ADVANCE–MONTICELLONIAN

The Lindsey Family

2022 Drew County Farm Family of the Year

Drew County names Farm Family of the Year

By: Ashley Hogg
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Ashley Hogg/Advance Monticellonian

For the past 41 years, Drew County has honored one family annually as Farm Family of the Year. The Rocky Lindsey family with Peyton Place Farms has been awarded the title for 2022.

In the 1950's, J.S. Gibson bought the original 100 acres of Peyton Place Farms with money he saved from serving in World War II. As the story goes, told from his daughter Alice, who still lives and works on the farm, Gibson sent his Army money home to his mother for safe keeping. When he returned home from the military, he made his dream come true and purchased the farm.

Gibson raised timber and cattle in the beginning and had some row crops. When Alice and her husband, the late Michael Joe Lindsey took over, chicken houses were introduced to Peyton Place.

At the time, the Lindsey family moved from Cleveland County to Drew County while Rocky and his sister were in high school, to better manage the chicken houses. The cattle and timber farms remained in operation as well.

After the sudden and untimely passing of Michael Lindsey, Rocky became quickly acquainted with the day to day operations of the farm.

"My dad had gotten older and there were some aspects of the farm that were in disarray," Lindsey said. "We spent a lot of time in the beginning repairing fences. Most of the work was done by myself and my sons."

Over the past few years, herds of small ruminant animals have been added to the farm.

Located in Wilmar, Peyton Place reportedly gets its name from the Peyton family that operated a Bed and Breakfast of sorts in the 1800's.

"During that time, you couldn't make it from Pine Bluff to Monticello in one day on horseback," Alice said. "I have been told that there was a family that lived on this property, with the last name of Peyton. It was a mother, father and eight children that lived in a two bedroom house. As travelers would pass through, the Peyton family would rent out one of the bedrooms and the ten of them, would stay in the other room. It became known as "The Peyton Place."

Today, the chicken houses have been dismantled but the 160 acre farm is still home to various types of timber, cattle, small ruminants and the Lindsey family.

What is a small ruminant?

BY: ASHLEY HOGG
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Farming and agriculture are a huge part of life in Southeast Arkansas. Natives are accustomed to seeing fertile fields along major highways during many months of the year and local farmers grow cattle, pigs and chickens in every county.

Something that is not seen a lot in our region are small ruminant animals such as those raised on the Lindsey farm. At this time, approximately 60 mature sheep and 12 mature Kiko goats call Peyton Place Farms home.

Ruminants are defined as even-toed mammals that chew cud that has been regurgitated from its first stomach. Cows, giraffes, sheep, goats and deer also fall into this family of mammals.

"I am a veterinarian and had little knowledge of small ruminant medicine," Rocky stated. "One reason for raising sheep and goats was to learn more about them so that I could educate other producers on how to effectively manage their herds."

The small ruminant herd is primarily managed by Alicia Lindsey, Rocky's wife. For the daily operations and care of the ruminants, Alicia feeds the sheep and goats and checks on their general well being.

