

Welcome to Gillett

home of friendly
people and the

Coon Supper





The dedication of this book is to all the hard-working individuals who make the community of Gillett and the Coon Supper remarkable. Through all the commitment and effort, a notable history comes forth and a great tradition carries on. It is hoped this tradition will continue, and Gillett will always be remembered for its friendly people and the Coon Supper.



This book was written and compiled by Miss Margaret Gunn's 11th and 12th Grade Advanced Placement English class. Those students include Hollie Gordon, Scott Griffie, John David Mizell, and Anne Hubsch. We would like to express that all information is correct to the best of our knowledge, and the pictures used in the book were selected based on availability. The AP English class sincerely hopes that you enjoy the memories compiled in this book.

Foreward

Gillett, a small rural community with a population of 883, is located in the tri-rivers country where the Arkansas and White Rivers flow to the Mississippi. Gillett is abundant in water, wildlife, and productive farm land, which produces its major crops of rice and soybeans.

The Arkansas River Navigation Project is located ten miles from Gillett. Lock and Dam No. 1 and Lock and Dam No. 2 are in this project. Also located on the Great River Road is the Wayne Hampton Bridge that replaced the once used Pendleton Ferry. There are several recreational areas, such as, Merrisach Park, Pendleton Park, Pendleton Bend Park, and Notrebes, which have easy access to the tri-rivers for fishing and water sports.

Arkansas Post National Memorial, the birthplace of Arkansas, is located 5 miles from Gillett. Lt. Henry de Tonti, LaSalle's aide, founded the first permanent white settlement west of the Mississippi here, in 1681. Arkansas Post later became Arkansas's Territorial Capital in 1891. Close by Arkansas Post is the Arkansas Post County Museum, which has preserved the legend and facts of this historic site of the Indian, French, Spanish, and American periods.

In addition to the abundance of water, wildlife, farm land, recreational areas, and historical sites, Gillett is also the home of the noted Coon Supper. This historical, legendary event, which is much celebrated, has spanned over fifty years and is one of the cornerstones under the foundation of a proud community.

One organization to thank for their time and effort for this event, in particular, is the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club. They have become a very notable organization through the years. Beginning in the 1940's, this non-profit, non-political club has grown into an outstanding asset for the community of Gillett, helping with efforts, such as, summer programs, school programs, sports programs, and community services. These efforts could not be accomplished without the proceeds from the Coon Supper. The Coon Supper has not only provided proceeds for worthwhile events; however, it has provided fun and fellowship to all since the 1930's.

In the 1930's fellowship was a very important part of a community. It was the only way for the people to discuss what was going on with one another, and it was a method for the communities to socialize with each other. At this time, the only means of socializing with people from various communities was the use of railroad transportation. The train was available for the people in the Gillett area to travel to DeWitt, Stuttgart, Little Rock, and other surrounding communities. But once a person arrived in Gillett by the daily train, they couldn't go anywhere but back the way they came. Therefore, people always stayed over for a visit with friends.

Not only did the train transport passengers, but it also transported supplies and non-perishable food items, such as canned goods, to the grocery stores in the area. The trains didn't bring vegetables or meats because there was no refrigeration systems available for people to utilize. Since there was no refrigeration process, vegetables were grown at home; and farm animals, such as poultry, provided the meat. Another supply of meat came from the hunting of wild game. The men would either hunt duck, wild turkey, geese, deer, or coon.

Since there was no long term storage for the meat, the men and their families would get together in fellowship to eat the game and other fixings that were brought. These suppers were a good way to have fellowship with one another. The people of Stuttgart and DeWitt were invited to these suppers in return for including Gillett people in their social events.

During that time, five young men with coon dogs enjoyed coon hunting and the socializing that would follow the hunt. These men were Mr. Harlan Wolfe, Mr. R.C. Wolfe, Mr. Burle C. Muse, Mr. Fred Elrod, and the "tripping a tree man himself," Mr. Preston Mattmiller. The five men, of whom three are surviving, took good coon dogs hunting on Mr. Billy Don Truax's land. At that time, guns were not used to kill the coons. The dogs would tree the coon and Mr. Mattmiller would "trip the tree", otherwise known as, chopping a tree down with an axe. As the tree tumbled down, the dogs rushed to the coon to prevent escape.

In 1935 men were now using guns to kill coons. The hunting sport became so popular within the community that the growing number of hunters made it dangerous to venture out into the woods. Not only did the coon hunting grow in popularity, so did the suppers that followed the hunt. This was the beginning of an annual event called "The Coon Supper". Coon Suppers were first held in houses, churches, and restaurants in Gillett at that time. There were suppers for nearly every hunting event, but the Coon Supper, in particular, developed rapidly in the years to follow.

The Farmers and Businessmen's Club began their organization in 1947. This club made it possible for the men of the community to get together to discuss community problems. Since there was no means of public communication, the club served as a voice for for the community. When the organization met they decided to help many of the school programs. The first task was to give aid to the football program for covering expenses, such as, trophies,

jackets, and supplies for the team members. Through this effort, the club eventually decided on the popular annual event, the Coon Supper, to raise the money needed to cover the cost of these items.

In 1947, the first annual Coon Supper was held in the recently finished high school auditorium, which had been destroyed when the school burned in 1943. The suppers continued to be held there until 1956 when the school's gym was completed. The gym provided more space for the large crowd capacity that was increasing by the years. Therefore, the Coon Supper has been held in the gym since 1956.

The preparation of the coon has altered over the many years. For example in 1947, Barney's, a restaurant in DeWitt, prepared the coon for the supper. This continued until 1960. At that time, the supper had grown considerably in size and Barney's could no longer accommodate the crowd capacity. Therefore, the Farmers and Businessmen's Club decided to prepare the coon themselves. The club gathered their own cookware together. They acquired huge kettles for boiling and constructed large tanks for smoking the enormous amounts of coon. The club members assembled to quarter the coon. They then, washed the coon and let it soak overnight in salt water. The next day, the coon was boiled until tender. From here, it was placed in the tanks to achieve a smoked flavor and the final touches. This process of preparation remained the same throughout the coming years. The women of the community prepared the rice and sweet potatoes that served as a side dish with the coon. They also made the dessert. The menu

has remained the same through the years, with the exception of dessert. The women prepared pies for dessert until the Health Department intervened. The Health Department intervened because the pies were not refrigerated during the supper. The lack of refrigeration during the supper could cause the pies to spoil; therefore, they started to make sheet cakes instead. But as long as one can remember, the food has always been enjoyable.

The Coon Supper, one of the major events of the year in South Arkansas, has attracted more people each year for the enjoyable food and great fellowship. 425 people attended the Coon Supper in 1955 and around 500 were expected in 1956. Since tickets could be purchased at the door, the crowd capacity increased to 650 people in attendance. Mr. Kenneth Hesser, President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club in 1956, invited all area farmers and businessmen along with their wives to the supper. The special guest speaker was Coach Jack Mitchell of the University of Arkansas. Mr. Alan Berry, manager of War Memorial Stadium in Little Rock introduced Coach Mitchell. Mr. James Place was the Master of Ceremonies. Entertainment was provided by the Gillett High School Glee club which was under the direction of Ms. Josephine Ochleschlager.

Mr. George Bauer, President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club in 1957, along with the other club members set up 16 tables running the length of the high school gym to accommodate the vast number of guests. Entertainment was provided by the Gillett High School musical ensemble. Around 700 people gathered for the 1957

Coon Supper. This banquet marked more than 20 years for the supper which started back in 1935. Cliff Shaw, a widely known Little Rock athletic official was the guest speaker. Mr. Shaw declared, "the finest community project that goes on in your town or any town is the U.S. today, is the promotion of high school football." Ned Moseley, former Stuttgart coach, shared the spotlight with Mr. Shaw. Mr. Moseley was the Clarendon School Superintendent and the District 6 Athletic Association President. As President of District 6, Mr. Moseley presented the Gillett High School football team with the 6-B Championship trophy.

Visitors arriving at Gillett to attend the 1958 Coon Supper were greeted by a new sign. Mr. George Pfaffenberger, Mr. Charles Johnson, Mr. Harvey Holzauer, Mr. John Darrell Nichols, Mr. Neil Holzauer, Mr. Jimmy Eichler, and Mr. Ed Knight placed the newly constructed sign at the outskirts of Gillett. The sign, which still stands today, reads "Gillett . . . Home of Friendly People and the Coon Supper." The Farmers and Businessmen's Club erected this sign in hopes that those attending the Coon Supper would not by-pass the town. Apparently the sign worked! A capacity crowd of over 900 came out to eat the commercially barbecued coon. The event was sold out two weeks in advance and if more space had been available, around 500 more tickets could have been sold. Entertainment was provided by Ms. Linda Hesser Sollars and Ms. Phillis Bauer Wittrock of Gillett; and Mr. Billy Lafferty of Helena. Mr. Benny Craig, the Colonial Bread Company's T.V. Sports Announcer, introduced guest speaker, Mr. Bo Rowland. Mr. Rowland was a former football

coach and director of public relations of the Reynolds Metal Company. Mr. Jackie Harrington served as President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club and Mr. Cleon Collier was the Program Chairman.

An article that was published in 1958 distinguished the 1958 Coon Supper as a great attraction for visitors, as well as townspeople in the area. Hundreds of people, year after year, from all parts of Arkansas and some from other states flogged into Gillett every January for the high school football banquet. The event also spurred the state press, radio and television outlets to focus on the small town of Gillett. Some felt that people attended the supper for the unusual serving of barbecued coon. Others said they came because Gillett was a town full of friendly people whose friendliness keeps on spreading. Gillett's story is evident that every town has something of interest to perspective visitors. It all depends on what people do about it.

"Big oaks from little acorns grow" was a phrase used to describe the Coon Supper in 1959. Reverend Paul Jilg delivered the invocation to a crowd of over 900. Ladies of the community prepared the food items which complimented the Coon Supper menu. The Dorcas Circle of the Lutheran Church prepared the potato salad, the WSCS of the Methodist Church prepared the sweet potatoes, Little Prairie Home Demonstration Club prepared the rice salad and the P.T.A. prepared the pies. Waiters serving these items were members of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club. Up until this time, the women of the community served at this event. The change was made in order that the ladies may have an

opportunity to eat and enjoy the feast. Mr. James Place once again entertained the crowd with his wit and wisdom. Entertainment included singing by Mr. Jerry Bogard from Stuttgart, the Charleston dance by Ms. Tilia Turner Relyea and Ms. Suzanne Parker from DeWitt, and singing by the Gillett High School Ensemble. The ensemble included Ms. Martha Vansickle Winroath, Ms. Carolyn Lowe Berry, Ms. Judy Lehman Raetz, Ms. Thelma Coffman Gordon, Ms. Ann Bauer Nichols, Ms. Barbara Swain Menard, Ms. Sue Ann Bass Turner, Ms. Kathy Lowe Nutt, Ms. Suzie Bonnor Rice, and Ms. Elizabeth Stagg Edwards.

Change was greeted with acceptance by all in 1960. Guests arriving to the coon supper that year were asked to park their cars on Main Street and ride school buses to and from the function. This was the first year for the Farmers and Businessmen's Club to provide convenient transportation services. Mr. Jackie Harrington, President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club, along with Mr. Benny Craig, the Colonial Bread Company's T.V. Sports Announcer, shared a spot at the head table with Mr. Jack Leon. Mr. Leon was a representative from the Hammond Organ Company of Little Rock. He provided organ music while everyone ate.

