

**Hidalgo County 4-H Youth Development Foundation
Memorial Scholarship Biographical Information on:**

Nellie Solether

August 8, 1900 - March 27, 1979

Name: Nellie Solether

Birth Date: August 8, 1900

Birth Place: Boscobel, Wisconsin

Family Information:

Spouse: Harry C. Solether

Children: Gerald Solether

Jack Solether

Community/Civic Involvement:

Mrs. Solether a resident of the mid-Valley for 60 years, was also known as the "flower lady" to a generation of Weslaco residents. She took over farming operations, engaging actively in cotton and citrus growing, after the death of her husband. She had grown roses at her residence in Weslaco, taking hundreds of them daily to place in bud vases at downtown eating establishments because she wanted them to be enjoyed. Her roses were used in decorations for numerous banquets and club meetings, and for corsages.

She was a former member of the Weslaco Garden Club, Zonta International, McAllen Country Club and was a tournament bridge player.

Contributions to 4-H Program:

In 1980 the 4-H Foundation received notification that the estate of Nellie Solether had named the 4-H Foundation in a will. Records show that the Foundation received a total of \$33,459.81 from the Solether Estate. As noted in the will, said money to be distributed to participants in the Weslaco area, with emphasis on those with extreme financial need as determined by the officers of the Foundation, for annual awards. During the 10 year period (1980-1990), 57 scholarships were awarded totaling \$32,000.00.

Margaret M. Looney

November 23, 1909

Birth Place: Dalhart, Texas

Family Information:

Spouse: J.C. Looney
Children: Margaret Looney McAllen
D'Ette Looney Fowlkes
Cullen R. Looney

Education:

Graduate of Edinburg High School
University of Texas at Austin - B.S. in Business Administration

Community/Civic Involvement:

Mrs. Looney was president of the Edinburg Improvement Association; founding member and past president of the Edinburg Junior Service League, an organizer and board member of the Hidalgo County Historical Museum, board member of the Hidalgo County Cotillion Club; longtime board member of the Edinburg Public Library where the Children's Wing is named in her honor. She was also a charter member of the Hidalgo County 4-H Youth Development Foundation. She and her husband Judge J.C. Looney were named Mr. and Mrs. Edinburg in 1969. In 1971, Mrs. Looney was named the Edinburg Daily Review's Woman of the Year. She was also a recipient of the University of Texas-Pan American Founders Day Award. She was also a member of the Pan American Round Table, Delta Delta Delta Sorority, the Edinburg Hospital Auxiliary and Trinity Episcopal Church in Pharr.

Contributions to 4-H Program:

Served as a 4-H club leader for over 20 years Charter member of the Board of Directors of the Hidalgo County Youth Development Foundation
Project and Activity Leader for 4-H Roundup - method demonstrations; coached a State-winning method demonstration team.

A.H. "Dutch" Karcher

December 14, 1917 - January 22, 1998

Husband, Father, Grandfather, Great-Grandfather, EXTRAORDINAIRE

Birth Place: Giddings, Texas

Married: Helen N. Bage on July 4, 1939

Daughter: Alba Jo, married to Jim Guffey of Harlingen

Son-J.F. "Jimbo" Guffey, Jr., New Orleans

Daughter-Mrs. Janna Preston, (Philip)

3 daughters-Jullian, Jordan and Jaycie

Daughter-Joyce Guffey, Dallas

Daughter: Barbara Kay, married to John Magness of New Braunfels

Son-Brian Magness (Stacie), San Antonio

Son-Greg Magness, Houston

Daughter-Amy Magness, New Braunfels

Son: A.H. "Corky" Karcher, III married to Hazel Greig of Scotland

Son-Geoffrey

B.S. in Agriculture from Texas A&M where he lettered in baseball, was a Ross volunteer intramural athletic manager and was captain on the Cavalry Regimental staff.

Masters degree through graduate studies at Colorado State University and the University of Maryland.

In 1939 Dutch entered the U.S. Army serving in the 1st Armored Division Reconnaissance Battalion in Ireland, England, Africa and Italy as company commander. He was discharged from the service in 1946 as Major, Calvary.

