins*

*Sweet Taste of Success*





# Landmarks

Volume 30 | Issue 1

PERSPECTIVES



The Sweet Taste of Success

A Passion for the Land



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## Landmarks

Vol. 30 Issue 1

*Landmarks is the official alumni news magazine of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at Texas Tech University. It is published biannually and sent to alumni and friends of the college.*

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Michael Galyean  
Dean, College of Agricultural  
Sciences and Natural Resources

Those of us who have lived a few decades understand that life can take some interesting twists and turns. You wake up one morning and ask yourself, “How did I get here?” I’ve asked myself that question a few times since I became Dean of CASNR in 2012. But regardless of how we might find our way into various situations in life, the things we do once we get there are what really matter. Changes can bring opportunities or burdens – perhaps often both in the same package. Our decision is whether to rise above the burdens and make the most of the opportunities or to try to find the nearest exit as soon as possible and return to a less-burdensome comfort zone.

Although I’ve made the decision on occasion to slide back to a comfortable place, I like people who chose the former option – meeting opportunities head-on and dealing with the challenges. This issue of Landmarks has stories about CASNR alumni who made the most of opportunities when their circumstances changed. Larry Butler retired from a noteworthy career with the NRCS with plans to do consulting work. That all changed one day when he was watching RFD-TV and had an idea

for a television show that would capture his passion for managing natural resources. Now a few years later, I’m certain Larry wakes up some days and wonders just how he got to be a successful “star” and producer of a television show on the same network. For Tommy Wilkins, life has always been about making the most of opportunities. Even before he completed his bachelor’s degree in CASNR, he was working in various positions related to the produce side of the grocery business. When changes occurred in the management of the company he had built his career with, he met the challenge by adapting and moving to his present position with Grow Farms Texas and has rapidly helped them develop strong niche markets around the country.

At the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, our goal is to provide students with opportunities that allow them to respond to the twists and turns that life will bring. Through outstanding instruction in the classroom, numerous extracurricular activities like our many competitive teams, social and cultural activities around campus, study-abroad programs, internships, and undergraduate research opportunities, we are doing our best to educate “challenge-ready” graduates.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Landmarks. Thanks for your continued support of the college and its people and programs.

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Tracee Murph  
Coordinator of Alumni Relations

Alumni play a major role in our accomplishments. Texas Tech would not be the university it is today without the foundation laid by former students and professors; current faculty, staff and students; and the support of our alumni and friends. Your contributions as students, and now as alumni, are reflected in our successes.

One of my favorite things in this job is seeing students graduate and become professionals in the agriculture and natural resources industry. Seeing how our degree programs propel students, and how our alumni advance the industry is inspiring. In each issue of Landmarks, we feature alumni, faculty and students doing just that, and I hope you feel the same inspiration I do.

I hope it inspires you to give back, as well. Your successes are our successes, and it takes all of us to continue that success. There are many ways you can participate. Volunteer with the Dr. Bill Bennett Student Success Center to provide information to prospective students or serve as a career development resource for current students. Or, make a donation to support scholarships, programs, research and initiatives. Visit [www.Give2Tech.com](http://www.Give2Tech.com) and select one of the funds listed in CASNR. Any amount will truly make a difference, and your support is greatly appreciated! The percentage of alumni donors that give, whatever the amount, makes a difference in our university's national rankings of best universities (US News and World Report).

Again, your support aids in scholarship funding and helps us attract the best and brightest students to continue in our tradition of excellence. Feel free to contact me any time with questions on how you can give back. I look forward to hearing from you!

*Tracee Murph*



Peggy Espinoza-Horn



Shannon Tower

Change continues to be a theme around campus, and in our office as well. This year we welcomed two new faces to our Development and Alumni Relations family. Peggy Espinoza-Horn has taken over as our Coordinator of College Development. She comes to us after more than 17 years with CASA of the South Plains. We also welcomed a new Student Assistant. Shannon Tower is an Agricultural Communications major from Copperopolis, Calif.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**50TH+ CLASS REUNION**  
WELCOMING THE CLASS OF 1965 AND BEFORE!  
Thursday, May 7, 2015  
Luncheon: 11:00 a.m.  
Campus Bus Tour: 1:00 p.m.  
*McKenzie-Merket Alumni Center*

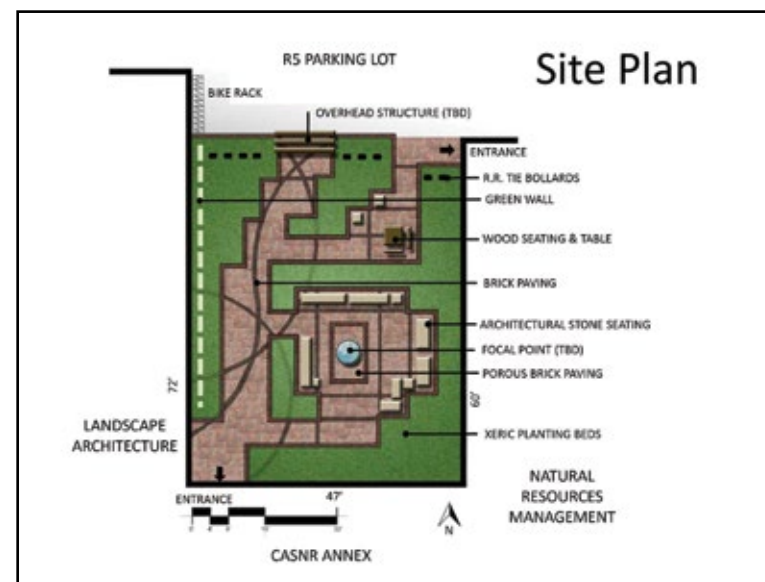
**VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL  
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE**  
July 27-31, 2015  
Alumni Reception:  
Tuesday, July 28th, 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
*Waco Convention Center | Waco, Texas*