A record breaking attendance of over 1,000 assembled in Gillett for the annual Coon Supper in 1961. Farmers and Businessmen's Club President, Mr. Gene Holloway, along with the remaining members served 1,350 lbs. of coon. Mr. Buddy Simms of DeWitt was in charge of barbecuing the coon and cooking the eight bushels of sweet potatoes. Mr. Bryan Blalock, Vice-President of

Borden Milk's Southern Division, arrived from Marshall, Texas, to speak with the guests. Entertainment for the 1961 coon supper was provided by the Gillett High Ensemble, and organ selections were played by Ms. Carol Hardwick of DeWitt.

Tickets for the 1962 Coon Supper were sold out weeks in advance. Mr. James Place was the Master of Ceremonies and Mr. J.W. Lehman was the President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club. Mr. Benny Craig, once again attended as a special guest. Mr. James Mason, publicity director of the Rice Growers Association; and Mr. Randy Tardy, news editor of KTHV Channel 11, were on hand to visit with those attending the Coon Supper.

Around 950 guests attended the 1963 Coon Supper. Guests came from 34 communities in Arkansas and from 4 surrounding states. Mr. James C. Place, with his wonderful wit and humor, was Master of Ceremonies again that year. The President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club was Mr. Kenneth Smith. Entertainment was provided by singer Miss Tamera Stevens of Stuttgart, and was accompanied by Miss Sharon Holm. Miss Charlotte Kranschnable played the piano for guests and accompanied a Gillett High School girls sextet, which sang for the numerous guests that attended the supper. The sextet included Ms. Sandra Minich Kennedy, Ms. Edna Mitchell Davis, Ms. Elizabeth Fuhrman Alderman, Ms. Kathy Lehman, Ms. Linda Ritcher Thompson, and Ms. Phillis Bauer. Mr. Benny Craig was on hand to take pictures of happenings and faces at the Coon Supper, which were later shown on TV Channel 11. The football coach of

Gillett, Mr. Clyde Dorrough, introduced the football team's lettermen.

The 1964 Coon Supper was a complete sell-out. Mr. James Place received his nickname "Will Rogers of the Rice Field." Entertainment was provided by a trio composed of Ms. Nancy Lowe Butler, Ms. Paula Hackney Cossey, and Ms. Leota Reed Haynes. Piano accompaniment was provided by Ms. Rose Ella Reed Smith. Guests traveled from Mississippi, Tennessee, and 29 Arkansas communities.

"A Big Dinner at Gillett -- Where Coon is King" was used to describe the 1965 Coon Supper. The ticket sales were handled on a mail order basis, and were limited to four per order at \$3 each. This method of ticket sales drew orders from 30 towns in Arkansas and 12 states. "One of the most pleasant customs at the Gillett gathering is that nobody makes a speech, not a long one, anyhow. Also, there's not only Jim Place's jokes, but other entertainment," stated one of the guests. Other entertainment was provided by Ms. Nancy Lowe Butler, Ms. Paula Hackney Cossey, and Ms. Leota Reed Haynes who sang while Ms. Kathie Lehman Schroeder played the piano. Mr. Bill Hathcote's folk singing group also performed a song. The group was composed of Mr. Larry Bauer, Mr. Jimmie Holzhauser, Ms. Sue Whiting, Ms. Kathie Lehmann Schroeder, and Ms. Teresa Bell.

From the middle 1960's through the middle 1970's, the Coon Supper drew capacity crowds. Mr. James C. Place entertained the huge crowds every year during this time while he served as Master of Ceremonies. "Master" defines Mr. Place. His charm, quick

wit, down-home humor, and country philosophy made him a Coon Supper legend.

Mr. Albert Roberts, President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club in 1966 welcomed everyone. Mr. Benny Craig from KTHV and Brother Hal Webber were both recognized. Mr. James Place entertained the crowd with his usual wit and humor as he served as Master of Ceremonies. Other entertainment was provided by the Jimmy Carter Dance Band of Stuttgart and the Treblettes composed of Ms. Nancy Lowe Butler, Ms. Paula Hackney Cossey, and Ms. Leota Reed Haynes. Ms. Lorna Duderstadt gave the reading, "Comic Monologue" that she presented at the Junior Miss Contest. Folks from thirty-eight Arkansas communities, and states Virginia, Indiana, Texas, Oklahoma, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee attended the annual Coon Supper.

During the 1967 Coon Supper, Mr. Place was at the helm and doing his part in the program. Mr. Darrall Richter served as President of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club. He presented Arkansas Highway Commission Chairman Wayne Hampton with a plaque. Mr. Hampton was honored for this community service. Mr. Max Graham, who was head coach of the Gillett Wolves, introduced the senior high football team to the crowd. Also, Mr. Benny Craig, a popular T.V. sports announcer, was on attendance at the Coon Supper. Music was furnished as guests were being seated and later as they were leaving by Mr. Rendall Rutledge, Ms. Brenda Rutledge, and Ms. Linda Milliken. During the program, the Treblettes, a singing group from Gillett, also entertained. They were Ms. Nancy Lowe Butler, Ms. Paula Hackney Cossey, and

Ms. Leota Reed Haynes. Accompanying them was Ms. Lynn Bauman, a pianist from Almyra. The songs they sang included: "Mighty Mississippi," "Hanging On," and "Winchester Cathedral." Lynn Bauman also played a rendition of "Rhapsody in Blue." Each year door prizes were awarded to guests at the Coon Supper. This year, not only did the guests receive a prize, they also received a spot in the "lime light." Mr. Place had all the winners come to the stage and aid him in singing "George Washington Bridge." People from thirty-three Arkansas towns and six states attended and enjoyed all the fun and festivities.

Once again a change had affected the coon supper of 1968. Mr. Benny Craig, the T.V. announcer who regularly attended the Coon Supper had passed away. A scholarship award was given in his memory. Mr. Harvey Holzhauser, President of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club, presented this award to senior football player Johnny Holloway. Entertainment that year included: The Pine Bluff Singers, the Treblettes, and Miss Debbie McGahhey of DeWitt. The Treblettes sang "Cool, Cool, Water" and "Ride, Tide, Ride." Miss McGahhey sang "The Marriage of Figaro", "Aria from Puccini", and "I Could Have Danced All Night". A good time was had by all at the 1968 Coon Supper.

Mr. Place had the crowd roaring with laughter as he impersonated Tiny Tim, complete with long black hair and high-pitched vocalizing, at the 1969 Coon Supper. He gave a humorous rendition of "Tip Toe Through the Tulips." The Arkansas College Lassies from Batesville also entertained, and Miss Debbie McGahhey played the piano. Mr. Jim Landers, a T.V. sports

announcer, introduced Arkansas State University football players, who were standouts for the Indians. The players attending were Gary Crane, Dennis Zoper, and home-town player, Terry Whiting. Mr. Johnny Holzhauser served as President of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club.

The Bob Cover Award originated at the 1969 Coon Supper and brought forth a great tradition. Bob Cover, a 1961 Gillett High School graduate, had given his life on August 18, 1968, in Vietnam. He had been an All-District football player for the Gillett Wolves and earned All-State honorable mention. He was honored as Best All-Around Athlete by the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club. Bob Cover was attending college at Arkansas A&M in Monticello, when called on by the U.S. Army to serve in Vietnam. Head Coach Dwight Fite of the Gillett Wolves had approached the Cover family with the idea of having an award dedicated in Bob's memory. The award was to be voted upon by the senior high football team and presented to the best all-around teammate at the Coon Supper. Coach Fite presented to the Dale Reed, a junior player for the Wolves, with the first Bob Cover Award. This award has been given every year thereafter and hailed as a great honor.

Mr. David Schwartz held the position of President of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club for the 1970 Coon Supper. Coach Fite presented the Bob Cover Award to two Gillett Wolves. The recipients were Mr. Donnie Shepherd and Mr. Charles Hesser. The Pine Bluff Singers found themselves entertaining at the Coon Supper as they had once before. Larry Alexander of the Pine

Bluff Singers amused the audience with humorous impersonations. Bob Hicks, a T.V. personality from Channel 11's "Eve on Arkansas," was on attendance. He received a coon skin cap from the football team. Also attending was Attorney General Joe Purcell. The Coon Supper drew patrons from forty-six Arkansas cities and seven states.

Miss Arkansas Donna Connelly performed at the 1971 Coon Supper. The Cummins Prison Band, which carried the title "Ball and Chain," also performed. Mr. Randy Henry was head coach of the Gillett Wolves. He presented Mr. Dean Bell with the Bob Cover Award. Scotty Place, a Gillett football player, presented a plaque of appreciation to the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club on behalf of the Wolves. Mr. Marion Berry, president of the sponsoring organization, accepted it.

Mr. Billy Tom Wallace took the post of President of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club in 1972. James Morris, better known as Jimmy Driftwood, was the feature attraction at the Coon Supper. Mr. Driftwood, a native from Mountain View, was a well known composer and singer of folk music in Arkansas. Rackendak, a musical group also from Mountain View, attended as Mr. Driftwood's backup. Former Mountain View Mayor Tommy Simmons also came to help Driftwood in delivering music to the crowd. Prosecuting Attorney Sam Weems of Des Arc attended. He got a laugh when one of Mr. Place's comedy routines centered around him. Coach Randy Henry presented the Honorary Bob Cover Award to Mr. Jimmy Hackney. Coverage of the 1972 Coon Supper was provided by KATV Channel 7.

Former Gillett athletes were honored at the 1973 Coon Supper. Mr. Perry Goodell and Mr. Bruce Duderstadt received recognition and awards for their accomplishments at Arkansas Tech University in athletics. Both individuals were All-AIC football players at Arkansas Tech. Coach Henry made the presentation of the Bob Cover Award to Mr. John Menard. Entertainment was provided by the Ricelanders, a singing group from Stuttgart; and Mrs. Thelma Gordon, who provided organ music. Mr. Bill Davis served as President of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club.

In 1974, a band from DeWitt called "Longtime Comin'" performed for the Coon Supper crowd. The band was very popular and struck a chord with the crowd by the time it finished playing. Mr. Walter Lowe held the position of President of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club. Mr. Rich Johnson, head coach for the Gillett Wolves, presented the Bob Cover Award to Mr. Jimmy VanHorn.

In 1975, close to 2,400 pounds of coon were prepared for 1,100 guests at the annual Gillett Coon Supper. Entertainment for the guests was provided by Mr. James C. Place, Mrs. Thelma Gordon, and the Holiday Inn "Messengers". Many visitors from out-of-state were present, such as, people from New Mexico, Texas, Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, California, and Georgia. Many of these visitors attended the event each year. The Bob Cover Award was later presented the Gillett Wolf, tri-captain and quarterback, Kenny Pfaffenberger. Mr. Kenny Pfaffenberger was also honored by being named to an "All-

American" prep team. The 1974 Gillett Wolves finished the year as runner-up in the State Class B play-offs.

