

AGRICULTURE HALL OF FAME

HONORING FLORIDA'S GREAT AGRICULTURALISTS



23rd ANNUAL CEREMONIES

**February 13, 2001
Special Events Center
The Florida State Fair**

..... **MASTER OF CEREMONIES**



**Chris Vitelli,
Past National FFA President**

Chris Vitelli, 21, plans to “share his life experiences and friendship to help build confidence, encourage personal growth and develop direction for those he may come in contact with.”

Throughout this past year, Chris had the opportunity to serve as the 1999-2000 National FFA President. He met thousands of FFA members during his year of service as he and the five officers on his team each traveled more than 100,000 miles promoting agricultural education and the FFA. In addition to meeting with members on the local, state and national levels, he met with leaders in government, education, business and agriculture. He also traveled to Japan to provide a forum for discussion of global agriculture and trade issues.

After his year-long leave of absence from college to fulfill his term, Chris has returned to the University of Florida as a sophomore double majoring in agricultural education and agricultural leadership. He plans to pursue a career as an agricultural educator and leadership development coordinator.

Chris served as the 1997-98 Florida FFA Association Area V State Vice President. He received the American FFA Degree, the organization’s highest level of accomplishment, for his hands-on program in feeder swine and steers. Chris was a national extemporaneous public speaking winner, ornamental horticulture demonstration state winner and the county star in agribusiness.

In high school, Chris was involved in National Honor Society, student council, served as a junior and senior class officer and was a member of the Jr. Civitan service club. Currently, he is an active member of the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity at the University of Florida. Other collegiate activities have included UF Senate, UF Civitan, Agricultural Education and Communication Society and ACCENT. He is the son of Arnold and Alice Vitelli of Plant City, Florida.

..... **OFFICERS**

- President Chip Hinton
- Vice President Reggie Brown
- Secretary Tom Hughes
- Treasurer Chuck Smith
- Historian Richard Kelly

..... **COMMITTEES**

- Banquet Coordination Myke Morris, Ron Arkay, Tom Hughes, Hugh Gramling
- Facilities Lisa Hinton
- Food and Beverage Fred Montsdeoca, Myke Morris
- Membership Ray Crawford, Duke Chadwell, Amy Carpenter, Richard Joyner, Ron Hamel
- Nominations Eugene Badger, Richard Kelly, Fred Montsdeoca, Jeff Doran
- Presentation Building Wayne Harris, Bob Morris, Chip Hinton, Tom Hughes, Buddy Blain, Ashley Wood, Chuck Smith, Mary Hartney, Gene Gray
- Public Relations/Promotion Mary Hartney, Rod Hemphill, Ray Gilmer
- Reception Sponsors Reggie Brown, Glenn Bissett
- Registration Richard Kelly, Cheri Lively, Elaine Miller, Tom Hughes
- Screening Committee Chip Hinton
- Taste of Florida Chuck Smith, Lisa Hinton, Bob Morris
- VIP Committee Art Darling, Andy LaVigne, Polly Golden
- Video and Multimedia Ashley Wood, Ron Thomas, Chip Hinton
- Youth Mentor Program Jemy Hinton, Ken Allen, Erin Best, Jim Jeffries

.....**OFFICIAL PROGRAM**.....

Reception - 6:00 p.m.....	Special Events Center
Dinner - 7:00 p.m.....	Special Events Center
Welcome.....	Chip Hinton, President Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame Foundation
Emcee.....	Chris Vitelli, Past National FFA President
Invocation.....	Mamie Wise, President State 4-H Council
Presentation of Members 2001.....	Honorable Terry L. Rhodes Commissioner of Agriculture

Hall of Fame Dinner Menu

Prime Filet Of Sirloin
Slow Roasted, Cooked to Perfection

Chicken Valencia
Succulent Pieces of Chicken Sauteed with Herbs, Garlic and Tomatoes

Saffron Rice

Chef's Selection Of Mixed Vegetables
Sauteed Farm Fresh Green Beans and Carrots

Chilled House Salad
Fresh Ruskin Tomatoes, Cucumbers and Black and Green Olives

Fresh Baked Rolls
Whipped Butter

Fabulous New York Style Cheesecake
With Fresh Plant City Strawberries Garnish

Fresh Brewed Coffee, Iced Tea



Copeland Griswold

Regarded as a pioneer of Florida's cotton industry, Copeland Griswold spearheaded a program to eradicate the boll weevil. Realizing the economic and environmental advantages, Griswold worked tirelessly in the mid-1980s to secure state and federal funds to offset the high costs of the program's launch. He served as the first chairman of the Southeast Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation. His efforts led to the virtual elimination of the pest from Florida, Georgia and south Alabama.