**54TH ANNUAL HOMECOMING BREAKFAST**  
Saturday, October 10, 2015  
Keep an eye on your mailbox for more details!



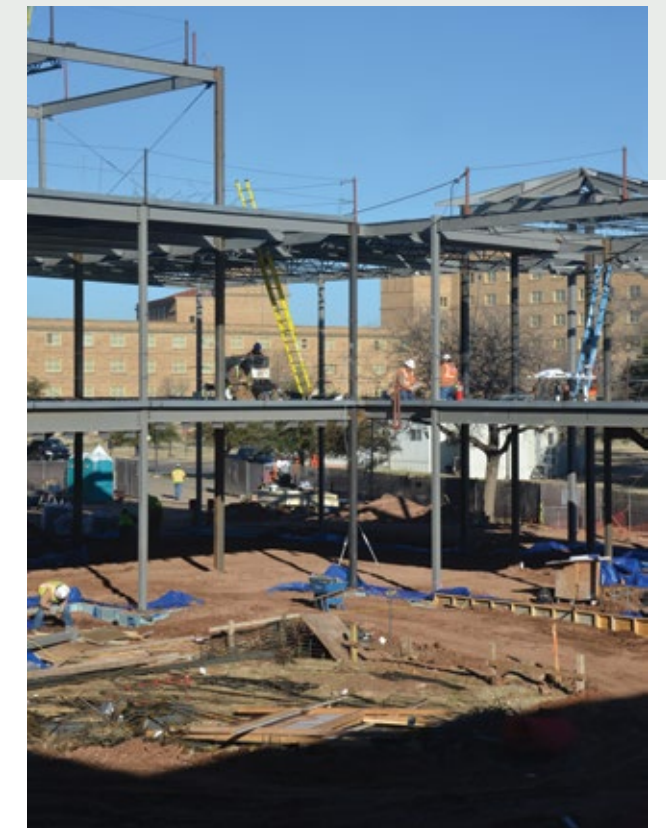
MANY OF OUR EVENTS ALLOW YOU, AS ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE COLLEGE, TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CHANGES AS WELL. PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND SAVE THE DATE FOR THESE EVENTS!

# UNDER CONSTRUCTION



Construction moves ahead on Plant and Soil Science's new \$13.6 million expansion and renovation of what will be known as the 'Bayer Plant Science Building.' The project adds 21,122 square feet of new construction, and includes 2,440 square feet of renovation and exterior upgrades to the existing home of the Department.

Among the upgrades are new open labs with expanded support and graduate student spaces, as well as an instructional lab, departmental suite and space for research equipment. Renovations within the existing building will create new space for faculty, staff and graduate students, and will provide a connection to the new building. The building project is being funded by donations, including lead contributions from Bayer CropScience.



The CASNR Annex received a minor facelift, as well, with a makeover of its courtyard area. The plaza project was part of the Landscape Architecture class 4404/5316 Materials and Details. Students in the class designed the plaza and began building it to better understand what is needed when development construction documents. One of the requirements was for the design to revolve around sustainability. The project then had to be "de-constructible" so that the materials could be salvaged and reused during any possible reconstruction.





**When Tommy Wilkins ('82 BS Horticulture) followed his father into the produce industry, the apple obviously did not fall far from the tree.**

"When you see what a farmer has to go through to grow produce, that intrigued me," Wilkins said.

But, the younger Wilkins – the first in his family to graduate from college – blossomed and grew in the industry in ways not possible a generation before because of advances in agriculture, technology and transportation logistics.

During his 40-year career, Wilkins has worked in all aspects of produce sales in Texas and California, from representing producers to retailers to being a broker between the two.

Today Wilkins lives in McAllen, Texas, where he is director of sales and business development for Grow Farms Texas LLC. The company is a joint venture between well-established produce providers Ciruli Bros. LLC in Nogales, Ariz. and The Horton Fruit Co. in Louisville, Ky. The goal is to expand retail offerings on products grown in Texas or crops brought into Texas from Mexico.

"We've been able to develop a retail business in about 14 months," Wilkins said.

He joined Grow Farms Texas in September 2013 after developing and managing the produce procurement division for The United Family (formerly United Supermarkets) in Lubbock, Texas.

"I think the whole 20 years I was responsible for produce for United there wasn't many domestic operations that I didn't visit," Wilkins said.

He learned such "kicking-the-dirt" visits from his father, Harold Wilkins, as a way of developing important relationships with growers, knowing where the produce came from and ensuring that it is flavorful, ripe and safe.





## grocery store roots

While in high school in Lubbock, Wilkins started his career at Furr's Supermarkets, where his father had worked for 40 years in the produce division.

