

The More, The Merrier

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likes to read horse and mystery books.

Kelsey has had some success participating in local and in state Lead Line competitions. She was the third-place winner at the Keystone International Livestock Exposition recently.

Chuckie also rides horses and shows sheep. He had some excitement when he was thrown off when the pony flipped backward and fell on top of Chuckie.

Although Chuckie's leg was broken, he said, "I wasn't scared to get back on him and ride."

Chuckie likes to mow the yard and wants to grow up to be a farmer.

Gordon is the only family member to have a goat. Her name is Peggy and he delights in caring for her. Gordon also enjoys riding a pony and in visiting with his grandmother who lives on an adjoining farm.

Because the Bowman family is so large, they sometimes can't afford to go to amusement parks and other high-priced entertainment. Vickilyn recalls that when she was growing up, she attended all the shows at the Fulton Opera House, and she sometimes regrets that she can't afford to expose her own children to that culture.

On the other hand, she believes that a large family has a lot of benefits.

"When I was growing up, I had no one else to ride horses with, no one to play games with, and no one to help me do chores," she said.

"Here, the kids always have someone to do something with. They spend hours playing games, building with Legos, etc. And, of course, someones always around to share the chores."

The Bowmans search for activities that don't cost money and are delighted with what they have found such as a picnic to a park concert.

"The key to successful farming is to be excited about the project your raising," Vickilyn said.

"Lamb is our family's favorite thing to eat. Our family prefers it over beef."

Some people are surprised that the children can raise sheep and eat the meat, but that is the purpose of raising sheep. Vickilyn enjoys relating how Gabriel named the first lamb he raised for meat "Dinner."

Although the Bowmans often try recipes for lamb that they see printed in magazines, Vickilyn said that she mostly prepares lamb just like beef—as a pot roast or grilled. "A recipe can only do so much," she said. "You must have good-tasting lamb to begin with."

She believes that lambs raised with no confinement and are grass fed with a little grain are tastier.

"It takes longer to finish a grass-fed lamb, but they aren't as fatty, which makes meat greasy, which is why most people complain of eating lamb," she said.

"When you eat your own meat, you know what's in it. You can't eat any healthier than that," she said.

When the Bowmans go to sheep shows, they often take along literature to hand out. Recently the Bowmans purchased and handed out 100 copies of the "Sheep



The most recent animal addition is this bunny snuggling with Kelsey.



Dalassa greets one of the Australian Shepherds used to herd the sheep in the pasture. Guard donkeys are used to protect the flock from stray dogs, wolves, and a bobcat spotted in the area.

Reporter," which includes information about sheep and activities for children.

"We meet a lot of people who don't like to eat lamb. I often ask them when they tried lamb. Mostly they admit it was years ago when they were a child," said Vickilyn.

Vickilyn tells them that it wasn't lamb. Mutton, which was served years ago, and is known to be tough and give off a strong odor has given lamb a bad reputation.

Vickilyn encourages Farm Show visitors to go to the food court and try some great tasting lamb.

The female members of the family also spin wool. They recently heard that the Columbia wool, which they shear from their sheep, does not shrink and can be machine-washed.

It's news that the Bowmans plan to spread.

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