At the 1976 Gillett Coon Supper, the main attractions for the event were more than 1,100 pounds of barbequed coon, the presentation of the Bob Cover Award, and the live performances of great entertainers. The recipient of the Bob Cover Award was All-District quarterback and team captain Shelby Slater. His consistently great performances led the Wolves to a 6-2-1 season that year. After the presentation of the Bob Cover Award, Mr. M.D. Braswell of DeWitt presented Mr. James C. Place and family with a plaque honoring them as the South Arkansas Farm Family of the Year. Mr. Terry Whiting, President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club also presented Mr. Place with a similar award. Entertainment was later provided seperately by Mr. Place and Mrs. Lillian Williams on piano.

As an audience of over 1,000 people were present at the 1977 Gillett Coon Supper, Mr. Wesley Lehmann, a three-year letterman as a Wolf, was awarded the coveted Bob Cover Award. Over 2,000 pounds of barbequed coon were eaten at this yearly event. Entertainment was provided by the Cummins Prison Farm Band. People from various areas including Texas and North Carolina attended the supper. People in the audience included Faulkner County Sheriff Mr. Marlin Hawkins of Morrilton, former candidate for governor and state surpreme court, Mr. Jim Johnson; and prosecuting attorney for Pulaski and Perry counties, Mr. Lee Munson of Little Rock.

In 1978, over 1,100 people attended the Gillett Coon Supper. As the audience looked on, Head Coach Walter Fisher awarded Mr. Bobby Joe Adams the Bob Cover Award. Entertainment was provided by the ever-popular Mr. James Place; Miss Arkansas Bunnie Carolyn Holbert; and Mrs. Lynn Bauman. Government officials present at the Coon Supper were Governor David Pryor, Representative Wayne Hampton, Senator Bill Hargrove, Representative Wayne Thornton, Secretary of State Winston Bryant, Representatives Sturgis Miller and Boyce Alford and Attorney Don Smith.

In 1979, coon eaters from all over Arkansas and other states such as Alabama, Louisiana, Texas, and Tennessee sat elbow-to-elbow and enjoyed the entertainment provided at the 31st annual Coon Supper in Gillett. Those present watched as Mr. Kenny Adams recieved the Bob Cover Award. As a special treat to the guests this year, Mr. James C. Place and his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Karen Burton Place, performed a rendition of "Side By Side." Later the avowed "country humorist," James Place, tickled the audience with his usual concoction of ribald tales and anecdotes. ASU head coach, Larry Lacewell, was present as guest of honor at the 1979 Coon Supper.

At the 1980 Gillett Coon Supper, Vicki Martin holder of the titles Miss Little Rock and Miss Diamond Lakes, provided great entertainment along with Mr. James Place for guests at the Coon Supper. Approximately 1,600 pounds of prepared coon were slated as the main course for the annual event. Mr. Jay Hackney was honored with the Bob Cover Award. Governor Bill Clinton was present that year along with several other government officials.

Those officials attending were Secretary of State Paul Reviere; Congressman Jim Guy Tucker; Representative Shirley Meacham; Representative Stanley Russ; and Attorney General Steve Clark.

In 1981, the newly-erected Governor, Frank White, attended the Coon Supper. He tried a piece of coon and enjoyed the friendly roasting by humorist, Mr. James C. Place. 1,200 people were present this year to witness the presentation of the Bob Cover Award to Mr. Jeff Zirbel. Also honored at the supper were Mr. Kenneth Smith and family, who were chosen Arkansas County Farm Family of the Year and for the entire State of Arkansas for 1980. Officials from the state of Arkansas attending were Representative Lloyd George; State Auditor Jimmie Lou Fisher; and Attorney General Steve Clark. Former Miss America Donna Axum was also on hand to enjoy the festivities.

Mr. Lloyd Wallace served as President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club at the 1982 Coon Supper. He welcomed guests and made announcements. Mr. James C. Place roasted the political officials present and those who were not present. These public officials were Governor Frank White and wife; Senator Dale Bumpers; Senator David Pryor; Attorney General Steve Clark; Representative Wayne Hampton; Senator Bill Hargrove; and State Auditor Julia Hughes. A couple of the political figures spoke to the 1,200 guests at the Coon Supper. Entertainment was provided by Ms. Lynne Robinson Ferguson, a singer and music teacher of Gillett. There were two presentations made at the supper. A plaque was given to the Mr. Bill Wallace family, the South Arkansas County Farm Family of the Year, and the second

presentation was the Bob Cover Award. The award was presented by Coach Jon Watson to Mr. Marty Gordon.

The President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club for 1983 was Jimmie Don Dupuy. Mr. James C. Place was Master of Ceremonies. He entertained many guests and political officials. Among the officials attending were Governor Bill Clinton, Lt. Governor Winston Bryant, Congressman Bill Alexander, Attorney General Steve Clark, State Senator Mike Beebe, and State Representative Wayne Hampton. Entertainment that year was provided by Mr. Don Hesser, Mrs. Karen Place, and Mrs. Donna Wallace, who performed music of the 50's. Ms. Paula Hackney Cossey and Ms. Tiffany Jones also entertained for the large crowd. In 1983, the Bob Cover award was presented to Mr. John David Cover, nephew of the late Bob Cover. The original trophy was retired that year to John David in honor of his uncle; however, the award would still continue to honor future recipients.

Head Coach Jon Watson presented the Bob Cover Award to Mr. Larry Hammett during the 1984 Coon Supper. Mr. Tommy Holzhauser presided as President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club. Mr. James Place got the entertainment off the ground quickly when he donned a Cowboy hat and performed the country hit, "Swingin'." The Cummins Prison Band gave him musical support and provided further entertainment during the Coon Supper. Several politicians were on attendance. Senator David Pryor; U.S. Congressman Bill Alexander; and Senator Dale Bumpers were seated at the head table. Retiring Representative Wayne Hampton from

the Arkansas House of Representatives was also present. He received tribute from Senator Pryor. Senator Pryor stated that Mr. Hampton would be greatly missed by his peers. State Senator Mike Beebe and Attorney General Steve Clark were also present.

Coach Jon Watson honored Mr. Allen Slater by presenting him with the Bob Cover Award during the 1985 Coon Supper. Mr. Sammy Ray Whiting served as President of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club and welcomed the guests to the event. Mr. Gene Holloway took the position of Program Chairman. Several politicians and people of distinction were again present at the annual Coon Supper. Those attending were Governor Bill Clinton, Attorney General Steve Clark, Senator Mike Beebe, State Representatives Wanda Northcutt and Charlotte Schexnayder, and Judge Russell Rodgers of Stuttgart. The Western Union Band provided entertainment.

Mr. James C. Place had Governor Bill Clinton in tears with his humorous jokes and stories. The 1986 President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club was Mr. Randy Womack. Entertainment was provided by a trio including Mrs. Donna Wallace, Mrs. Karen Place, and Mr. Don Hesser. Also entertaining was "Floyd and His Pink Cadillac" which was composed of Mr. Jess Essex, Reverend Duncan Cox, and Mr. Steve Ashcraft. The Bob Cover Award was presented to Mr. David Cameron by Head Coach Jon Watson. Mr. Cameron was one of the five senior football players. Other senior players were Mr. Bill Bohnert, Mr. Bryan Fox, Mr. David Michaelis, and Mr. Reggie Smith. Former Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus was also on hand to mingle with the guests.

Greg Wilbanks was the recipient of this year's Bob Cover award presented at the 1987 annual Gillett Coon Supper by Coach Jon Watson. The Gillett Wolves ended the season with an 8-2 record and the District 8A Championship. Coach Watson remarked, "We knew from the time he was in the seventh grade that someday this young man would receive the Bob Cover Award." Mr. Joe Durley was President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club this year. A couple of new items were donated to the supper that year by Leonard Abbritton of Amy. One was a bottled pepper sauce and the other was a hot sauce. The inscription on each bottle of home-made sauce read, "Use of this drug prohibited unless used on 'Koon, Possom, Turnip Griins, Lollards, or Poke Salat'." It took more than 2,000 lbs. of coon, 10 bushels of sweet potatoes, 100 lbs. of rice, and 14 whole hams to serve the 1,100 guests. Among these guests were Governor Bill Clinton and Congressman Bill Alexander. They were both allowed a few minutes each to speak to the audience during the supper. That year, Mr. Gene Holloway served as Program Chairman.

Due to a snow storm which left eight inches of snow on the ground, the attendance at the 1988 Coon Supper was only a little over half its usual size. Senator Dale Bumpers and Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton attended the Coon Supper, but arrived a little late. Their chartered plane hit a snow bank at the end of the runway at the DeWitt Airport. Along with the Senator and the Governor, only two other state officials attended. They were State Representative Wanda Northcutt and U.S. Representative Bill Alexander. The Bob Cover Award was received by Brian Greenhill.

This award is presented each year to the football player which is voted "best teammate" by the members of the Wolves football team. Mr. Wayne Clawson won a shotgun which was given away at the 1988 Coon Supper. Mr. James C. Place was Master of Ceremonies and the Program Chairman was Mr. Gene Holloway. Mr. Tommy Turner was President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club. All proceeds from the supper go toward Summer Youth Programs, School Athletic Awards, and other community projects in Gillett.

Mr. James C. Place served as Master of Ceremonies at the 1989 Coon Supper. He told several jokes and sang a few songs. Mr. Walt Sullivan was the recipient of the Bob Cover Award. Governor Bill Clinton, Representatives from Bill Alexander's office and Senator David Pryor's office attended along with other state officials. The guests at the 1989 Coon Supper were welcomed by the Farmers and Businessmen's Club President Mr. Wayne Sexton. Dinner music was provided by Mr. Miles Fish of Dumas. Mr. Norris Steele, pastor of the Gillett-Tichnor Methodist Churches gave the invocation. Fun and fellowship was had by the 1,100 people who attended the event.

The Bob Cover Award was bestowed upon Mr. Tim Edmondson during the 1990 Coon Supper. Head Coach Jimmie Don Dupuy made the presentation. Mr. Mike Wallace, a graduate of Gillett High School and a student at the University of Central Arkansas, was honored with a plaque from the Gillett G Club. He was given this award in recognition of his academic and athletic achievements at UCA. Mr. Jody Holzhauser served as President of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club, and Mr. Gene Holloway held the

position of Program Chairman. Entertainment was provided by the Cummins Prison Band and Miss Arkansas Marci Lewallen. Mr. Phil English provided further entertainment with his "Cajun" humor. Governor Bill Clinton, Senator Dale Bumpers, and Congressman Bill Alexander were present. KATV Channel 7 gave its late afternoon news, weather, and sports from the Gillett Gym.

The 1991 Gillett Coon Supper was very much unlike any other supper in the past. Mr. James C. Place, having served 47 consecutive years as Master of Ceremonies for the supper did not serve again as emcee that year. Mr. Place was presented with a plaque in appreciation of the numerous years he had served as emcee of the supper. Farmers and Businessmen's Club President Mr. Greg Holloway was helped by the 1991 Coon Supper Master of Ceremonies Mr. Phil English, with the presentation of the award to Mr. Place. The Richard Gordon Family was also recognized during the program. Mr. Bill Braswell, publisher of DeWitt Era Enterprise, presented the family a plaque as South Arkansas County's 1990 Farm Family of the Year. Music and entertainment was provided by the Buckeye Band of Little Rock and the reigning Miss Arkansas, Karissa Rushing. Then to top off the evening, Congressman Bill Alexander, Senator Dale Bumpers, and Governor Bill Clinton were each given an opportunity to make a few comments.

