

## 1990 Iowa Master Farm Homemakers Guild Inductees

### Effie Lee Boggess - IMFH Class of 1990

#### Page County

One wouldn't necessarily think of Villisca, Iowa, in rural Page County, as the cultural center of the people, environment, and academics to instill in the Boggess family a desire to excel and the will to succeed.

The primary influence on this outstanding family is Effie Lee. Since she loves to read, the family grew up recognizing the importance of literary knowledge. The Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, and Des Moines Register, as well as many monthly news and farm magazines were familiar materials around the Boggess home.

Hence, family members knew no boundaries. Effie and her husband Jim gave the confidence to believe they could become whatever they wanted, and the mental capacity to achieve it.

"They were always good students," notes Effie. "We encouraged them to do what they wanted to do, and to realize the importance of higher education."

Marilyn Boggess Collister is a tax attorney in Denver, Colorado. Susan Boggess Clayton teaches high school English in Wolbach, Nebraska. William is an agricultural economics professor at the University of Florida-Gainesville. Richard is vice-president of a bank in Des Moines. Mark is a University of Idaho extension livestock specialist. Jane Boggess Morreale is a freelance specialist in theatre art. James is with the Iowa National Guard in Alleman.

"I think it's difficult for Effie to recognize her positive influence," compliments Jim. "She was always there for anything the children wanted to do, and had more energy than three people."

All the children were active in 4-H, so Effie was active in 4-H, too, helping them with projects in lambs, hogs, calves, and home economics.

When the last child left home, Effie took over the sheep project. She maintains a flock of 100 ewes, and serves on the Iowa Sheep and Wool Promotion Board. She is also very active in the Page County Farm Bureau, serving as chairman and currently as vice-president.

In addition to farm activities, Effie became involved in band mothers, cub scouts, brownies, Sunday school, and Methodist Youth Fellowship. She is still very involved in the church, serving as president of the Council Bluffs District United Methodist Women.

Jim is also very involved in the community. As district agricultural aide to congressional representative Jim Lightfoot, he maintains a busy schedule.

Effie used to enjoy cooking and sewing as hobbies, but, she says, "My hobby now seems to be going to meetings!"

When she has time, Effie enjoys flower gardening and refinishing family heirlooms. She and Jim have done a considerable amount of remodeling on their soon-to-be century farmhouse.

Since some of the children live some distance away, Effie and Jim enjoy taking time to visit their families and play with the grandchildren. Their first concern continues to be the health and well-being of their family.

"A successful parent is right 51 percent of the time," says Jim. In the case of Effie Lee and Jim Boggess, it looks like 110 percent.

Jeanene Peiffer - IMFH Class of 1990

Keokuk County

The children of Jeanene and Herbert Peiffer of Sigourney grew up appreciating nature and music.

They still return to the home in Keokuk County frequently to enjoy the serenity, camaraderie, and Jeanene's home cooking.

They evidently acquired their love of music from Jeanene, who sings in several groups, including the well-known Farm Bureau Women's Chorus and Kitchen Band. This singing ensemble is in demand often and recently performed in the historic What Cheer Opera House.

She also sings with "The Entertainers," a group that is made up of members of St. Mary Church in Sigourney. Guitar masses, held at the church, utilize the abilities of Jeanene and son Greg, among others.

The piano holds a place of dignity in the front room, obviously the scene of many music lessons. In fact, the children were able to finance much of their college education by performing at weddings, receptions, and other functions. Their daughter, Sharon, chose music as profession, serving as an elementary school vocal teacher at Oskaloosa. She was married this spring to Wayne Hammes and still plays in the Oskaloosa City Band, said to be the oldest city band west of the Mississippi.

Jeanene and Herbert's sons are Greg, co-owner of Keokuk County Insurance Company in Sigourney; Bruce, manager of Regis Hair Salon, Oskaloosa; David, an Air Force pilot; and Eric, a junior in aerospace engineering at Iowa State University.

The Peiffers live close to the local airport, owned by good friends. "Ever since I can remember, David said he wanted to fly. He'd go to the airport and help out anyway he could," recalls Jeanene. "He had all the private flight requirements by age 17, before he was old enough to get a license."

Jeanene admits she was apprehensive about having her son become a pilot, until David made a valid observation.

"He told me, 'Mom, you fly places. Don't you suppose those pilots are somebody's son?' I couldn't argue with him," admits Jeanene.

Over the years, Jeanene has held many leadership positions within Farm Bureau and other organizations. She presently serves as the women's chairman for southeast Iowa district seven beginning her third two-year term.

The couple is active Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), assisting with the Voice of Democracy contest, and the Veteran's Dinner.

The Sigourney Federated Women's Club counts Jeanene as a valuable member as well since she has served as president and chairman of many committees.

The couple is concerned about conservation and protecting rural areas. Herbert is on the board of trustees of Vest Lancaster Township and Jeanene is the township clerk. Herbert received an honorary certificate from Izaak Walton League of America, whose mission is to "preserve purity of water, clarity of air, and wise stewardship."

The Peiffers have a love of the arts, appreciation of nature, strong emphasis on basic values, and a high standard of integrity. These qualities have earned them the respect and admiration of friends, family, and peers.