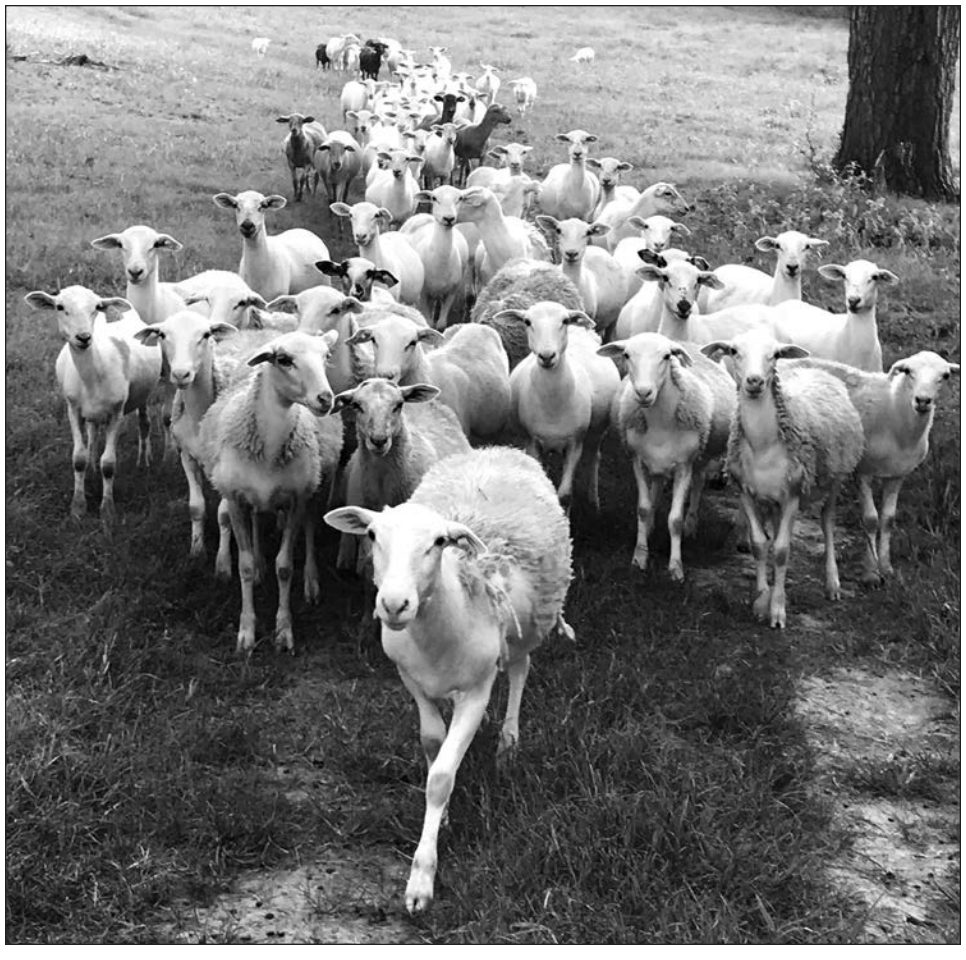
"They eat a lot of the landscape but we feed them and supplement their diet so we can put eyes on them and make sure they are staying healthy," Alicia noted. "The pregnant mothers will go off into the woods to have their babies. They hide them well to avoid predators. Some times we can find them and other times, they grow a little and come out with the herd for feeding time."

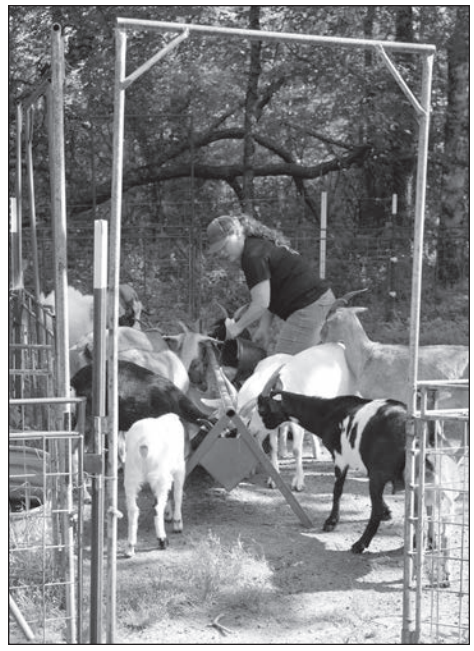
"We decided to raise sheep and goats on our operation in addition to the cattle that had been a part of our farm for decades," Rocky added.

