Montana Wool Grower
Official Publication, Montana Wool Growers Association

Winter/Spring 2017
MWGA Dues

Dues to the Montana Wool Growers Association are $20 per membership plus $.06 per pound of wool (or $.60 per sheep). The $20 covers the cost of the Montana Wool Grower Magazine, membership in the American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) and the ASI Newsletter that each member receives. The additional six cents per pound is what the Association operates on as it works to improve the opportunities for raising sheep and wool in Montana.

About the Cover:

From Left to Right: John Baucus, Dr. Whit Stewart, Greg Wichman, and Jim Foran discuss mouth-ing and bagging during the MSU Hands-On Presentation at the 133rd Annual MWGA Convention.

Deadline for the Summer Issue will be April 29th, 2017
Wool Pools and Buyers Operating In Montana

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(406) 765-3406

McConee Pool
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(406) 485-2605

MonDak Pool
Wibaux
Danielle Harper
(406) 796-2486
Bruce Smith
(406) 377-4277

Lower Yellowstone Pool
Sidney
Tim Fine
(406) 433-1206

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Malta
Marko Manoukian
(406) 684-2543

Front Range Pool
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Luanne Wallwein
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Big Timber
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Harlowton
Stacey Grove
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Beaverhead/Madison/
Jefferson
Dillon
J P Tanner
(406) 683-3785

Western Pool
Polson
Jan Tusick
(406) 883-4093

Snowy Mountain Pool
Lewistown
Bertie Brown
(406) 535-3919

Granite/Powell Pool
Drummond
Barbara Weaver
(406) 288-3282

Garfield County Pool
Jordan
Jerry Hensleigh
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Wool Buyers
High Plains Wool
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The MWGA newsletter is printed quarterly with additional issues published as needed. Special rates available

Save the Date
February 6th, 2017
Big Timber Sheep Seminar, 6-8pm
Big Timber, MT

February 8th, 2017
Wool Grower Luncheon
@ the Capital Rotunda 11:30-1pm
Helena, MT

February 8th, 2017
Board Meeting, JB Law Office
1pm-6pm
Helena, MT

February 9th, 2017
Domestic & Wild Sheep Management and Disease Symposium
1-5pm, Raddison Hotel
Helena, MT

February 10th, 2017
Domestic & Wild Sheep Management and Disease Symposium
8am-12pm, Raddison Hotel
Helena, MT

February 11th, 2017
Ram Test Field Day, MSU
Bozeman, MT

February 13th, 2017
Sidney Sheep Symposium, 10am-3pm
Richland County Extension Office

March 27-29th, 2017
ASI Legislative Trip
Washington, D.C.

June 16-18th, 2017
Wool Grower Summer Campout
Whitlash, MT

September 13th, 2017
4th Annual Montana Ewe Sale
Miles City, MT

September 14th, 2017
92nd Annual Montana Ram Sale
Miles City, MT

November 30th-December 2nd, 2017
134th Annual MWGA Convention
Billings, MT

Please Submit Calendar Items to mtwga@outlook.com

Auction Markets

Glasgow Stockyards, Inc.
Glasgow, MT
(406) 228-9306
www.glasgowstockyards.com

Headwaters Livestock Auction
Three Forks, MT
(406) 285-0502
www.headwaterslivestock.com

Lewistown Livestock Auction
Lewistown, MT
(406) 538-3471
www.lewistownlivestock.com

Public Auction Yards
Billings, MT
www.publicauctionyards.com
(406) 245-6447

Western Livestock Auction
Great Falls, MT
(406) 727-5400
www.westernlivestockmontana.com

Sidney Livestock Market Center
Sidney, MT
(406) 482-3513
www.sidneylivestock.com

Bowman Auction Market
Bowman, ND
(701) 523-5922
www.bowmanauctionmarket.com

St. Onge Livestock
Newell, SD
(605) 642-2200
www.stongelivestock.com

The MWGA newsletter is printed quarterly with additional issues published as needed. Special rates available.
Hello,

We were fortunate enough to have beautiful weather for convention but since then, Mother Nature has once again reminded us what winter is all about in Montana. Don’t forget to check your body condition scores so you don’t pay at lambing. I’ve also learned that Montana produces the best wool in the USA and you can all take the credit for that. Let’s not let them down this year! As you’ll notice on our Facebook page and in the magazine, we’ve partnered with the Montana Ag Safety folks to bring you a series of safety articles that are relevant and a good reminder to always be safe— it’s a jungle out there.

Montana had a very good representation at the recent ASI Convention in Denver. Even though it was warmer at home, it was well worth the trip. Start saving for next year’s ASI convention trip that will be held in San Antonio, Texas.

It is gratifying to be able to say that the new Secretary of Interior is a fine, well-grounded, US Navy Seal from Montana. We are look for a great deal of change within the Department and you can be assured that MWGA will be continuing our working relationship with Secretary Zinke’s office to the benefit of our members.

The Board will meet in Helena on the 8\textsuperscript{th}, starting with a lunch for the legislators at the capital sponsored by MWGA. That being said, the membership should stay in touch about any legislative concerns.

On February 9\textsuperscript{th} and 10\textsuperscript{th} MWGA will co-sponsor the first Domestic Sheep/Bighorn Sheep Symposium. Many scientific minds from both sides of the fence will be bringing knowledge on the table. The end goal is to hopefully find some cooperation between wildlife and private property owners.

I wish you the best of luck this spring with lambing, shearing, and calving. Range Days is in Red Lodge this June. Plan on dropping in!

Be safe,

Dave McEwen
MWGA President

"Raising Sheep in Eastern Montana for Over 100 Years"

McRae Brothers Targhees
Jack & Kathryn McRae
(406) 557-6266
MWGA continues to strengthen the relationship between MSU President Waded Cruzado in efforts to building a new MSU Wool Lab in the future.

MWGA and the Industry Outlet Store promoted the association and lamb and wool products at the Next Generation Conference in Shelby on January 27th.

MWGA Public Affairs Director Jim Brown provided testimony on multiple bills and supplies MWGA with a Legislative Update every week. These can be found online at: www.mtsheep.org/public-affairs/

MWGA is a member of the Montana Ag Coalition which is a collaborative group comprised of many agricultural organizations in Montana. The Coalition realizes the importance of a strong voice for agriculture in Montana’s Legislature and the group often collaborates on issues. We work hard to promote effective and beneficial policy for Montana farmers and ranchers. The Coalition meets weekly during the legislative session. On January 16th, MWGA helped host a Welcome Reception to introduce the members of the Ag Coalition to the Legislators and to talk to them about key issues affecting our membership. There was also an information session held for the legislators concerning water rights on January 23rd.

MWGA Board Members have been representing the organization at area wool pool banquets and meetings around the state.

MWGA commented on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement reviewing the potential environmental consequences from the 2002 and 2008 MOUs in the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest.

MWGA sent a letter to Senator Steve Daines congratulating him on his recent appointment to the US Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

MWGA sent a letter to Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke to congratulate him on his recent appointment to the President’s cabinet.

President Dave McEwen attended Senator Steve Daines’ 56 Country Tour in Chester and talked with him about issues the Wool Growers are dealing with.

Mike Schuldt announces the winners of the 2016 Certified Lamb Carcass and Ultrasound Contest during the Wool Grower Banquet at Convention
Operating a farm or ranch today is a challenge beyond anything that’s been done in agriculture in the past. It involves taking risks and operating in an environment that presents the opportunity for accidents and injuries and even fatalities. Liability for worker’s safety is the responsibility of the individual business and ignoring it could jeopardize their very existence. The Montana Ag Safety Program is a tool designed to help mitigate those incidents. It is offered in conjunction with the Montana State Fund Worker’s Compensation Insurance program. This program also offers a second refund on premiums paid in for qualified farms and ranches.

In 1993 the Montana state Legislature passed the Montana Safety Culture Act (MSCA). The intent of the MSCA is to create a culture of safety for workers and employers. Because of the high accident rate with agriculture and other industries in Montana, the lack of responsibilities for worker protection became foremost in the design of the act. The Montana Ag Safety Program will help design and implement a safety program for farms and ranches that comply with the state law and MSCA.

Any farm or ranch that hires employees, has volunteers help, or have farm or ranch functions that involve people other than yourself, is required to provide workers compensation insurance for those people either through Montana State Fund or a private insurance company. Then the farm or ranch is required to establish a safety program for the operations that occur on the farm or ranch. Even branding, moving cows, or just having someone help for the weekend requires that coverage.

The Montana Ag Safety program follows the guidelines laid out in the MSCA. The program sets up the six requirements as follows: 1. General safety orientation for new employees/volunteers; 2. Job/task specific training; 3. Continuing regular refresher training; 4. Safety awareness; 5. Periodic self-inspection for hazard assessment; and 6. Documentation. The purpose is to establish a culture of safety on the farm or ranch to reduce injuries, illness, and fatalities. Any businesses with five or more employees are required to have a safety committee that meets at least once a year.

Because there are so many agriculture related incidents and deaths in Montana, the insurance rates are higher than need be. The Montana Ag Safety program will work with individual farms or ranches to establish the safety program needed to comply with the state law, or provide workshops through one of the following agriculture organizations: MT Grain Growers Assoc., MT Farm Bureau Federation, Mt Farmers Union, MT Stock Growers Assoc., Mt Cattlemen’s Assoc., MT Wool Growers Assoc., MT Pork producers, and MT Organic Assoc. There are no costs associated with the workshops or visits and can be scheduled at any time during the year. Along with the safety program, the need for 4-wheeler safety, family safety intervention, and information on Livestock and machinery safety have been hot topics for discussion at MT Ag Safety meetings. If you would like more information about the MT Ag Safety Program or want to schedule a meeting or get enrolled in the program, please contact Jim Larson, MT Ag Safety Program at 406-860-6129.
Wishing you good luck for the 2017 shearing and lambing seasons!

Reliable Market Information - Two Full Service Warehouses - Year-Round Marketing Opportunities

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Billings, Montana
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Larry Prager
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Sheep producers from across Montana, as well as attendees from Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Idaho, had the opportunity to hear from some of the best speakers in the business on a wide variety of topics. The convention was very well attended and we were very fortunate to have nice traveling weather. The festivities started off Thursday with the Master Wool Grower Program for the Young Entrepreneurs group. This afternoon program was very well attended and was paid for in part by the Let’s Grow Grant that MSU and MWGA received. There will be more programs similar to this one in the coming months. The Thursday night Welcome Reception that was sponsored by Center of the Nation gave everyone a good chance to shoot the breeze and catch up with old friends.