The year 1992, finding the Gillett Coon Supper was easier than ever thanks to sky lights provided by Rat Productions. These lights were clearly visible even up to a few miles away. The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Bob

Cover Award to Mr. Brad Haynes. Brad is the son of Mr. and Mrs. V.H. Haynes. He was honored as a National Football Foundation Hall of Fame Scholar-Athlete for 1991. Mr. Gene Holloway was presented a plaque in appreciation of the past eleven years that he served as program chairman for the Coon Supper, and that presentation was made by Mr. Bill Lawrence, the President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club. A free lance writer from Esquire magazine was on hand , that year, doing a profile on Governor Bill Clinton. This article was slated to appear in the July edition. Miss Arkansas Heather Hunnicutt, and the Arkansas County Country Band provided entertainment for the guests this year. Phil English, emcee for the event, set aside a few minutes for Lt. Governor Tucker and Congressman Alexander to talk to the 1,000 guests which were present for the festivities.

The 50th Anniversary of the Coon Supper was celebrated in 1993. The Bob Cover Award was bestowed upon two Gillett Wolves football players. Coach Jimmie Don Dupuy made the presentation to Mr. Sammy Hudson and Mr. Scott Griffie. Mr. Richard Gordon held the position of President of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club and welcomed the large crowd. Mr. Butch Turner served as Program Chairman. Mr. Phil English served as emcee. Mr. James C. Place, who had been emcee of the annual event for over forty years, also spoke and humored the guests. Governor Jim Guy Tucker, U.S. Senator David Pryor, and U.S. Representatives Ray Thornton and Blanche Lambert were in attendance, and they each spoke to the crowd. Miss Arkansas Shannon Boy also spoke and entertained by performing a song. Two

Easy Pieces, a band from Little Rock, provided additional entertainment and dinner music. A good time seemed to be had by all.

Composed of over fifty years of history, traditions, and notable names, this volume finally comes to a close. With the pride, honor, and traditions held by the people who shape the community, more pages are sure to compile in this work as the annual Coon Supper ascends into the future. As one can see, this legendary event will continue to leave proud moments and a history to look upon for years to come.

1956



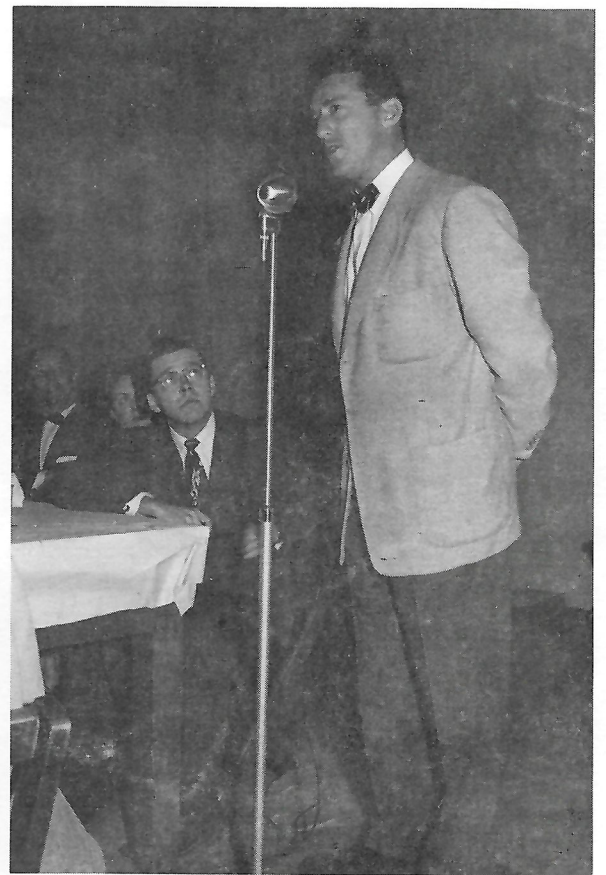
People gather together for a friendly coon hunt



Coach Fletcher Sullard awards a football sweater to Billy Boyd Smith



Coach Fletcher Sullard awards a football jacket to Elmer Bohnert



Coach Jack Mitchell is a guest speaker at the coon supper

FOOD FOR COON SUPPER

340 lbs. barbecued coon
6 hams
85 dozen rolls
5 bu. sweet potatoes
65 lbs. cabbage
20 bowls of rice salad
20 bowls of potato salad
14 lbs. coffee
85 pies
8 qts. coffee cream
10 lbs. butter
6- $\frac{1}{2}$ gal. cans white syrup
35 lbs. sugar
4 qts. salad dressing
4 large cans pimentos
6 bunches carrots

A sample menu of food preparation for the coon supper

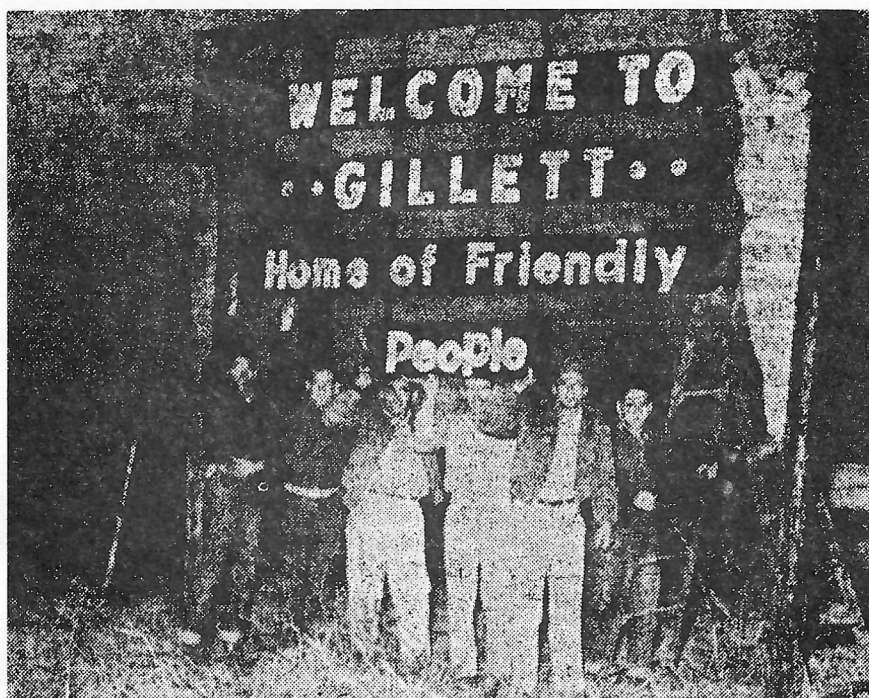
1957



Gillett Football team of 1957 poses for a candid shot

1958

THE ROAD TO A PROGRESSIVE TOWN



Pictured here are the seven men who rushed to erect this sign on January 19, 1958 in order that those attending the Coon Supper might not by-pass the town. They are, from left to right, George Pfaffenberger, Charles Johnson, Harvey Holzauer, John Darell Nichols, Neil Holzauer, Jimmy Eichler, and Ed Knight on the ladder



Many guests enjoying the coon
at the 1958 Coon Supper



A blanket being presented
at the 1958 Coon Supper

1959



Servers of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club in 1959

1960



Gillett's football captain, Johnny Cover, samples a bit of barbecued coon offered by his friend Miss Linda Place, a high school cheerleader, at the annual coon supper held at Gillett.



Master of Ceremonies, Mr. James Place, joins the Treblets during the evenings entertainment. Wearing a Gillett High School letter jacket and a freshman beanie, Mr. Place does things up in a true Rudy Valaee style. The Treblets are composed of Leota Reed, Paula Hackney, and Nancy Lowe.



High school football players of Gillett presented Coach Max Graham with a gift at the Coon Supper. The players are, from left to right, Jimmy Fletcher, Jim Michaelis, David Whiting, and Phil Smith

1968

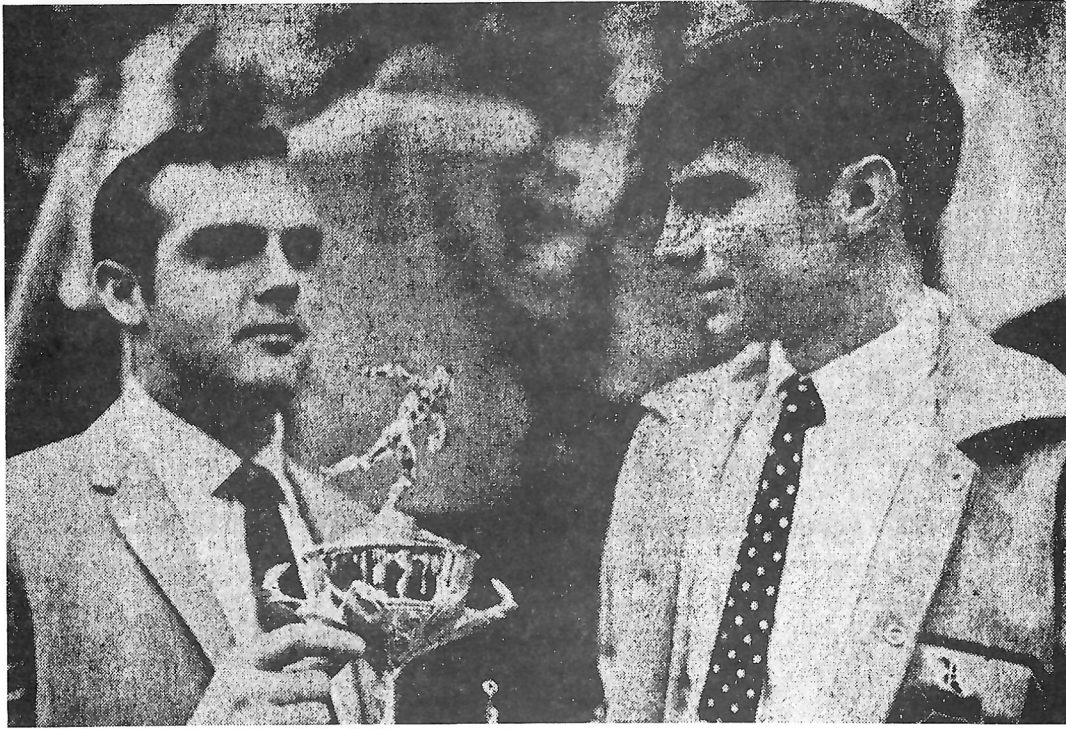


A scholarship in honor of the late sportscaster, Benny Craig, has been awarded to G.H.S. senior football player, John Holloway. Making the presentation is Mr. Harvey Holzauer, President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club, which set up the scholarship.



The Treblettes provide entertainment at the 1968 Coon Supper in true western style. The girls, Nancy Lowe Butler, Paula Hackney Cossey, and Leota Reed Haynes, are from Gillett and make a good representation of local talent.

1969



Dale Reed of the Gillett Wolves football squad receives the Bob Cover Award from head coach Dwight Fite. Presented for the first time, the trophy award is given to a Gillett athlete in honor of Cover, a former GHS football player who gave his life for his country in Vietnam.



Sitting at the head table of the Coon Supper, these GHS players were the true honorees at the event.



