

Quail Conservation Awards

Lifetime Achievement Award

article by Dr. Dale Rollins, Alan Heirman, and Fred Bryant

Editor's note: This month, as we close our series on the TWAF Quail Conservation Awards, we celebrate the lifetime achievements of two icons of quail conservation in the state. The contribution that these gentlemen have made is immeasurable, and we congratulate A. V. Jones Jr. of Albany and Joe Coleman of Houston for winning the Alfred C. Glassell Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award.

A.V. Jones Jr.

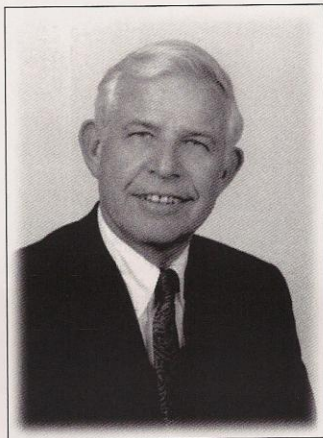
Submitted by Dr. Dale Rollins and Alan Heirman

A. V. Jones' affection for quail hunting in Shackelford County was inherited. His father, A.V. Jones Sr., was a geologist and traveled all across North Texas during the oil boom days of the 1920s. He settled in Albany, because that's where the best quail hunting was. And his son, A. V. Jones Jr., has since become the face of quail stewardship for that area.

A.V. was born in Wichita Falls, Texas, in June 1932. Shortly thereafter, he moved with his parents to Albany where his father had formed a partnership with Mr. H.R. Stasney. A.V. has lived in Albany since that time. A.V. is married to the former Pat Lidia of Albany and the couple has two children, Patti Holloway of Abilene, Texas and K.C. Jones of Albany, Texas.

In 1953, A.V. graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a Bachelor of Science degree in Petroleum Geology. After graduation, A.V. returned to Albany and with his brother, Jon Rex Jones, and his father, formed a partnership known as Jones Company, Ltd., of which he was the chairman. The partnership was active throughout the United States and Canada in oil and gas exploration. In addition to the oil business, A.V. is involved in ranching, banking and real estate.

A.V. has served as president of the Independent Petroleum Association of America, the National Stripper Well Association and West Central Texas Oil and Gas Association. He has been active on several committees of the Texas Independent Producers and Royalty Owners Association and a director of General Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association. In



A.V. Jones Jr.

addition to receiving numerous distinguished awards through his associations with the oil industry, he is also a Platinum Life Member of Quail Unlimited and serves on the Board of Directors for the Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch.

I [Dale Rollins] first met A. V. at the Quail Unlimited convention in 1989 in Houston where we struck a friendship that has since spanned 20 years. I affectionately refer to A. V. as the dean of quail hunters in North Texas. He once told me, "while South Texas may produce more quail year in and year out, there's no better place to hunt bobwhite quail than the Rolling Plains of Texas." For those of us who share roots in the Rolling Plains, we couldn't agree more.

As a landowner, A.V. is general partner and/or an owner of Jones family ranches, which includes Pecan Grove (4,960 acres), Lake DeLafosse (4,584 acres), and Newell Ranch (20,039 acres), all in Shackelford County. Historically, bobwhite populations have been very good in Shackelford County, but over the last three years, quail numbers in the county have been at all-time lows without huntable populations. However, properties managed by A.V. have maintained adequate numbers of bobwhites to provide days of hunting pleasure.

Conservation work on these ranches has required the removal of woody cover (primarily mesquite) to promote and

stimulate the reproduction of native forbs that provide food and cover for bobwhites. Lotebush, bumelia, elbowbush, skunkbush sumac, littleleaf sumac, plum, and other low woody cover were left.

Each pasture on each ranch has been prescribed burned at least once to promote forb development and to provide brooding areas for bobwhites. Prescribed burning is used to top-kill mesquite and suppress prickly pear. All pastures are properly grazed and provide an abundance (over 350 per acre) of basketball size clumps of bunch grasses that provide ideal nesting sites.

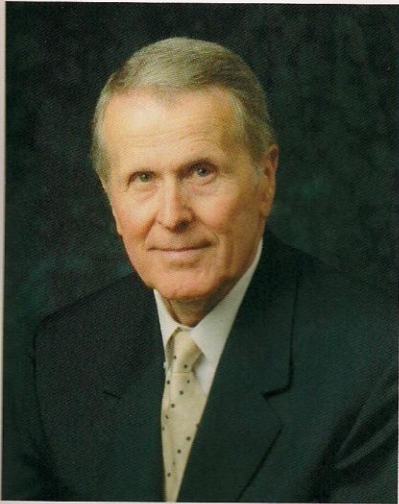
Hunts on these properties are guided by Jones and are by invitation only. Each hunter is limited to only two shots per covey rise. Singles are seldom hunted. Quail numbers are determined by late afternoon drives through the ranches. A.V. continually supports programs that benefit bobwhite quail. He is a long-time supporter of the Big Country Celebrity Quail Hunt that benefits Disability Resources, Inc., and has been active in the Bobwhite Brigade since its inception in 1993.

