

RURAL LIVING YOUR WAY

LEADER

Farm Credit of the Virginias Spring 2018

WVU – Military Livestock Training and Handling

Young Farmer Profile: Linden Heatwole

WV Ewe: Love for the Lambing Life



Join us as we celebrate our #1 asset— **OUR CUSTOMERS!**

CUSTOMER APPRECIATION EVENTS

Branch	Date	Time	Location
Clarksburg	4/12	5–8	Lambert's Winery
Lexington	4/17	6–8	Virginia Horse Center Mezzanine
Ripley	4/23	6–8	Cedar Lakes Conference Center
Rocky Mount	4/24	6–8	Pigg River Community Center
Charlottesville	5/7	5–7	Woodgrill
Oakland	5/8	6–8	Alpine Lake
Lewisburg	5/10	5–7	WV State Fairgrounds
Warrenton	5/11	6–9	Warthog Brewery
Moorefield	5/18	4–7	Brighton Park
Orange	5/23	11–2	Orange Office
Romney	5/24	5–7	Hampshire Park
Roanoke	6/4	6–8	The Home Place Restaurant
Wytheville	6/5	5–7	Wytheville Meeting Center
Chatham	6/7	5–7	Olde Dominion Ag Complex
Gate City	6/8	12–2	Scott County Park & Golf Course
Halifax	6/12	5–7	Edmunds Memorial Park
Culpeper	6/13	5–7	Culpeper Office
Bedford	6/14	5–7	The Old Mill Farm
Harrisonburg	6/22	11–2	Rockingham County Fairgrounds
Leesburg	6/26	5–7	868 Estate Vineyards
Verona	6/27	5-7:30	Frontier Culture Museum
Abingdon	6/29	6–8	Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center



FARM CREDIT

*Loans for
Farms, Homes & Land!*



LEADER

is published quarterly for stockholders, directors and friends of Farm Credit of the Virginias.

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Peery Heldreth

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Address changes, questions, comments or requests for copies of our financial reports should be directed to Farm Credit of the Virginias, ACA, by writing P.O. Box 899, Staunton, VA 24402 or calling 800.919.3276. Our annual and quarterly financial reports can also be obtained by visiting our website at FarmCreditofVirginias.com.

Farm Credit of the Virginias furnishes data to credit reporting agencies. The Association's reporting efforts are important for aiding consumers in obtaining credit, assisting businesses in credit approval, providing consumers with timely and accurate personal credit information, reducing fraud and abuse, helping prevent identity theft, and minimizing errors in credit reporting. If you have questions regarding this process, please contact our Credit Desk at 540.886.3435 ext. 5038.



Change In Procedures

Effective July 1, 2018

Farm Credit of the Virginias will no longer accept third party or postdated checks.



2018 Holiday Schedule

Our offices will be closed for the following holidays:

May 28 – Memorial Day (Monday)

July 4 – Independence Day (Wednesday)

Sept. 3 – Labor Day (Monday)

Oct. 8 – Company-wide Employee Meeting (Monday)

Nov. 12 – Veterans Day (Monday)

Nov. 22 & 23 – Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday)

Dec. 24 & 25 – Christmas (Monday and Tuesday)

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Peery Heldreth

Letter from the CEO

In our recent annual report for 2017, we reported very favorable financial results that demonstrate the continued success of our customer-owners as well as Farm Credit of the Virginias' (FCV) commitment to carefully managing your cooperative. As a result of the success of these efforts, and adding in the special patronage we received from AgFirst, in early April we were able to return a record level of patronage dividends totaling \$30,000,000 to our customers.

The financial strength and stability we've built over many years continues to enable us to meet our customer-owners' needs, and the needs of new customers.

Despite the overall strength of our cooperative and improvements across sectors of our agricultural economy, we're still seeing ongoing stress in the dairy industry. We are actively working with customers being impacted by these industry pressures to find solutions to help them weather the storm. We encourage all our customers, no matter what your industry, to talk to your loan officer as soon as you recognize that you may have difficulty making your loan payments. The tools we have available to help resolve these situations are much more effective the earlier they're put into place, and our commitment is always to support our customers to the extent that we are able.