Jon Arneson and Taylor Brown with the Voices of Montana kicked off the Friday morning session by interviewing President Dave McEwen, Public Affairs Director Jim Brown, MSU Sheep Extension Specialist Dr. Whit Stewart, and Angela sheep rancher Kacie Killen. Dave McEwen spoke on the state of the association and the challenges the sheep industry has been facing. Jim Brown spoke on the upcoming legislative session and the bills and policies that will affect MWGA. Dr. Whit Stewart spoke on the Next Generation Wool Grower Program and the events and activities that MSU Extension and MWGA have planned for the young sheep ranchers across the state. Kacie Killen, recipient of last year’s scholarship trip to the ASI convention spoke on her experiences with the Next Generation Wool Grower Program and how to get involved in the association’s activities. It is always a pleasure to have Voices of Montana kick off the convention.

Bridger Fuez, Livestock Marketing Specialist and Educator for the University of Wyoming Extension, provided the attendees with his insight on what the lamb market outlook looks like for the future. Rachel Endecott, MSU Beef Extension Specialist, explained the changes to the Veterinary Feed Directives and how that will affect sheep producers. It was great to have her on hand for producers to ask questions about the new rules.

US Senator Steve Daines attended the convention as the Friday lunch Keynote Speaker. He spoke about the surprising election results and the direction that he feels the country is headed in. He also reassured the Wool Growers that he has fought to keep the US Sheep Experiment Station open in Dubois, Idaho and he will continue to do so. We know that Senator Daines has a busy schedule so we were very happy that he fit us in and we look forward to meeting with him in March in Washington.

MSU Sheep Extension Specialist Dr. Whit Stewart, MSU Professor Dr. Tom Murphy, and MSU Extension agents Brent Roeder and Mike Schuldt provided a very interactive, hands-on workshop. Producers were able to get their hands on some ewes to adequately determine whether or not they should be culled based on reasons such as broken mouths or bad bags. Dave Scott with NCAT (National Center for Appropriate Technology) also taught the participants the “Cover, Push, Pull, Pop” procedure that is helpful in checking for parasite problems in their herd. General consensus from the participants what that it was “very informative” and that “they like the hands on workshops”.

Jim Larson and Les Graham with the Montana Ag Safety Program talked about rule changes that might affect MWGA members. John Steuber with Wildlife Services, George Edwards with MT Livestock Loss Board, and Mike Honeycutt with the Board of Livestock all gave industry updates. Larry Prager with Center of the Nation Wool also provided an update on the wool outlook and trends.

Friday night is always the biggest, most attended night of convention and for good reason. We changed things around a little this year with the hotel and they put us outside in a big tent. While many were skeptical, it turned out very well. We had much more room for the Speed Shear festivities and everyone had a great time. Please, if you visit Western Ranch in Billings, thank them for supporting MWGA and for continually sponsoring the “Western Ranch Watering Hole” for the speed shear event. Superior Farms out of Colorado provided lamb sliders for the crowd this year. Thanks guys! I am please to report that we raised $3,425 for the USA Shearing Team and everyone who attended can take credit for that. Thank you for all the bids,
participation, and donations that were made to the Live Auction and the Speed Shear Calcutta. We also need to thank Wade Kopren, Bronson Smith, Brent Roeder, and Mike and Cheryl Schuldt for helping put that event on. We are already discussing ways to make the event even better for next year!

The Saturday morning session started off with Dr. Laurie Gaugler, DVM from Judith Gap. Convention goers said that this was the most informative workshop and they really enjoyed her talk about sheep protocols and the changes to the veterinary feed directives. She also gave the producers a pop quiz which gave them the opportunity to get up and talk protocols with other producers.

Dr. Emily Almberg, Dr. Jennifer Ramsey, and John Vore, all of FWP, Dr. Maggie Highland with ARS, John Helle of Helle Livestock, and Brian Solan of the Montana Wild Sheep Foundation provided a panel type discussion on the Tendoy Mountain Big Horn Sheep depopulation. This conversation is just a small part of a bigger event that is being planned between FWP, MWGA, ASI, ARS, and the Montana Wild Sheep Foundation for February.

We had the pleasure of hearing from WAR editor Linda Grosskopf during the Saturday noon meal. Linda was definitely a crowd pleaser and had the whole room captivated by her wisdom and wit.

After lunch, Steve Vantassel, Montana Department of Agriculture, talked about M-44’s and the benefits of using them to protect your livestock from predators. He also addressed the safety concerns involved and was very informative on the procedures. Dr. Bret Taylor with the United States Sheep Experiment Station in Dubois Idaho gave a quick update to convention goers before the Annual Meeting.

The Annual Meeting was held and with that the re-election of its President and 3 directors. Dave McEwen was re-elected as President of the Association and will serve for 1 year. Kevin Halverson of Big Timber, Duane Talcott of Hammond, and Sam Ortmann of Wolf Point were also re-elected to serve 3 year terms on the MWGA Board of Directors. Resolutions were voted on and you can find the new resolutions on page 22-23. If you would like to see a full list of the MWGA Policy Resolutions, please visit our website at http://www.mtsheep.org/public-affairs/. Thank you for those attending the meeting and voting.

Just about everyone is partied out by Saturday night but that doesn’t stop us from having a good time at the Silent Auction, Wool Grower Banquet, MWWW Fashion Show, and NFR Calcutta and viewing. (We like to pack a lot of activities into one night!) The proceeds from the silent auction go directly to the MWGA Legislative Fund so that we can continue to provide a voice for you in Helena and Washington, D.C. Thank you to all who donated, we couldn’t have put on that fundraiser without you. Also, thank you to Wendy Smith for helping the busy, busy Executive Secretary set that up. :) Banquet attendees enjoyed delicious leg of lamb while Mike Schuldt, Extension Agent for Custer County, recognized and awarded the 2015 and 2016 Certified Lamb Carcass and Ultrasound Winners. The 2016 winners are listed on pg. 33. It was great have some of the award winners attend the banquet. Lets give a big thanks to Mike Hollenbeck and Bronson Smith for running the NFR Calcutta! The big winners of the night were the team of Larry Pilster and Ken Wixom. Ken is our the Regional Caucus Leader for Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming on the ASI Executive Board. Ken and his wife ranch in Idaho and we appreciate the support that they give the Montana Wool Growers.

Convention 2015 was the start of my career with the Wool Grower Association and as I wrapped up Convention 2016, its become apparent to me that we are much more than an association, we are a family. The community of sheep producers in Montana have welcomed me with open arms and I love doing my job because of all of you. My job is to serve you, the lamb and wool producers of Montana. If there is something that I can do for you or if I can help in some way, please call. My phone line is always open. Thanks again for the friendship and for the great year...we’ll see you down the trail!
The Power of Social Media

By Jesse Thompson, MWGA Executive Secretary

If you follow the Montana Wool Growers Association on Facebook (and if you haven’t yet, you should), you might have noticed that over the past year we have become a bit more active than in the past. And while it has been time consuming to manage that page, here’s why we think it is important:

1. It increases Organizational Awareness

While the MWGA Facebook page might be small compared to others on Facebook, we have almost 2,700 people following our page and even more seeing our content at any given time. By engaging with these users and sharing relevant content, photos, events, industry advertisements, articles, and videos, we can reach a greater number of prospects and achieve increased awareness of the lamb and wool industry in Montana. Earlier this year, we had one Facebook post reach 134,000 people. Sometimes, the content that we post just takes off and spreads like wildfire! We’ve had several posts reach within 15,000-35,000 people. Generally, we average 1,200-1,500 people reached with a normal daily post.

2. It Builds Relationships with Members

In addition to attracting new members to the organization, interacting through social media helps to build relationships with our existing members and followers in similar industries. By answering questions, engaging in conversations, and sharing helpful and relevant content, this helps us build meaningful connections with you and strengthens those bonds to make the industry stronger as a whole.

3. We can Promote the Industry

Because raising sheep is most of the time a “photogenic” profession, it’s not hard to promote the lamb and wool industry on Facebook. Our followers, some of which probably don’t have sheep, love seeing the beautiful pictures and videos of lambing, shearing, herding, and grazing sheep from around the state. We also share lamb recipes, fun facts about wool, and educate the Facebook world the sustainability behind raising sheep. We are able to reach a greater number of people with our advertisements of our events, such as the Montana Ram and Ewe Sale, Convention, Sheep Seminars, Wool Pool pick-up dates, and any other industry related events that may come up.

4. It Provides Another Line of Communication

Social media is about the convergence of information and the convenience of communication. Although you can still reach us by phone, email, or snail mail, the presence of technology and social media are increasing daily and we want to keep our organization “up with the times.” Sometimes, it’s just easier for someone to hop onto Facebook and message the Wool Growers Association through our Facebook page. They might have my phone number right off hand or know what our email address is so this gives them another line of communication. Whether they have a question, comment, or general inquiry, we can easily get back to them. Providing one more line of communication helps us serve you better and it makes it easier for you to get in contact with us. We want you to know that you and your questions are important to us so when we get a message online, we do our best to answer in a timely manner.

While managing a consistent social media page can be overwhelming, we find that it is an important and relevant tool to better serve our association members. While not everyone is on social media, we feel that we can still reach a large audience without having to spend a bunch of money on promotion. Below is a list of the things we hope to achieve through our social media accounts.

Through the MWGA Facebook Page, we hope to:
1. Promote Montana lamb and wool products
2. Increase awareness of our Industry
3. Promote MWGA events and other industry related events
4. Create a growing community of people advocating for sheep
5. Share relevant news and keep people informed
6. Promote the industry through photos and videos
7. Become a trusted source of information concerning the industry
Stop By and Say Hi to MWGA at the MATE Show!

February 16, 17, 18
Thursday 10am-6pm
Friday 10am-6pm
Saturday 10am-5pm
Billings, MT

We’ll be promoting the lamb and wool industry as well as selling pelts, lotions, wool products, and MWGA Scholarship raffle tickets!
~Prairie Handspinners will Demo~ Montana Pavilion Booth 626

Males $350
Females $500

ABCA National Champion Bloodline

Health Guaranteed
Loyal, Smart, Herding in the hard drive. $100 will hold your pick. Come see at the ranch near Melstone or view online. Can deliver to Billings. Ready to go March 1st. Will have shots and be socialized.
Call (406) 358-2217 or billtd@hotmail.com
# MWGA ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Please support the Businesses Supporting Our Industry

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The Public Lands Council is awarding two Nick Theos scholarships of $250 (in addition to hotel and registration) to attend the annual Spring Legislative Conference in Washington, DC, March 27-30, 2017.

