

National 4-H Hall of Fame 2006

Maryland



Shirley Ann Geis **4-H Horse Program Volunteer**

Home: Clarksville, MD

Nominated by: Maryland 4-H

Major 4-H Efforts:

One of the first female members of Block and Bridle at Michigan State; majored in zoology and went to graduate school to study bacteriology, specializing in parasitology. Became a 4-H horse club leader 35 years ago, and has developed horse clubs and coached nationally ranked hippology and horse judging teams. Inducted to Maryland 4-H All Stars and has received Mylo Downey Award for leadership, Dorothy Emerson Award for citizenship and service, and the Maryland 4-H Youth Development Award. Helped found the Maryland Horseman's Party to support 4-H horse programs and members.

Biography:

Shirley Geis moved to Maryland in 1956. Her son was interested in horses, so they joined the Hi Riders 4-H Horse Club. When that club grew large, a new club was started, the Spur and Stirrup 4-H Club, and she was asked to be leader. The club still exists with Shirley as leader. Her graduate education in bacteriology and parasitology and her positive, supportive attitude make her an ideal horse leader. Over the years, she has developed horse clubs, coached winning hippology and horse judging teams, organized horse shows and developed youth into leadership roles at county state and national levels.

Shirley has lobbied officials for more horse trails and facilities and organized countless shows, fundraising and educational events. Along with the late Sallie Robertson of Ship's Quarters Farm, Shirley founded the annual Maryland Horseman's Party that celebrates the accomplishments of Maryland 4-H horse members and raises funds to support the 4-H horse program. Although her eyesight has declined, she continues as a club leader and a role model and mentor to 4-H youth. Shirley is a 4-H All Star and has received the Mylo Downey, Dorothy Emerson and MD 4-H Youth Development awards for years of dedicated service to 4-H.

Quote:

"4-H is the greatest training for life for young people. When my son joined 4-H with his first horse, I learned that the Howard County Extension office was looking for a coach for horse judging. As a former member of a livestock judging team at Michigan State University, I decided 'I can do that'. I began work with Hi Riders 4-H Club and did well enough at local competition to take a Jr., Int., and Sr. team to State Fair. It has been a marvelous growing experience. I have met hundreds of families, and I take great pride in the accomplishment of children. It makes it all worthwhile because they all come back and say 'Thank you.'"