Wilkins held several jobs with Furr's from 1975 to 1985, including spending four years at the company's greenhouses and helping to transition them from growing hothouse tomatoes to floral products. He was also a produce manager all through college.

Wilkins seriously considered leaving Texas Tech University to focus just on work, but four faculty members in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources encouraged him to complete his studies and earn his degree. They were Norman Hopper, Ph.D., Clinton McPherson, Ph.D. (Chemistry), Robert Reed, Ph.D. and George Tereshkovich Ph.D.

"These four men really pushed me to stay in school, and I'm glad I did," said Wilkins, who credits his degree for his career achievements.

In 1984, Wilkins and his wife Barbara ('83 B.S. Management Information Systems) moved to Dallas, where he was hired as a sales associate for Foursome / Ron's Brokerage. Four years later he moved to California to work as a sales associate for Cal Fruit / Nobility Fruit Company. The company grew and marketed grapes, strawberries, stone fruit and kiwis when they were still a novelty fruit in America.

"I would sell in the mornings but then go to the production fields in the afternoon," Wilkins said.

His horticulture degree enabled him to have knowledgeable conversations with growers in those afternoon visits.

Wilkins returned to Lubbock in 1994 to form, with his father and Joe Genova, the produce buying company Wilkins Genova Inc.

Through the company, Wilkins helped United transition from buying from a wholesale produce distributor to self-distributing in the 1990s. The project included building storage and distribution facilities, negotiating contracts and setting up transportation logistics.

"We built it from the ground up. We started it from scratch," Wilkins said.

In 2006 Wilkins joined United as director of produce procurement. He developed strategic partnerships and built several successful programs to ensure that quality, fresh produce was delivered in a timely fashion to stores at fair prices for growers while reducing costs and spoilage.

When Wilkins returned to Lubbock, he also planted deep roots in the community. He served on the Frenship ISD School Board from 2003 to 2009, including as president and vice president. During his tenure, he saw the passage of a \$46.8 million bond and the construction of five new buildings.

But what he most enjoyed as a school board member was passing out diplomas during high school graduation.

"That's a big day for a lot of families, and to be a part of that is really special," Wilkins said.

He also served on the boards for Lubbock's Make-a-Wish Foundation and Homes for Heroes, and on the finance committee for Wolfforth United Methodist Church. In addition, he helped organized United Supermarkets' annual Jacky Pierce Charity Classic golf tournament for seven years.

## new challenges

Wilkins attributes his professional and personal success to three important qualities: integrity, passion and intensity.

"I think I can out hustle most people," Wilkins said.

He continues to bring that work ethic to his new life in McAllen, where he is leveraging his knowledge to help Grow Farms Texas expand. They grow and market, pack and ship pineapples, avocados, tomatoes, hot peppers, mix lettuce, mangos and other produce from South Texas and Mexico.

As water and other issues adversely affect California produce production, producers and packers in South Texas see an opportunity for growth because of the production fields in Mexico.

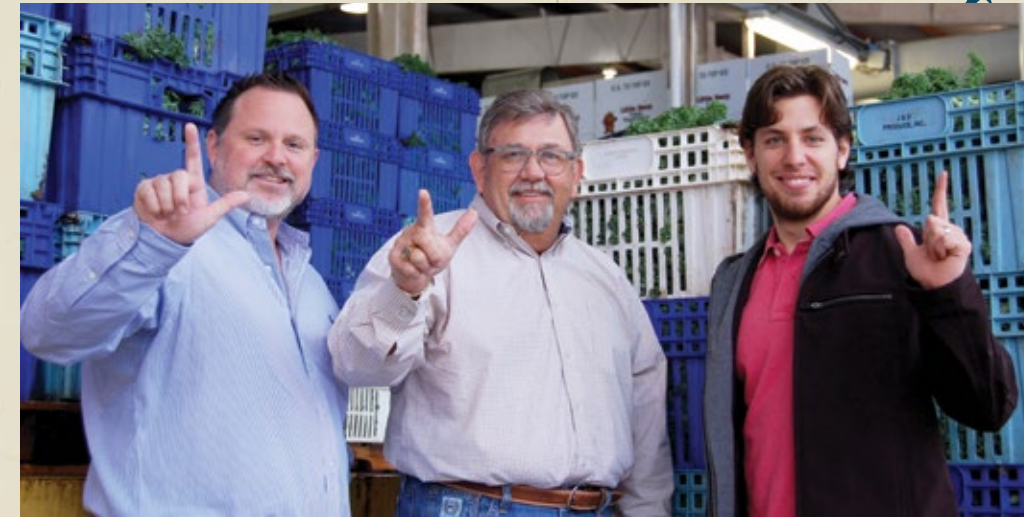
"Mexico will take up our production slack. They've got the land, labor and water," Wilkins said.

Grow Farms Texas ensures the safety of its produce by employing high quality control measures that exceed industry minimums in growing, water usage and handling, Wilkins said. The company is currently working with small- and mid-sized grocery chains that can be aggressive and move quickly to give customers exceptional produce, he said.

Community involvement continues to be important to Wilkins, who is trying to launch an Ex-Student Group in McAllen. He also serves on the board for First United Methodist Church in McAllen, and helped start the inaugural charity golf tournament for the Southeast Produce Council in 2014 that raised about \$50,000 for the Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children. The event is now called the Terry Vorhees Charity Golf Classic.