"One motivation had nothing to do with the farm itself, but my education as a veterinarian. Not only as a veterinarian, but as a vet that goes on mission trips often where these small ruminants are common. The sheep and goat population in our region is also increasing. Veterinarians in our region, however, have little training and experience with sheep and goats. The main reason for this is that these livestock animals don't have a lot of monetary value. If one of these animals gets sick or injured, it is usually not cost effective to pay for veterinary services. For these reasons, in order to know how to care for the animals better and be better versed in disease treatment and prevention of small ruminants, I decided to raise some on our farm.

Photos by Ashley Hogg/Advance Monticellonian

The Kiko goats were chosen for the breed's parasite resistance and twinning reputation. They are being kept in a forested area of mature pines. These pines will be harvested within the next few years, with plans for that area to then raise additional livestock. Alicia and I made the decision a few years ago that we could immediately fence the area and place goats in there until the trees were harvested. Goats are browsers, preferring leaves





as their diet. Our pines had a lot of underbrush, so we fenced in approximately 35 acres of the mature pines in order to gain some income potential from the area prior to the tree harvest. Having the goats in the pines, allows the underbrush to be consumed, helping prevent the need for chemicals to be used to poison the underbrush. Within the next couple of years we will begin clearing lanes in the trees employing a silvopasture technique which incorporates pasture with trees. The goats will still be around as our "maintenance crew" keeping the underbrush at bay.

Katahdin sheep are hair sheep, so they naturally shed their winter coat each spring. This prevents the need for shearing. They are also known to have high parasite resistance and to raise twins easily. We added Katahdin sheep to our operation to allow them to eat the plants that the cattle didn't prefer. Sheep are grazers preferring what most livestock producers would call a "weed". They like forbs, which cattle do not prefer to eat. Having the sheep on our pasture actually produces a high quality hay for cattle. When we bale the hay where the sheep have been, it is essentially weed-free. This increases the quality of the hay for cattle to consume. The sheep also decrease the need for herbicides which are normally applied to hay farms to kill forbs. We have other farmers that specifically seek out this hay to feed to their all-natural or organic livestock.

In the future, we have the option to start a rotational grazing program in which we will rotate cattle and sheep on different areas of the pasture. This will require more fencing and water placement before it can be employed. This technique is called multi-species grazing or symbiotic grazing. The cattle ear grass, and the sheep eat the forbs. So they both have food they prefer over the other, which increases the total carrying capacity of our farm. Each species also consumes the other specie's parasite while grazing. Simply stated, sheep worms don't grow well in cattle, and cattle worms don't grow well in sheep. So they decrease the parasite loads of the other species of livestock, decreasing the need to use dewormers on our animals."

A heart for animals, and people

BY: ASHLEY HOGG
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With a full time farm and a class load at UAM, one would think Dr. Rocky Lindsey would have a full plate. Somehow, he and his family have figured out a way to fulfill a higher calling.

For many years, Lindsey was a practicing veterinarian in Arkansas. While working at a clinic in Central Arkansas, he met his wife, Alicia. Together, they took the opportunity to purchase a veterinary practice in Warren.

The couple ran the animal clinic in Warren for several years before they decided it was time to sell.

"When we sold our veterinary clinics, we considered becoming foreign missionaries," Lindsey said. "So I began going on several mission trips and realized that small ruminants were very common in the countries I was working in. That's because refrigeration is often not available, so large cattle couldn't be used because their meat would go bad after processing. I had very little experience in a small ruminants so I decided to start growing them on my farm."

The rest, as they say, is history. The small ruminant project became a full time business at Peyton Place Farms and the family still uses these animals for educational opportunities and for undergrowth management on the farm.

Over the years, Dr. Lindsey has traveled to many foreign countries to help educate the local people about caring for small ruminants. Through this venture, he is also able to share the word of Christ. According to their website, Christian Veterinary Mission, believes animals are a bridge to relationships.

"Whether at a clinic in urban America, a veterinary school in Bolivia, the countryside of Mongolia or serving the Cherokee Nation, relationships are formed over the care of an animal," Dr. Leroy Dormin, founder of CVM said. "Trust is built, hearts are shared, and a seed is planted for the Kingdom of Christ."