While our commitment to our customers' financial needs is unparalleled, we continue to support the education and development needs

of both our customers and of others who live in our communities. This focus on community, whether our agricultural community or our physical community filled with our neighbors and friends, is a guiding principle of FCV as a cooperative and as a responsible corporate citizen. The FCV Knowledge Center is the hub for the diverse education resources and programs that we continue to develop to benefit all our communities and contribute to a strong rural America.

Most recently, we rolled out Ag Biz Basics, a self-paced, online program to help new, expanding or transitioning agricultural business operators quickly get up to speed on important business planning processes, from goal setting and financial documentation, to cash flow and production planning, to balance sheets and

income statements. With just a four-hour time commitment, Ag Biz Basics offers a wealth of useful information in a flexible format.

Youth represent an important part of our community today and in the future, and our Knowledge Center experts have created several resources targeting this group of agricultural entrepreneurs. One such program helps educate 4-H and FFA members who are preparing to sell their animals about how to craft a strong Buyers Letter to increase attendance at, and ideally income generated by, their animal showing. We also offer youth loans to help our young audience develop an understanding of finance, scholarships to support young people planning for their careers in agriculture, and a list of local and regional youth organizations so they can find other venues to support their agriculture and development goals.

We've also developed resources for specific agriculture sectors. The Dairy Management Institutes in April collected and analyzed data

from more than 75 herds across the territory, delivering industry benchmarks to participants to help them manage and improve their operations. Our Farm Management Institute is open to a broader group, delivering insightful presentations about the ag economy and broader economic trends, succession planning and financial planning.

Our online tools include a web page listing live commodity market prices to help support effective marketing decisions. The page also includes relevant articles from respected industry publications. Other resources available on the Knowledge Center website support effective business planning, including a list of documents and reports essential for a meeting with your lender and an outline of how to approach a farm transition. We also provide a list of grant opportunities, resources for young, new and minority farmers, and a list of links to other industry organizations.

In short, FCV's Knowledge Center offers a breadth of valuable resources and useful tools to everyone in our community, and our

experts continue to enhance and expand our offerings. Their dedication to delivering effective education and resources to our constituents is matched by the dedication of all our staff to delivering expert advice and unmatched customer service. Our success in this arena is demonstrated by the exceptional ratings we continue to receive on our customer satisfaction surveys – for 2017, you, our customer-owners, awarded us an average of 9.7 out of 10! It's also gratifying to find that our customers across the board would recommend FCV to others. We thank all of you who completed a survey for your honest feedback, and all of you who recommended us to friends or family for the increased business.

We also thank those of you who have found the time to attend one of our Customer Appreciation Events, which kicked off in mid-April. We all enjoy the opportunity to spend time with our customers, learning more about you and your needs. If you haven't yet attended an event, I welcome you to come and visit with us in person. ∞



Millions of Reasons to LOVE Farm Credit!

Thanks to our combined success, we have enjoyed strong earnings and the Board of Directors has returned **\$30 million** to our customer-owners. That's double last year's total distribution. If you are looking for a lender that gives back, call us today.

Benefits of doing business with Farm Credit include:

- We offer great rates. In addition to your patronage refund, you also receive a competitive interest rate upfront on your loans, helping you maximize your money.
- We are ag experts. Our board of directors, management and employees have agricultural experience and expertise that allows them to understand your needs and challenges.
- We are committed. We have been serving agriculture and rural communities for more than 100 years — through good and challenging times — and we are poised to continue serving our communities for the next century and beyond.



The entire Phillips family wanted to join in on the patronage fun while Casey Hayes made deliveries in Oakland, MD.



Oakland, MD loan officer Casey Hayes and loyal customer David Bryte.



Matt Lohr and wife Beth were visited by Harrisonburg, VA loan officer Matt Findley during patronage delivery week.



Ricky Poole was visited by Halifax loan officer Lyle Moore with his patronage check.



Brian Wilkerson, loan officer out of Chatham, VA delivered a check to Garland Gomer.



Harrisonburg, VA loan officer, Cheyenne Rhodes delivered a patronage check to Jake Montalbano in early April.



New loan officer Jasmine Boardwine out of Rocky Mount, VA made a few special patronage deliveries and Pamela Laprade was one.



Rebecca Frantz, Oakland, MD loan officer and Leonard Custer paused for a quick photo during patronage week.