Haming it up to the audience's delight, Mr. James C. Place joins the Pine Bluff Singers in a song at the 1968 Gillett Coon Supper. Mr. Place, serving as Master of Ceremonies, kept the laughs flowing before a crowd of approximately 1,000 persons. The Pine Bluff Singers drew a wide range of applause for their singing numbers and recently appeared on the Mike Douglas T.V. show.



Gillett Coach Max Graham receives an outboard motor as a gift of appreciation from the Gillett High players. These GHS players make the presentation at the Coon Supper on behalf of the entire squad.



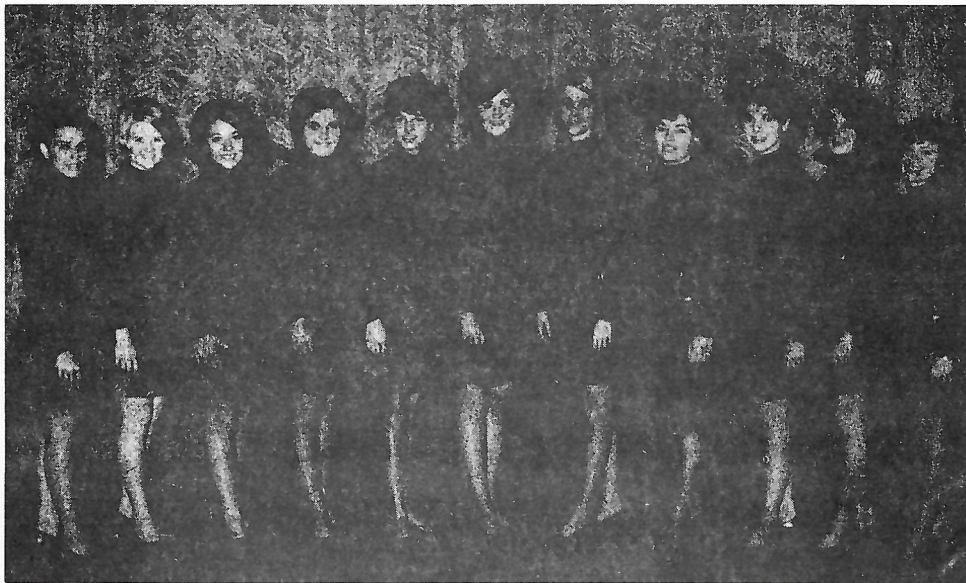
Chester West, left, of the DeWitt Dairy Bar barbecues some of the coon for the Gillett Coon Supper. He is assisted by Doris Haller and Eugene Trimble. The dairy bar prepared over 500 pounds of the 2400 pounds of coon served at the annual event.



Coach Fite and Coach Davis are honored with gifts of appreciation by Gillett football teammates, left to right, Bruce Duderstadt, Maurice Trites, and Perry Goodell.

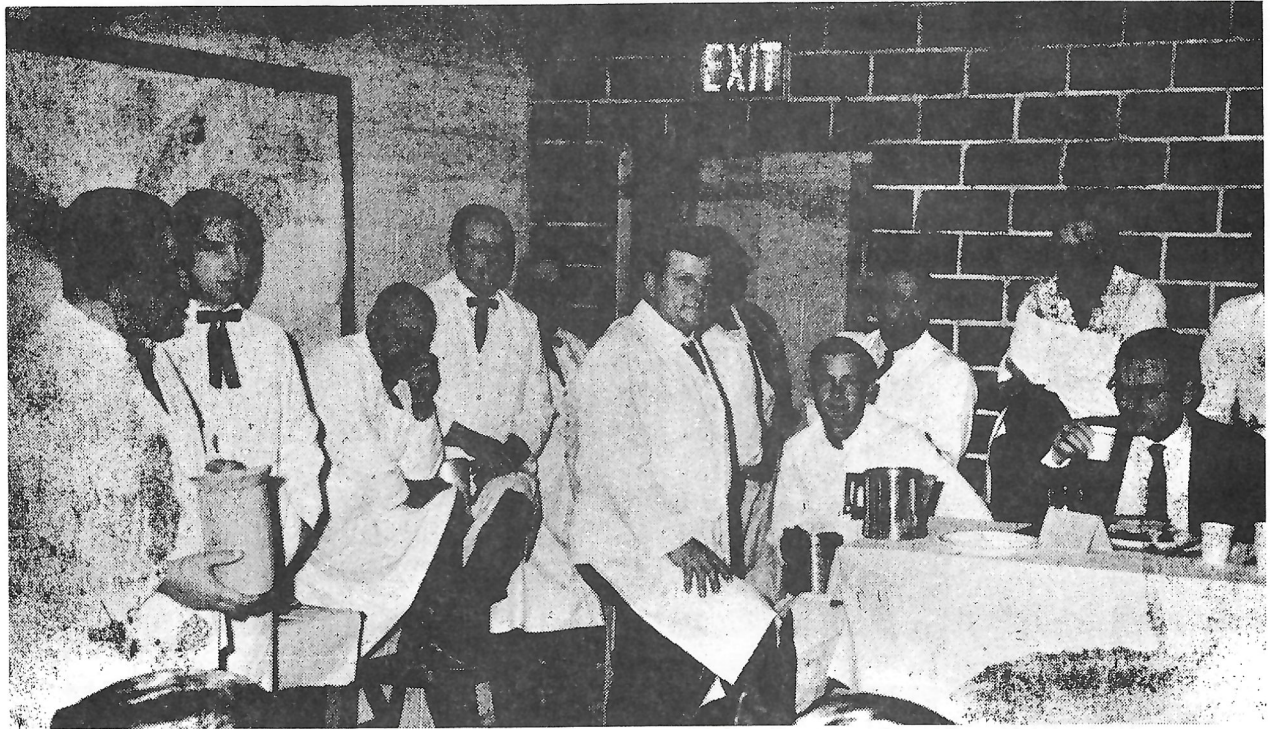


Tiny Tim? In Arkansas County? No other "Place" could it be than James, of Gillett's Coon Supper, who rocked his audience last night by suddenly deserting his emcee role to join accompanist Debbie McGahhey on the musical stage to tiptoe through the tulips - complete with long raven locks, tiny uke, and that now-famous quivering falsetto vocal delivery.



The Arkansas College Lassies were the highlight at the 1969 Coon Supper. The choral group performs as an extra-curricular activity at the Batesville college and are becoming widely known for their talents and professional touch. The Lassies include a local lady Paula Sue Hackney of Gillett.

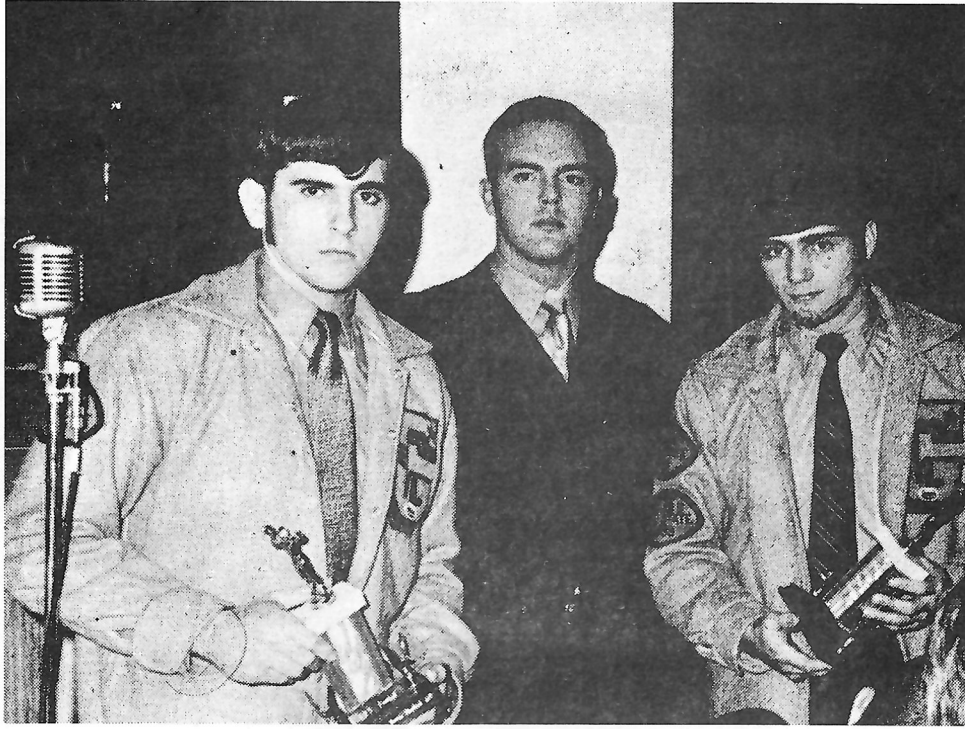
1970



Gillett Farmers and Businessmen take a rest after serving a capacity crowd.



Gillett Wolves football players are seated at the Coon Supper.



Coach Fite stands with Bob Cover Award recipients, Donnie Shepherd and Charles Hesser.



Head Football Coach Dwight Fite receives a shotgun as a gift from the Gillett football team. Pictured with Coach Fite is player Larry Smith.



Pictured is Miss Arkansas Donna Connelly. She will attend and perform at the 1971 Coon Supper.



Mr. Bob Hicks, TV personality from Channel 11, chats with Mr. James C. Place. Mr. Hicks is wearing a coon skin cap presented to him by the football team.

1971



Veteran Coon Supper waiters Mr. Ben Lowe and Mr. R.C. Wolfe dish out the rice salad.



Honoree of the Gillett Coon Supper were the GHS athletes.



Coach Henry admires a rifle presented to him as a gift from the GHS football team. Pictured with Coach Henry are players Jody Holzhauser and Jeff Fletcher.



Nostalgic moment at the 1971 Coon Supper came when emcee James Place was joined briefly at the podium by son, Scotty, GHS senior football co-captain. It was 17 Coon Suppers ago that Place beamed the news of a male heir's arrival.



President Marion Berry receives a plaque of appreciation on behalf of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club. Player Scotty Place presents on behalf of the GHS football team.



Head Coach Randy Henry is pictured with Bob Cover Award recipient Dean Bell.