Griswold, a sixth-generation farmer, was born March 21, 1932, in Alabama. His career in farming began as a member of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) with an 80-acre plot of land. Today he is chief executive officer of Griswold Farms, a 4,800-acre family farm that produces food, fiber and timber.

Griswold's family was recognized as a leader in conservation tillage during a 1999 congressional tour of his farm. In 1996, only 150 acres in Santa Rosa County used strip tillage; today, more than 15,000 acres use this environmentally sound technique. Copeland's entire farm uses strip tillage and, because of his leadership, Santa Rosa County ranks first in strip tillage acreage in Florida.

Griswold served eight years on the governing board of the Northwest Florida Water Management District, working to ensure that every citizen had access to a quality water supply. During his term, he sought to implement policies that balanced preservation with agricultural production.

An active participant in agribusiness affairs, Griswold has been a longtime member of the Santa Rosa County Farm Bureau, Florida Farm Bureau Federation, American Farm Bureau Federation, Georgia-Florida-Alabama Peanut Association, Florida Peanut Producers Association, Florida FFA Foundation and the American Soybean Association.

In addition to his service to numerous industry and community organizations, Griswold has served as FFA state president (1951-52). In that role, he began an advocacy that would span half a century, speaking volumes about the industry he loves. He is highly respected in Tallahassee and Washington, and policymakers regularly seek his insight. Said U.S. Rep. Allen Boyd of Copeland Griswold: "One would have to search long and hard to find a person more deserving of this distinguished award."

Copeland Griswold lives in Pace, Florida, with his wife, Winona Salter Griswold. They have four children: Marty, Lavon, Vicki and Paul.



Bert Edward Roper

Bert Edward Roper became part of a citrus family tradition when he was born Nov. 7, 1923, in Winter Garden. Though he has devoted his life since then to running the family citrus business, Roper Growers Cooperative, and other citrus interests, Roper is perhaps best known for developing a revolutionary electronic device that has made grove sprayers more efficient.

Roper is the inventor of the Tree-See Control System, an electronic sonar system that can turn spray nozzles on and off based on the pattern of reflected sound from the spray fluid. Since he developed the device in 1980, it has become widely used in the citrus industry, and has been introduced in the apple, cherry, plum and almond industries.

Today Roper serves as chairman and president of Roper Growers Cooperative and president of Citrus Service Inc. But he began working for the family business by hoeing trees for 10 cents an hour. His father, Frank, and uncles had entered the fruit business in the early 1920s before he was born.

In fact, Roper's father planted his first grove in 1918. But the Mediterranean fruit fly infestation and the stock market crash of 1929 crippled Roper Brothers, as the business was called then. The brothers worked their way back into business during World War II, selling fruit and developing Full Ahead and Ship Ahoy brands. Meanwhile, Bert Roper completed his chemistry degree at Emory University and served in the U.S. Navy during the war.

When he returned from the war, he went to graduate school at the University of Pittsburgh and finished his master's degree in 1958.

After graduation, Roper came back to Central Florida where he helped build a concentrate plant called Winter Garden Citrus Products Cooperative. He worked there four years before returning to his father's fresh fruit business where he remained until the packinghouse was torn down, according to an article in Citrus Industry magazine in 1995.

His love of science and knack for fixing things led Roper to try to find a solution to wasteful grove spraying in the 1970s. A new technology he developed for the family's own acreage proved to be marketable industry-wide. He knew light projected into trees about to be sprayed could be used to turn the sprayer on and off based on the pattern of reflected light. But it wasn't until Polaroid developed a camera with auto focus capabilities that Roper had the technology necessary to complete his project, according to the Citrus Industry article. Roper found an engineer at Martin Marietta who could design the device, and the Tree-See was born in 1980. Bert's son, Charlie, now oversees the Tree-See division, and markets it all over the country.

In addition to serving as president of Roper Growers Cooperative and Citrus Service Inc., Roper is vice president of Space Groves Inc., and director of Diamond R Fertilizer Co. He has served the industry as president of the National Juice Products Association, and president of the Florida Citrus Processors Association.

