

## Obituaries



**James A. Deer**  
1916–1985

James A. "Jimmy" Deer, Extension Entomologist—retired, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, died on 21 February 1985, in Marble Falls, Tex. Born in Lott, Tex., he grew up in Beeville, Tex., and was educated there, finishing high school in 1934.

Jimmy attended Texas A&I College, majoring in Agriculture, from 1938 until enlisting in the army in November 1940 when he entered service with Beeville's 327th Field Artillery Company. Commissioned in November 1942, he was honorably discharged a first lieutenant in December 1945. Jimmy earned the bachelor's and master's degrees in Agriculture and Entomology from Texas A&M College (now University) in 1948 and 1949.

Jimmy worked for Goodland Farms in the Brazos River Bottom in 1947 as an insect scout; from February–June 1948, he was a graduate research assistant as he worked on his master's degree with the Department of Entomology at Texas A&M.

Later that year, he worked for USDA/BEPQ on ear tick research at the Beeville Station until September. Returning to the Department of Entomology in September 1948 as a graduate research assistant, he received his master's degree in February 1949.

Jimmy began his long and productive career with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service as Assistant Entomologist on 1 February 1949. He was located on the Texas A&M College campus and worked statewide on crop and livestock pests with Texas producers and county agents. At that time, he joined an extension entomology staff of one, Allen C. Gunter.

Working as an extension entomologist until December 1951, he accepted a position as sales manager with the Texas Division of Tobacco Bi-Products Company. He was located in Waco, Tex. In 1953, he moved to Wharton, Tex., and established an insecticide formulating and sales business and operated the business until 1955. In June 1955, Jimmy sold the insecticide business, accepting a position with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service as Associate County Agent—Entomology in Weslaco (serving the Rio Grande Valley and South Texas). Jimmy replaced Andy White (June 1950–January 1953) and Dick Griffith (February 1953–March 1955) who preceded him in the position.

Although Jimmy's title changed over the years, he served as the Extension Entomologist for the Rio Grande Valley and South Texas for the next 21 years, retiring in March 1976 when he moved to the lake to catch up on some fishing. He was an inveterate outdoorsman—hunting and fishing were part of his persona.

Jimmy set a standard for an extension entomology program that stands today and serves as a model for the present extension entomologists in Texas. His pioneering work in the most difficult, demanding, and trying entomological area of Texas and his ability to delineate the true nature and scope of an insect problem earned him a reputation that is as apparent today as it was when he was the entomology reference in the valley—for producers, consultants, industry, or peers.

Jimmy's most significant contributions

to the Rio Grande Valley and South Texas counties were a result of his developing effective management strategies for dealing with the Gulf Coast tick and the persistent complex of cotton pests such as the boll weevil, bollworm, and tobacco budworm. Without a research base, Jimmy developed control strategies and treatment techniques that effectively protected cattle against the blood-sucking species, and on his own, these gained widespread rancher adoption. Recognizing the role of the Gulf Coast ear tick in creating sites for screwworm invasion in cattle (before the successful eradication of the screwworm in the United States), Jimmy was able to entice and console a larger uninterested and reluctant chemical industry into becoming involved in tick control, especially when he mentioned the 6 million head of cattle in the 87 counties of South Texas. These figures and the accompanying economic figures enticed the chemical giants and convinced ranchers of the importance of controlling ticks.

Jimmy's knowledge of pest biology, potential damage, pest/predator and parasite relationships, conventional production practices, and producer economics allowed him to redesign pest control in Rio Grande Valley and Coastal Bend Cotton production. Initiating field scouting of insects affecting valley cotton in the mid-1950's, he trained farmers and scouts in the procedures required to monitor fields for injurious infestations. He stressed the importance of using insecticide only where indicated by an infestation level. These early pest control strategies and philosophy were the forerunners of today's Integrated Pest Management Program.

Jimmy is survived by his high school sweetheart and wife of 43 years, Lorene; two daughters, Pamela Marks and Beverly Neal, both of North Carolina; and two brothers, Joe of Guadalajara, Mexico, and Keith of San Antonio.

**John G. Thomas**  
**J. Knox Walker**  
**Horace R. Burke**  
**Manning A. Price**  
College Station, Tex.

Bulletin of the Entomological  
Society of America  
Fall 1986, Vol. 32, No. 3