Wilkins also served on the Texas International Produce Association's steering committee that organized its inaugural Viva Fresh Produce Expo in Austin in March. More than 100 growers and 80 retailers were at the three-day event, which had a theme of "Gateway to the Americas" to showcase produce from the Southwest and Mexico.

"I'm only 54 years old, and I have such a passion for what I do. I enjoy going to work every day," Wilkins said.



L and R: Fellow Red Raiders Bret Erickson('97 BS Agricultural Economics), President and CEO of Texas International Produce Association; and James Bassetti('09 BBA Management), Vice President of Operations for J&D Produce.



Tommy with his wife Barbara, daughter Randal, and son Jeremy.



*a passion for the*

Dr. Larry Butler's vocations, hobbies and philanthropy all center on one element: land.

# Land



Butler ('74, BS Wildlife Management) is the creator, executive producer and host of the 30-minute television program "Out On The Land" shown weekly on RFD-TV. Since the pilot aired on Jan. 1, 2013, Butler has completed five seasons totaling 65 episodes.

The show explores the American landscapes and highlights best land practices of ranchers, farmers and other landowners. Each episode is designed to be educational, entertaining and professional.

"I can let an individual tell his conservation story through RFD-TV," said Butler, who lives in Weatherford, Texas.

"Out On The Land" is an apt name for the show, given Butler's previous award-winning career with the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service) from 1974 to 2007. After starting in an entry-level position in San Angelo, Butler retired more than three decades later as the federal agency's Texas State Conservationist and one of 26 top NRCS executives.

"Out On The Land" is Butler's first television venture, but it is a natural fit for his land stewardship knowledge and education skills.

"The first time I heard Larry speak was at a beef cattle short course. I was impressed with his knowledge, but also doubly impressed with his passion for the land," said Sue Price ('77, BS Education). She and her husband, Gary, appeared in a season one episode in 2013 after winning the

National Cattlemen's Beef Association Environmental Stewardship Award in 2012.

Like he does with many of his guests, Butler interviewed the Prices outdoors on their ranch about 50 miles south of Dallas, Texas.

"It's fun working with Larry. He makes you feel real comfortable. He's very relaxed and not pushy," said Frank Price ('73 BS Agricultural Economics) – no relation to Sue and Gary Price – who ranches with his son Sims near Sterling City, Texas. The Prices were recipients of the NCBA's Environmental Stewardship Award in 2013.

But more importantly, Frank Price praised Butler for using the show to "promote good environmental science."

In addition to interviewing more than a handful of Texas Tech University graduates, Butler also has featured the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources' Department of Natural Resources Management.

In his free time, Butler enjoys hunting, golfing, and public speaking where he shares original poetry and stories related to the American land and its people. Western singer and songwriter Michael Martin Murphey has had him on stage during shows on more than one occasion. Butler also works with a nonprofit that harvests excess deer and donates the venison to the hungry.

"The highlights of my career are working one-on-one with landowners to make their ranch better for themselves and their kids," Butler said.



### CAREER ROOTS

The germ for Butler's love of the land is easy to identify. Growing up he often spent time running trotlines, hunting quail and enjoying other outdoor exploits with his grandfather, Willie Richard Dunlap (1901-1976), a cowboy turned teacher and school administrator for several West Texas towns. Dunlap was in the first class when Texas Tech (then Texas Technological College) opened in 1925.

"He tied education and outdoors together for me," Butler said.

He credits his father for setting a high bar in character, integrity, and honesty. Butler's father worked for a gas company, and his childhood was spent in the West Texas towns of Ranger, Blackwell and Bronte. Butler finished high school in Ranger, where he excelled in math and science.

During his freshman year at Texas Tech as an electrical engineering major, Butler discovered that all the career presentations by professionals in the field did not excite him. He started searching for a new major by flipping through the college catalogue and saw that wildlife management aligned with his outdoor interests.

"I wasn't sure what one did with that degree, but I knew that really interested me," Butler said.

Looking back, he credits much of his career success to the instruction and guidance of five faculty members – Bill Dahl, Ph.D., Russell Pettit, Ph.D., Ron Sosebee, Ph.D. and Darrell Ueckert, Ph.D. – and senior lecturer John Hunter.

"At Texas Tech wildlife and range management were taught in the same department, so there was a lot of crossover," Butler said.

He was also a member of the college's Range Plant Team, where students had to be able to identify a plant by just a leaf and know multiple facts about them. That emphasis on plants was instrumental in Butler being hired by the NRCS/SCS following graduation, he said.



### Meet Dr. Larry Butler

Career: From 1974 to 2007, Butler worked up the ranks at United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, serving as a range conservationist, biologist and district and area conservationist in San Angelo, Del Rio, College Station, San Antonio and Pecos. Butler was also a regional range conservationist for 13 western states based in Utah, a range conservationist in the West National Technical Center in Oregon and director at the NRCS Grazing Land Technology Institute in Fort Worth. His final NRCS appointment was as the Texas State Conservationist.

Since retiring from NRCS, Butler consults with landowners and is the executive producer and host of "Out On The Land" on RFD-TV.