Roper's honors are numerous. He has been named a lifetime member of the National Juice Products Association, a Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary International, an FFA Honorary Chapter Farmer, and is the namesake of the Bert E. Roper Humanitarian Award, given to a deserving student by the Orange County Migrant Youth Association.

Roper lives in Winter Garden with his wife, Barbara. They have four children and seven grandchildren.

..... 2001 INDUCTEES



Al Bellotto

He is a respected leader in much of Florida's agriculture industry, but Al Bellotto will always be known as one of the state's renowned cattlemen and citrus growers. Born February 15, 1925, in a Dundee, Florida, log house, Bellotto started his cattle herd at age 11. Working for 50 cents a day, he saved money to purchase his first calf for \$20. After graduation from Haines City High School, he saw World War II action in the Navy aboard the battleship USS New York. Involved in some of the Pacific's most heated battles, including Iwo Jima and Okinawa, his ship survived three hits from Kamikaze planes.

Returning from the war, he got back to the Florida cattle business. Today, he and his wife, Betty, manage a 3,700-acre cattle and citrus operation in Polk County.

Bellotto is perhaps best known for his 1985 fight to implement a Beef Checkoff Program in Florida, which would provide funding for beef advertising. Previous attempts to win rank-and-file approval for the program were unsuccessful. However, Bellotto canvassed the state, speaking one-to-one with cattlemen about the benefits of a mandatory tariff of \$1 per head. Through Bellotto's leadership and persistence, the checkoff program was overwhelmingly passed with the second-highest approval vote in the country. Today it remains an important component in the cattlemen's arsenal of marketing tools.

A natural pioneer and innovator, Bellotto introduced freeze branding to Florida, which vastly improved legibility of the brands and is still in use today. He initiated the money-making concept of bull sales in the 1960s, which still ranks as the top fundraising activity at the Polk County Youth Fair. He also started the use of double-deck cattle trailers to maximize hauling capacity and cut shipping costs.

As a strong proponent of conservation, he struck an agreement with a nearby citrus processor to pipe wastewater to his ranch to irrigate pastures. The unique arrangement cut his costs, reduced groundwater pumping and distributed wastewater over large areas, reducing concentrations of contaminants.

Bellotto is a vocal advocate for Florida agriculture and has served in a range of prestigious industry positions. He has been president of the Florida Cattlemen's Association and the Polk County Cattlemen's Association, twice chairing Florida's Beef Council. He has served as chairman and director on the boards of AgFirst Farm Credit Bank and Farm Credit of Central Florida. He was president of the Polk County Farm Bureau, where he served as a director for 25 years, and a trustee of the Florida Agricultural Museum. Bellotto is currently vice president of the Farm Credit Funding Corporation Board.

Al Bellotto lives in Lakeland with his wife, Betty, and their four children, Cherée, Leah, Chris and Al Jr. Born Oct. 17, 1919, on the family farm in Quincy, Fla.



Fountain H. May Sr.

Fountain "Fount" H. May Sr. has never left his agricultural roots. May is owner of a 300-acre container nursery in Quincy, and an industry leader who has helped introduce Florida nursery products to markets around the world.

He started out helping run the family tobacco business in 1945 when he returned from attending college at the University of Florida and serving a stint in the U.S. Air Force during World War II. Times were good for the tobacco industry then, and May, his brother, Don, and their families enjoyed the success of their labors. May's interest in the welfare of the agricultural industry translated into his participation in developing hybrid seeds to improve production of cigar leaf tobacco with Florida Hybrid Seed Co.

However, May began to explore other agricultural opportunities as cigar manufacturers started shifting some of their operations overseas in search of less expensive labor in the 1960s. He started May Nursery, Inc., in 1970 on four acres of land, and took advantage of workshops, seminars and trade shows to learn everything he could about his new venture.

His need for information led him to Florida Nurserymen and Growers Association, the beginning of what has turned out to be a 30-year relationship. He served as president of FNGA in 1980 and was an ambassador for the industry from then on, traveling to Europe and the Pacific Rim several times to introduce homegrown products and forge trading relationships.

