

Marjorie and Billy Burke

Few couples have led lives as intimately tied to agriculture as Marjorie and Billy Burke. The two currently own and operate a 1,000-acre, 100-head beef cattle operation near Sand Fork. Both began their lives in agriculture at an



early age, and both were strong advocates for agriculture in the West Virginia Legislature. He took over his grandfather's farm at age 14. There, he cared for all the farm's livestock, including eight milk cows, which he milked by hand. The farm had no motor vehicles, no electricity and no natural gas. In later years, he worked as the state executive director of the Farm Service Agency and Soil Conservation Service. He received the USDA Distinguished Service Award in 2000 and is a life member of the

WVU Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Science Alumni Association. Billy served in the West Virginia House of Delegates from 1962-1977, providing a strong voice for agricultural issues. Marjorie also served in the House of Delegates between 1978 and 1996. She, too, grew up working on the family farm, and remains active in many state and local agricultural organizations. She is a member of the Jackson's Mill Advisory Committee, and was recently appointed to the Task Force on Extension by WVU President David Hardesty. She was named an honorary member of WVU's Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Sciences, and received the Friend of 4-H Award in 1983 and in 2000. She is associate chair of the State Democratic Executive Committee and secretary/treasurer of the Central WV Livestock Marketing Association.