He retired in 1973 after 34 years with the Agricultural Extension service, the last 16 of which he served as County Agricultural Agent of Hidalgo County. During the time he was cited for his step-by-step training program for new agents.

Organized or Assisted:

Area 1 of the Texas Vegetable Growers Counsel; Rio Grande Valley Swine Breeders Assoc.; Program Building Sub Committee on Aging in Hidalgo County; Many communities; The North Alamo Community of Hidalgo was Judged 4th Best in the Texas Community Improvement Program; Hidalgo County 4-H Youth Development Foundation in 1967 to support the training of rural and urban youth in leadership and citizenship development; Lower Rio Grande Dairy Herd Improvement Assoc.;

Past President of the following:

Dutch Karcher Contd.....

Titus County A&M Club; Rio Grande Valley A&M Club; Rotary Club of Edinburg; First Lutheran Church of Edinburg; Brotherhood Southern District of the American Lutheran Church; Valley Lutheran Laymen's League; Texas County Agricultural Agents Assoc.; All Valley Winter Vegetable Show; Rio Grande Valley Horticultural Society; Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show Superintendent of the Fat Steer Division; Texas Citrus Fiesta - Fruit Exhibit Chairman; Consultant to the All Valley Winter Vegetable Show holding various offices over 16 years.

Hidalgo County 4-H members have won many awards during Dutch's time as county agent including: 5 members went to the National 4-H Conference, 1 member to the 4-H Report to the President, 14 to the National Farm City Week. Coached the swine judging team to high team at the American Royal 1963. Many adult leaders have won district and state recognition. Organized a Junior Leaders organization and Adult Leaders organization, a county 4-H Council, and published an annual yearbook covering club and council program and activities.

Awards:

Professional Man of the Year for the Southmost Soil Conversation District; Meritorious Service by the All Valley Winter Vegetable Show; Distinguished Service Award from the National Assoc. Of County Agricultural Agents of 1969; USDA Superior Service Award 1973; and many other to numerous to list.

James Carlton McQueen

Name: James Carlton McQueen

Birth Date: November 14, 1919

Birth Place: Mercedes, Texas

Family Information:

Spouse: Marjorie Lowell DeGrooff McQueen

Children: James Carlton McQueen Jr

Susan McQueen Girard

Education:

Graduate of Mercedes High School

Texas A & I University - Kingsville - B.S. And M.S degrees - Education

Community/Civic Involvement:

Mr. McQueen was a World War II veteran and served in the U.S. Army I North Africa and Italy. He started his educational career as a principal for West Oso High School. He taught football and science at Donna Junior High School. He retired after 40 years of teaching biology, being a science department head and senior class sponsor at Mercedes High School.

He was founder and director of the South Texas Lamb and Sheep Exposition and the Coliseum where the show was held was named in his honor The James Carlton McQueen Coliseum. Mr. McQueen also served 50 years with the Southwest Football Officials Association officiating at games throughout the Rio Grande Valley.

He served as president of the Rio Grande Valley Audubon Society and member of the National Wildlife Federation. He was the first president of the Hidalgo County A&I Alumni Club and member of the National Environmental Educators Association. In 1973 he was honored by the City of Donna declaring James Carlton McQueen Day. He was a host father for foreign exchange students for 30 years and a coordinator for the American Institute of Foreign Students. He was a member of the First Christian Church in San Benito.

Contributions to 4-H Program:

Mr. McQueen dedicated 48 years as a 4-H club leader. In 1972, he was named Adult Leader of the Year. He received various awards and recognition for his work in 4-H including project leader for livestock, sheep, and lamb, method demonstrations coaching various county, district, and state level winning demonstrations. He was also an Honorary Board Member of the Hidalgo County 4-H Youth Development Foundation.

Neva Iona Hatten Smith
January 11, 1906 - 2000

Neva Iona Smith was born January 11, 1906 in Marshall County, Kansas. She graduated from St. Joseph's School of Nursing in Ponca City, Oklahoma in 1926. In 1928, she married Dewey Smith and they had four children: Joan, Sue, Sherry and Dewey, Jr.