Nick Theos, a founding member of PLC and great supporter of the livestock industry, passed away on April 11th, 2013 at the age of 92. It is because of the Theos family and the Nick Theos PLC Scholarship Program that young people are able to attend our annual Legislative Conference in Washington, DC.

In an effort to get more college students involved with PLC issues and provide them with an unforgettable learning experience, we are offering this chance to meet members of Congress and their staff; attend meetings with agency officials; and hear from the leading experts and influencers in the industry. Scholars will be able to actively participate in our efforts to promote and support public lands grazing at our Nation’s Capital.

Applicants should have a demonstrated interest in public lands ranching. We ask that they complete the form below and include a letter of recommendation from a teacher or professor, FFA mentor, livestock association, or other leader that can attest to the professionalism and interest of the applicant. If selected, applicants should be prepared to give short remarks to meeting attendees during lunch on Tuesday, March 28th. PLC will provide hotel rooms and registration fees. Sponsorships to help cover travel costs are encouraged. Applications can be found at http://publiclandscouncil.org/about/careers-internships/nick-theos-plc-scholarship-program/

BLM and Forest Service Announce 2017 Grazing Fee

The Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service announced the federal grazing fee for 2017 will be $1.87 per animal unit month (AUM) for cattle. This is a 24 cent decrease from the 2016 fee, which was $2.11 per AUM. The 2017 grazing fee for sheep is $0.37 per AUM.

As many of you know, the federal grazing fee is determined by a formula that includes a base fee of $1.23 per AUM and fluctuates based on three factors: current private grazing land lease rates, beef cattle prices, and the cost of livestock production. This means that the grazing fee essentially increases and decreases based on market conditions. In addition, the fee cannot fall below $1.35 per AUM but can also not be raised (or lowered) by more than 25% of the previous years’ fee.

PLC and NCBA will continue to support the federal grazing fee, and will also continue to advocate for the positive role that public land ranchers play in the management of our federal lands. Without ranchers maintaining fence lines, improving water sources that benefit wildlife, and without the benefits that grazing provide including invasive species abatement and the reduction of fine fuels that ultimately curbs the severity and intensity of wildfires, our public lands would not be in the shape they are today.
Wool Wanderings with Lisa

By Lisa Surber, PhD, American Sheep Industry Raw Wool Services

Returning from Denver and the annual convention of the American Sheep Industry, I left with one word resonating in my mind... OPTIMISM. Attendees were united with a message of positivity, more so than any other year I have attended this convention. There were so many voices filled with optimism especially with regard to the wool industry.

**Wool...Branded for the Future – Industry unveils a new logo!**

As American consumers embrace the natural magic of homegrown wool, it was imperative for the American Wool Council to adopt a new look that brought the industry’s image up to par with the products being created every day with this innovative, sustainable fiber. The American Wool Council and ASI will soon launch a new website [americanwool.org](http://americanwool.org). This website and the materials within will highlight that American wool is vigorous enough to support the U.S. military on the frontlines of battle, yet elegant enough to grace red carpets and magazine covers. Additionally, it will bring heightened consumer recognition of and build loyalty to this new brand. ASI intends to build a greater dependence on American wool and a loyalty to the products created with Nature’s Magic, our beautiful, American Wool. After all, this is America, where innovation is celebrated, tradition is respected and high performance reigns. The message from convention was loud and clear... The resurgence of wool will continue into 2017.

**Embracing Animal Welfare** During convention it was also clear that ASI is taking a very proactive stance when it comes of animal welfare. Social responsibility was on the tips of attendees’ tongues and that theme was woven throughout the convention. The keynote speaker was Temple Grandin. As you may know, she is an industry expert in the science of animal behavior. Three messages came from her presentation: the animal welfare train is coming and we need to get on board; specific changes are in order; and don’t make changes too complicated or too many at once. During the American Wool Council forum and roundtable section, there was an active discussion on the approach ASI must take with regard to ensuring our customers and the textile brands that we are producing wool in the most ethical manner possible. We are losing our “right to farm” in the public’s eye and animal welfare programs that use third party verification systems add creditability to the production practices we know we are doing correctly and ethically. We, as an industry, have an opportunity to show the textile industry and consumers that we are doing things the right way. The American Sheep Industry has been and will continue to a leader in this area and will shape programs that document standards of responsible wool production.

**Wool Education Efforts.** As I travel throughout the US, there seems to a renewed interest and optimism in wool education programs particularly with growers. Part of my ASI responsibilities are teaching certified wool classing schools, wool handling schools and wool education days. The three day certified wool classing course covers: wool fiber growth, development and production; objective measurement of wool; genetic selection programs; responsible wool production practices; wool contamination and handling practices; hands-on wool grading; wool classing, packaging, labeling and marketing; and the test for Level 1 Certification. Wool handling schools and wool education days are shorter versions but as equally valuable to wool growers. Level 1 classes are certified to class their own clip of wool. Certified wool classing schools are designed to make available to US wool producers, trained wool classers who can assist in improving the overall quality of the US wool clip that helps with the efficient marketing of wool and can assist producers in realizing more economic value of their wool. One of the challenges our program faces is the advancement of classers from Level 1 to 2. There is a need for advanced wool classers in our region. ASI will be working on addressing this challenge in the coming year.

**Wool Market Update** Wool is a hot commodity at the recent Outdoor Retailer show. There is increased interest in wool shoes and socks, next to skin fabrics that are wool blends, with easy care. Easy care refers to the super-wash treatment of wool that makes it more user friendly. The position for wool is very promising particularly in the finer wools in light weight fabrics and next-to-skin products. The US wool clip is positioned well to meet some of this demand particularly in the 20-23 micron range.
The message from our overseas buyers like China is that there is enough coarser wools in storage, in fact, they have an overabundance. Finding treatments that make these wools perform like finer micron wools and ultimately uses for these coarser wools will be key for the coming year (i.e. shoes, batting for jackets).

**Spring Wool Outlook** The wool outlook is optimistic and prices look favorable for the spring shearing season! Wool is beginning to fly and shearing crews are firing up for the season. If you haven’t already done so, you should be communicating with your shearer or shearing contractor and your wool marketing agent. Growers should also tailor their production to meet the needs of their buyer or first stage processor, being cautious of value-determining factors such as vegetable matter limits and length and strength requirements. Make your wool preparation and marketing goals clear. It’s your wool clip… make the most of it! It’s never too early to arrange a shearing and delivery date. When preparing for shearing day, at a minimum, consider the following steps below to optimize effectiveness and financial return. We want to minimize wool contamination. Our buyers (domestic and overseas) don’t want contamination, especially poly, hair and manure. Make sure you sort sheep before shearing and package different these types of wool separately. Remove belly wool and tags during shearing and package separately. This procedure reduces potential for contaminants in fleece wool. Tags with heavy manure should be disposed of and do not belong in a wool bag. With a fine, white-face wool operation, two additional steps may be considered. In these wools, table skirt to remove inferior wool. Class wool in like groups for commercial marketing purposes. Taking these steps of wool preparations and precautions opens many marketing options for producers.

**Helpful reminder** Metal tags pose a danger to shearers in that many times they are difficult to see. If the shearing comb catches the hard-to-see tag, it can cause the shearing head to take a random and potentially dangerous bounce causing injury to the shearer or the sheep. In order to prevent injury, it has been recommended that producers insert plastic scrapie tags into their animals instead of the metal tags. Tag placement is also important. It has been recommended by the sheep industry that the scrapie ear tag be placed in the left ear when standing behind the animal. Ideal placement would have the tag inserted into the middle to the outside of the ear - not close to the head - where it is more visible, preventing the tag from being caught in the comb and locking up the cutter.

Best of luck for the upcoming shearing and lambing season! Please contact me with comments, questions, or concerns at lisa@sheepusa.org.
Participants of the Master Wool Grower Program that was held during convention learn about Niche Marketing.

Left to Right: Kacie Killen, Shirley Halverson, Amanda Tunby, Luanne Wallewein, Lenora McEwen, and Debbie Talcott enjoy their time catching up at the President's Welcome Reception.

Participants of Montana’s Make It With Wool State Competition
Left to Right: John Baucus, Marty Penrod, John Green, and Scott Lammers attend the President’s Welcome Reception

Linda Grosskopf, Western Ag Reporter Editor

Convention Attendees mouth and bag ewes during the MSU Hands On Workshop during Convention
Sheep Producers Captivated by Temple Grandin at Annual Convention

Press Release from the American Sheep Industry Association

Temple Grandin, Ph.D., Colorado State University, kicked off the festivities at one of the largest American Sheep Industry Association conventions in the last decade in her trademark way...by mesmerizing the audience with her concrete thinking.

It is impossible for anyone - students, educators, industry leaders or politicians - to understand agriculture and the way it operates without spending time in the field. Nebulous policies and vague guidelines won't work when you're standing in the pasture trying to understand the needs of your flock. And they certainly won't help sell your product to a suspicious consumer, Grandin shared.

"I found that with some things like sustainability, it's easier to define what it's not," Grandin said. "Would you take your sheep out and just strip a pasture? We wouldn't do that now, but I've seen it done. That's obviously not sustainable."

Throughout her presentation, Grandin stressed the need to deal in tangible terms and concepts. Just as she continually urged students to get out into the fields they choose to study, she stressed the importance of producers dealing with complicated topics in real-world scenarios.

"We have to remember that every phone is a TV station," continued Grandin. "Social media magnifies the voices of the far right and far left. The only way to counter such extremes is for those in the middle to make their voices heard. Social media can provide new avenues for building credibility with consumers."

The last time the American Sheep Industry Association held its annual meeting in Denver was in 2000. "If the turnout was any indication, membership was ready to return to the Rocky Mountains. Registration numbers once again topped those of all gatherings but one since the last Denver event," stated ASI Executive Director Peter Orwick.

As the industry celebrated the release of the newly created American Wool logo recognizing the versatility of American wool, textile-industry representatives also took center-stage to share their stories about programs supporting homegrown wool, innovative products and sustainability. The messages reinforced the concept that American wool is being used for the most comfortable socks imaginable, outdoor apparel capable of standing up to the toughest conditions and is an all-natural product that can be worn next to the skin.

According to Kelly Nester, Nester Hosiery, "100 percent American. Farm to Feet is committed to the single, simple goal of creating the world's best wool sock by exclusively using an all-American recipe: U.S. materials, U.S. manufacturing and U.S. workers."

Another textile representative, John Fernsell, Twizel Goods, stated, "Our mission is nothing short of changing the way clothes are made, from the fiber to your front door. Every Twizel item must forge a path to a better tomorrow starting with sustainable materials and the best intentions."