FNGA adopted a second trade show, the Tropical Plant Industry Exhibition, and signed its first marketing agreement with the federal Foreign Agricultural Service during May's tenure as president. His travels to the Netherlands, considered the center of Europe's horticulture trading industry, resulted in Florida nurserymen exhibiting in international flower shows and May serving as a judge in the prestigious Florales of Ghent in Belgium in 1985 and 1990. He also helped establish the United States/Florida nursery exhibit at the Liverpool Garden Festival in England and had the honor of presenting it to Queen Elizabeth.

May visited the Pacific Rim countries of Japan, Taiwan, Thailand and Singapore twice on trade missions to help establish more of a global marketplace for Florida agricultural products. He also proved to a valuable ally back home where he met with the Florida delegation in Washington, D.C., on behalf of the University of Florida Extension Service.

In addition to FNGA, May is a member of Gadsden County Farm Bureau and former governor of the American Association of Nurserymen, former president of the Southern Nurserymen's Association, and former president of the Florida Nursery and Allied Trade Show. He has been honored as Florida Nurseryman of the Year by FNGA in 1982, Outstanding Farmer of the Year by Gadsden County Farm Bureau in 1983, Nurseryman of the Year by the Southern Nurseryman Association in 1992, and Rotary Club's "Four-Way Test Award," an honor he shares with his wife, Carolyn.

May and his wife, Carolyn, have been married 56 years. They have three children and are active in their church, local library and in the local music and arts community.

FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL HALL OF FAME

- 1980 Edwin Hall Finlayson
Thomas Gilbert Lee
Nathan Mayo
Henry Oscar Partin
Hoyle Pounds
Egbert Norman Reasoner
- 1981 Irlo Overstreet Bronson
Gilbert Andrew Tucker
J. Francis Cooper
Louis E. Larson
Pliny Ward Reasoner
Don A. Storms Sr.
- 1982 Willard M. Fifield
Robert G. Pitman Jr.
Herman J. Reitz
James N. Watson
- 1983 Raymond B. Becker
John M. Fox
- 1984 Alan James Norden
- 1985 John Duda,
Andrew Duda Jr.
Ferdinand Duda
Clinton Huxley Coulter Sr.
Doyle E. Conner
- 1986 Louis G. MacDowell
Edwin L. Moore
Cedric D. Atkins
Lena Smithers Hughes
B. Edward David Jr.
- 1987 Ben Hill Griffin Jr.
Anthony T. Rossi
J.O. Pearce Jr.
James S. Wershow
- 1988 Paul Beary Dickman
John Buckner Boy Sr.
Ruth Springer Wedgworth
- 1989 Peter S. Harlee
Charles P. Lykes
Donald L. Wakeman
- 1990 Dr. Robert Henry Harms
Raymond P. Oglesby
Carl G. Rose
Dr. E.T. York Jr.
- 1991 Doyle E. Carlton Jr.
Dr. Tony J. Cunha
Julian B. Lane
Joseph M. O'Farrell Sr.
- 1992 Edward J. Campbell
N. Curtis Peterson
Edgar H. Price
Vance V. Vogel
- 1993 Karl Albritton
Wm. Travis Loften
Dr. John Mortensen
Dr. Julia Morton
Dr. Marshall O. Watkins
- 1994 Elton L. Hinton
Dr. J. Wayne Reitz
Latimer H. Turner
George H. Wedgworth
- 1995 Leroy Baldwin
Dr. Clarence L. Campbell Jr.
Latimer "Latt" Maxey
William H. Stuart Sr.
- 1996 Neal Palmer "Pal" Brooks
Snead Young Mathews Davis
Henry Gatrell
Barnette E. "Barney" Greene Jr.
Gov. Wayne Mixson
- 1997 William "Bill" H. Krome
J.R. "Jack" Spratt
Raymon F. Tucker
Robert "Bob" Billingsley Whisenant
Stephen Monroe Yoder
- 1998 Miles Edward Groover
Edna Pearce Lockett
Maxey D. Love Jr.
Elliott L. Maguire
Mabel M. Simmons
- 1999 Alto Lee Adams
Bert J. Harris, Jr.
Kenneth F. Jorgansen
Copeland D. Newbern
John Powell Wallace
- 2000 Tom B. Adams
Jack Monteith Berry
William A. "Bill" Graham
Henry F. Swanson

..... **THANK YOU**

...to the following organizations for sponsoring the reception:

