

National 4-H Hall of Fame 2008 Oklahoma



Ira J. Holler
Oklahoma State University, State 4-H Program Leader

Home: Stillwater, OK

Nominated by: Oklahoma 4-H

Major 4-H Accomplishments:

Began 38-year career in 1926 as the Asst. Extension Poultryman. Promoted to County Agent in progressively larger counties until appointed State 4-H Program Leader in 1949. Established Oklahoma 4-H Foundation, 4-H Key Club, State 4-H Hall of Fame and Personality Improvement Project.

Honors: USDA Distinguished Service Award.

Biography:

Ira J. Holler is highly regarded by many Oklahoma 4-H alumni and retired staff. He began his 38-year career in 1926 as the Asst. Extension Poultryman and was promoted to County Agent in progressively larger counties until his appointment as State 4-H Program Leader in 1949. For his accomplishment, the people of Muskogee took up a collection and presented him a new car! In the late 50's Holler and 4-H members rode the train back from National 4-H Congress. They made such an impression on R. D. Farmer that 4-H was named as final beneficiary of the Farmer Trust. In 2007, the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation became recipients of proceeds from a \$3.6 million trust. Holler was responsible for creating the foundation and its largest gift so far!

Holler used his position to provide leadership for developing new and innovative programs. Many of his ideas tied back to the virtues of good record keeping, including the 4-H Key Club, State 4-H Hall of Fame and Personality Improvement Project. The Oklahoma 4-H Hall of Fame program recognizes two outstanding 4-H members annually. Among those recognized during Holler's tenure were Zerle Carpenter, retired Extension Director at Texas A&M, Ann Benson, retired Director of the Oklahoma Career Tech System and Bill Doenges, successful lawyer and auto dealer in Tulsa. The 4-H Key Club was started in Oklahoma and later became a national recognition program for the top 1 percent of 4-H members.



Holler receives the USDA
Distinguished Service Award



Holler (middle) receives keys to a new car
upon leaving to become State 4-H Leader.