SAVE THE DATE 7/6/2018
*All cattle producers invited to attend the
 Annual Field Day held at Whitestone Farm
 Aldie, VA*

**Have you ever wished you could have an impact
 on the future of the cattle industry?**



JOIN TODAY!!

*Insure that YOU have a voice-VCA works with industry groups, media, and the government to represent Virginia's cattle producers on regulatory and policy issues

*Get the best prices for your cattle-VCA, in partnership with the VA Department of Agriculture, helps to market cattle through special graded sales, board load sales, and tel-o-auctions

*Stay up-to-date on what's going on in YOUR industry-Your membership provides you with a yearly subscription to The Virginia Cattleman-The Monthly Voice of Virginia's Cattle Industry. VCA works hard to provide and support educational opportunities for producers on a local and state level. We provide valuable and timely information to our members because we care about your success!

*Memberships also qualify for certain discounts and benefits on the things you need to keep your farm running!

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 VCA PO BOX 9*Daleville, VA*24083**

Virginia State Dairymen's – 2018 Dairy Expo

Friday, July 13 from 10 am – 3 pm

**Stoney Brook Dairy & Homestead Creamery
 2717 Wirtz Rd • Wirtz, VA**

For more information call 540.828.6960



West Virginia University®

Military Livestock Training and Handling

By: Julie Cryser

When most people think of military special forces, they envision soldiers slinking onto boats or dropping out of airplanes behind enemy lines in an old John Wayne movie.

But for soldiers enrolled in the Special Forces Medical Sergeant Course at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the first line of defense may be an antibiotic – for humans and animals.

WVU Medicine and the Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design have teamed up with the Special Warfare Medical Group at Fort Bragg to conduct Special Operations Clinical Training, a 24-day program that is the culmination of all medical training for students in the SFMS program.

SOCT is designed to help soldiers develop treatment plans, perform minor surgical procedures, document findings, and conduct patient education.

It is only at WVU, however, that students also learn to work with animals.

Students spend two days on WVU's Reymann Memorial Farm in Wardensville, West Virginia, gaining hands-on experience and veterinary training for large and small animals.

"WVU is the only SOCT site where our students get to work with animal scientists and veterinarians," said Maj. Shawn Van Tassell, group operations officer for the Special Warfare

Medical Group. "The faculty and staff have really gone out of their way to ensure our students get a phenomenal experience. Participation in programs such as these allows our medics to stay relevant and prepared for missions they could face in the future."

According to him, there are four main components to a Special Forces team: weapons, engineer, communications, and medicine. The Special Operations Clinical Training experience is the conclusion of 13 months of medical training to become a Green Beret Medical Sergeant.

This training provides soldiers with maximum patient contacts in multiple clinical specialties. It takes place in 20 Army hospitals and underserved hospitals throughout the United States over a period of 24 days. For at least 240 hours, each student operates under the close supervision of a medical preceptor and is expected to perform on the same level as a third- or fourth-year medical student.

"The skills they learn during the large animal module could be used in a variety of situations," Van Tassell said. "Special Forces teams often work in underdeveloped or rural areas, and may be called upon to diagnose or treat local farm animals in order to gain trust or build rapport with the local population."

The importance of understanding animal care cannot be understated.

"Special Forces teams used horses at the very beginning of the War in Afghanistan to ride into battle alongside their Northern Alliance counterparts," he said. "And a Special Forces Medical Sergeant may be called upon to provide treatment for the multi-purpose canines that are frequently deployed with the teams. This program exposes students to animal treatment techniques that can't be replicated in a classroom."

The partnership between WVU and the U.S. Army Special Forces began with George Bal, M.D., WVU Sports Medicine Chief. Bal spent 18 years in the Army as an orthopedic surgeon; the last seven were spent teaching at Fort Bragg.

When the Army visited WVU, representatives met with Bal and Alison Wilson, M.D., Chief of Division of Trauma, Emergency Surgery and Surgical Critical Care and the Skewes Family Chair for Trauma Surgery.

During the meeting, Army officials said they would benefit from a large animal module.

Alison Wilson just happens to be married to Dr. Matthew Wilson, associate dean for programs at the WVU Davis College, and she knew the college was up to the task.