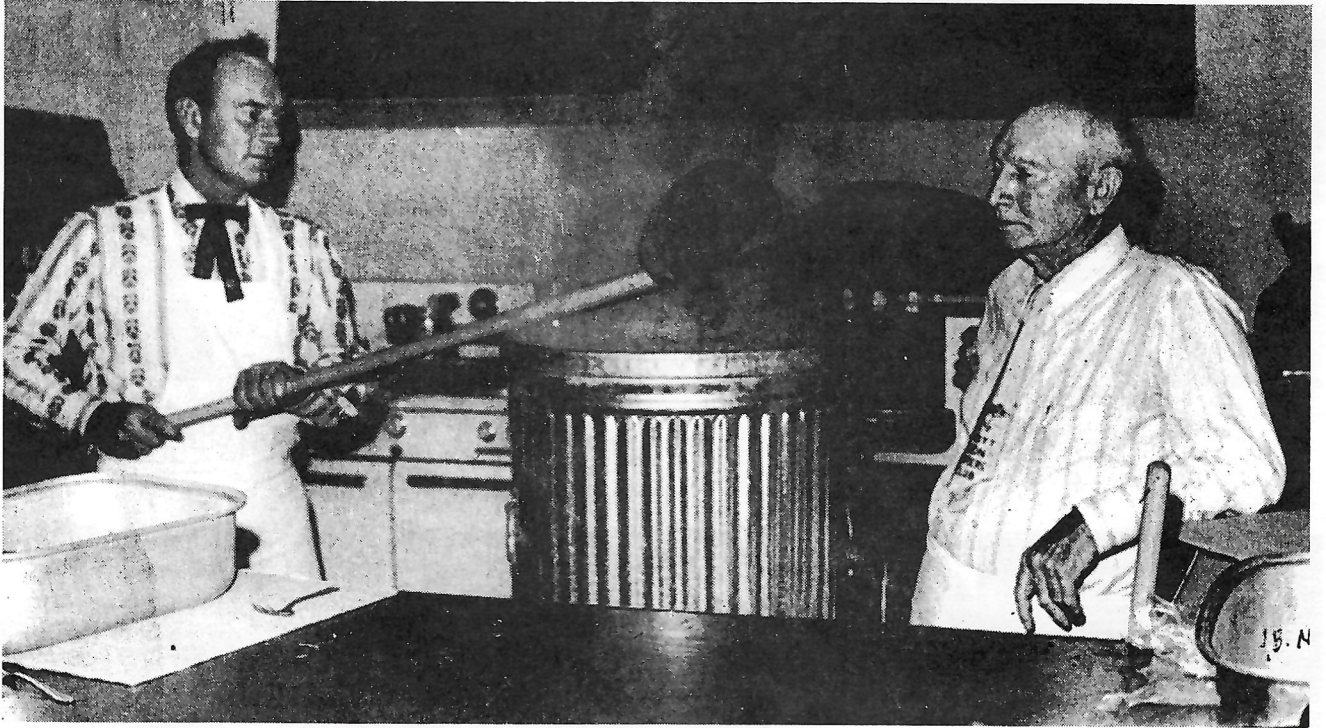


Mr. Keneth Smith of Tichnor removes hot coon from the huge metal ovens.



Mr. Glen Lubeck works diligently for Coon Supper serving preparations.

1972



Mr. John Nichols and Mr. Darrel Nichols both seem to be hard at work for Coon Supper preparation.



Dishing up the salad is Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's club member Gene Holloway.



Recipient of the Bob Cover award was All-District quarterback Jimmy Hackney, pictured with trophy and head coach Randy Henry. The award is made by vote of teammates for attributes of self-discipline, courage, fortitude, character and team leadership.

1973



What is a coon supper without the master of humor? James C. Place , master of ceremonies for many years always has a bag full of stories - some will bring blushes from many present but always brings roars from the crowd.



John Menard receives this year's Bob Cover Award. Also pictured with him is teammate, Tommy Holzauer.



Bruce Duderstadt and Perry Goodell pictured with their honors.

1974

1974 COON SUPPER



№ 1012

GILLETT FARMERS AND BUSINESSMEN

THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY:

Place Mats Riceland Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Hams C. Finkbeiner, Inc. & Neal's Inc.
Water Glasses Planters & Merchants Bank, Gillett
Rolls Colonial Baking Company
Milk and Coffee Cream Borden's
Coffee Cups, Napkins, Spoons & Plates
Johnson Machinery Co., DeWitt
Aluminum Pans Malone & Hyde and Neal's
Aluminum Foil Reynolds Metal Company
Pies Solicited by Gillett P. T. A.
Sweet Potatoes.
Prepared by U. M. W., Gillett Methodist Church,
and Dorcas Circle, St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Barbecued Rice Prepared by Little Prairie EHC
Rice and Chefway Stuttgart Grain Dryer, Gillett
Place Cards DeWitt Publishing Company

As one can see by a sample place card that many people give of their time and effort to make the Coon Supper a success.

1975



Gillett High School quarterback and Tri-Captain, Kenny Pfaffenberger accepts the Bob Cover Trophy during the 1975 annual Coon Supper. Making the presentation to Pfaffenberger is GHS Coach Carroll Ray Bell.

1977



Riding the bus from "downtown Gillett" to the school for the coon supper is part of the fun. Among the group boarding the bus are Mrs. Gene Weser, David and Maxine Stubbs, and Mr. Billy Don Truax.



Among those enjoying the coon supper are from left Jimmy Wallace, Miss Cheryle Gray, Mrs. Weser (behind the waiter), and Mr. and Mrs. David Stubbs.



A Gillett legend is Mr. James Place, who annually emcees the Coon Supper. He sings and tells jokes to the delight of the audience.



Wesley Lehman was presented the Bob Cover Award at the Coon Supper.



Mr. Cleon Collier of Gillett shows his tie advertising the Coon Supper.

1978



Bobby Joe Adams receives the Bob Cover Award from Head Coach Walter Fisher.



Coon Supper Emcee, Mr. James Place; Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's President, Bill Weinrich; Miss Arkansas Bunnie Holbert are pictured enjoying the festivities of the Coon Supper.



Governor David Pryor picks a piece of coon from a bucket being offered by Representative Wayne Hampton.

1979



Mr. Dennis Dixon, President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club, presents a plaque in honor of the late Cleon Collier, whose efforts were important to the annual success of the Gillett Coon Supper to Superintendent Max Watts.



Several Gillett football players discuss important matters before being served at the Coon Supper.



Elected by his fellow GHS teammates, Kenny Adams is the 1979 Bob Cover Award winner. Being congratulated here by Coach Wayne Mayer and Mr. Danny Slay.



Mrs. Karen Burton Place and her father-in-law, James C. Place, sing "Side by Side" to a delighted audience during the entertainment segment of the Coon Supper.



New Arkansas State University head football coach Larry Lacewell (left) and Gillett Principal Bill Lawrence confer during the Coon Supper.

1980



Gillett quarterback Jay Hackney was the recipient of the Bob Cover Award exemplifying the "Best Teammate."



James C. Place, longtime emcee for the Coon Supper, enjoys a hearty laugh with Governor Bill Clinton.



Governor Clinton listens seriously as he greets well-wishers at the Gillett Coon Supper.

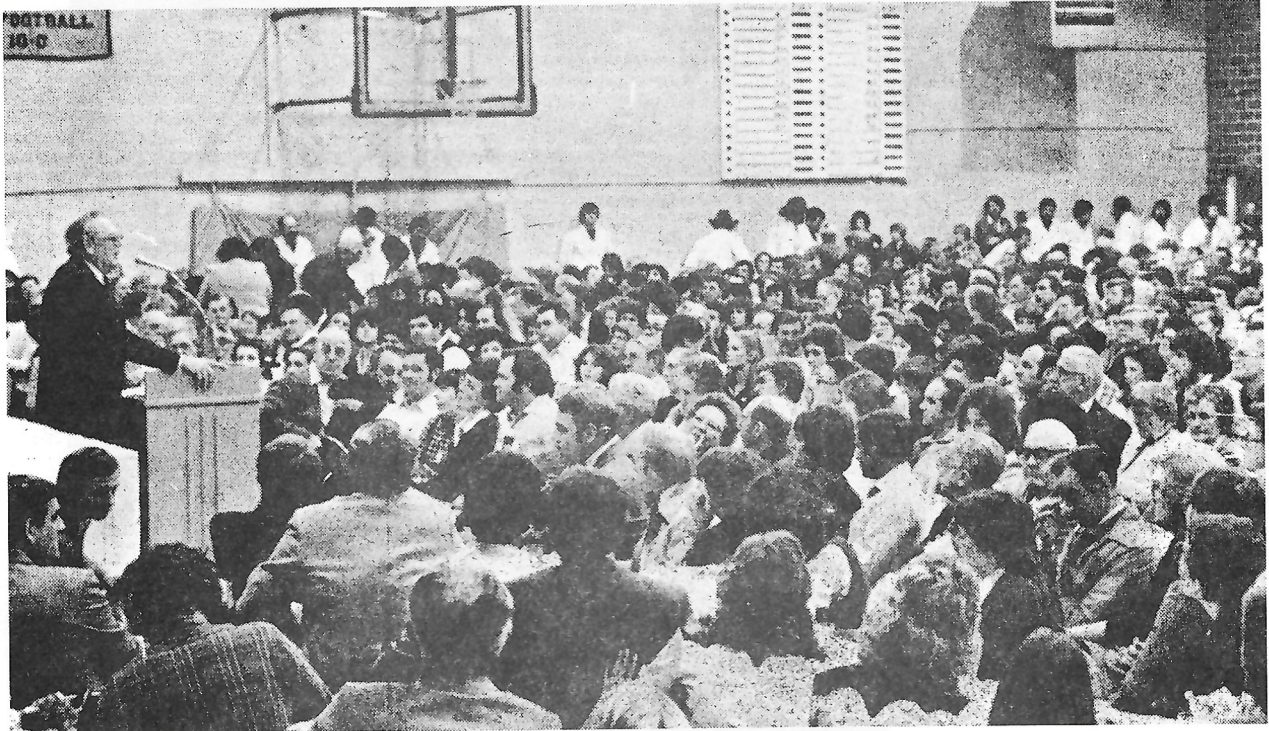


Much preparation goes on before the annual event is hosted, as one can see pictured here.



What a face!!! Governor Bill Clinton finds the jokes very entertaining at the annual Coon Supper.

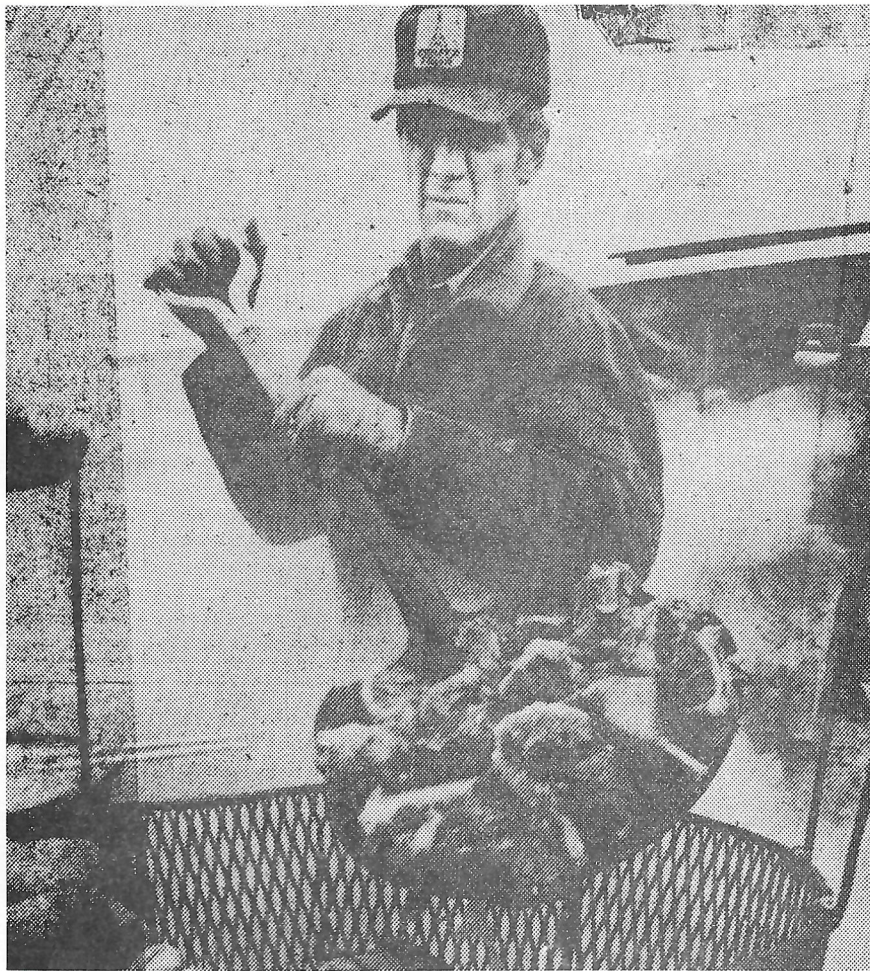
1981



A large crowd was on attendance for the annual Coon Supper.



