

Merle L. Eyestone
County 4-H Agent & NAE4-HA President



Hometown: Lansing, KS, currently resides in Manhattan, KS.
Year Inducted: 2003

4-H Stats: Ninth President of NAE4-HA in 1955. Co-author of Kansas 4-H history book. Secured 30 donors who provide Kansas 4-H scholarships with annual distribution of more than \$25,000. Instrumental in development of \$12 million Rock Springs Center in Kansas. He & brother Cecil provide \$1200 in scholarships & grants per year.

Eyestone graduated from Lansing High School in 1940. His degrees include: Ag Economics, Kansas State Univ. (1947); Master's (1961) and PhD (1966) in Adult Education, University of Wisconsin. As Shawnee Co. 4-H Agent from 1947-1960, the program grew from 450 to nearly 900 members in 30 4-H Clubs with help from 270 volunteer leaders. Merle trained 4-H judging teams in livestock, dairy, crops, poultry, and home economics. His teams won 7 state championships, five in poultry, and a national award in poultry judging. He served on several national committees for NAE4-HA. Merle is recognized by his peers for his successes in fund-raising.

"I was fortunate to have been serving as a County 4-H Club Agent during the golden years of community 4-H clubs in Kansas in the decade of the 1950's. There were new projects and activities introduced and accepted by the expanding membership to boys and girls in urban and cities, lowering age requirements - volunteer leaders stepped forward, economy was improving, and more counties in Kansas were hiring County 4-H Club Agents."

The early successes of the 4-H program throughout the United States was partially a result of available resources from the private sector. Many individuals, corporations, and businesses recognized the elements of the free enterprise methods that the 4-H program offered to 4-H Club members thru the ownership of a project, responsibilities of management, keeping of records, were applauded by donors who gave generously of financial support."



Pres. Merle Eyestone presents NAE4-HA donor thank you to Thos. E. Wilson at 38th annual Wilson & Co. dinner, Nov. 1955.



Coach Eyestone and his National winning poultry judging team in Chicago.



Merle used TV to promote 4-H and Extension programs while 4-H Agent in Shawnee County.