

Hall of Fame...from Page 1A



Above, the Bud Hill family, middle the Robert Harkins family, below the Sid Chandler Family. Photo/Charles Duncan

humble individual. He credits his success in life and the cattle business to his wife of 47 years, Lorraine.

"Normally, you have to be dead or near death to be considered for the Hall of Fame," County Agent and Market Manager Mickey Cummings said. "Bud's obviously not dead, and has escaped the other."

Bud's Hill-Vue Farms began at the tender age of 15, when he bought 40 acres of his current farm by using money he earned from delivering the Atlanta Journal.

After that, Bud, his father and brother purchased additional acres. Today, the farm consists of 480 acres, with 75 acres leased.

Cattle farming isn't easy, and it remains a year-round process.

The legend of Hill-Vue Farms continues today on Deep South Farm Road.

Harkins, 71, also is alive and now in the Hall of Fame.

He's also a legendary cattle farmer and the first beef producer in Union County to practice rotational grazing.

Like Hill, Harkins is the past president of the Blue Ridge Mountains Cattleman's Association.

Working with the County Agent, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and Farm Service Agency, Harkins secured cost share grants to establish heavy use areas, stock trails, fencing of stream banks, spring head development for watering cattle, and covering of open ditches.

He was awarded \$60,000 in grants to use on the projects,



The families of Bud Hill, Robert Harkins and Sid Chandler. If you look hard enough, you'll see Bud Hill right in the middle. A taller version of Bud Akins overlooks his left shoulder. Photo/Charles Duncan

and he matched that money with \$60,000 of his own.

"The effort led to the prevention of 450 tons of soil from entering Suches Creek," Cummings said. "TVA fisheries biologists surveyed Suches Creek and found brook trout thriving and reproducing in the creek."

Harkins is revered in the cattle business for his methods of increasing profitability for farms.

His expertise is demanded in many different states and foreign countries, Cummings said.

"The TVA recognized Robert Harkins in 1993 as the TVA Farm Family Farmers of the Year," Cummings said. "Robert Harkins was recognized as the Georgia Purebred Cattleman of the Year by the Georgia Cattleman's Association in 1998."

As for Chandler, his legend lives on in the history

books at the University of Georgia, Cummings said.

Chandler came to Union County in 1930 as the first County Agent.

He introduced new farming methods that included the use of fertilizer, contour plowing, terracing, using machinery, and trying new crops, Cummings said.

"He encouraged farmers to work together, and helped organize the Union County Soils Club," Cummings said. "He also worked out a successful marketing plan for cash crops of vegetables. In all this time, he worked closely with the Experiment Station, local farmers and state leaders and teachers of agriculture."

"Sid Chandler had the gift of listening and putting himself in the farmer's place," Cummings said. "Farmers paid attention to his suggestions, and tried new things. He helped them decide what

needed to be done and how to accomplish it. Through these measures, Sid Chandler was able to bring agriculture in the county up to a higher level than ever before."

There is a Hall of Fame plaque at the Union County Farmers Market and the Historic Union County Courthouse, Union County Historical Society President Bud Akins said.

"Agriculture is an important part of our history, and we remember those who made a difference in the lives of the people of Union County," Akins said. "We remember where we came from."

Prior to the Hall of Fame ceremonies, the annual Tractor Parade took place at the Market.

Twenty-seven tractors, with drivers young and old, paraded around the complex on Old Smokey Road, a record for the event.

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be fireworks. We took our food to go and came here to the park."

Another note that Union County can hang their hat on is, they were able to compete with not only the first Saturday of the college football season, but the University of Georgia at Clemson game.

You could throw a stone in the air and hit someone who was either listening to the game on the radio or keeping up with the action on their phones.

Considering the amount

of spectators dressed head-to-toe in Georgia Bulldog attire, that speaks volumes about the reputation the fireworks display carries. When you're able to pull football fans away from their television to celebrate July 4th in August, that's saying something.

Some youngsters like Keera Smart said that she thought the fireworks were "really cool" as she viewed them from possibly the best seat in the house, across from the basketball courts.

"The fireworks were



right over the top of our heads," she said. "I was so close that I could smell them. They were just so cool."

As the display came to a close, the showers moved over Blairsville, but not before most spectators were already in their cars and headed home.

Now Union County can look forward to the next Fourth of July celebration, and this time, instead of waiting an entire year, the next go-round is only 10 months away.