

# National 4-H Hall of Fame 2017

## NAE4-HA



**Betty Gottler**  
Regional Extension Agent

Home: Elberta, AL

Nominated by: NAE4-HA

### Major 4-H Accomplishments:

Received Distinguished Service Awards from NAE4-HA, NEAFCS and ESP and the national Natural Resources/Environmental Team Award. Served on the NAE4-HA National Board as NEWS & VIEWS Editor, 1989 Conference Co-Chair and Archivist and on the editorial team for 4-H Stories from the Heart (Vol. 1). Morgan County Farmers Federation (Farm Bureau) presented her with their Service Award for working with agriculture families and she received the Distinguished Loyalty Award from the University of Montevallo. Attended National 4-H Congress as the 1967 Alabama 4-H Achievement Project Winner.

### Biography:

Betty Gottler, an Alabama 4-H alumna, knew from a young age that 4-H was her life's work. Her mother was an Extension agent when she met her father at a research station program. The Gottler's provided leadership in two clubs. Betty and her two brothers, Johnny and Jim, excelled in Alabama 4-H, earning Achievement Awards and attending National 4-H Congress. Graduating with an education degree in 1974, Betty easily transformed into her role as a 4-H Educator on the Morgan County (AL) Team. Thirty years later, she was still in the same office because of the caring people of the community. Under her guidance, the county averaged 75 clubs with more than 4500 youth enrolled in 4-H, with members earning state and national awards.

When Alabama Extension restricted, Betty's professional role changed as she transitioned into a regional office supervising five counties providing leadership for volunteer training, program planning and regional council work. When Alabama 4-H started planning its 4-H Centennial in 2008, Betty was the right person for the job. She relocated to the State 4-H Office to lead efforts in planning the 4-H Centennial and was responsible for State 4-H Awards and planning citizenship and leadership program. In retirement, Betty continues to be active as a volunteer in her local community, serves on the Alabama 4-H Foundation Board of Directors, and across the state of Alabama.

### Quote:

Betty said, "My years in Extension and 4-H started long before I had a paying job. 4-H opened worlds I never knew existed. I am thankful for each child, and their family, that crossed my path and the adventures we conquered. I continued to work, To Make the Best Better."

Alabama 4-H colleagues describe Betty as a teacher, encourager, counselor, mentor ... the embodiment of 4-H. Her life's work has been about the children, and they as well as hundreds of colleagues, are the beneficiaries of the fruits of her labor.



Betty Gottler, Peggy Pluscht and Frances Salzmann practice demonstration techniques for Baldwin Co. 4-H Awards Program. (1967).



Ann Barr, retired Alabama State 4-H Leader, promotes 4-H Stories from the Heart with Betty Gottler.



Regional Extension Agents Betty Gottler, Amy Burgess and Kristen Wilson review class records at the Alabama Junior Beef Expo for the 2011 Spring Show.