### Select Recent Awards:

2014: Outstanding Contribution to Range Management, Texas Section Society for Rangeland Management

2007: CASNR's Distinguished Alumnus Award

2006: USDA Senior Executive Service Performance Award

2005: Society for Range Management's Outstanding Achievement Award; and Dept of Natural Resources' Outstanding Alumnus Award

Family: Butler and his wife, Dorlene, have been married 10 years. He has two sons, and she has a daughter.



### CONNECTING WITH LANDOWNERS

It was while working at his first station in San Angelo, Texas that Butler's career became more than a vocation.

"I really didn't get the passion until I began working on the land with landowners. This just wasn't about land management. This was about their lives," Butler said.

Butler realized that he was in a unique position to work on diverse lands across the country, observing best practices and sharing that information with countless landowners.

"I got to go from ranch to ranch to ranch to share information about what works. Even though I didn't own land, I could help people who did," Butler said.

While at the NRCS, Butler earned a master's degree in Recreation and Resources from Texas A&M University in 1980 and a doctorate in Range Science in 1990 from Utah State University.

"He's one of the best range men I've ever known. He has a diverse background. With the NRCS he's worked all over the country. He's got a lot of knowledge in a lot of different country," said Kent Ferguson ('77 BS Range Science and Management), a former NRCS colleague and friend who appeared in the pilot episode. He and his wife now raise cattle on a ranch near Waco, Texas.

Butler considers his work with landowners an honor.

"My philosophy for working with others is to have respect for their land, their operation, their private information and their goals and then showing them proven methods that are science-based that can help them achieve those goals," Butler said.

He greatly enjoyed working with individual landowners, something that his move up the NRCS ranks often precluded. His television show "Out On The Land" has allowed him to return to his first love.





"Out On The Land"

Airs at 6 p.m. (Central) Tuesdays on RFD-TV. Visit [rfdtv.com](http://rfdtv.com) for local availability on your cable or dish provider. Previous episodes can be viewed at [outontheland.com](http://outontheland.com).

Current sponsors are Dow AgroSciences, Total Feeds, Inc., Stay-Tuff Fence Mfg Inc. and Blake Fulen-wider Automotive Companies.



NEW VENTURE

After retiring from the NRCS in 2007, Butler did consulting work. He had the idea for the show in September 2011 while in his home office with the television on RFD-TV. He thought the regular agriculture shows talked a lot about livestock but little about the land. After a prayer to God, he wrote a one-page proposal for a television show on land issues. The next day he polished the document and emailed it to RFD-TV.

The following week a network executive emailed that the idea was great and to send his pilot. Butler called to discuss the project and ask how to make a pilot. The executive referred him to a couple of videography professionals in the Waco-Temple area, and eventually the team completed a pilot by January 2012. The network then greenlighted the show.

As executive producer, Butler buys the airtime, sells sponsorships, lines up episode topics and handles all other logistics. Butler is also the show's host and does most of the voice-overs. Episodes have been shot in nine states, including Florida and Montana.

Talking land issues with Butler is easy, said Stephen J. "Tio" Kleberg ('64, BS Animal Science), a director of the King Ranch near Kingsville, Texas. Kleberg appeared on an "Out On The Land" episode to discuss the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute.

If people were to ask for a reference for Butler, "the first thing I would tell them is you can trust him. He'll respect what you ask him to discuss or not discuss," Kleberg said.

Although he had no television background, Butler considers "Out On The Land" the capstone of his career because it brings together land and education. Fans of the program have contacted him to express how the program inspired them to tackle issues on their land or helped educate their children.

"I did alright for a boy who didn't have a plan. But I knew that if I did a job well I would move on," Butler said.

**EARL MADDING** ('59 BS Agricultural Education) retired after 30 years of working in vocational agriculture teaching, administration, and auto dealership. He now spends his time traveling and playing golf.

**THOMAS V. ALVIS** ('61 Agricultural Education) is working with Moak, Casey & Associates dealing with School 313 agreements.

**JAMES "JIM" M. SMITH** ('64 BS Agricultural Education) is the chairman of the San Juan Resource Conservation and Development Council in Colorado.

**BRUCE BACCUS** ('73 BS Animal Business) retired in June from Rabobank International as CEO and General Manager of Rabobank Canada.

**H.P. "TREY" HARBERT, III** ('73 BS Agronomy) retired from BP in 2012 and Kinross Gold in 2014 as a senior environmental project manager. He now lives in Butte, Mont. with his wife Luanne and spends his time fishing, hunting and skiing.

**BARRY STREET** ('79 BS Agricultural Economics) is now the chairman of the Membership Committee for the Texas Tech Alumni Association Board.

**JOHN OSBORNE** ('82 BS & '83 MS Agricultural Education) is now teaching agriculture at Schleicher Co ISD in Eldorado, Texas.

**JAY RUTHERFORD** ('85 BS Agricultural Economics) was one of 14 Jackson Walker attorneys selected as 2013 Fort Worth Top Attorneys by Fort Worth Texas magazine. Each year, the magazine selects the attorneys as the best in their field by their peers.

**TOM MAYNARD** ('86 BS Animal Production, '87 MS Agricultural Education) is celebrating 14 years as Texas FFA Executive Director and is a member of the State Board of Education for the Texas Education Agency.