There are global concerns surrounding the development of resistance to antibiotics important in human medicine. Use of antibiotics in human and animal health are among the factors presumed to be contributing to resistance. The Food and Drug Administration wants to help prevent the development of resistance and maintain the effectiveness of these drugs for human and animal health.

Meg Oeller, DVM, Ph.D., Office of Minor Use and Minor Species Animal Drug Development, FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine, discussed two efforts in this area in her presentation to the Board of Directors. "These endeavors involve increasing veterinary oversight of antibiotics that are considered 'medically important' in human medicine and removing approved label claims for use of these drugs for low-dose long-term production uses, such as to increase weight gain or feed efficiency."

To this end, at FDA's request, the drug sponsors voluntarily changed the marketing status of these particular antibiotics from over-the-counter to prescription or veterinary feed directive status. These label changes now require veterinary oversight in the therapeutic use of these products.

"This process is clear for drugs approved for use in sheep," said Oeller. "Extra-label use (using the drug in sheep when it is approved for other mammalian species) is legal for water medications, following a veterinarian's order. Extra-label use is not legal for medicated feeds. However, FDA "will not recommend or initiate enforcement action" for medi-
Sheep Producers Captivated by Temple Grandin at Annual Convention

Press Release from the American Sheep Industry Association

Oeller also provided a short update on the work of the Minor Use Animal Drug Program - a USDA program known as NRSP-7 in partnership with FDA and university researchers. This program conducts research to support new animal drug approvals of needed drugs for use in minor species of agricultural importance. This program has been responsible for approvals for sheep in the past and has projects in progress.

Jim Richards, Cornerstone Government Affairs, shared political analysis of the recent general election and expected impacts on government. He reviewed the sheep industry’s priorities for 2017, stressing the importance of engaging in the 2018 Farm Bill process. Some of the top-tier concerns identified are to update and reauthorize the Wool Marketing Loan, infrastructure funding, sheep pharmaceutical approval and foot and mouth disease vaccine bank. Working through Congress to strengthen wildlife services, bighorn sheep language, new positions for the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station and small ruminant funding were also identified.

It was considered another productive year for the Young Entrepreneurs program with a record number of active participants. From a hands-on wool classing session and competition to presentations on crossbreeding, social networking, generational family transition and much more, the group stayed engaged throughout.

"The sheep industry has again shown a united front with the gathering of all of the national sheep organizations under one umbrella here in Denver," said newly elected ASI President Mike Corn. "This meeting set the direction of the industry for the next year and I look forward to working with each of the volunteer leaders to accomplish these goals."

Elections to the Executive Board resulted in Mike Corn (N.M.), president; Benny Cox (Texas), vice president; Susan Shultz (Ohio), secretary/treasurer; Don Kniffer (N.J.), Region 1; Jimmy Parker (Ala.), Region 2; John Dvorak (Minn.), Region 3; Jeff Ebert (Kan.) Region 4; Bob Buchholz (Texas), Region 5; Steve Osguthorpe (Utah), Region 6; Ken Wixom (Idaho), Region 7; Reed Anderson (Ore.), Region 8 and Steve Schreier (Minn.), National Lamb Feeders.

ASI is an equal opportunity employer. It is the national trade organization supported by 45 state sheep associations, benefiting the interests of more than 88,000 sheep producers.

United States Sheep Experiment Station Update

At the 2017 American Sheep Industry Association meeting in Denver, Dr. Bret Taylor met with members of the Production, Education, and Research Council and representatives of the Idaho-Montana-Wyoming Caucus. He discussed current and future research plans for the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station in Dubois, ID (USSES-Dubois). Two items were of particular interest to Montana producers. First, Dr. Taylor is partnering with Drs. Tom Murphy and Whit Stewart at Montana State University to study mastitis in sheep. While Murphy and Stewart will quantify the prevalence and economic cost of mastitis in sheep flocks throughout Montana, Taylor will initiate a series of studies at USSES-Dubois to explore non-antibiotic solutions to minimize mastitis in ewes as well as scours in lambs. Second, Taylor is committing resources to complement a Let’s Grow Grant that was awarded to the Fine Wool Consortium, which includes a number of Montana producers. The purpose of the grant is to develop a wool-value breeding index for NSIP. This endeavor will also involve Stewart and Murphy. A large portion of the data needed to develop the breeding index will originate from a joint venture between the Montana Wool Lab and USSES-Dubois. Taylor also reported that the 5-year research plan for USSES-Dubois has been submitted for review. The plan was based on a number of comments received from Montana sheep producers. Outlined in the plan are objectives focused on antibiotic alternatives, transferring USSES-Dubois flock data to NSIP, nation-wide fine wool and terminal sire ram evaluations, improving breeding indexes for reproductive performance and wool, and evaluating post-fire sheep grazing strategies to enhance nesting habitat for sage grouse. During the Idaho-Montana-Wyoming Caucus, Dr. Taylor expressed his gratitude for the Montana Wool Growers Association’s outstanding support of USSES-Dubois.
After seven years, of hard work and sacrifice, two Montana trappers have developed an animal trapping device that will change the trapping industry forever! Mike Hoggan and Steven DeMers have created and are selling “a patented foot snare device designed to humanely and selectively capture a wide variety of animals.” This innovative product is called the Universal Select-A-Catch® 1000.

Steel-jawed leg hold traps have been used for many years since the early 1800’s. They are still being used today. Trapping is part of our North American heritage. Trappers have always tried to improve the technique but still the main design never changed much until now.

Today homeowners and agriculture interest are having to deal with wildlife causing crop, predation and property damage. This problem is not understood by parts of our society. We have become more educated and responsible toward legal methods, safety, selectiveness, and ethical trapping. Society has been given the impression that trapping is recreational, but today farmers/ranchers more than ever acquire the help of agencies and private trappers to help with predation of livestock and crops, some even take it upon themselves to help alleviate the problem.

Seven years ago, Steve DeMers came up with a revolutionary capturing device and Mike Hoggan joined him and developed the snare to go with it. They teamed up with Allen & Terri Denzer, local ranchers to manufacture the snaring system utilizing Montana-made components. Allen & Terri were very excited about the prospects and potential of this device. They knew all too well the loss of animals on their ranch during calving season and dealing with bigger predators during the summer. This device is lightweight and easy to set. It is durable and made from heavy duty ABS composite with a heavy marine grade aluminum bottom that will provide years of service. This unit is equipped with a tension device that reduces the chance of capturing lighter, non-target animals. One unit can capture many different types of animals, depending on the snare used.

Several states have outlawed steel traps, but at the same time some of these states have allowed the use of foot snares. This revolutionary foot snare is humane, selective and effective. The Select-A-Catch® 1000 can selectively as possible capture destructive wildlife and reduce agricultural losses now estimated to be in the billions of dollars in the United States and Canada annually. Animals may be released unharmed on short-term captures. This is a great tool for dog catchers as well.

Most components of the device are manufactured in Montana. The molded ABS product comes out of Columbia Falls, the bottom covers are out of Choteau, the trigger tips and hinges are made in Augusta and the boxes used to ship the device come from Bozeman. It is assembled locally and shipped out of Valier.

The unit works with a pan tension to reduce the capture of lighter non-target animals. The snare has a break away S-hook to release most larger, non-target animals. The kink-less chain (similar to a bracelet) that wraps around the foot helps maintain circulation making this one of the most humane capturing device on the market today.

When we started the business, one of our target markets was feral hogs which are now causing billions of dollars in agricultural and residential damage every year. They are now in 44 states. Currently there are more than 5 million wild hogs causing over
1.5 billion dollars in damage each year. Even though hogs are an important part of our business, this unit will catch animals up to the size of bears.

Trapping takes time and dedication, using the Select-A-Catch® 1000 setting is fast and easy. Through our experience as professional Montana trappers having a combined 72 years in the field, we have tried to make this as simple and user friendly as possible. Depending on the snare used, this one unit is capable of capturing target animals large and small.

There has been much work to get to this point. We received patents in the US on the delivery device as well as the snare and we have patents pending in Canada as well. Until now, we have sold primarily to agencies and a few private individuals. Our product is now sold to the public and we have been up and running now for about 3 months. Our website www.selectacatch.com has pictures and videos, instructions as well as links to all 50 states on trapping regulations and restrictions.

The unit is priced at $149.99 which includes the snare of your choice, depending on the animal you are trying to capture. It also includes anchoring spikes and an instructional DVD, and booklet on snare setting instructions. You can purchase the unit and snares on our website at www.selectacatch.com.
Renewed Resolutions

The following resolutions were due to sunset at the 2016 Convention and were renewed at the Annual Meeting.

PREDATOR
Predator Control Methods (2016)
The MWGA strongly encourages continued use of all current and new developments in viable predator control methods.

Beneficial Alliances (2016)
The MWGA recognizes the need for beneficial alliances with agricultural, sportsmen, and non-agricultural entities that will assist in maintaining, understanding, and enhancement of predator control and wildlife populations.

FARM FLOCK
Scrapie Tags (2016)
The MWGA encourages APHIS to purchase the voluntary and the mandatory ear tags for the Scrapie Program.

PRODUCTION
Trade Barriers (2016)
The MWGA supports elimination of non-scientific based health trade barriers.

Lamb Processing Facilities (2016)
Whereas, the sheep industry produces a product as opposed to a commodity and recognizing there could be a potential bottleneck within the existing supply chain,

Therefore, be it resolved MWGA supports efforts to expand the number of lamb and mutton processing facilities in the United States to ensure future industry stability.

Montana State University Sheep Program Infrastructure (2016)
Whereas, MWGA recognizes the importance of the combined efforts of sheep programs at Montana State University, specifically the Sheep Specialist, Wool Lab, and County Extension Network.

Whereas, these programs and the people responsible have a very positive impact on the sheep and wool producers within Montana, as well as throughout the United States.

Therefore, be it resolved MWGA directs its executive secretary to coordinate efforts in cooperation with Montana State University to enhance the future services provided by the Sheep Specialist, Wool Lab, and MSU Extension Network.

LAND USE
Sage Grouse Protection (2016)
The MWGA opposes any action on Sage Grouse protection that would negatively affect management of private and public lands for livestock grazing.

Livestock Driveways (2016)
Whereas the MWGA recognizes the importance of traditional and historic livestock driveways, be it resolved that the MWGA supports the continued unrestricted use of these driveways

Bison Translocation (2016)
The MWGA opposes the translocation of bison for the establishment and the introduction of free roaming bison in Montana.