New Governor, Frank White, who assumed the governorship of Arkansas in inauguration ceremonies this past week visited Gillett for the annual Coon Supper.



Pictured here is Kenneth Hesser, unofficial head coon cooker.



James C. Place calls the Annual Coon Supper a "Homecoming".

1982



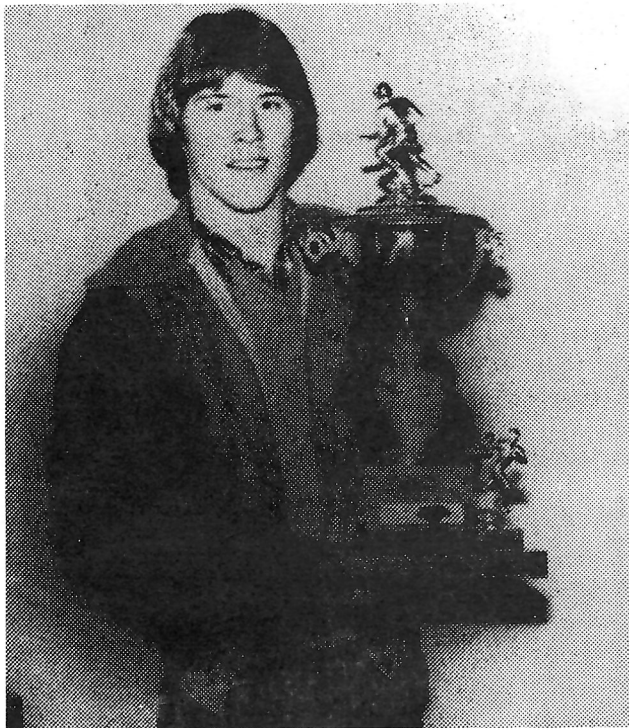
Politicians were abundant at the Coon Supper. Shown here are Governor Frank White, Senator Dale Bumpers, and Senator David Pryor with Gillett's Marcia Holloway who has served Pryor's office as an aide.



Lynne Robinson, music teacher and vocalist of Gillett, sang to Coon Supper guests.



James Place entertained guests with his vocal rendition of the popular song, "Elvira".

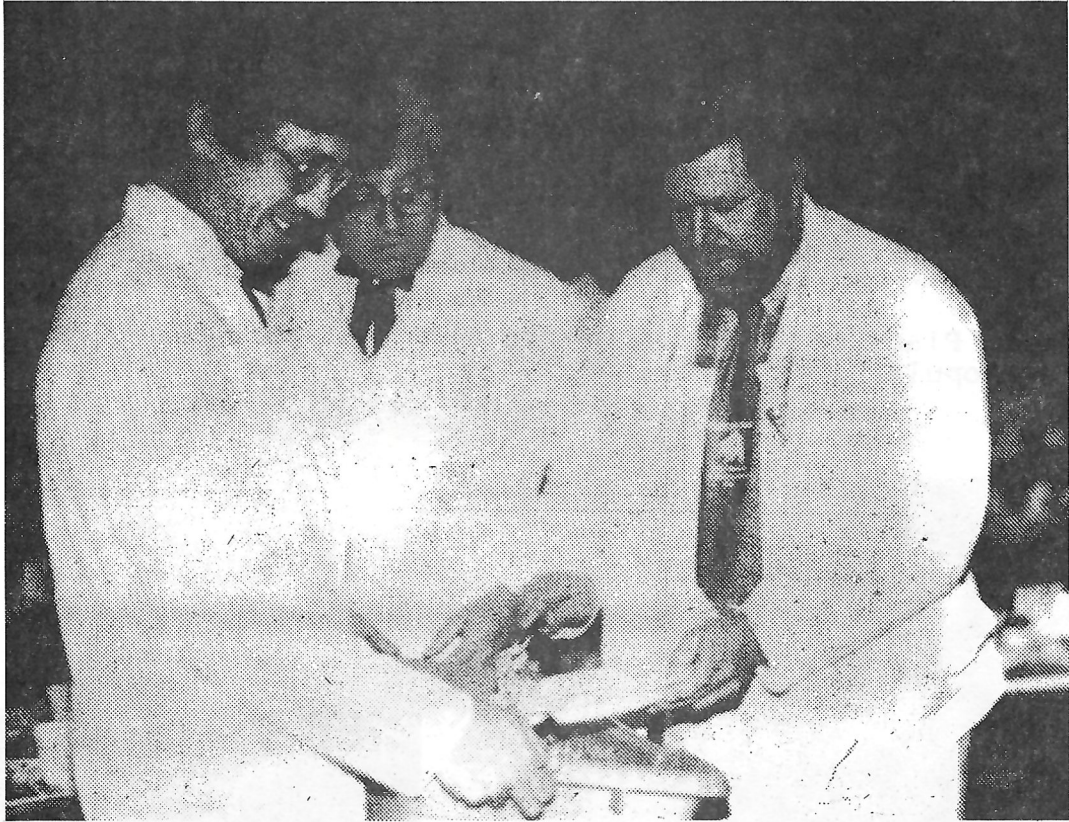


Marty Gordon, senior football player, was the recipient of the Bob Cover Award.



Junior Fletcher is decked out in a coonskin cap and coon tie when he attended the Coon Supper.

1983



Shown here, three members prepare for the event by serving one of the meal's entrees.



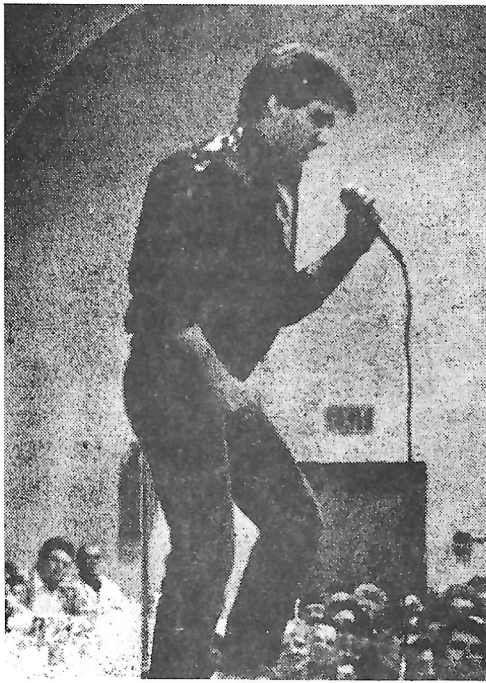
The many hard-working members of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club - in their familiar white jackets - are something the Coon Supper couldn't do without.



Governor-elect Bill Clinton and Congressman Bill Alexander share a laugh at the Gillett Coon Supper.



State's new chief executive strikes a pensive pose during the activities.



Gillett's Don Hesser presented a vivid image of the rock'n'roll singers of the 1950's.



Karen Place and Donna Wallace provided the background vocals for the '50's tunes.



Tiffany Jones' rendition of "9 to 5" opened the entertainment.



Awarding of door prizes was only one duty of busy emcee James C. Place.

1984



Larry Hammett, winner of the Bob Cover Award, smiles with the trophy at his side.



Gillett High School football coach Jon Watson and Senator Dale Bumpers chat at the annual Coon Supper.

1985



Governor Bill Clinton (center), Marion Berry on the Governor's left and Gene Holloway on his right posed for this picture at the Coon Supper. Mr. Holloway was program chairman for the event.



Allen Slater (holding trophy) was voted by his teammates to receive the Bob Cover Award at the Coon Supper. Pictured with Allen are Wolf coaches (left to right) Steve Dardenne, (Allen), Jon Watson and Jim Dupuy.

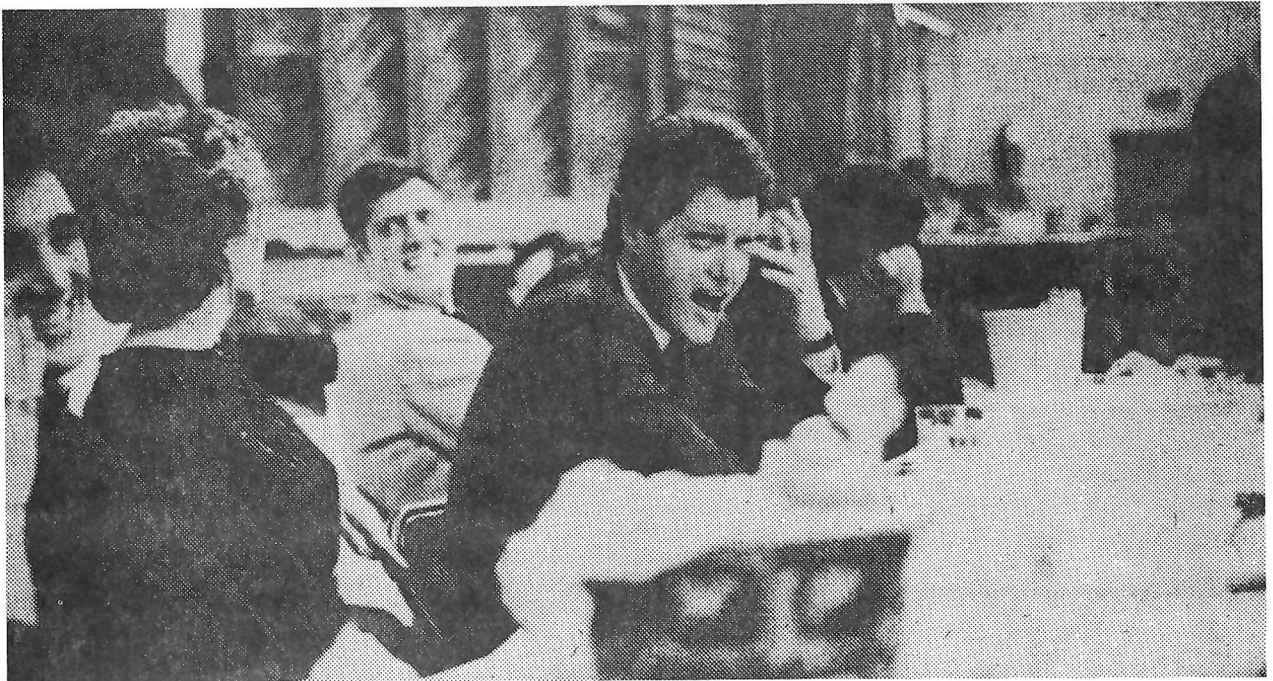
1986



David Cameron was presented the Bob Cover Award at the Gillett Coon Supper.