**JAMES "JIM" D. RAY** ('87 BS Range Management) has been working as a wildlife biologist and scientist for Consolidated Nuclear Security, LLC for the past 15 years, after a nine-year stent with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

**GREG CUOMO** ('88 MS Range Science) is now the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Programs in the College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Recourse Sciences at the University of Minnesota.

**NORMA RITZ JOHNSON** ('90 BS Agricultural Communications) has been promoted to executive vice president of the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce. She oversees the government and community relations functions and external programs.

**BRANDON HARRISON** ('99 BS Agricultural Economics) has been farming cotton and wheat since college. After working for the Farm Service Agency for 7 years, he was hired by Happy State Bank in 2011 as an agriculture lending/commercial lending agent.

**JOSH STEWART** ('99 BS and '14 MS Agricultural Education) is an instructor at Oregon State University and working on his Ph.D.

**COLIN MURCHISON** ('00 BS Agricultural and Applied Economics) is an attorney for Jackson Walker, LLP and was selected for inclusion in Super Lawyers – Texas Rising Stars 2014 by Thomson Reuters in the Texas Monthly magazine. The list represents the top 2.5 percent of Texas attorneys who are under 40 or have been practicing for 10 years or less.

**COREY LOWRANCE** ('04 BS Agricultural Education) recently moved to Imperial, Texas as the agriculture teacher.

**STEPHANIE EDWARDS** ('07 BS Animal Science, '12 MS Agricultural Education) is now teaching at Texas City High School.

**KAYLEE DECKER** ('09 BS and '12 MS Horticulture) was recently promoted to Plant Trials Manager at the Dallas Arboretum. She oversees all aspects of the trials program which trials more than 3,000 varieties of annuals and 600 perennials each year. The data that is collected helps suppliers and breeders know what performs well in North Central Texas.

**AMANDA WALL HEAD** ('10 BS Agricultural Education) is teaching at Amarillo Caprock High School.

**KATY HARKEY** ('11 MS Agricultural Education) is now teaching agriculture for Ralls ISD.

**ASHLEY LARKIN** ('11 BS Interdisciplinary Agriculture) got married December 27, 2013 to Austin Smith, and is now Mrs. Smith.

**MEREDITH COUTS** ('11 BS Agricultural Communications, '13 MS Agricultural Education) started teaching at Frenship ISD in July 2014.

**ALYSSA SMITH** ('13 BS Agricultural Education) is now an agriculture teacher at Brownfield ISD.

**MAGAN ESCAMILLA** ('13 BS Agricultural Communications, teaching certificate) is now teaching at Vandegrift High School in Leander ISD.

**ALICIA GARZA TULL** ('13 BS Food Science) welcomed a baby girl in December 2014.

In Memory

W. PAUL PHILLIPS  
'47 BS Soil Science

H. G. SPRAWLS  
'47 BS Animal Husbandry

BOBBY RAY HENSLEY  
'49 BS Agricultural Education

WAYLON R. CARROLL  
'50 BS and '54 MS Agricultural Education

RONALD G. STEWART  
'54 BS Agricultural Economics

ROBERT LEON "BOB" GEE, JR.  
'69 BS Agricultural Education

GARY E. SORRENSON  
'72 BS Agricultural Engineering

CARMEN S. MORAN  
'83 BLA Landscape Architecture

G. BARRON WETSEL  
'97 MS Agricultural Education

DR. DONALD ASHDOWN  
Former faculty in the Department of Plant and Soil Science



**KELLY LANGE**, a farm and agribusiness management expert, has been named an assistant professor in Agricultural and Applied Economics and Director of Farm Operations within the department.

An expert in international agricultural leadership, **AMY BOREN**, has been named an assistant professor in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communications. Working closely with CASNR's International Center for Food Industry Excellence, she will explore youth entrepreneurship and rural community development in developing countries.

**KELLY RICCITELLI** has been named an associate professor of practice for equine science in the Department of Animal and Food Sciences. She will work closely with the coaches of the Equestrian Team, Ranch Horse Team and Rodeo Teams to develop a strong connection between all users of the Texas Tech Equestrian Center. One of her primary goals is to also build up the horse judging program and competitive team.

An expert in the development, coordination and delivery of international food safety training programs, **MARCOS SANCHEZ-PLATA**, has been named an associate professor in the Department of Animal and Food Sciences. One of his primary goals is to carry out research to generate scientific support for food safety management systems at the industry level, and address food safety data needs under the risk analysis framework to support science-based decisions for regulatory control and the facilitation of international trade.

**MARIE BUGAREL** has been named a research assistant professor in Animal and Food Sciences. She will be working in the development of innovative molecular methods to solve food safety related issue to facilitate the improvement of public health.

An expert in food safety management and training, **ALEJANDRO ECHEVERRY**, has been named an assistant professor in Animal and Food Sciences. He is particularly interested in continuing his research on improving, validating and implementing antimicrobial interventions to improve the safety of beef products, especially in developing countries, with the goal to increase their ability to export to the United States.

**SOHYUN PARK**, has been named an assistant professor in the Department of Landscape

Architecture. Her goal is to research the reconciliation between ecology and planning, and to contribute to making sustainable urban environments through independent and collaborative research efforts among different disciplines, professions and sectors.

