

## Bayward Butler

**M**r. Butler was born in Belfont, Braxton County, W.Va. He is a graduate of Glenville State College, majoring in education. He also attended West Virginia University and received approximately 20 credit hours in education. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1943-1946, advancing in rank to chief petty officer. Since that time, he has devoted his life to family, farming, education and community service. He and his wife Mary purchased a 225-acre farm in 1949, on which they raise hay and Black Angus cattle. They have 6 children, 19 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren. Not only has he devoted his life to family, farming, education and community service, he leads by example in advancing land management and education in Central West Virginia.

Upon his retirement in 1980 from public school teaching, Mr. Butler accepted new challenges and responsibilities to promote and advance the management of agriculture and other natural resources in Central West Virginia – which with his quiet demeanor, persuasive personality, and exemplary leadership have made him ideally suited.

As Braxton County Farm Bureau president for over 20 years, Mr. Butler has promoted agriculture and natural resources conservation throughout West Virginia, receiving the W.Va. Farm Bureau's Distinguished Service to Agriculture award in 2000 – given for distinguished, meritorious service and outstanding contributions to the establishment, development and improvement of agriculture in West Virginia.

Mr. Butler was appointed Elk Soil Conservation District supervisor in 1983 and elected chairman in 1984, where he has served for over 30 years. In this role he has promoted improved management of all natural resources through active leadership of committees dealing with forestry, education and water quality. His work with the Elk Soil Conservation Council is exemplary of his continuing efforts to improve the quality of life for area residents. This work was recognized by his reelection as the W.Va. Association of Conservation Districts' Supervisor of the Year in 2003. He is the Conservation Education Council representative and a contributing member on the Mountain Resource Conservation and Development Council and W.Va. Envirothon Council – which he has played a major role in organizing the annual W.Va. Envirothon, a high school competition dealing with the knowledge of aquatics, soils, watershed, forestry and wildlife concepts.

Mr. Butler has organized and promoted countless farm tours, forestry field days and other natural resource programs to improve area land conservation practices. He is the leader of most inspections of small reservoir projects throughout the Elk River Watershed in an effort to insure safety and recommend management and maintenance needs. These water impoundments reduce potential flooding impacts and provide additional outdoor recreational opportunities. He received the Citizen of the Year award in 1994 from the Lions Club for his many contributions to the citizens of Braxton County.

Being a FFA alumni member and 4-H All Star, Mr. Butler has been a major supporter of FFA, 4-H and youth organizations. He served as coach in the Braxton County School system, and as a Glenville State College ambassador where he was always ready to meet with young people to discuss career opportunities and provide guidance. He is member of the Cattleman's Association; Braxton County Association of Retired School Personnel, which he has served as president; Braxton County Coalition; and Cutlip Baptist Church, where he is a Sunday school teacher. He is also a Gideon Chaplain for Braxton and Clay Counties and a Braxton County Solid Waste Authority representative.