"Our mission trips are focused on helping the local farmer better sustain and improve his livelihood by helping his animals produce more," Lindsey added. "Most of the trips I take are focused in Central America and the Caribbean. The organization I serve with is called Christian Veterinary Mission. I became a regional representative for them last year and now go to the regional Veterinary schools and veterinary conferences to promote the missions and encourage those students and professionals to go on missions."

Photos courtesy of Alicia Lindsey

In 2017, Lindsey added the title of professor to his resume.

"I started teaching Animal Science a UAM a few years ago," Lindsey noted. "I teach all aspects of animal science from reproduction, to genetics, to nutrition, to animal health. We cover poultry, cattle, sheep and goats, horses, swan, and companion animals. I had not planned on being an education, but when the job opened became available it was very clear that I had a calling to go there. I enjoy educating the students and impacting their lives outside of the classroom. I enjoy watching the transition from freshman to senior in their growth and maturity as people. I love watching them succeed once they graduate."

Four generations; a long standing family legacy

Photos courtesy of Alice Lindsey

DAYS GONE BY J.S. Gibson (left) proudly stands in a field on Peyton Place farms in the early 1960's. Alice Lindsey (right) has fond childhood memories of playing on the land she now owns and is passing down to her children.

Timber and hay serve many purposes on the farm

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360 acres of timber are harvested approximately every 15 years at Peyton Place Farms. The forest provides shade for livestock, hunting areas, and lumber for profit.

The timber aspect is just another cog in the wheel of Peyton Place Farms and their efforts to be environmentally friendly.

The goats that call Peyton Place home, take care of the underbrush and allow the trees to flourish.

When goats were first introduced to the farm, they quickly irradiated foliage on the forest floor. Now, Dr. Lindsey keeps what he calls a "maintenance crew" of fewer goats to help keep the under growth under control.

Along with the timber harvest, approximately 1000 round bales of hay are cut every year from 100 acres of Peyton Place Farms.

"The hay is sold locally as high quality hay for cattle, after it is analyzed," Alice Lindsey said.

The sheep on the farm play a huge role with the hay operations. Sheep prefer to eat the weeds in the hay field so there is little need for herbicide use. This allows the hay to be offered at a premium to organic farm producers since no chemicals are used on it.

Ashley Hogg/Advance Monticellonian

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In the photo above, Alice Lindsey stands in front of one of the trees original to the property when it was purchased by J.S. Gibson.

Extension's fecal egg count service saves Arkansas producers money, animals

By Tracy Courage
U of A System Division of Agriculture

Controlling parasites in sheep and goats is crucial to herd health but chemical-resistant parasites pose challenges.

Without a management plan, a producer can waste money on ineffective, expensive dewormers — and possibly lose animals. The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture offers a free fecal egg count sampling, which is part of a sound management plan. The service, available through the division's Parasitology Lab in Fayetteville, provides valuable information about an animal's health.

Worms eggs are passed out of the animals in their manure. The eggs in the fecal material can be detected with a microscope and provide valuable information about the type and level of parasites present; the magnitude of the parasite burden, or how susceptible the animal is to infection; and dewormer effectiveness.

"Many times, we are unaware of how productivity and overall animal wellbeing are negatively impacted by parasite loads in our flocks," Michael Looper, professor and head of animal sciences for the Division, said.

"This no-cost service of fecal egg counts actually allows producers to know the worm load of individual animals. This informative tool will increase animal health and wellbeing, as well as increase profitability on the farm."

Arkansas ranks 18th for meat goats in the U.S., and the number of sheep within the state has increased every year over the past decade, Looper said.

Eva M. Wray, a livestock parasitologist with the Division's Animal Sciences department, provides producers with in-depth data on samples that are submitted and offers recommended treatment strategies and consultations.