A nationally-known waterbird and wetland ecology expert, **WARREN CONWAY**, has been named the Bricker Endowed Chair in Wildlife Management for the Department of Natural Resources Management. His primary goal is to carry out research on ecologically relevant, applied and conservation oriented wildlife management issues.

**BRENDAN KELLY** has been named a research assistant professor in the Department of Plant and Soil Science. His primary goal is to work with the research community and industry partners to develop varieties with improving on yarn quality and processing performances.

An experienced entomologist, **SCOTT LONGING**, has been named an assistant professor in Plant and Soil Science. He has worked as a visiting professor in the department since 2012. His research focuses on the ecology and conservation of endemic terrestrial insects at the Monahans sand hills in western Texas and endemic aquatic insects across the Ozark Plateau, with a common goal across these systems to determine habitat associations and threats to populations.

**AMY PARKS** has been named the new safety coordinator for CASNR. She will work with cross-disciplinary teams within the College to ensure safety including addressing chemical, biological, and occupational safety concerns.

An experiences research economist who specializes in political economy, **ADAM MARTIN**, has been named an assistant professor in Agricultural and Applied Economics. He will also have a joint appointment with Tech's Free Market Institute.

**ANDREA GARMYN** has been named a research assistant professor in the Department of Animal and Food Sciences. She will continue to foster the relationship that has been created between Texas Tech and Silver Fern Farms in New Zealand to research evaluating the impact cattle finishing systems and growth promotion technologies have on beef cutability and palatability.

An expert in ruminant nutrition, **BRYAN BERNHARD**, has been named an assistant professor in Animal and Food Sciences. He has a primary goal of investing in student development by teaching classes and creating new opportunities for students to participate in undergraduate research, industry activities and on competitive teams.

**YI LUO** has been named an assistant professor in the Department of Landscape Architecture. Her research interests include landscape performance, sustainable development and assessment, stormwater management/low impact development, urban landscape ecology, and landscape architecture history.

An expert in aquatic invasive species, **MATTHEW BARNES**, has been named an assistant professor in the Department of Natural Resources Management. He will be working in advancing the ability to make predictions in invasive ecology, including which species are likely to be introduces, how they are likely to arrive, and where they will find conditions promoting their success.

**KATIE ROTH LISBERGER-LEWIS**, an experienced soil scientist, has been named an assistant professor in Plant and Soil Science. She will have a joint appointment with the Texas A&M AgriLife Research Center.

A nationally-known researcher in cotton fiber research, **NOUREDDINE ABIDI**, has been named associate director of CASNR's Fiber and Biopolymer Research Institute. He is also an associate professor with the Department of Plant and Soil Science.

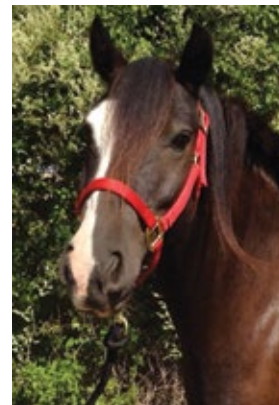
**JOSEPH NEARY** has been named an assistant professor of animal health and well-being in the Department of Animal and Food Sciences. He will continue his research in diseases of the bovine cardiopulmonary system.

An expert in population modeling and biostatistics, **HENK (HENDRIK) DER BAKKER**, has been named an assistant professor in Animal and Food Sciences. He will work closely with the International Center for Food Industry Excellence and the Center for Biotechnology and Genomics.

**CARLOS PROTILLO-QUINTERO** has been named an assistant professor in Natural Resources Management. One of his primary goals is to develop a research and teaching program on geospatial technologies applied to questions in biogeography, biological conservation and natural resources management.



Tech's Therapeutic Riding Center was awarded a Gypsy Varner horse through a Facebook contest. Aptly named Gypsy, the horse was donated by the Gypsy Gift Organization through LexLin Gypsy Ranch. Only Premier Accredited Centers with Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, International (PATH, Intl.) were eligible for the contest, the TTRC is the only Premier Accredited Center on the South Plains.



The Department of Animal and Food Sciences was recently ranked among the Top 20 in the country, according to GraduatePrograms.com. The online guide ranks higher education programs based on student evaluations that cover a variety of topics, such as academic competitiveness, career support, financial aid, and quality of network.

The College established the Senator Robert Duncan Texas Legislative Internship Endowed Scholarship. Created by the agricultural economics alumnus and newly appointed Chancellor, funds generated by the endowment will be used to give scholarships to students participating in the long-running CASNR government internship program. Specifically, recipients of this scholarship will intern for Texas' 28th Senatorial District.

The Livestock Judging Team took first place, and three members finished in the top 10 individually, at the National Barrow Show, considered by many as the "World Series of Swine Shows." The team finished four points ahead of the second place team, Iowa State, and this is only the second time Tech has won the Barrow Show in its history of competing there.



The Department of Agricultural Education and Communications' agricultural communications undergraduate program was ranked as the best in the nation, according to a new University of Arkansas study. Forty programs across the country were identified in the study, Characteristics of U.S. Agricultural Communications Undergraduate Programs. The research focused on creating an accounting of existing programs, a description of those programs, identifying program demographics and identifying top programs.