His influence extends far beyond the boundaries of Shackelford County, and he is very worthy of this award.

Joe Coleman

Submitted by Dr. Fred Bryant

Joe Coleman was born and raised in Freestone County on a farm and ranch north of Fairfield. As a youngster, he started out hunting rabbits and squirrels, but graduated to quail when he was about 10 years old. He killed his first quail then and has been hooked ever since. His uncle had setters and they would hunt quail on all the kinfolk's land, with Joe riding behind on horseback. After attending college at Baylor University, including Law School, he wound up in Houston. He was employed at a law firm that represented J. S. Abercrombie, an avid quail hunter. Mr. Abercrombie leased the Mills Bennett Ranch and owned Cameron Iron Works that had Hollywood Camp on the land west of Falfurrias now owned by Berdon Lawrence. He recalls hunting quail in the late 1950s and 1960s on Abercrombie's property west of Houston



Joe Coleman

and in South Texas. He hunted from Pearsall, to Cuero, to San Diego, to Falfurrias to Hebronville.

One of his most interesting experiences was in Duval County in the early 1960s.

It seems that George Parr had closed the quail season in Duval County because he didn't like what people were paying to lease for hunting (10 to 15 cents per acre). Cameron Iron Works' lease on the Miller Ranch had about 4,000 acres in Duval County, and it could not be hunted for quail for five years. Some privileged people were still allowed to hunt in Duval County even though the season was closed. This closed season rule, and all the flack the governor took, was one of the reasons county control of setting hunting seasons was ended and given to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Joe bought the La India Ranch in Duval County in 1968 and began his quail management practices in earnest. He kept the La India for 30 years. During the fall of 1987, in one, 3 1/2-hour hunt, he and Butch Gerke put up 55 coveys. This interest in quail conservation led Joe to write and speak on the subject in a number of different venues.

Joe developed a passion for bird dogs, particularly setters, which led to competing in field trials. Joe won the National Amateur Shooting Dog Championship in 1984, with the first setter to win the prestigious award in 30 years. Joe has since judged field trials all over the United States and Mexico, including the National Amateur Quail Championship run on King Ranch.

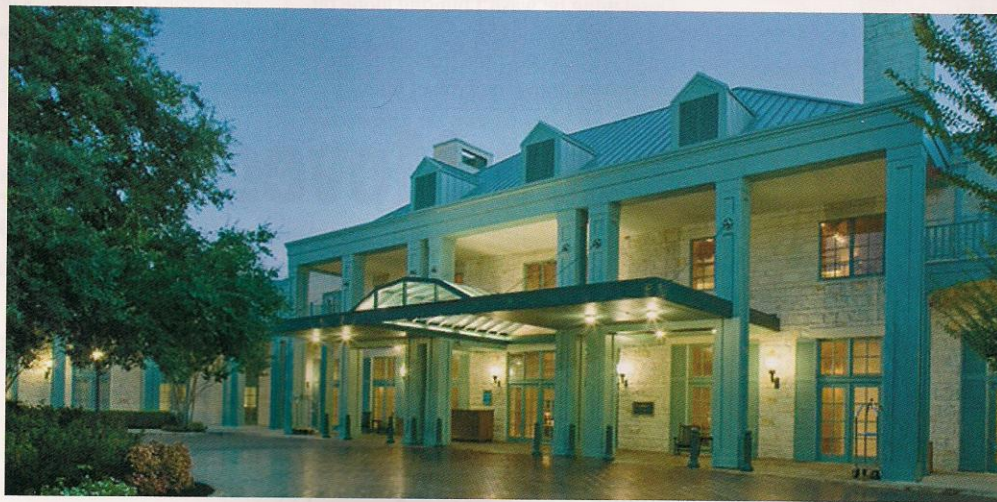
Joe has had a remarkable run at quail hunting, field trials, and being a great attorney. He was honored in November of 2008 as "Lawyer of the Year" by the Baylor School of Law. To put this award in perspective, other honorees include Special Watergate Prosecutor, Leon Jaworski, F.B.I. Director William Sessions, Gov. Price Daniel Sr. and Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock.

If he had any silver bullet for quail managers in South Texas, Joe maintains that quail habitat is "badly undergrazed." He fervently believes that cattle impact can be one of the best tools to manage quail. 🐾



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