"The Special Forces medics when deployed are considered the medical experts," Alison said. "Sometimes they have to help with animal care in a village. They get some of that training at their school in North Carolina. But they don't



have the facilities to do this. We offered this to the school as an option.”

“The faculty and staff at Wardensville have been fantastic,” Alison said. “The students come back and say they have had a fantastic time out there.”

“We’ve gotten some feedback from students after they’ve left who have used the skills they have received out there,” Bal said.

Matthew Wilson said the Wardensville facility and the faculty and staff who conduct the training there have been tremendous assets to the program. To date, nearly 70 students have been trained at the medical center in Wardensville. He said he hopes that this program will lead to other potential collaborations with the Department of Defense and the WVU Davis College.

Students spend two days at Wardensville out of the 25 total training days at WVU. The large animal module is designed to teach the students basic livestock husbandry and herd maintenance skills along with the recognition of animal diseases. Faculty and staff from the college and WVU Extension Service taught soldiers how to do physical exams, check

for common diseases, and apply preventive medicine to sheep, cattle and pigs.

Farm Credit partners with the training as well. Loan officer, Scott Ernst, and also a graduate of WVU (1995) recently retired from the military and he provides insight regarding financial stewardship and participates in the

hands-on experience helping to relay the practical application to the deployed environment. Farm Credit is also a financial supporter of this program.

“The professors at Wardensville have been amazing,” Van Tassell said. “They are incredibly patriotic and have gone out of their way to ensure our students have the best experience possible. This has created an amazing environment for learning. When we combine a great learning environment and motivated students, great things happen.”

Dr. Lowell T. Midla, a Veterinary Technical Services Manager for Merck Animal Health who volunteers with the program at Wardensville, said when he asks for volunteers, students elbow each other to be the first to conduct exams or perform procedures.

“The goal of any nation’s foreign policy should be to make friends and you can make friends by helping people,” said Midla.

“We can’t make them a veterinarian in one day,” he said. “But we can give them some tools in their tool box to help them to make friends.” ∞

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Spring Happenings at the



2018 is off to a great start for the Farm Credit Knowledge Center. In January, the 2017-2018 Ag Biz Planner Program class traveled to Raleigh, N.C. to spend two days listening to Dr. Dave Kohl, Dr. Alex White, and several other speakers and network with other participants from other Farm Credit Associations. This year's class finished their modules and turned in their business plans at the end of March; and several of them will join the Knowledge Center Team and other Farm Credit of the Virginias employees for a two and half day trip to Washington, D.C. at the end of April where they will have a chance to tell their agriculture story to legislators and staff.

February brought the 2nd Annual Knee Deep Grazing and Pasture Management Workshop series. Participants had the opportunity to hear the answers to questions such as...

"How do I get the most out of my pastures? How many animals can I successfully graze? How long should I leave them in a pasture? How close to the ground should I/can I graze without damaging the grass? How long should I wait before putting animals back on the pasture? What is overgrazing and how does it affect my production? How do I efficiently graze the pasture I have?"



The 2017-2018 graduates of the AgBiz Planner Program celebrated their accomplishments in Raleigh, N.C. in early January along with their mentors.



The 2nd Annual Knee Deep Grazing workshops took place in February.

...and many more last week during an intensive three evenings. This workshop series, which was held in partnership with Virginia Cooperative Extension, Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Virginia Forage and Grasslands Council, offered the opportunity to hear from experts in pasture and grazing management on a variety of topics related to efficient and effective utilization of their pastures. Each night was filled with information, and also included an opportunity to look at some pasture and grazing management tools and resources first hand. Participants received a binder full of resources and reference materials, and were able to engage and ask questions along the way. The last night also included a chance for participants to work on their own individual grazing management plans with an expert, and hear from Tom Stanley on the economics of grazing management. This has become an annual workshop series, and we are excited to announce that plans are already underway for one in the Lexington area in 2019.

Then, in March, the two Farm Management Institutes kicked off with one on March 1st in Weyers Cave, VA, followed by one in Moorefield, WV on March 16th. Participants spent the day with Dr. Dave Kohl and Dr. Alex White learning about global and national economics, business strategies and farm transition and succession planning. The Farm Management Institute is an annual event held in the spring of each year, one in West Virginia and one in Virginia.

