

**Texas will be home to nation's largest wool testing lab**

By Jennifer Dorsett  
Texas Farm Bureau  
Field Editor

Texas will soon have the largest wool testing facility in the nation.

The American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) partnered with the Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension Service's Bill Sims Wool & Mohair Research Laboratory in San Angelo to build a testing lab that can service the entire nation's commercial wool testing needs.

Currently, most of the U.S. wool industry relies on a lab in New Zealand for testing, according to ASI President Benny Cox.

There was a dire need for a U.S.-based lab to test properties such as fiber diameter, length and strength, as well as calculate clean wool content and scoured yields.

"Angus McColl's group [Yocum-McColl Testing Laboratories] in Denver was the wool testing lab for most people for the longest time. But now Angus is 92 years old, and they didn't have a transition for someone to take that over," Cox said in an interview with the Texas Farm Bureau Radio Network. "Texas A&M University has a research center just north of San Angelo, which had a wool lab, but it was not big enough to service the entire industry."

Although a few other universities have sheep and goat research centers or facilities, Montana State University and Texas A&M are the only two academic wool labs remaining in the U.S., according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Sheep Industry Improvement Center.

Texas is the top sheep-producing state in the nation, with USDA data showing a statewide inventory of more than 730,000 head at the beginning of 2020.

It's fitting that the lab will be located near San Angelo, said Cox, who is the sheep sales manager at Producers Livestock Auction Company, the largest sheep and goat auction in the nation.

That's because the majority of Texas sheep are raised in the South Central and Hill Country areas, where the hardy animals thrive in the mostly arid but temperate climate.

Although there has been a shift in sheep production over the past few years toward more hair breeds, which are raised for meat, wool production remains important to the Texas sheep industry. In 2018, the latest year for which values are available, wool production contributed \$3.17 million to the state's economy.

ASI is helping purchase equipment for the new testing lab, which should be fully operational by 2022.

**Since 1889, newspapers have served Coke County beginning with the Coke County Rustler. In the 1980s, the Bronte Enterprise and the Robert Lee Observer combined to become The Observer/Enterprise.**

**The history told in these publications is fascinating and we want to share it with our readers of today. Each week, we will include items from the archives.**

**Neighborhood News**

Mr. Luther Coalson, whose life story appeared in the San Angelo Standard times recently, has received fan mail from an oldtimer in Del Rio who said he really enjoyed articles like that.

Two oldtime friends of Luther's died in the December fire at the Coronado Hotel in Trinidad, Colorado.

The Robert Lee Band Boosters Club will meet next Tuesday, Jan. 19, in the music room in the elementary wing of the school. Membership is open to everyone interested in a good school band.

Ben Bessent has been promoted to the position of new car sales manager of Mustang Chevrolet in San Angelo. His wife is the former Mary Vaughan, daughter of Mayor and Mrs. Bob Vaughan. The couple has three children, Craig, 7, Randy, 6, and Lisa, 4.

Mr. and Mrs. Delbert Shoemaker and children, Debbie, Steven, Emily, and Teresa, recently visited Mrs. Shoemaker's parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Dozier, at Delhi, La.

Mrs. Shoemaker started taking the agricultural census in December and finished up this week.

During the weekend Mrs. Jack Trimble and Mrs. Bonnie Robertson motored to Odessa to visit relatives. Mrs. Trimble visited her son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. James Coleman, and children, Linda, Kathy, and Ray Lee, and Mrs. Robertson visited her daughter, Mrs. Kenneth Hester, and Mr. Hester and children. Mrs. Trimble also visited her sister and family, the V. M. Boxes.

The foundation has been poured for the new home the Upton Mathers family is building at the corner of 14th and Eucl Streets. The house, to be finished in brick veneer, will have four bedrooms and 2½ baths.

Two blocks south of the Mathers building site bulldozers are leveling the lot where Sheriff and Mrs. Melvin Childress will build a new home.

Lavada Box, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. V. M. Box, of Odessa, was married in November to Johnnie Williams, of Odessa and Corpus Christi.

Otis Carroll Robertson and wife, Undice and two sons, Ted, and Otis Carroll Jr. of Fairfield, California, spent a week in Texas during the Christmas holidays. They visited with his father, Jim L. Robertson and it was Jim's first time to make the acquaintance of his daughter-in-law and small grandsons, and the first time for all to be together for Christmas in seven years. Motoring on to Slaton the family visited with a brother there and two sisters and Otis' mother who lives at Lubbock.

Otis has been in the Air Force for 12 years, and making the Air Force a career, he will retire in 8 more years of duty.

Mrs. Claude Carter of Harlington is here visiting Mrs. Sam Powell and their mother, Mrs. J. N. Adams of San Angelo, who is very ill with pneumonia.

The Robert Lee Observer is one of 143 newspapers in which the General Telephone Company of the Southwest is placing local advertising for 1965.

**Observations**

(A Personal Word  
By The Editor)

Peanuts may have a point. He or one of his playmates says: "Why SHOULDN'T I complain, when it's the only thing I'm really good at?"

Of course, maybe we ought to cultivate some other talent. It does seem like the good old American gripe has been well developed enough.

Did you ever stop to realize that the person you spend most time telling your troubles to has about as many as you do—just isn't whining?