### Lavonne Peters - IMFH Class of 1990

#### Jackson County

In her quiet, unpretentious way, Lavonne Peters and her husband, Floyd, of Bellevue could easily be described as the salt of the earth, the backbone of agriculture. Not only have they raised an exceptional family, they've earned the admiration of friends, neighbors, and associates just by doing what they felt to be right.

Prioritizing was not difficult in their Jackson County home. You did your part, and helped others. You treated people fairly, and didn't place judgment. If you treated people with respect and understanding, you could usually expect the same in return.

These basic values were remembered by the Peters eldest daughter, Kathy. With a family of seven, there wasn't money for luxuries. Instead, the Peters family learned the value of a dollar, the pride of making a homemade gift or card, and the meaning of time spent by their mom as she made Easter outfits and prom dresses for them.

All of the Peters children are college educated. Farm labor was paid in the form of feed for their cattle projects. Prize money went in an account that was invested in CDs. When the oldest child went to college, this money was used for tuition and books. Continually replenishing the fund provided enough for everyone.

Their education was obviously worthwhile. Daughter Kathy is a pharmacist at Mercy Hospital in Dubuque. She and her husband have two children. Karen is a teacher and elementary guidance counselor for the Tipton, Iowa, school system. Son Steve and his wife, Sherry, are involved in the family farm operation.

Kim teaches learning disabled students at Northeast School in Goose Lake, Iowa. She and her husband have two children. Kris is married with one child. She is employed by Rockwell-Collins in Manchester, Iowa. Charles is pursuing his doctorate in animal nutrition at Kansas State. Karol is a senior at Iowa State University, majoring in animal science.

Lavonne has been actively involved in 4-H and extension activities for years. She is presently on the vocational agriculture advisory committee, and Floyd organized the 4-H and FFA special steer class at the county fair.

Also, she served 10 years on the Andrew Community School Board and was the board's first woman member. Lavonne takes an active role in farm chores. She does all heat detection, since Floyd uses artificial insemination on the 150-175 females. She also has major responsibility for the ewe flock, and does all recordkeeping.

Both Lavonne and Floyd are conscious of good conservation practices. In 1983 Lavonne was Jackson County's first woman soil conservation commissioner. Pasture renovation is an ongoing practice on the Peters' farm.

The most important roles of wife and mother come first with Lavonne Peters. But there's always enough energy to contribute to church, school, 4-H, and community needs.

Now, with a new generation of grandchildren, Lavonne still has her priorities straight. She heads out the door, after hearing from a toddler, "Come on, Grandma! Let's go play in the creek."

### Barbara Wittmer - IMFH Class of 1990

## Benton County

Barbara Wittmer's life has not followed the normal progression of things. While her peers had children, raised them, and now enjoy grandchildren, Barbara and her husband, Warren, of Vinton, Iowa, have taken a less traveled road. They, too, had children, raised them, and enjoy their grandchildren, but as foster parents, they're starting over. "We've just celebrated our 34<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary and we have a crib in our bedroom," quips Barbara.

It's obvious she enjoys the hectic place. She has enough energy for community involvement, yet enough patience and understanding to enrich a child's life with love, respect, and responsibility.

For two kids from Chicago, Barbara and Warren Wittmer have done well. Warren came to the Benton County farm in Iowa each summer while growing up to help his uncle and grandfather. Barbara's first visit was as Warren's 16-year-old girlfriend.

When they moved to Iowa, Warren took night classes to learn farming techniques "but you never quit learning," he admits.

Barbara recalls her introduction to Wallace Farmer.

"The trip that we took to Warren's uncle's farm in Iowa was my first taste of country life. While looking around the house, I saw several issues of Wallace's Farmer. Well, Warren's uncle was named Wallace, and you can imagine their reaction when I asked, 'Does Uncle Wallace have a magazine named after him?' It's been a family joke ever since."

"But it gives an even more special meaning to being selected as an Iowa Master Farm Homemaker," she notes.

The Wittmers have four children. Peggy is a nurse and a nationally certified athletic trainer. She is the trainer for Kennedy High School, Cedar Rapids. Robert is married to Angie Meyers and farms with Warren. They have one son, Garrett, 4. Eileen works for Hall Furnishings in Cedar Rapids as a credit representative. Susan is married to Joe Kwiatkowski. They live in Chicago and have two sons, Joey, 5, and Danny, 3. Another son, Eddie was killed in an accident ten years ago at the age of 13. Barbara and Warren donated trophies for the trail class at the Benton County Fair in his memory.

Barbara helps milk the 60 Holstein cows twice a day and helps care for the calves, chickens, lambs, geese, and horses.

Barbara served on the Benton County Porkette Board for three years. When she went off that board, she was instrumental in organizing the Benton County Dairy Promotion Board.

When their children got into high school, it must have seemed too quiet for Barbara and Warren. They started in the foreign exchange program.

And, since election day in 1982, they have been active foster parents. Twenty-one children have lived in the Wittmer home in the past eight years.

Presently, Warren and Barbara have four young foster children. These children receive the same love, encouragement, and discipline that Barbara and Warren showed to their own children, with lots of hugs. "There is such a need for quality foster care," says Barbara emphatically.