In addition to these in person events, we are excited to announce the launch of several new items this spring. We have added a Distressed Loan video to our website under our educational videos, and have added a recipe section where we will be sharing recipes each month. In addition, if you have a Facebook or Twitter account, be sure to follow the Farm Credit Knowledge Center – we have started a Tip Tuesday and are posting tips and tricks to make life easier, more economic, or both, around the house and farm. Most notably, we have launched a new online program, Ag Biz Basics, designed to help farms and agribusinesses set goals and put together basic financial documents. For more information on this program, please see the ad in this edition of the Leader, and feel free to reach out if you have any additional questions, or if you would like to register!

We are pleased to be able to offer these programs, resources and opportunities to help our customers and all those involved in agriculture be more successful. To see more of what the Farm Credit Knowledge Center is up to, please visit the website at www.FarmCreditKnowledgeCenter.com and as always, feel free to reach out to any Knowledge Center Team member if you have any questions or would like to participate in any events! ☺



One of two Farm Management Institutes took place in Weyers Cave, VA the first of March.



Farm Credit **EXPRESS**, an equipment financing program offered by Farm Credit, is now available at many local dealerships.

Financing is available for farm equipment, irrigation systems, equine and ag commodity trailers. The program offers competitive rates and terms. Ask your local dealer for information about Farm Credit **EXPRESS** rates the next time you need to finance a piece of equipment.



TO FIND A DEALER LOCATION
NEAR YOU, VISIT
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EASY EQUIPMENT FINANCING

**Give Us
Your Best
Shot!**

**Hurry! Deadline for entries
is May 31, 2018.**



Here's your chance to win a prize in the **2019 Farm Credit of the Virginias Calendar Photo Contest!**

We are looking for images that include anything related to farming, ranching and rural lifestyles.

Photo opportunities might include but are not limited to crops, livestock, wildlife, scenery, or farm families and kids.

Prizes:

First Place: \$300 Second Place: \$200 Third Place: \$100

For more information and contest rules and requirements, visit:
FarmCreditofVirginias.com/news/photo-contest.aspx



KICK-START AND ENERGIZE YOUR PLANNING PROCESS!

- ▶ Aspiring to start a new business?
- ▶ Managing a business?
- ▶ Growing a business to new levels?
- ▶ Transitioning to the next generation of management?

What is Ag Biz Basics?

Flexibility is key. If you are an aspiring agri-entrepreneur, transitioning into a business as a family member or partner, or you desire to reconnect with agriculture and the land, Ag Biz Basics is for you. This program balances the passion of farming and ranching with the economic and financial side of running a business.

Ag Biz Basics is a fast-paced online program designed not only to prepare you for working with your lender, but also to position your agricultural business for success. In a nutshell, this hands-on program allows you to establish written goals and get your financial business documentation in order including a projected cash flow statement, balance sheet, and a cash income statement. Along the way, you will be introduced to a few key financial ratios that can provide guidance concerning financial performance.

Launch. Manage. Grow. Transition.

Linden Heatwole Nothing Will Stand in His Way

Cherry Grove Farm – Broadway, VA

First generation farmer Linden Heatwole has known that he wanted to farm ever since he started helping out on his uncle's operation as a kid. The process of planting a crop, watching it grow and harvesting it provided a welcome sense of accomplishment. He was also attracted to the idea of being his own boss and working outdoors.

When Linden was just 18, he bought his first tractor and hay baler and started his own business baling hay for area farms, and dedicating himself admirably to the task: "That first spring, I had to stop baling to go to my high school graduation," he says.

Linden also started custom farming back then, first providing custom hay making, and then adding custom fertilizer application a year or two later. But still, he wanted to farm his own land, a dream that came true in 2005 when he rented his first acreage and started raising high quality hay for the local horse and dairy market, while also continuing to custom farm.



Diversification Breeds Success

Linden didn't stay solely focused on hay for too long: two years after he founded his operation, Cherry Grove Farm in Broadway, Virginia, he started growing corn. He has continued to expand his acreage and his crops, and today Cherry Grove includes approximately 1,150 owned and rented acres, with more than 600 acres of crops including corn, soy, wheat and barley, 350 acres of hay, and 200 acres of pasture.