"It really is an underutilized service that is somewhat unique to Arkansas producers, and I think more folks need to take advantage of it," Wray said.

Barber pole worms

"The biggest problem in small ruminants is the barber pole worm and the resistance it displays to all dewormer classes," Wray said. "This worm is a blood-eating nematode and can wreak havoc on operations."

Sheep, goat and other small ruminants infected with the barber pole worm are susceptible to low reproduction rates, low weaning weights, low sale weights, and heavy lamb/adult death rates.

"Cattle do not have the worm problem that sheep and goats face, but producers are likely losing money due to the failure of dewormers they are using," Wray said. "For cattlemen, it is typically more about saving money by implementing targeted, selective treatments, and eliminating unnecessary, ineffective treatments."

There are many types of parasites that can affect animal health, and most parasitisms are subclinical in nature, meaning the producer cannot visually see the extent of the damage done to the animal.

"If a producer is not routinely surveilling the parasite burdens, they have no idea of the money being lost," she said.

Small ruminant workshops

In addition to the fecal egg counting service, Wray and agricultural agents with the Cooperative Extension Service conduct small ruminant workshops around the state to teach Arkansas producers how to detect and control livestock parasites.

The next workshop will be June 4 in Marianna at the Lon Mann Cotton Research Center, starting at 9:30 a.m. and will include Lee, St. Francis, Cross, Crittenden, Monroe, Phillips and Prairie Counties. Anyone interested in attending can RSVP by contacting Eva Wray or their county agent.

How to use the fecal egg counting service

Anyone interested in using the fecal egg count service can contact Wray, (479) 575-4855 or emcclint@uark.edu, or your county agent. They can provide detailed instructions for collecting, storing, and shipping samples to the University of Arkansas Parasitology Lab in Fayetteville.

"The main issue with sending samples is that the producer must send the samples via overnight UPS or FedEx, so shipping can get costly, "she said, "but my opinion, the information that they gain far outweighs the shipping cost."

The service is provided at no charge to Arkansas residents as part of the Division's mission to strengthen agriculture, communities, and families by connecting trusted research to the adoption of best practices.

Past Drew County Farm Family Award winners

YEAR	PRODUCER	TYPE OF FARM
2021	Jeff and Christine Felts	cropland
2020	Edward and Angela Schenk	cropland
2019	Eddie Eubanks family	produce, hay/cattle
2018	Tony Adams family	cropland
2017	Mike McGregor family	hay/cattle
2016	Rusty and Karla Mitchell	chickens
2015	Frank and Jacob Appleberry family	cropland
2014	Rob Jones III	timber
2013	Jason and Sara Cater family	chickens/cattle
2012	Thad Mitchell family	chickens/hay
2011	No selection	
2010	James and Rene Knowles	cattle/logging
2009	Eric, Joel and Norris Stephens	cropland
2008	Michael and Jeremy Oltmann	cropland
2007	Glynn and Bryan Gibson	cattle
2006	No selection	
2005	Eddie Barnes	tomatoes
2004	Larry Miles family	cropland
2003	Joe Hayden	cattle
2002	James Shepherd	poultry
2001	Billy Miller	cropland
2000	C.H. Stafford	cattle
1999	Phillip Morris	cropland
1998	Charlotte, Von and David Eubanks	tomatoes
1997	Mar Miles and Jeff Felts	cropland
1996	John Sims	cropland
1995	Shannon Pace	tomatoes
1994	Dwight Witcher	cattle
1993	Paul Peacock Jr.	cropland
1992	Thad Freeland	cropland
1991	David Oltmann	cropland
1990	Frank Appleberry	cropland
1989	Eddie Eubanks	tomatoes
1988	John Staudinger	cropland
1987	Jerry Pamplin	cropland
1986	James Schenk	cropland
1985	Glen Crow family	cropland
1984	Richie Hopper	cropland/cattle
1983	Doy Ogles	cropland
1982	T.K. Woods	cropland