Rewritten Resolutions

The following resolutions were rewritten by the resolutions committees and voted on during the 2016 Annual Meeting.

FARM FLOCK
National Scrapie Eradication Program (2016) rewritten by removing brand inspectors
The MWGA encourages the continuing education of the National Scrapie Eradication Program to producers as well as organizations and agencies involved in the sheep and goat industries, including, but not limited to auction yards and county extension agents.

Mentor Program Rewrite (2016) rewritten by including Young Entrepreneur
MWGA supports the ASI Mentor and Young Entrepreneur Program which is part of the Let’s Grow Initiative and directs the board to seek grants to assist new sheep producers.

MSU Shearing School (2016) Rewritten
MWGA supports the MSU Shearing School. MWGA is encouraged to maintain a list of shearing school graduates interested in shearing for hire.
PRODUCTION
MSU Wool Lab (2016) Amended
MWGA requests that MSU maintain a functional wool lab facility located within the MSU campus and MSU continue to seek funding for the wool lab manager position as part of its base budget. The facility should maintain operations that continue to utilize appropriations including federal initiatives, experiment station funds and grower funds, to ensure quality research that applies directly to MWGA and Montana producers.

U.S. Government Wool Usage (2016) Rewritten to include Berry Amendment
The MWGA encourages the United States government to continue to increase their use of domestic wool through support of the Berry Amendment.

Imports (2016) Rewritten
The MWGA encourages trade policy that benefits American sheep industry's products over imported product.

LAND USE
Public Land Access Damage (2016) Rewritten added roads
Whereas public access for hunting and recreational purposes is causing damage to, including but not limited to roads, fire, erosion, and the spread of noxious weeds,

Whereas these activities cause unnecessary hardship and frustration to the land lease holders

Be it resolved that MWGA work together with Fish Wildlife and Parks, public land agencies, and land owners to address issues of damages caused to Private land from Public land access encroachment

State Land Fee Increase (2016) Rewritten
The MWGA opposes rate increases on State Land, which are not based on current or future market values and cause undue hardship on leasees.

New Resolutions

The following resolutions were introduced to the resolutions committees and voted on at the Annual Convention.

PREDATOR
Grizzly Delisting (2016) New
MWGA encourages our congressional delegation to introduce legislation and appropriations to delist the Grizzly bear for the entire state of Montana.

Wolf and Grizzly Management (2016) New Replaces 5 existing resolutions
Whereas livestock losses caused by wolves and grizzlies in Montana continue to increase at an unacceptable level.

Whereas emphasis and funding for wolf and grizzly management needs to prioritize protection of livestock and especially in the case of grizzly management to maintain public safety.

Whereas MWGA agrees that USDA Wildlife Services be the primary agent in wolf and grizzly damage control.

Therefore be it resolved, MWGA insists FWP reimburse Wildlife Services for all of the work WS performs on wolves and grizzly bear damage management.

Further be it resolved, MWGA work towards securing adequate funding for WS for wolf and grizzly depredation as well as funding for depredation control of other predatory animal species.

GENERAL
Authorization of Board Actions

Whereas, the bylaws of the association authorize the MWGA Board of Directors to establish interim policy during the course of the year, and whereas, the MWGA Board of Directors have so acted during the course of the year;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the interim policies established by the MWGA Board of Directors during the course of the year, and the management and control by the Board of Directors be hereby approved and is ratified by a majority of the membership of the association according to the bylaws of the association at the 2016 annual meeting held December 3rd 2016 at Billings, Montana.

For a complete look at MWGA’s Policy Resolutions, please visit http://mts sheep.org/public-affairs/
Montana Make It With Wool representatives showed off their talents during the 69th annual National Make It With Wool competition as part of the 2017 American Sheep Industry (ASI) Convention held January 26 thru 28, 2017 at the Denver Marriott City Center Hotel in Denver, Colorado. Morgan Brooks of Ronan, Montana, participated in the Junior Category, while Jasmine Powell of Havre, Montana, participated in the Senior Category. Montana’s Adult winner, Michal Ann Stedje of Ronan, competed in the mail-in and video portion of the National contest.

Morgan Brooks found her dress pattern online and fell in love with it. She could not find the pattern in the store so she printed it out and taped the many sections together. Morgan likes the style and flow of the skirt. An added bonus was finding the guipure wool lace to accent and enhance the bodice as shown on the pattern. Working with the lace was a new sewing technique for her. Morgan also made her necklace from a motif of the lace. Morgan is a junior at Ronan High School and is involved in theater arts, with her favorite being the costume department. She earned her captain’s pin this year as a cheerleader and come spring you will find her on the tennis court. She is also a 4-H member, concentrating on the sewing project and she looks forward to showing her Lionhead rabbits at this year’s fair.

Jasmine Powell’s “easy” coat is fashioned from a New Look pattern and is constructed from 100% Bordeaux Wine Boiled Wool from the Netherlands. Jasmine’s fully lined coat features a shawl collar, an asymmetric front, and side pockets. Its single closure is a loop and button. Oscar De La Renta’s Green Eyes/Tibetan Red Cashmere Boucle is the focus for Jasmine’s dress. This design comes from a McCall’s pattern. The pullover dress is close-fitting and features a wide bertha collar. A note of interest is that Jasmine repurposed the salvage on the cashmere fabric and used it as a decorative trim on the bottom of the collar, ¾ length sleeves and dress hem. Jasmine is a Junior at MSU-Northern in Havre taking business classes and is an online student at Dawson Community College in Glendive taking early childhood courses. When she has a moment of spare time, she enjoys her pets which consist of 8 bunnies and 7 cats.

Michal Ann Stedje used a woven tweed wool fabric to make her wrap style jacket. The draped neckline puts a stylish spin on the swing jacket. It will prove to be a versatile garment as it can be worn wrapped when there is a chill in the air or it can be left open for a causal look with the sweeping sidetails making it a seasonal favorite. The jacket is set off by yards of black faux leather binding. The biggest challenge was applying the binding so it would flow with the lines of the garment.

Michal Ann works full time at the elementary school in Ronan and is also a 4-H leader for the sewing project. She also enjoys knitting and often pulls out a project during her lunch break.

In the National MIWW contest there were 25 Junior contestants, 20 Senior contestants, and 20 Adult contestants representing 27 states. Currently, there are 30 states with active Make It With Wool programs. The National MIWW Director is Mary Roediger from Albany, Ohio. The contestants took in a few workshops while in Denver. They learned how to spin wool with a drop spindle, how to make a bound buttonhole, and how to measure themselves to pick the right sized pattern and for alteration purposes.

Construction judging was completed while the contestants were in workshops. Fashion presentation was held in front of a panel of three judges with a time limit of 3 minutes for questions and answers.

The presentation of contestants and garments to the ASI attendees happened on Saturday evening, January 28, 2017. The theme of the style show was “Star Wool – The Fleece Awakens” interpreted from “Star Wars”. Our very own Lane Nordland of the Northern Ag Network and Chandra Woaman, the Oregon State MIWW Director, presented the Style Show.

When the awards were handed out, Morgan Brooks was placed as a “Top 10 Finalist” in the Junior category. Allison Faber of Ohio won the Junior Division, Sarah Thelen of Minnesota won the Senior Division, and Rebecca Sintek of Oregon won the Adult Division.

Some interesting statistics were also presented for the 2016 MIWW year. There was a total of 85 Adult contestants, 62 Seniors, 158 Juniors, 204 PreTeens, and 26 Made for Others throughout the 27 competing states. The total MIWW entries were down by 41 from 2015. There was a total of 1,642 yards of wool fabric and 229 skeins of wool yarn used to construct the MIWW garment entries this year.

For more information on the Make It With Wool program, please visit mtsheep.org.
A HUGE Thank You to the Sponsors of the 133rd Annual MWGA Convention!

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Sieben Live Stock Co.

Top Left: Jasmine Powell of Havre shows off her beautiful pullover dress. Top Right: Michal Ann Stedje of Ronan models her wrap style jacket. Bottom: Morgan Brooks and Jasmine Powell pose for a photo after the National MIWW Fashion Show in Denver, Co.
This winter has been one for the record books as you are all very aware. Knocking on wood, I am hoping that the worst is behind us as lambing approaches. However, the realist within me understands that we live in Montana and the weather is always unpredictable. But here’s to optimism this lambing season!

Since it’s been a few seasons since I’ve worked in the lambing shed, I won’t be sharing information as if I had a recent successful lambing season. Yet, with the phone calls, emails, and conversations that cross the desk it’s apparent that many lambing time challenges repeat themselves. Each operation is very unique and has a system in place that works, but from time to time we see aspects that we’d like to improve when it comes to lambing. Here’s a few thoughts...

**Timing is everything**
Internationally, and regardless of management system, the majority of lamb death loss occurs during the first week. Specifically, the first 24 hours are the most critical for the newborn lamb where success and failure are determined by how quickly the lamb adapts to its new environment. Tissue reserves that regulate the lambs body temperature and fuel the energy required to stand and nurse are limited, and rapid attachment to the ewe is the difference between success and failure.

Maternal antibodies provided in the colostrum are the first line of defense for the critical period of birth until the lamb can mount its own immune response to the suite of pathogens it will encounter throughout its life (3-5weeks). Thus, timing is crucial as antibody concentrations in the colostrum and the ability for the lamb to absorb the maternal antibodies in the colostrum declines rapidly after 24 hours.

It’s also important to remember that colostrum is a concentrated “energy-shot” to the newborn lamb, which provides a focused cocktail of energy, protein and trace minerals. Trace mineral content of the ewe milk declines rapidly from birth to 2-weeks post lambing. Remember, the mineral the ewe consumes during pregnancy is transferred to the growing fetus via the placenta, and also accumulates in the colostrum. Manage the mineral status of the ewe to manage the mineral status of the lamb.