Five or so years ago, Linden added livestock to the mix with the purchase of three cows. By retaining heifers and purchasing

"That first spring, I had to stop baling to go to my high school graduation."

to protect and build his soil. In what he calls a “prescription farming” approach, he also tests plant tissue as well as soil so he can give his crops exactly, and only, what they need. “I don’t want to guess and apply the generic standard of inputs for any crop, I want to be precise in what I’m doing,” he says. “I always want to do things that are healthy for the environment, and it also makes sense from an economic standpoint.”

Linden’s commitment to conservation has earned him industry recognition: he won the Clean Water Farm Award for Rockingham County in 2016, and went on to win the Virginia Grand Basin Clean Water Farm Award that same year. In 2017, he won the Harrisonburg Rockingham Chamber of Commerce Farm Family Stewardship, an award that Farm Credit of the Virginias has sponsored for the past 10 years.

“If I’m going to do something, I’m going to do it the right way and try my best to excel,” Linden says. “These awards make me realize that my actions are being noticed and people see what I’m doing to improve the land and the water.”

The Right Financial Partner

Linden has turned to Farm Credit of the Virginias for his credit needs since his first loan in 2000, working with several dedicated, knowledgeable loan officers. “I have a good working relationship with the folks at Farm Credit, especially my loan officer,” Linden says. “The folks at Farm Credit understand my operation, and I don’t have to explain too much because they are aware of how the industry works.”

His recovery progressed following his surgery, and after six months or so he was starting to take a more active role in managing Cherry Grove. Then, in January of 2017 Linden was diagnosed with cancer, with a ping pong-ball sized tumor found in one of his Eustachian tubes, which connect to the middle ear. “I was just getting back on my feet after the lung transplant, but I said to myself that I’d been through too much to give up now,” he says. Fortunately, the cancer was treatable, and Linden is now cancer-free.

“I’ve always been determined not to let my health problems hold me back or stop

me from living my dream,” he says. “I think I’ve done pretty well at accomplishing what I wanted to because I don’t give up easily.”

A Commitment to Conservation

Part of Linden’s farming dream includes managing his crops and his livestock with conservation as a high priority. His conservation plan includes livestock exclusion and riparian buffers to protect waterways, and innovative cover crop practices, no-till planting and advanced nutrient management techniques



additional animals, he’s grown his cattle herd to 70 cow/calf pairs and 100 stocker steers. Cherry Grove participates in a farm-to-table program that sells a small portion of his meat directly to consumers. “We’re not real big in this yet, but we sell quarters, halves and whole animals,” he says. “The customer pays for the processing, we bring the animal to the slaughterhouse, and then the customer can pick up the meat or we’ll deliver it.” The rest of his cattle are sold at the livestock market. In addition to his farming operation, Linden owns a trucking business with two trucks hauling feed commodities full-time, and he works in sales and distribution

enhancement products.

“I handle products I use myself and that are used in agriculture,” Linden says, adding, “I think that being diversified in farming and in these other businesses have helped me be successful.”

Overcoming Personal Challenges

Also contributing to

Linden’s success is his team, which includes one full time and six part time employees. They, along with his then-wife Julia, were instrumental in keeping Cherry Grove Farm going strong when Linden underwent a double lung transplant in April of 2016. Linden was born with cystic fibrosis, a genetic lung disorder from which his sister died at age six. A progressive disease, Linden’s lung capacity was down to 24% in 2016, and a lung transplant was deemed the best option. “I was struggling to breathe and I was very limited in what I could do,” he says.



WV Ewe: Hardy County Couple Loves the Lambing Life

By: Jennifer Smith, WV Department of Agriculture

Drive up to the main road to Misty Mountain Farm in Fisher, West Virginia and you'll find cattle grazing as far as the eye can see. But tucked into a corner of the property is a barn dating back to the early 70's. That's where you'll find Andy and Kellan Cumberland working most evenings. The sounds of baas and bleats fill the air, along with the excited chatter of the couple's two young children, Kate, 4, and Chase, 2.

