

WCSHC... "Celebrating PASS-ON CEREMONY 2006" by Frank Taylor

Winston County Self Help Cooperative continued its mission of helping save rural America by passing on 9-bred heifers to fellow co-op members Robin Matthews and Derrick Hopkins.



Weather conditions were bearable with sultry temperatures approaching 100 degrees; nevertheless, cooperative members, visitors, friends and youth witnessed Winston County Self Help Co-op's Second Historic "Pass on" ceremony. The pass on ceremony started at approxi-

imately 6:30pm which produced gleaming smiles. Elder George Miller offered a ceremonial prayer for recipients. The selection process started with ear tag numbers being placed into the co-op's traditional silver box; two youth members drew numbers on behalf of each recipient. Derrick Hopkins received first choice by

winning the coin toss. Roger Jones, with Rev. Willie Matthews invoking prayer and youth member, Chris Mays delivered an eloquent welcome,

winning the coin toss. Roger Jones, South Central Project Director, commented, "In my five years of working for Heifer International, Quintessence, this is the best group of pass on heifers I've ever witnessed. Hubert Nicholson and co-op members have designed a successful regiment of managing; therefore, they should be commended for their valiant efforts of passing on quality bred heifers". A communal pasture system is a plausible solution for producing quality heifers. This system insures uniformity growth, deworming, dehorning, vaccinating and breeding in a timely manner.

HPI's Funds

Wcshc received funds from Heifer International in 2002 and purchased 40-bred heifers. Eight coop's members received 5-bred heifers each with a signed letter of agreement between coop and recipient to exercise judicial care of animals. Recipients are allowed three years to complete pass on of 5 quality heifers back to coop. Recipients are required to participate in 75 percent of monthly and special meetings to obtain current health & market information. According to Omeria Dotson, "We have been fortunate with our project for as our members adhering to rules and caring for animals". We have more than 100 HPI's animals distributed among 18 families with four members completed pass on. We are thankful for this of generous gift from Heifer International, Roger Jones and South Central Staff for helping Winston County Self Help Cooperative "save rural America."



Benefiting

According to Winston County's officials, we are elated and in support of Winston County Self Help Coop's efforts to help save rural America. They are contributing economically to fill county's coffers by purchasing tractors,

implements, feed, wire, post, and other necessities. The county's tax receipts have increased and added value to our quality's of life. They are focusing on improving ecological values such as clean air & water, wildlife habitat, reducing ero-

sion, forestry and creating viable environment for future generation. Wcshc's youth group participates in eradicating litter and Arbor Day activities. This is win-win situation for Winston County.

Youth Involvement



Winston County Self Help Cooperative's Youth Group participated with 17 members observing activities. According to Assistance Youth Director, Mary Hopkins, "This is excellent opportunity of exposing our youth to possible careers in agriculture or veterinary medicine." The youth will also participate in Wcshc's Fall Day Activities Monday October 2, at Leon Goss's Farm in Louisville, Ms.

Partnering/Collaborating/Outreach



Jesse Fleming of Attala County Self Group said, "This is a fantastic project to emulate as we move forward with our plans of connecting with Heifer International. We have participated in several meetings with Winston County Self Help Cooperative and this event has presented an opportunity to network, learn about USDA's programs, land retention, conferences and workshops." Carl Holden of South Rankin County Cooperative presented a plan of buying feed & hay collectively to reduce cost. We are striving to lower input cost and raise profit margins and this process will help elevate profit margins. Kim Crisler of Mississippi Association of Cooperatives stated, Federation of Southern Cooperatives' 39th Annual Meeting will occur August 18 & 19 at Rural Training Center in Epes, Alabama. For further details contact Fannie Rice 205-652-9676.

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Captions from WCSHC Pass-On Ceremony 2006



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