**Figure 1.** Selenium concentrations in colostrum and 30 day milk from ewes supplemented or not supplemented with Selenium during pregnancy (Adapted from Stewart et al., 2012).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selenium Transfer to Milk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selenium ng/mL</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colostrum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 d Milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ No Selenium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Selenium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How much colostrum to feed**
Knowing when to intervene and tube the lamb is a balancing act. Leaving the ewe alone to bond with the lamb is extremely important; however, some lambs need a quick jumpstart. The situations to intervene will vary but should largely be guided by whether the lamb can stand and attach to the ewe. Potential candidates for tube feeding intervention are:

- Lambs that struggle to stand within first 3 hours
- Lambs less than 8 lbs. of body weight
- The lightest weighing lamb born as a multiple
- Lambs that experience significant cold stress
- Lambs from ewes that had to be pulled, especially breach lambs
- Lambs from ewes in poor body condition
Thoughts on Lambing (Continued from Pg 30)

By Dr. Whit Stewart, MSU Sheep Extension Specialist

Table 1: Colostrum intake recommendations for first 12 to 14 hour based on lamb body weight.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lamb Weight (lb)</th>
<th>Fluid Ounces Colostrum Intake Required first 12-14hr (10% Body Weight)</th>
<th>1st Feeding (4hrs. after birth)</th>
<th>2nd Feeding (4 hrs. after 1st feeding)</th>
<th>3rd Feeding (4hrs. after 2nd feeding)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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Tube-Feeding
There is no more important technique to master and employ at lambing than esophageal “tube” feeding. An excellent overview from Dr. Susan Kerr at Washington State University can be accessed at:


One of the most common mistakes made when tube feeding is not pinching the tube before insertion and before removal from esophagus. We all get in a hurry but this will avoid any additional fluids getting into the lungs, which exacerbates the health issues in the newborn lamb.

Keep a couple of tube feeders on hand, as the rubber tube can get pretty brittle after heavy use and washing. Furthermore, the shipping time required for a replacement can be costly. Inspecting the tube after each use for damage can help you avoid fluids getting into the lungs. Ensure that the tubing edges and ridges are smooth (4-6mm diameter) to avoid irritating the esophagus. Cleaning the tube thoroughly on a regular basis is very important to avoid bacterial spread.

The Milk Machine
It’s safe to say that your time is the most limiting resource regardless of the operational dynamic. Technology has vastly improved to alleviate some of these time constraints especially with the artificial rearing of lambs. Automated milk machines are gaining popularity in our region due to the time saved and quality of lamb raised.

Deciding whether to buy a milk machine will largely depend on how many orphan lambs will be artificially reared in a given year and if added revenue will be generated from purchasing the unit. Assuming the purchase price is approximately $2,000.00 for the 120 lamb unit and $1,300.00 for the 60 lamb capacity unit, they would be paid for in the first year if approximately 20 orphan lambs are marketed annually. The decreased death losses, as lambs are able to mimic normal eating patterns and consequently don’t have the same potbellied, stunted look, can also add value when the lambs are marketed. Accounting for the time spent trying to market the orphan lambs during the busy lambing season, feeding the lambs at least twice a day, and simply having one less thing to do during the busiest time of the year, are reasons to re-evaluate your orphan rearing practices. See the following artificial rearing methods from University of Wisconsin Spooner Ag. Research Station.

Figure 3 (Pictured Right) Training pen milk feeder with shallow cake pan kept warm with lights.
Figure 5 (Pictured Left) Graduate pen milk feeder, lambs strong enough to suckle from deep pails

If you are raising a significant number of orphan lambs, planning ahead and buying in bulk can also result in significant savings in milk replacer. Of course, this requires coordinating with other operations as very few of us can buy a ton of milk replacer at any given time. One rancher in particular mentioned $20 a bag savings when buying in bulk and ordering through a major Ag supply store.

Since milk replacer is costly we often have tendency to want to dilute yet it’s important to never skimp the powder to water ratio. An article in itself could be written on selecting milk replacer yet a good rule of thumb is minimum 20% crude protein and 25% crude fat. Use lamb milk replacer, as calf milk replacer is higher in lactose and can result in scours.

Weaning at 30 days or until lamb weighs 30 lb. is a good benchmark to maintain profitability. Data from the University of Wisconsin Spooner Station show an average of 18 lb of milk replacer consumed until weaning at 30 days. Wean the lambs abruptly rather then watering down milk or decreasing gradually the amount of milk. Providing a high crude protein creep feed (>20%) immediately allows lambs familiarize early and will aid in rumen development. Avoid putting hay or forage based pellets in the creep feed prior to 50 days. Research has shown that rumen papilla development in the lamb is stimulated by energy dense diets more so than fiber (hay) based diets early one until 40 to 50 days of age.

Record Keeping
We can’t improve what we fail to document. How many times do we have an idea that we fail to write down? Record keeping can be as simple as a pocket notebook or complex as archived spreadsheets. Ideas on lambing shed improvements, what to feed in the jugs, lambing supplies, etc. A lambing notebook that compiles all the inside information that we tend to forget is a good way to save time and keep us from repeating the same mistakes.

Long-term decision making requires real numbers that show where we are trending. Record keeping at lambing can guide decision making the rest of the year. Some of the following metrics are worth keeping track of this coming lambing season:

- Number of lambs born per ewes exposed
- Number of triplets
- Number of lambs artificially reared
- Attributable lamb death loss (water mouth, scours, weak at birth)
- Pounds of milk replacer per lamb used
- Number of ewes with mastitis

At the wool lab we’ve developed written standard operating procedures for every procedure run in the lab. By doing so, everybody can ensure that they are conducting lab procedures the same way. If someone is sick or leaves the lab, the work can continue seamlessly. Do you have these same instructions for members of the family, the high school student or neighbor when something unexpected happens? Can we organize our operations to facilitate someone stepping into help in the event of illness or unexpected family events?

Even amidst the stress, fatigue, and marital strife that encompasses lambing season there is no more exciting time of the sheep production cycle. Make sure to take time to enjoy the evening lamb races, king of the hill competitions, and the oft taken for granted miracle of birth. Happy Lambing!

Thoughts on Lambing (Continued from Pg 31)

By Dr. Whit Stewart, MSU Sheep Extension Specialist
The Annual MWGA Speed Shear Competition and Calcutta is one of the most anticipated events of the Wool Grower Convention. Every year, high quality shearsers from around the state and region participate in the annual event to see who can come out on top as the fastest shearer. Each two-person team is auctioned off to the highest bidder in the Calcutta and then the fun begins. The fastest shearing time was recorded by Alex Moser of Iowa. Alex is part of the 5-person team that will be representing USA at the Golden Shears World Championships in Southland, New Zealand in February 2017. Through a portion of the payout from the Calcutta, and the generous crowd donating money to the cause, MWGA was able to raise $3,425 to help the shearsers make the trip.

This year’s team representing the USA is made up of the following individuals, proudly representing 5 states and utilizing talent from multiple regions.

Machine Shearing
Alex Moser- Lester, Iowa
Loren Opstedahl- Piedmont, South Dakota

Blade Shearing
Kevin Ford- Charlemont, Massachusetts
Loren Opstedahl- Piedmont, South Dakota

Wool Handling
Leanne Brimmer- Biddle, Montana
Maggie Passino- Charlottesville, Virginia

MWGA would like to thank all those that participated and helped run the successful shearing event and live auction, including Wade Kopren, Bronson Smith, Brent Roeder, and Mike and Cheryl Schudlt. We would also like to thank Western Ranch Supply for generously sponsoring the “Watering Hole” for the event and for Superior Farms for donating the lamb sliders.

MWGA would also like to thank the following businesses for sponsoring the 133rd Annual Montana Wool Growers Convention: Northwest Farm Credit Services, Bank of Baker, First Interstate Bank, CHS Nutrition, Great Plains Wool Co., West Feeds, Center of the Nation Wool, Montana Livestock Ag Credit, Superior Farms, Wyoming Livestock Roundup, Sieben Ranch, Animal Health International, PAYS, Northern Livestock Video Auction, C&B Operations- Yellowstone County Implement and Horizon Implement, Bank of the Rockies, Nickels Gaming, and Sieben Live Stock Co.
Lambing season is right around the corner. This is an ideal time to start thinking about shearing, vaccinating, and deworming, as well as nutritional needs. Pregnancy toxemia in ewes can be reduced by shearing at least three weeks out from lambing, allowing the ewe to mobilize energy from fat stores. At this time, ewes should be on an increasing plane of nutrition. Feeding nutrient-dense feed is important since growing lambs decrease the volume of feed ewes can consume. A high quality alfalfa hay or one to two pounds of grain with fair to good hay are options. Ewes that are thin, young, or carrying multiples benefit from being managed separately and fed higher concentrates. Selenium and vitamin E supplementation is necessary if forage is selenium deficient. Those with flocks with a history of Vibrio or those introducing new ewes should also visit with their veterinarian about feeding tetracycline to help control abortions.

Vaccinate ewes around two to four weeks prior to lambing with a product containing Clostridium perfringens C and D and tetanus. The ewe’s immune system will concentrate these antibodies in her colostrum providing the best protection to her lambs. This is also an ideal time to deworm due to the periparturient rise in fecal egg counts. If coccidiosis has been a problem in the past, consider feeding coccidiostats such as Rumensin, Bovatec, or Deccox. Keeping feed off the ground or feeding on clean ground will greatly reduce the spread of internal parasites including coccidia.

Question and Answer:

What do you think of products like supplements for newborn lambs? Should all lambs be treated or only the weak ones?

Sometimes weak lambs may need some glucose to give them a boost. I think the most important thing for newborn lambs is colostrum. It is liquid gold and no synthetic products can match its ability to provide antibodies, essential nutrients, and calories. I can’t over emphasize the need for colostrum in the first 12 hours of life. The first feeding for an average sized lamb should be 8-12 ounces of colostrum milked from a ewe.

Should we vaccinate lambs for sore mouth?

Soremouth vaccine is made from live virus from ground-up scabs from “modified” soremouth infections. The virus is altered in a way so that it will not cause serious disease, but will produce a mild form of soremouth. Because the vaccine is a live virus, it is important to only vaccinate for the virus if it is already present in the herd, as it will introduce the virus if it is not already there. Once soremouth is introduced to an operation, either by vaccination or natural exposure, it usually returns yearly to susceptible animals. I do not recommend vaccinating young lambs for sore mouth. Pregnant ewes may be vaccinated two months prior to lambing to help reduce severity of disease during the nursing period.

How should we treat ewes with pregnancy toxemia?

Pregnancy toxemia occurs when the energy requirements of growing lambs in the uterus exceed the energy consumption of the ewe. If the ewe cannot consume enough nutrients she will sacrifice herself to meet her lamb’s nutritional requirements. Energy is mobilized from fat stores and ketones become too high. The ewe sequentially loses her appetite, becomes weak, separates from the flock, becomes recumbent, seizures, and dies. If the ewe is close to lambing, I recommend inducing the ewe to lamb with dexamethasone (5-10 mL, IM). Ewes will usually lamb 24-48 hours after injection. They should be administered CMPK or another dextrose-containing supplement orally or injected under the skin and propylene glycol (4-6 oz. orally 3-4 times a day). Appetite stimulants such as vitamin B complex and probiotics may also be beneficial. If the ewe will not live long enough for induction of labor, lambs should be removed by Caesarian Section. If the ewe is not close to lambing, I recommend that the lambs be aborted with dexamethasone. Of course, prevention of pregnancy toxemia is key!
The Tendoy Mountain Big Horn Discussion Panel was well attended at Convention.