The Senior Wolves that were honored at the Coon Supper are (left to right) Bill Bohnert, David Cameron, Bryan Fox, David Michaelis, and Reggie Smith.



Governor Bill Clinton, (center of picture) is wiping tears from his eyes after laughing at some of James Place's jokes at the Gillett Coon Supper.



Albert Roberts, a member of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club, looks over the situation at the annual Coon Supper.



Donna Wallace, Don Hesser, and Karen Place (l to r) entertained at the Coon Supper.



Former Governor Orval Faubus shakes hands with Raymond Sullivan, an Arkansas County Justice of the Peace at the annual Coon Supper.

1987



Greg Wilbanks (center) received the Bob Cover Award at the Gillett Coon Supper. Coach Jon Watson (right) presented the award. Jim Dupuy (left) is assistant football coach and head basketball coach.



Joe Durley, President of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club welcomes over 1,100 guests to the Coon Supper.



Shown here are Buzzy Menard and Billy Vansickle and other members of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club placing coon in buckets to be placed on the tables at the Coon Supper.



Coach Jon Watson presents the Championship Trophy to Tom Wilson (right). The Gillett Wolves won the District 8A Football Championship this past football season. Mr. Wilson is principal of Gillett High School and Coach Watson received "Coach of the Year" award.



The Back Porch Players of Stuttgart provided entertainment at the Coon Supper.



Governor Bill Clinton (left), Congressman Bill Alexander (center), and James Place (right) visited before the Coon Supper.

1988



This twin-engine plane had a rough landing at DeWitt Airport with Senator Dale Bumpers and Governor Bill Clinton aboard. No one was injured in the accident. In fact, the two politicians still made it to the Coon Supper even though the weather was bad.

1989

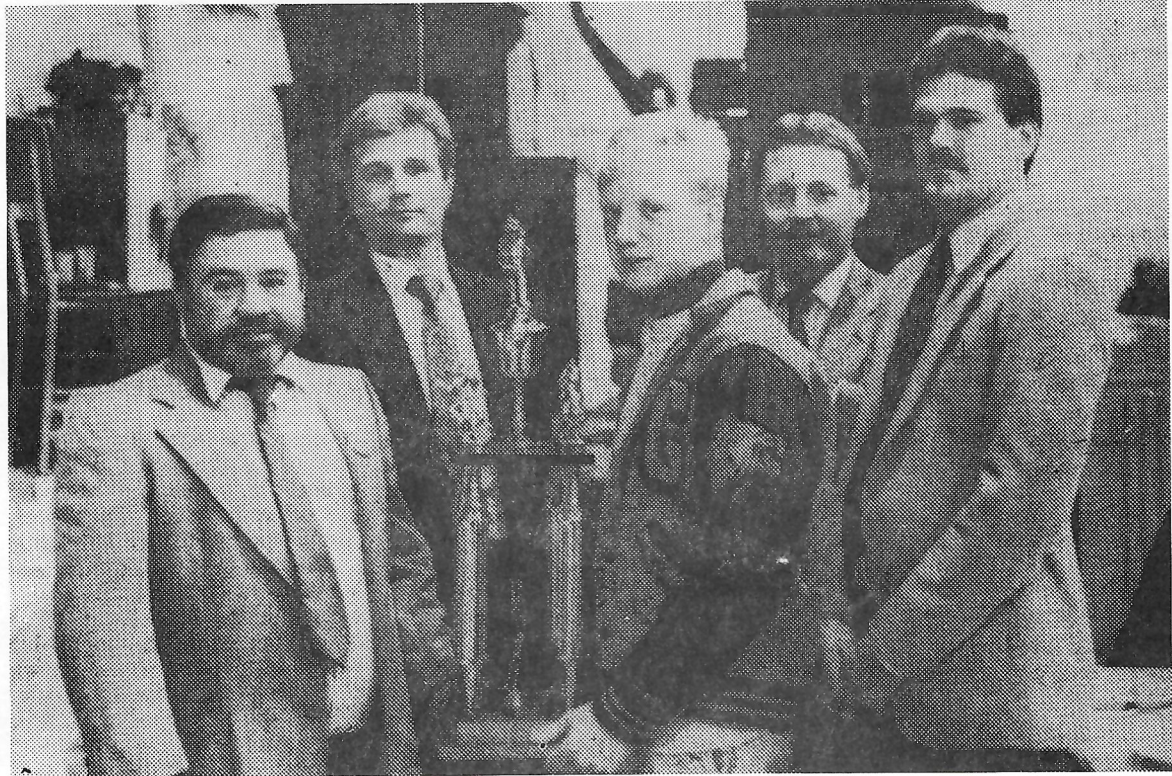


Walt Sullivan, a senior at Gillett High School, received the Bob Cover Award at the Coon Supper. Presenting the trophy was coach Jim Dupuy.



Farmers and Businessmen's Club President Wayne Sexton is being interviewed by a reporter for the Coon Supper.

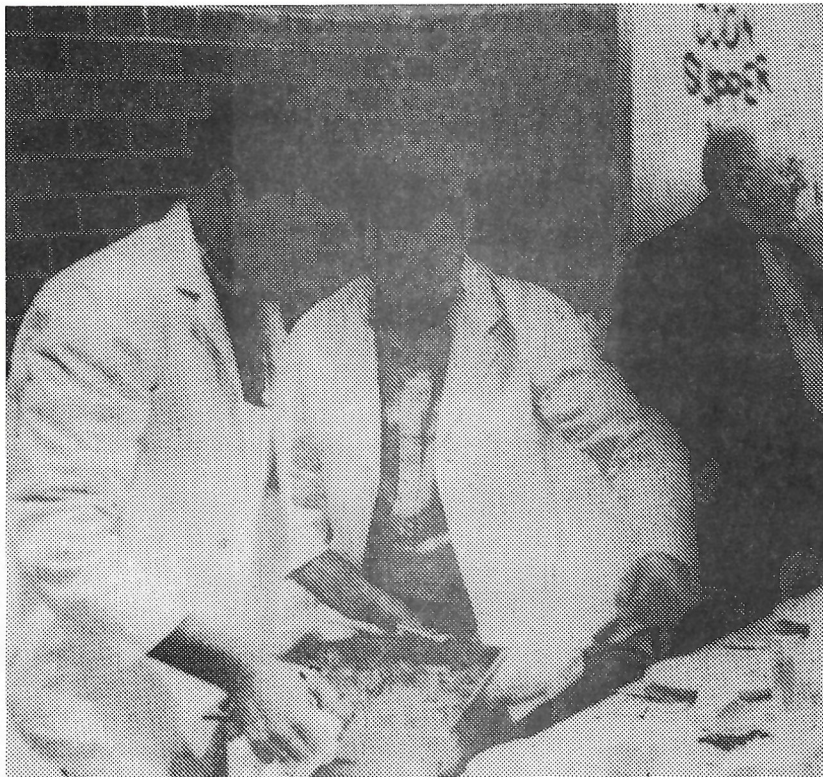
1990



Tim Edmondson (center) received the Bob Cover Award during the Coon Supper. Pictured with him are coaches (l to r) Jimmie Don Dupuy, Jon Howell, Jay Coburn, and Superintendent of Schools Tom Wilson.



Channel 7, KATV did the evening news, weather, and sports from the Gillett High School gym as preparations were being made for the Coon Supper. Pictured (l to r) are Ned Perme, Regina Blakely, and Paul Eells.



Heath Williams and Eddie Hague (l to r) are busy serving sweet potatoes in preparation for the annual event.



Phil English, Cajun humorist, is entertaining the crowd at the Coon Supper.

1991



Doug Roach received the Bob Cover Award at the Gillett Coon Supper. Pictured are (back row, left to right) William Roach, Coach Jon Howell, and Coach Jay Coburn; (front row, left to right) Barbara Roach, Doug Roach, and Coach Jimmie Don Dupuy.



James C. Place (left) received a plaque naming him "Mr. Coon Supper" at the annual event. Making the presentation was Greg Holloway, President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club. Also pictured is Mr. Phil English, emcee for the supper.

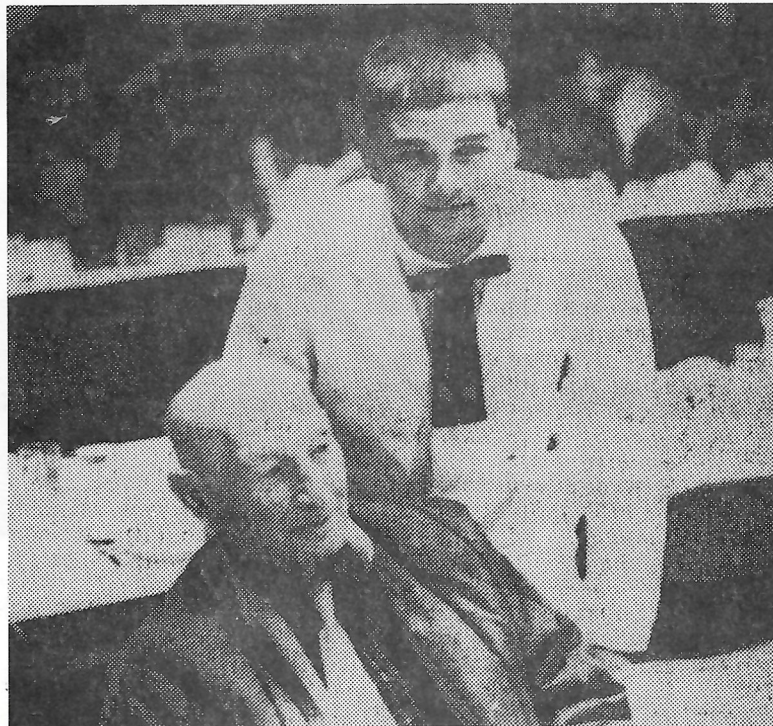


Dean Bell and Wade Richter (l to r) dish up barbecue rice.



Congressman Bill Alexander (back to camera) and Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton visit as Gov. Clinton made his way to his place at the head table.

1992



Heath Long, (standing) the youngest member of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club in Gillett visits with John Nichols, the oldest member of the club. Mr. Nichols has a perfect attendance record for the club meetings.



Mr. Rowlett Wolfe played on Gillett's first football team in 1926 and has perfect attendance at the annual Coon Suppers. Seated with him is his wife, Mrs. Jessie Wolfe.



Brad Haynes received the Bob Cover Award at the Coon Supper. Pictured are coaches Jon Howell, Jay Coburn, and Jimmie Don Dupuy; and Brad with his parents, V.H. and Leota Haynes.



Mr. Gene Holloway holds a plaque that was presented to him during the Coon Supper for his past eleven years as Program Chairman of the event. He is pictured here visiting with Miss Arkansas Heather Hunnicutt.

1993



Sammy Hudson and Scott Griffie were the recipients of the Bob Cover Award at the annual Coon Supper. Pictured are (l to r) Coach Jon Howell, Sammy Hudson, Coach Brad Bailey, Scott Griffie, and Coach Jimmie Don Dupuy.



Shannon Boy, Miss Arkansas, entertained the crowd during the annual event.



Mr. Richard Gordon, President of the Farmers and Businessmen's Club gives his introductory speech.