Reminds me of a cartoon that ran in Yank during the war. Soldiers all remember Old Sad Sack—the saddest soldier in the war. Everything always went wrong with old Sad.

So one day he ankked in to see the Chaplain. He moaned and he groaned, and the chaplain smiled, encouraged, patted him on the back. Finally Old Sad left feeling pretty good—helped up a lot.

As Sad closed the door, all smiles, the CHAPLAIN cradled HIS hands in his arms on his desk and burst into tears.

Neighbor I drops in for a chat with Neighbor II, and for an hour unburdens a tale of woe, then leaves feeling much better. But how does Neighbor II feel?

That neighbor had a load to carry, too. Did the visitor lighten IT any, or leave it heavier and

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harder to bear?  
(Some evening when this Editor comes home all burdened down, Mrs. Editor is going to read this back to him, sure as shootin!)

**JANE AUSTIN BRUCKNER  
MEMBER OF DALLAS DAR**

The National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution has recently accepted the membership of Mrs. Howard Bruckner, "by virtue of her descent from a patriot, who with cent from a patriot, who with loyalty rendered material aid to the cause of American Independence during the Revolutionary War." Mrs. Bruckner is the former Jane Austin of Robert Lee and is descended from Lieutenant George Reeves of Virginia. While a resident of Buffalo, New York she was invited to join the Abigail Fillmore Chapter of the DAR in Buffalo, which she did. Since she has recently returned to Dallas to reside, her membership will be transferred to a Dallas chapter soon. Jane is the wife of Howard Bruckner, M.D., a Dallas physician, and the mother of a four year old daughter, Pam.

Mrs. Grace Murtishaw of Bronte was in Robert Lee Thursday and came into the office to renew her subscription to the paper. She was on her way to Colorado City to spend a week with her daughter, Mrs. W. D. Sparks and family.

See Our Assortment of Items for \$1.00 at Roachs'

**COKE HISTORY HD THEME**

Green Mt. Home Demonstration Club met Jan. 5th in the home of Mrs. Betty Hays. Many members and one child were present for the program. "Interesting facts about the History of Coke County," given by Mrs. Betty Page. The hostess served refreshments of coffee, cold drinks, donuts, and small sandwiches.

The next meeting will be in the home of Mrs. Lois Williams Tuesday, Jan. 19th.

**Notice Taxpayers**

Starting Jan. 11 I will be at Robert Lee Mon., Tues. & Wed., and at Bronte Fri. & Sat. to assist in preparing your 1964 Income Tax Returns. 20 Yrs. Experience in All Types Tax Accounting. REASONABLE RATES.

**O. T. COLVIN**  
Blackwell, Tex.  
Phone 282-2291

**HAYRICK LODGE**

No. 696 A. F. & A. M.  
Meets second Thursday night in each month. Visitors welcome.

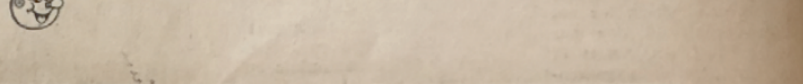
**EARL IVEY, W. M.  
DELBERT SHOEMAKER, Sec.**

**ROBERT LEE CHAPTER**

No. 187 O. E. S.  
Meets Second Thursday Night in Each Month. Visitors Welcome.

**HELEN JONES, W. M.  
CHRISTINE ROACH, Sec.**

**PATTERNS FOR PROGRESS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

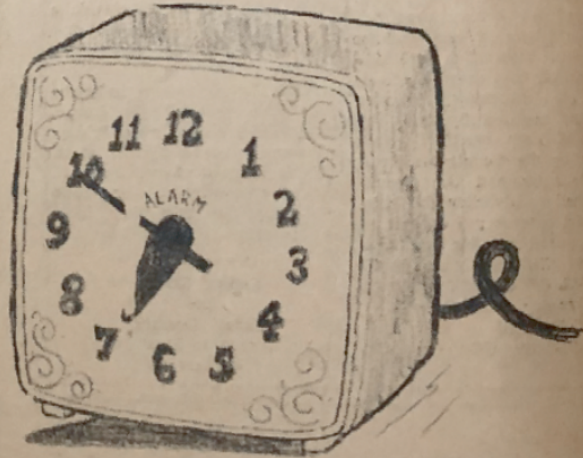


**Name Our Services!**



If you were suddenly offered \$5 on a quiz program for each of our banking services you could name in one minute, how much would you collect? Think about it. You may be losing much more than Five Dollars by overlooking one of our helpful services available to you at this bank. We welcome inquiries on any phase of our complete banking facilities.

**Robert Lee  
State Bank**



**Today many Towns are "waking up" to Community Development**



Everywhere you go these days you see towns engaged in or planning "community development." These activities range from simple clean-up programs to business modernization, new schools, hospitals, public buildings and recreational facilities as well as commercial and industrial promotion . . . making the towns better places to live, work and play. In 1965 we will run a series of ads which will picture and describe examples of community development now taking place in our service area. This is part of our area development program in which we are dedicating our efforts to assist the towns we serve to grow and progress. Growth-conscious towns are invited to contact their local WTU manager for the services of our area development representatives.

**WEST TEXAS UTILITIES**  
AN INVESTOR OWNED ELECTRIC COMPANY