"See, they're coming. Look!" Kate points to 20-some newborn lambs just entering the pen under her father's watchful eye. "This is our sheep barn where we raise our ewes," Andy explains while giving a tour of the barn. "This is kind

of our side business. It's also our passion to raise competitive lambs and to compete at local fairs, the state fair and hopefully a national show at some point." Misty Mountain Farm got started with Kellan's grandfather, who

purchased the property in Hardy county back in the early 70s.

Her father now runs the operation with 300 head of cattle and six poultry houses.

But sheep have always been a part of the

equation. "Some of the earliest memories I have are here on the farm and here in the sheep barn with my father," Kellan reminisces. "It's a pretty special place." When her grandmother was alive, there were upwards of 400 commercial sheep on the farm. However, when she passed away, Kellan says the sheep were too much work for her father alone on top of his other duties. That's when she and Andy, newly married, stepped in. "I knew my grandmother would want us to



"It's a pretty special place."

Opposite page: Andy and his wife, Kellan Cumberland, along with their children, Kate (4) and Chase (2).

continue this, so we have.” Andy and Kellan started out with just 10 ewes four years ago. Today, that number is up to 2 rams, 60 ewes and Andy’s lost count of the lambs. “I think I slept in my truck more than I did my bed this lambing season,” he laughs. “I think we lambbed 25-30 ewes in four days!”

The ewe business isn’t their full-time gig. Andy works as a loan officer for Farm Credit, Kellan as a speech pathologist in the local school system. But their dream is to one day be fulltime farmers. “We want to create our own legacy for the kids,” stresses Andy. The Cumberland’s don’t raise their sheep for meat or the fiber, their focus is club lambs for 4-H and FFA students. “We can breed in the summer to have lambs in early winter. Those lambs are full grown by the time we’re ready to breed again,”

explains Andy. Unlike some ewe operations, Andy and Kellan prefer their clients to come to the farm to choose a lamb. “That’s my ideal, for people to come out and look at the lambs. There are a lot of online sales and pictures around.

Pictures can be misleading. There’s things pictures can’t tell you,” says Andy. “Coming out and looking with your own eyes, you can tell foot and structure placement. That’s hard to capture in a photo.” The couple also works with their customers to find the right lamb. They’ll discuss what the client is looking for and how they plan to show the animal.

“We kind of stand back and let them [the clients] do the picking. If they’re picking the right ones, we keep our thoughts to ourselves. If we feel they’re picking out something that’s not where they want to be, we’ll interject and try to explain why it may not be the lamb for

the Misty Mountain lambs have won blue ribbons at county fairs and have shown at the state fair. “It’s a tough business. There’s a lot of good sheep in West Virginia,” Andy stresses. “But we know we’re going in the right direction. We’re not at the bottom, but we’re not at the top either. To have a competitive flock in five, six, seven years, that’s our goal. This is a long-term project.” As for the kids, Kate is already showing lambs at the local level. Chase just loves being in the ewe barn with his Dad. “The kids are in here attempting to feed the lambs, maybe creating a little more dust more than anything,” laughs Andy. “But they

like to help out. They can be part of it and grow up in it.” Now that the lambing is over, Andy says he might be getting a little more sleep but there’s still the weening to do and visits from FFA and 4H members to pick out their favorite lamb. Then comes the breeding and the cycle starts all over again.

“It’s been a challenging year.

But the more challenges, the more you learn, and the more you learn, the more you want to do it,” says Andy. ∞



them,” explains Andy. “But ultimately, it’s their choice.” The cost of a club lamb from Misty Mountain Farm can go upwards of \$1,500. Andy stresses you’re not just getting a lamb but a lineage. Genetics are key. So far,

To find out more about Misty Mountain Farm, check out their page on Facebook, or call Andy Cumberland at 304-703-0460.

Farm Credit Recognizes Top Team Members

Farm Credit of the Virginias recently announced its top performing team members for 2017, recognizing the contributions of these employees to the organization's continued growth and support of the farmers, ranchers and rural homeowners it finances.

FCV's "Circle of Excellence" award recognizes new revenue generation, leadership and customer service as well as loan servicing and credit administration performance. Nine employees have earned this year's Circle of

Excellence distinction: Marilyn Adams, Dustin Bowman, David Cuddy, Rodney Dellis, Mark Haddix, Ashlie Howell, Trey Keyser, Andy Puckett and Brian Wilkerson.