Thank you for attending the 133rd Annual MWGA Convention! Plans are already underway to make the 134th Annual Convention the best one yet! Save the Date for November 30th-December 1st, 2017 at the Red Lion Hotel and Convention Center! If you are interested in serving on one of the resolutions committees at convention, please contact Jesse Thompson at (406) 442-1330.
Hettinger Wool Classing School Participants Share Their Experiences

From Lilly LeVeque - I do want to thank the Montana Wool Growers for the support of the scholarship to attend the Wool class in Hettinger, ND. This made it nice since Boo was attending the shearing school.

I learned that while there is a place for every kind of wool from different sheep we raise, we are still fighting the same battles. Getting the clip as free from poly, and vegetable matter, packing it correctly, and knowing what we must sell. While not everyone raises fine wool, the other has its place but still needs to be put up as nice as possible. Also, shearing the dark animals last, keeping the sheep off feed and water overnight before shearing is a great help. The one thing I did learn was about the ram fleeces. If they are the same kind and quality, they can be bagged with the ewe fleeces. The buyers do not want a little bag of ram fleeces just because they came off of the rams. Knowing the classes of wool and increasing the uniformity of the clip can help, no matter the grade of wool. You are so much better off to not have fleeces all over the grades, wool is a highly heritable trait that can be looked at on the ewes after a year of age to know where you are going with your flock genetics. People look at the rams but you also must look at the ewes.

Communication between the owner, shearer and classer (if you have one during shearing) is a must. The lack of communication can cause a break down and one that can cause you not to get that shearer or classer again. Shearing and classing are not easy jobs and to do them correctly things need to flow well. The owner should have someone else moving the sheep so he can watch in the beginning and tweak or talk to the shearers or classer. If he is in the back he cannot be aware of what is going on or needed from the shearsers, classer, or his sheep. Good help is a must so that we are getting our animals sheared in the most economical way with the least amount of stress to the animal. Shearing or at least tagging the ewes 4-6 weeks before lambing, will help increase the worth of the wool clip and lamb survival.

All in all, things have not changed a lot in 30 years, we just need to remember to do our best for our help, ourselves and of course the sheep!

From Dawnita Sampsel - Wool classing school began on a Saturday morning, in the blustery winds of Hettinger, North Dakota. Our Instructors Lisa Surber and Ron Cole covered a wide variety of wool topics as well as teaching the basics of classing. The first day of school included learning about wool fiber growth, development and production. As well as learn about the different operations that each participant came from. Some participants were there to learn about using the classing skills with a shearing crew and others to expand their knowledge about the products they are selling. When the opportunity arose I jumped at the chance to gain more knowledge about the product my husband and I will be selling. Wool is a major part of any sheep producer’s livelihood and I wanted to make sure that as we embark on our new business that I know the basics before shearing this spring. One activity included picking out samples from over 20 clips, ranging from carpet wool to contaminated wool. On our second day of activities we were able to journey to the shearing school and learn how to “throw” a fleece as well as how to “skirt” the fleece. The hands-on learning was extraordinary with many different types of fleeces crossing the table. Not only did we get to throw the fleeces but were also asked to grade the fleece and determine how they should be sorted. That afternoon Larry Prager from Center of the Nation Wool joined our group and gave a presentation about his business and how as sheep producers we can help make his job easier.

On our final day we were able to do more throwing and skirting, the Ofda machine was demonstrated for us as well. Some of the class had wool samples from their operations which they had tested by Lisa as well. We also got the chance to try out shearing at the end which was a highlight! Classing school left me with knowledge not only about how breeding can affect your wool clip but also what the wool and ram buyers are looking for in various clips. Thank you to the Montana Wool growers Association for giving me the opportunity to experience this wonderful opportunity and for anyone wanting to learn more I would highly recommend it!
A Message From Senator Steve Daines

Recently, I had made several stops along the Hi-Line and eastern Montana. From the wheat and sugar beet fields to grazing cattle and sheep, visual reminders of the importance of agriculture in Montana were everywhere.

In January, I was honored to be selected to serve on the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry this Congress. Montana’s number one economic driver is agriculture and I am excited to represent your priorities on that critical committee, particularly as negotiations over the next farm bill are about to begin in earnest. And as your U.S. Senator and a member of the Senate Ag Committee, I’m asking for your feedback and ideas to improve the farm bill to reflect your priorities for the future. I’m dedicated to ensuring the effective implementation of the 2014 farm bill for farmers and ranchers, and I’m also working to improve the bill as negotiations for the next farm bill are in the beginning stages.

Additionally, one of my top priorities will be repealing many of the costly regulations impacting Montana’s sheep producers. One such example is the burdensome BLM Planning 2.0 rule. This rule was rushed through late last year without sufficient input from producers. It diverts the decision-making process away from the local communities and towards bureaucrats in Washington, D.C. while having dramatic impacts on the federal land management process. That’s why I was proud to recently help introduce legislation that would repeal this regulation in its entirety and look forward to working to ensure that the people most impacted by any future regulations have a say and significant input in its development.

I will also continue to strongly support robust funding for the Wildlife Services program within the Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station (USSES), and other critical programs for Montana’s sheep producers. Predators can cause significant losses for producers, and Wildlife Services plays an essential role in mitigating those impacts and assisting producers in managing wildlife. USSES’ work is critical for both the sheep industry and the environment throughout the West. Research conducted at USSES has led to the development of new breeds of sheep, improved grazing and monitoring techniques, and increased overall efficiency for the sheep industry and will help it continue to succeed.

As agriculture plays such a large and critical role in the lives of farmers, ranchers, and Montanans around the state, I would like to invite you to join me at my Montana Ag Summit that will take place at the Montana ExpoPark in Great Falls on May 31-June 1. The Summit will include keynotes from United Grain’s President and CEO Augusto Bassanini, Northwest Farm Credit Services CEO Phil DiPofi, and other industry leaders in agriculture. Stay tuned for more information.

With a Trump administration, we will be successful in reducing the federal footprint on Montana agriculture and will work hard towards that end – giving our farmers and ranchers the greatest opportunity to continue feeding not only our state and our nation, but the world. I am working to overturn many of these costly regulations that have harmed Montana farmers and ranchers, small businesses, coal workers, and Montana families.

Note from the Editor: Please look forward to “A Message From Senator Jon Tester” in the next issue.
The Montana Woolgrower’s Memorial Fund

The Montana Woolgrower Memorial Fund (official name “Educational and Research Endowment Fund”) was established in 1983 when over $100 was sent to the association in memory of Miles City sheepman/wool buyer, Duncan McDonald. A savings account was established for such a purpose and others, wanting to remember longtime sheepmen, be they friends or relatives, made similar donations.

In 1984 the Board filed the necessary papers to make such gifts tax deductible and a three-person board was appointed to oversee the account. The original board consisted of Don McKamey, Bill Lehfeldt, and Ralph Dreyer.

Funds must be used for educational or research purposes only and cannot be used for expenses of the Woolgrowers Association. The present board consists of Jim Whiteside, chairman, John Baucus, and Bob Lehfeldt.

Those wishing to make a donation should make the check out to Montana Woolgrower Association Memorial Fund and send it to the Helena office. You will receive a receipt and if the memorial donation is sent in memory of someone, that person’s family will also receive an acknowledgement.

**Bill Lehfeldt**
Bob Gilbert
Center of the Nation Wool, Inc
Sharon & Clyde Parker
Arielle & Elaine Lammers
Jocelyn Brown
Larry & Madge Pilster
Bob & Marie Lehfeldt
John and Nina Baucus
Joe and Aggie Helle
Don & Beverly McKamey
Jack & Kathryn McRae
Kevin & Shirley Halverson
Fred Itcaina

**Jim Drummond**
Gordon & Marilyn Darlinton
Kelly Ingalls
John and Nina Baucus
Joe and Aggie Helle
Jack and Kathryn McRae
Kevin & Shirley Halverson

**Trent Meyer**
John and Nina Baucus
Joe and Aggie Helle
Kevin & Shirley Halverson

**Ed Smith**
Jack and Kathryn McRae
Bill Lehfeldt
John and Nina Baucus

**Pat Norton**
Jack & Kathryn McRae
Connie Gail Bracken
August 4, 1955-January 17, 2017

Connie Gail (Engelke) Bracken was born on August 4, 1955 to Charles and Delores Engelke and was raised west of Froid, Montana on the family farm. She graduated with the Class of 1973 from Froid High School and attended Montana State University. She married Tom Bracken at the Congregational Church of Froid on November 30, 1974. Together, she and Tom enjoyed operating the Engelke and Bracken farms.

As a youth, Connie was an active 4-H member in Roosevelt County and continued as an adult volunteer leader of the Up-N-Atom 4-H Club for 36 years. She taught, guided, and led many youth to master and excel in clothing construction for fairs and the Make-It-With-Wool competition, quilting, leather crafts, livestock production, gardening, and horses. She was continually interested in learning new techniques to share.

Connie was a creative, joyous and very hardworking woman who excelled in anything she put her mind to do, especially home improvement projects. With her "can do -will do" attitude, she mastered many talents from becoming a Master Gardener to designing and helping to build the family home, owning and running her own sheep herd and business, driving a team of horses, operating the swather for haying and the combine for harvest, helping neighbors, and supporting her community.

Always ready for an adventure, she enjoyed traveling and exploring new sites. She and Tom attended many National Finals Rodeos each December, participated in wagon train and trail rides with their team "Jack and Daniel!", and dancing, especially to George Strait songs.

She found serenity kayaking on the rivers with her friends. She was a very loyal and caring daughter to her parents.

Connie was an avid quilter with many yards of fabric and lovely projects completed. She looked forward to Thursday quilting with the Flying Geese Quilters and trips to Medora, North Dakota with the Badland Quilt Guild.

Above all else, her greatest creation was her son, Justin. She and Justin shared many water and snow skiing escapades, working together, and attending 4-H events. She was amazed at his fine woodworking skills. She was a ‘second mom’ to many youth. Connie was elated to welcome her daughter-in-law, Sadie, into their family and was eagerly awaiting the birth of her first grandchild. A completed special quilt awaits his arrival.

Connie made friendships easily through her many travels that took her from Anchorage, Alaska to Australia and New Zealand and across the United States and Canada. Connie will be mourned, but not forgotten, by her plethora of friends and acquaintances.