# GERALD W. THOMAS OUTSTANDING AGRICULTURALIST AWARDS

*The outstanding agriculturalist awards, established in 1969, are named for Gerald W. Thomas, who served as dean of Tech's College of Agricultural Sciences from 1958 to 1970.*

The annual Gerald W. Thomas Outstanding Agriculturalist Awards recognize individuals for contributions to various areas of agriculture. This year's recipients were Glenn Schur for agricultural production, Linda Taylor for agribusiness, and Patti Jones for public service.



## GLENN SCHUR - AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

The Plainview native is owner/operator of Glenn Schur Farms, where he has been a sorghum grower for Grain Berry Cereal for seven years. Farm operations include Schur Limousin, a 100+ registered cow/calf operation. He received his bachelor's degree in agricultural economics from Tech in 1980. Schur is a current member of the CASNR Advisory Board and serves as Chairman of the Texas Alliance for Water Conservation. Awards for Schur include the Blue Legacy Award (2011); CASNR Distinguished Alumni Award (2008); and the Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership award (1990-1992).

## LINDA TAYLOR - AGRIBUSINESS

Taylor is owner and operator of S P Taylor Insurance Agency, a Ropesville-based crop insurance agency. She was office manager, co-owner and operator of Buster's Gin, Ltd. between 1976 and 2009. She is a member of the Plains Cotton Growers Finance Committee, the Bayer Museum of Agriculture, and the Texas Farm Bureau, among others. Taylor received her bachelor's degree in business administration in 1965 and master's degree in education in 1969, both from Texas Tech. Honors include Leader Legacy Award for District 2 of the Texas 4-H Foundation (2004); Cotton Ginner of the Year for the Texas Cotton Ginner's Association (2009); and Honorary Recognition from the Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership program (2014).



## PATTI JONES - PUBLIC SERVICE

The Honorable Patti Jones was elected Lubbock County Commissioner for Precinct Four in 2000. She has the distinction of the first woman to serve on the Commissioners Court. She has served as Past President of the South Plains Soil and Water Conservation Association, Vice President of the Bayer Museum of Agriculture, the Texas Department of Agriculture Appointee to Texas Agricultural Finance Authority Board of Directors, as well as service on numerous local boards and committees. Jones is from a multi-generational farming family and today continues the legacy built with her late husband, Steve. She and her youngest son, **CASEY** (2003 BS Interdisciplinary Agriculture) and daughter-in-law Lacy, operate today as JJJ Farms, LLC.

**RONNIE HOPPER** ('69 BS Agronomy) and his son **R. N. HOPPER** ('00 BS Agronomy) were honored among recipients of the 2015 Farm Press-Cotton Foundation High Cotton Awards. The awards were initiated more than two decades ago to recognize cotton farmers and their families who demonstrate concern for the environment. The Hoppers said their operation went 100 percent no-till in 2008 to conserve water, soil and other components.

**KRISTINA BUTTS** ('01 BS Agricultural Communications, '04 MS Animal Science) and **KEITH UNDERWOOD** ('02 BS Animal Science) were both selected for Vance Publishing Corporation's inaugural "40 under 40 in Agriculture" awards for their leadership and commitment in advancing the cause to double food production by 2050.

Longtime supporters of Texas Tech and CASNR **DAN** ('64 BS, '68 MS Agricultural Education) and **LINDA TAYLOR** were selected to receive the Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership (TALL) Alumni Association South Plains Agriculture Leadership Award for their passion and dedication to agricultural education, advocacy and history.

**BILL W. BAKER** ('77 MS Agricultural Economics) was honored with a 2014 Legacy Award from the University of Wyoming's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

**EDDIE SMITH** ('73 BS Agricultural Economics) was selected the 44th recipient of the Cotton Grower Achievement Award. Organized and managed by Cotton Growers magazine and sponsored by Case IH and Deltapine, the award honors growers who are outstanding innovators, sound stewards of the environment and leaders in their communities as well as the cotton industry.

**RICK BRACY** ('89 BS Agricultural Education), Director of Career and Technical Education for Grapevine-Colleyville ISD, was selected as the Career and Technology Association of Texas' Texas Administrator of the Year 2014 and chosen to represent Texas in the Region IV Association of Career and Technical Education 2015.

**ANGELA M. REID** ('07 BS Range Management) received the Outstanding Young Range Professional Award at the Society for Range Management's 67th Annual International Meeting.

Animal and Food Sciences honored eight alumni, special contributors and members of the 1984, '94 and '04 Meat Judging Teams at their annual departmental awards event. **MAX MILLER** ('58 BS Dairy Management) received the Hall of Fame Distinguished Service Award, **SAM MILLER** ('90 BS Food Technology) received the Hall of Fame Graduate of Distinction Award, the G. Rollie White Trust received the Hall of Fame Distinguished Service Award, **DALE AND WENDY WOERNER** ('03 BS and '05 MS Animal Science) received the Hall of Fame Horizon award, **JOHN PIPKIN** ('92 Ph.D. Animal Science) received the Hall of Fame Advanced Graduate of Distinction Award, **LARRY MEADOWS** ('70 BS Animal Science) received the Meat Science Distinguished Alumni Award, **TRAVIS O'QUINN** ('08 BS and '10 MS Animal Science) received the Meathead of the Year Award, **DARRELL AND SUSAN O'QUINN** received the Albert Usener Award.





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