"These employees made great strides in strengthening our cooperative by continuing to support our existing members with financial support and informed business advice," said Peery Heldreth, FCV's CEO. "The financial results the organization enjoyed are a direct result of their efforts and are reflected in the

patronage dividends we were able to return to our customers this year."

In April, FCV distributed more than \$30 million to its customer-owners as a result of the organization's 2017 financial performance.

"Our board and management appreciate all our employees, who are each committed to supporting our customer-owners, regardless of their role within the organization," said Heldreth. "The Circle of Excellence winners are exceptional in their dedication to our organization and their customers." ∞



From the left: Donna Brooke-Alt-Chairman of the Board, Mark Haddix, Brian Wilkerson, David Cuddy, Rodney Dellis, Ashlie Howell, Peery Heldreth-CEO, Marilyn Adams, Trey Keyser and Dustin Bowman. Not pictured: Andy Puckett.

Consolidated Balance Sheets

	March 31, 2018	December 31, 2017
<i>(dollars in thousands)</i>	<i>(unaudited)</i>	<i>(audited)</i>
Assets		
Cash	\$ 1,364	\$ 5,082
Loans	1,823,329	1,844,949
Allowance for loan losses	(15,046)	(17,461)
Net loans	1,808,283	1,827,488
Loans held for sale	1,383	1,388
Accrued interest receivable	12,798	10,127
Equity investments in other Farm Credit institutions	20,817	20,763
Premises and equipment, net	10,043	10,142
Other property owned	1,142	1,221
Accounts receivable	2,948	25,059
Other assets	2,737	2,338
Total assets	\$ 1,861,515	\$ 1,903,608
Liabilities		
Notes payable to AgFirst Farm Credit Bank	\$ 1,390,513	\$ 1,437,895
Accrued interest payable	3,542	3,634
Patronage refunds payable	1,492	25,254
Accounts payable	1,074	3,146
Other liabilities	36,303	10,858
Total liabilities	1,432,924	1,480,787
Members' Equity		
Capital stock and participation certificates	10,491	10,493
Retained earnings		
Allocated	92,568	92,568
Unallocated	325,562	319,790
Accumulated other comprehensive income (loss)	(30)	(30)
Total members' equity	428,591	422,821
Total liabilities and members' equity	\$ 1,861,515	\$ 1,903,608

Consolidated Statements of Comprehensive Income

	For the three months ended March 31, 2018	2017
<i>(dollars in thousands)</i>		
Interest Income		
Loans	\$ 24,782	\$ 23,326
Interest Expense		
Notes payable to AgFirst Farm Credit Bank	10,836	9,998
Net interest income	13,946	13,328
Provision for loan losses	500	500
Net interest income after provision for loan losses	13,446	12,828
Noninterest Income		
Loan fees	294	139
Fees for financially related services	27	39
Patronage refunds from other Farm Credit institutions	2,666	2,777
Gains (losses) on sales of rural home loans, net	119	197
Gains (losses) on sales of premises and equipment, net	157	35
Gains (losses) on other transactions	13	(144)
Insurance Fund refund	1,673	—
Other noninterest income	25	26
Total noninterest income	4,974	3,069
Noninterest Expense		
Salaries and employee benefits	5,045	4,967
Occupancy and equipment	339	343
Insurance Fund premiums	316	521
(Gains) losses on other property owned, net	(4)	(7)
Other operating expenses	1,940	1,817
Total noninterest expense	7,636	7,641
Income before income taxes	10,784	8,256
Provision for income taxes	12	14
Net income	10,772	8,242
Other comprehensive income	—	—
Comprehensive income	\$ 10,772	\$ 8,242

The shareholders' investment in the Association is materially affected by the financial condition and results of operations of AgFirst Farm Credit Bank. Copies of AgFirst's quarterly and annual financial reports to shareholders are available free of charge at www.agfirst.com, or by writing to AgFirst Farm Credit Bank, Financial Reporting Department, P.O. Box 1499, Columbia, SC 29202. Farm Credit of the Virginias complete quarterly and annual financial reports are available online at www.farmcreditofvirginias.com



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- Did you Make a Profit?

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3. Hands-on Activities

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4. Convenience

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