- Alico, Inc.
- Ben Hill Griffin, Inc.
- Florida Cattlemen's Association
- Florida Citrus Mutual
- Florida Citrus Packers
- Florida Farm Bureau Federation & Affiliates
- Florida Fertilizer & Agrichemical Assoc.
- Florida Forestry Association
- Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association
- Florida Nurserymen & Growers Assoc.
- Florida Peanut Producers, Assn.
- Florida Phosphate Council, Inc.
- Florida Poultry Federation, Inc.
- Florida Strawberry Growers Association
- Florida Sugar Cane League
- Florida Tomato Committee
- Harllee Packing, Inc.
- Indian River Citrus
- Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative of Florida
- Sunshine State Milk Producers
- The Florida Land Council
- United States Sugar Corporation

..... **THANK YOU**

... to the FNGA Floriculture Committee for providing the centerpieces for the 2001 Hall of Fame Banquet. A sticker will be on one program at each table to indicate the winner of the centerpiece to take home.

- Dave Self, Wyld West Annual, Laxahatchee
- Patrick Miller, Earl J. Small Growers, Pinellas Park
- Jody Richards, East Coast Greenery, Jacksonville

..... **THANK YOU**

... to the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences for producing the video presentation on the 2001 inductees and to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for their contributions in helping to make this event a success.

..... FOUNDATION MEMBERSHIP 2000-2001

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 Carlton, Doyle E., Jr.
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 Citrus & Vegetable Magazine
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 Desoto Veterinary Services
 Diamond R. Fertilizer
 DiMare Tampa, Inc.
 Dixie Egg Co.
 Dixie Grower
 Dicie Lime Products Co.
 Driscoll's of Florida
 Eli's Trailer Sales
 Fancy Farms
 Farm Credit of Central Fla., ACA
 Farm Credit of North Fla., ACA
 Farm Credit of South Fla., ACA
 Farm Credit of SW Fla., ACA
 First Bank of Indiantown
 Florida Cattlemen's Assoc.
 Florida Cattlewomen's Assoc.
 Florida Citrus Mutual
 Florida Citrus Processors Assoc.
 Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Serv.
 Florida Department of Citrus
 Florida Farm Bureau

Federation & Allilates
 Florida Feed Association, Inc.
 Florida Fertilizer & Agrichemical Assoc.
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 Florida Fruit & Vegetable Assoc.
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 Florida Natural Growers Assoc.
 Florida Nurserymen & Growers Assoc.
 Florida Peanut Producers Assoc.
 Florida Phosphate Council
 Florida Poultry Federation
 Florida State Fair Authority
 Florida Strawberry Growers Assoc.
 Florida Sugar Cane League
 Florida Thoroughbred Breeders & Owners Assoc.
 Florida Tomato Committee
 Florida Tropical Fish Farms Assoc., Inc.
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 Hackney Nursery, Inc.
 Harlle Farms, Inc.
 Harris, Wayne & Anne
 Hillandale Farms
 Hillsborough Co. Ag Econ. Dev. Council
 Hillsborough Co. FFA Federation
 Hillsborough Co. Farm Bureau
 Hinton Farms
 Holmberg Farms, Inc.
 Hughes, Thomas J.
 Hunt Bros. Service, Inc.
 Indian River Citrus League
 Jack M. Berry, Inc.
 Kahn Grove Service, Inc.
 Lakeland Animal Nutrition

Larson Dairy, Inc.
 Latt Maxcy Corp.
 Lykes Bros.
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 Paradise Growers, Inc.
 Peace River Valley Citrus Growers Assoc.
 Polk County Farm Bureau
 Richard Barber Farms
 Ringhaver Equipment Co.
 Roth, Rich
 Sanwa Growers
 Soil & Water Engineering Tech., Inc.
 Southeast Agnet Radio Network
 Sparr Building & Farm Supply
 Sugar Cane Growers Co-Op of Florida
 Sunshine State Federal Savings
 Sunshine State Milk Producers
 Syfrett Feed
 Tampa Bay Water
 Tampa Bay Wholesale Growers, LLA.
 Tampa Chamber of Commerce
 Tampa Wholesale Nursery, Inc.
 The Florida Land Council
 The Graham Companies
 Thomas Produce Company
 Tropicana Products, Inc.
 Tucker, G.A.
 UF Indian River Research & Ed. Center
 United States Sugar Corp.
 Valrico State Bank
 Volusia County Farm Bureau
 Western Palm Beach County
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