Neva was active in PTA, the Edinburg Hospital Auxiliary, the Friends of the Edinburg Library, the Hidalgo County Museum Guild, and most importantly to her, the 4-H club when her son Dewey "Smitty" Smith joined in 1955. From that time she was involved in almost every aspect of 4-H work at the local, district, state and national levels. Neva for the next 30 years, along with Mrs. J.C. Looney and Mrs. C.E. Townsend, was instrumental in getting the Edinburg 4-H clubhouse built, and in organizing the first chicken barbeque, the major fund raiser for the Edinburg 4-H club for many years. She coached two state winning beef demonstrations and one second place in state co-op demonstration. Her children taped an interview with her on June 15, 1986; she said, "One year, I took 5 method demonstration teams to State Roundup, and one of the teams won first and the rest of them were in the top three. For about 15 years, I took teams. I had three state winners, and the rest of them were in the top ten, which I felt was very good."

Neva attended the National 4-H Forum in Washington D.C. in 1970, where she first heard of the idea of a 4-H foundation. Neva was one of the founders of the Hidalgo County 4-H Foundation and on the board for many years. She was named an Honorary Member of the Hidalgo County 4-H Youth Developments Foundation in 1991.

Her grandchildren that lived in Edinburg were 4-H club members; her grandson Mike Flanagan was Gold Star recipient in 1971, to match his Uncle Dewey Smith, Jr. In 1963. The 4-H club was near and dear to her heart and she touched many lives along the way.

Dewey Smith, Sr. died in 1995 and Neva could no longer live alone. She moved to Grand Prairie, Texas and lived with her daughter Joan until she died in 2000. She is buried beside Dewey in Edinburg.

**Hidalgo County 4-H Youth Development Foundation
Memorial Scholarship Biographical Information on:**

Norma Linda Perez Larralde
February 11, 1948 - January 16, 2001

Name: Norma Linda Perez Larralde
Birth Date: February 11, 1948
Birth Place: Edinburg, Texas

Family Information:

Spouse: Noe Larralde for 24 years
Children: Michael Rene Larralde
Noe Ronnie Larralde

Education:

Graduated Edinburg High School in 1967
Attended University of Texas - Pan American

Community/Civic Involvement:

Mrs. Larralde worked as a secretary and administrative assistant in the Department of Education at the University of Texas - Pan American for 22 years. She was active as a Edinburg North High School Cougar Band Booster and served as an officer of the Booster Association also assisting with fund raising and serving as a bus chaperon on various band trips in which the band was involved in competition.

Contributions to 4-H Program:

She was active in the community as a 4-H leader for 15 years serving the Town and Country 4-H Club as a project leader in foods and nutrition, horticulture, recreation, and arts and crafts. She also served the Hidalgo County 4-H Council as a County Leadership Camp chaperon and "Camp Mom" for over 12 years. She was an active member and supporter of the Hidalgo County 4-H Adult Leaders' and Parents' Association assisting with fund raising efforts, community service, and leadership projects. In 1997, she was honored as Hidalgo County 4-H Adult Leader of the Year by the Hidalgo County 4-H program.

Hidalgo County 4-H Youth Development Foundation
Memorial Scholarship Biographical Information on:

William Kelley Looney

August 25, 1974 – July 21, 2003

Education:

Graduate of Edinburg High School
Graduate of Texas A&M University
Attended University of Texas

Will was a natural leader, and while attending Edinburg High School, he was elected to serve as president of 4-H for the state of Texas. He went on to attend Texas A&M University where he became the president of Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity his senior year. At his time of passing Will was enrolled in the McCombs School of Business MBA Program at the University of Texas in Austin.

Upon graduating from A&M, Will moved to or traveled to any city he wished to explore. From New York City, to Boston, to the Californian Coast, to the Amazon, to South America. However, his greatest interest laid in traveling Mexico to master the language, to study the culture, to delve into its history and to become a part of its future. Will was one of those amazing people who decided on something and somehow worked his way into achieving it.

Will is survived by his mother and father, Cullen and Carol Looney of Edinburg, his sisters, Lorin Runnels of McAllen, and Courtney Looney of Los Angeles, his fiancée Margot Marsh of Austin. Will is the grandson of the late J.C. and Margaret Looney of Edinburg.

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