She is survived by her husband, Tom; son and daughter-in-law Justin and Sadie; her parents, Charlie and Delores; niece, Kristin and family; sister-in-law Linda and family; and several great nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her brother Donnie and his son, Dusty, and Tom's parents, Ray and Anna.

Connie, age 61, passed away, after a courageous and valiant battle against cancer, on Tuesday, January 17 at the Roosevelt Medical Center. In the spring, her ashes will be inurned on the hillside overlooking the ranch she dearly loved so that she may watch over and continue to enjoy her family, cattle, sheep, and horses as they continue in her eternal dreams.

Patricia Norton
May 17, 1948-November 17, 2016

Patricia Cecelia Kerr Myers Norton “Pat”, “PK”, “Patty” was born May 17, 1948, in Tarrytown, New York. She passed away November 17, 2016, at her home in Belgrade, MT.

PK was raised in New York until she was 18 and left to go to Montana to join her sister, Connie, in 1965. PK attended MSU, Flathead Community College and Western at Dillon. She worked at the Sportsman’s Lodge in Ennis with her sister as cook and cook’s assistant. The patrons had never experienced such fine dining. She was a bartender at the Eagles in Bozeman, cooked for a hunting camp outfitter, and helped lamb the many Targhee sheep at John and Donna Paugh’s. She was an accountant and receptionist and helped at the Belgrade Vet with her husband, Dr. Rob Myers, DVM. Pat served as director for the Gallatin Valley Humane Society using her extraordinary compassion and knowledge of animals to do great good for all creatures great and small. She proudly had a flock of Targhee sheep, which were known for their fine quality. PK married Dave Norton and loved him.
PK loved to help others and their animals and did so often. She loved well and lasting. Pat’s most recent years were devoted to the care of her father, John Kerr, until he died, and caring for her home on Cameron Bridge Rd. Her compassion was remarkable and quietly unrealized.

PK leaves her sister, Connie Lien of Bozeman; brother, Duncan Kerr (Cheryl) of Laurel, Maryland; niece, Lissy Kerr and nephew, Alexander Kerr of Laurel, Maryland; and her beloved Sheltie dog, Bonnie; and so many special friends.

Bernard B. Arnold
May 19, 1919–December 14, 2016

On Dec. 14, 2016, with family at his side our father, grandfather, and friend, Bernard B. Arnold peacefully passed away. Bernard was born May 19, 1919, on the West Rosebud River. He was the 3rd of 10 children born to William and Margaret Arnold. It was here that he learned to work hard “at a pretty young age.” He attended the Green School House in Fishtail through the 8th grade. He “wasn’t very happy about school.” The first day of high school he was assigned a seat by the window, looking at the Beartooth’s that he was so fond of, he decided there was nothing in the classroom that could teach him to be a rancher so he “got up and walked out the back door, and never looked back.” This is when he went to work for the Civilian Conservation Corps that lasted six months. Also, he ran a trap line “catching the occasional skunk” and worked for a neighboring rancher.

“It was a Saturday in September 1939, and sure enough, walking the street was one of the neighbor girls and my school teacher. They called her Vonnie”. After attending a dance that night, a special 72 year bond was created. Bernard and Vonnie were married Aug. 14, 1940. With the permission of the Fishtail school board they lived at the teacher age for the first year. To this union were born three children Karen (Jack) Robbins, Larry (Vicki) Arnold and Rick (Deb) Arnold. From 1946 – 1950 they began ranching on the West Rosebud and working various jobs to save enough money to purchase their own ranch. In 1949 they purchased the current ranch outside of Absarokee, “It was in terrible shape and I thought the price was right.” For four years, he milked his own cows to supply the cheese factory in Columbus. At this point he sold the dairy cows to begin raising sheep and Black Angus Cattle. At one time he had over 800 sheep running on the Beartooths and Stillwater River. In 1972, he sold the majority of the sheep and purchased more Black Angus. Always a steward of the land he was very proud of the tradition and the legacy that remains today as a premier Black Angus operation. Even after he moved to “town” he remained very active at the ranch well into his 80’s. Between chores at the ranch he became well known for his woodworking projects. Spending many hours “in the shop” building everything from china hutches to small replica horse drawn wagons that reminded him of his past. Giving them away to family and friends was of great joy to him.

In 2013, he moved into Shipp’s Assisted Living in Absarokee. The transition was hard as he could no longer fall asleep holding the hand of his beloved Vonnie. But he soon became a staple with the residents of Shipp’s. Always sharing his stories and being so proud to talk about his family. A family that was instilled with his hard working, loving and caring values.

Bernard was a life member of the Stillwater Wool Growers, Beartooth Stockgrowers Association, Immanuel Lutheran Church and Absarokee Lions Club. He was also an Honorary FFA member, 4-H leader, past member of the Absarokee School Board, and past Director of the Federal Land Bank.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 72 years, Vonnie, his parents, four brothers and two sisters. He is survived by his three children and their spouses. Eight grandchildren; Curt (Ardona) Robbins, Sheri (Jim) Devlin, Will (Sue) Robbins, Corey (Kodi) Arnold, Scott (Kristen) Arnold, Kevin Arnold, Jess (Dylan) Lancello, and Andrew Arnold. 12 great-grandchildren; Jonathon (Terra) Robbins, Brandon Robbins, Jordan (Brittany) Hill, Corina (Mike) Szubinski, Jayson Robbins, Tyona Robbins, Kelsey, Zach and Danielle Devlin, Kasidey and Derek Robbins, Brynley and Ryley Arnold, and Ryal Lancello. Four great-great-grandchildren; Jaxston and Oaklyn Robbins, Aubree Szubinski and Vienna Hill. Older brother Bill Arnold, Sister Clarice (Jack) Fawcett, Sister Ruth Mendenhall and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

The family would like to thank the tremendous people at Shipp’s Assisted Living for taking great care of our Dad and Grandpa. Tess, Charlene, Amber, Jackie, Sheri and Sarina and his four legged fuzzy companion Tinkerbell. Also a big thanks to Donna McClure and Riverstone Hospice.

*Quotes are from a personal biography written by Bernard prior to his passing.
James Brown Law Firm, PLLC

Meeting your needs in the following areas of practice, including lobbying and public affairs on behalf of the Montana Wool Growers Association.

- Water Law
- Natural Resource Development
- Energy Law
- Wind Development
- Business Law & Litigation
- Grazing Rights Protection
- Insurance Coverage
- Real Estate
- Tax Law
- Wills, Estate Planning, & Probate
- Zoning & Land Use

30 S. Ewing, STE 100
Helena, MT 59601
406-449-7444

Don’t forget to pay your 2016 dues to the association!

$20 + $0.06/lb wool

Dues can be paid online at mtsheep.org or can be mailed in to MWGA, PO Box 1693, Helena, MT 59624
# Breeder’s Directory

## Columbia
- **MT COLUMBIA SHEEP ASSN.**
  - Raina Blackman, Sec.
  - 2987 Craig Frontage Road
  - Wolf Creek, MT 59648
  - (406) 235-4227
  - scottblackman965@gmail.com

- **BLACKMAN COLUMBIAS**
  - Scott & Raina Blackman
  - 2987 Craig Frontage Road
  - Wolf Creek, MT 59684
  - (406) 235-4227
  - scottblackman1965@gmail.com

- **CROSSROADS COLUMBIAS**
  - Conner Klick
  - PO Box 252
  - Simms, MT 59477
  - (406) 264-5989
  - (406) 590-5172
  - 3ellers@3rivers.net

- **PRAIRIE ISLAND**
  - Jim & Margaret Eller
  - 415 Knapstad Road
  - Sun River, MT 59483
  - (406) 264-5426
  - 3ellers@3rivers.net

- **PAT & BEV GIBBS**
  - 513 Van Norman Road
  - PO Box 382
  - Jordan, MT 59337
  - (406) 977-2852
  - pbgibbs@midrivers.com

- **DOUG HITCH**
  - P.O. Box 368
  - Hobson, MT 59452
  - (406) 423-5651
  - dhitch@itstriangle.com

- **LANGHUS COLUMBIAS**
  - Gene and Mary Langhus
  - 147 Main Boulder Road
  - Big Timber, MT 59011
  - (406) 932-4718
  - langhussheep@mtintouch.net
  - www.langhussheep.com

- **DOUG & RITA PIERCE**
  - P.O. Box 134
  - Harlowton, MT 59036
  - (406) 632-4419
  - doug-pierce@hotmail.com

## Contact MWGA if you would like to be listed here

## Shropshire
- **CRAGO FAMILY RANCH**
  - Mark and Jennifer Crago
  - 22 Maki Hill Road
  - Columbus, MT 59019
  - (406) 322-9935
  - markcrago@netzero.net

## South African Meat Merino
- **GENE AND MARY LANGHUS**
  - 147 Main Boulder Road
  - Big Timber, MT 59011
  - (406) 932-4718
  - langhussheep@mtintouch.net
  - www.langhussheep.com

## Suffolk
- **MONTANA SUFFOLK ASSN.**
  - 296 Wyttenhove Lane
  - Miles City, MT 59301
  - (406) 232-1060
  - www.mtsuffolksheep.org

- **DAWE SUFFOLKS**
  - Robertta & Kevin Dawe
  - 2 Ten Mile Lane
  - Big Timber, MT 59011
  - (406) 932-6529
  - krdawe@itstriangle.com

- **HEART LAZY P SUFFOLKS**
  - Dana Penrod
  - 51 Perkins Lane
  - Miles City, MT 59301
  - (406) 234-2648
  - heartlazyp@midrivers.com
  - www.heartlazypsuffolk.com

- **KNUTSON SUFFOLK**
  - Kim Knutson
  - P.O. Box 250
  - Clyde Park, MT 59018
  - (406) 578-9175
  - kimssuffolks@yahoo.com
  - www.knutsonsuffolks.com

- **McKAY SUFFOLKS**
  - Bill McKay/Scott McKay
  - (406) 866-3368/(406) 799-5398
  - P.O. Box 71
  - Ulm, MT 59485-0071
  - http://mckaysuffolks.weebly.com/
  - suffolk406@gmail.com

## Texel
- **LEVEQUE RANCH**
  - Dale and Lilly LeVeque
  - 280 Ten Mile Rd
  - Cascade, MT 59421
  - (406) 468-2776
  - mtlevran@yahoo.com
  - www.levequeranch.com
Montana Wool Growers Association
Jesse Thompson
PO Box 25
Whitlash, MT 59545
(406) 442-1330