

George Tidwell, Lonoke



As a boy while growing up on a cotton, corn and peanut farm in north-central Florida, George Tidwell watched Air Force pilots from a nearby flight training school and dreamed of becoming a pilot.

That dream led him to an aviation career that ultimately brought him to Arkansas in 1960 to work in agricultural aviation. He started Tidwell Flying Services in 1964, which grew to become one of the country's most advanced and progressive ag aviation enterprises.

He served on the Arkansas State Plant Board as a member for almost 28 years, as chairman of the Pesticide Committee for 24 years and as chairman of the regulatory body for 15 years. His focus was on using sound science as the basis for regulatory decisions.

In addition to his flying service, Tidwell also managed and operated a successful hay and beef cattle operation, along with raising, selling and showing top-quality cutting horses.

An Air Force veteran, Tidwell worked for Boeing Aircraft, where he was introduced to someone in the agricultural aviation business, which would lead him to Arkansas and well over 50 years of service to the state's agricultural business sector. Pilot safety and training were hallmarks for Tidwell. He also was well known for the testing and protocol procedures for new weed control products

Tidwell has held all 4 offices of the Arkansas Agricultural Aviation Association and secretary of the National Agricultural Aviation Association (NAAA). He served 11 years on the Arkansas Aeronautics Board, serving as chairman twice.

Also, Tidwell has been involved in community service. He served on the Lonoke City Council and was President of the Lonoke County Jaycees.