

Spring 2017

The Journal of RMLA



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GOLDEN PLAINS LLAMA ASSOCIATION

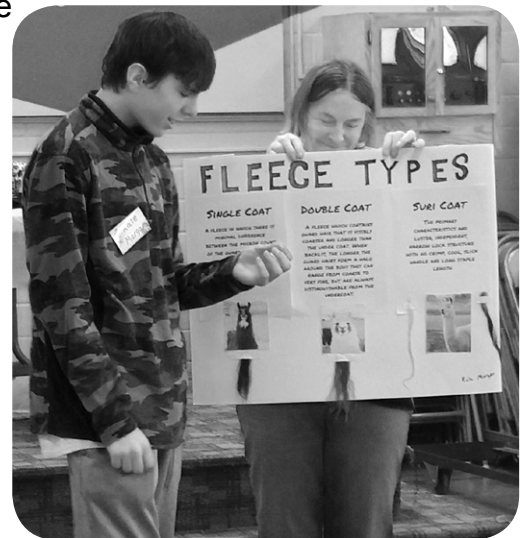
By Geri Rutledge & Patti Morgan

On February 4th 2017, the Kansas members and friends of GPLA, about 35 in total, gathered in McPherson, Kansas for a 1 day conference. Each year we try to cover different areas of interest to our members. Lauren Sill led the events of the day and it was a busy day!



In the morning, 3 craft stations were set up; participants learned about tile pictures, ceramic mugs and weaving. Sally Brandon from Shepherds Mill gave a presentation on how to prepare fiber for mill production and how the mill works. Lauren discussed the Pack Trials and how to get animals certified. Patti Morgan went over basics of Llama Showing to prepare the group for the afternoon with the animals. Vendors were set up to show the wonderful items they had made.

A social potluck lunch of delicious food was enjoyed by all. Then it was outside to the animals. We have new families, some with animals already and some thinking about it. Watching the kids with these llamas, going through some simple obstacles was so fun to watch. It's so



nice to see new interest and families getting involved with our llama/alpaca community. The weather was nice and we all enjoyed the day.

Everyone is welcome to join GPLA, the Kansas Group. The photos on this page show the educational posters made by the kids. They will be on display at this year's Kansas State Fair.



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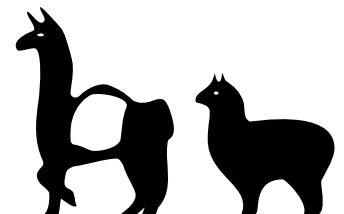
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Journal Submission Dates, Ad Rates and Specifications

Issue	Submission Deadline	Mailing Date
Spring	February 20	March 20
Summer	May 20	June 20
Fall	August 20	September 20
Winter	November 20	December 26

Ad Type	Width x Height	Member	Non-Member
Business Card	3.5"x2"	\$15	\$18
1/4 Page Horiz.	7.5" x 2"	\$24	\$36
1/4 Page Vert.	3.5" x 4.5"	\$24	\$36
1/3 Page Horiz.	7.5" x 3"	\$35	\$48
1/3 Page Vert.	2.5" x 10"	\$35	\$48
Half Page	7.5" x 5"	\$48	\$72
Full Page	7.5" x 10"	\$78	\$117
Two Page Spread	15" x 10"	\$200	\$300

- **Classified Ads**—Member \$10 for up to 50 words
Non-Member \$25 for up to 50 words. Ads must be related to the Camelid industry.
- 25 cents for each word over 50 for both Member and Non-Member.
- Ad rates are quoted per issue. Lock in the current rate by purchasing the same ad for four consecutive issues and receive a 10% discount.
- **INSTRUCTIONS FOR ARTICLE AND AD SUBMISSION:** Email all text and/or graphics content to: RMLAeditor@gmail.com. 'Camera ready' ads and articles should be submitted via email in .PDF, or any text readable by MS Word. Images alone should be submitted in .jpeg(.jpg) or .tiff.
- We suggest ads and article graphics be submitted in color at 300dpi. Both will be converted to grayscale for printing.
- For ad design or graphics that require scanning: Use address: RMLA-Ron Hinds -5704 Canyon Trail, Elizabeth, CO 80107-7814 or email to ad-design@rmla.com. Phone: 303-646-1320.
- **INSTRUCTIONS FOR PAYMENT:** Send your check, payable to RMLA, along with a copy of the ad to: RMLA Journal Advertising Manager – Sonja Boeff – 12920 W. 84th Avenue. Arvada, CO 80005 – 303-257-6733 – RMLAAdvertise@gmail.com
- Payment and ad copy must be received prior to submission deadline. See the table above for dates.

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Welcome all and welcome spring! This is a time of new beginnings and growth. We hope the articles and photos in this spring issue of the Journal inspire just that in you.



Lama folks have been busy all winter. New is everywhere: a new, fun, outrageous theme for the 2018 RMLA wall calendar; new leaders for the Fairplay Llama Event; and perhaps even a new pack trial in Colorado.

Members have been getting their animals out and about to shows and educational events such as the National Western Stock Show, the Golden Plains Conference and the Rifle Ag Expo.

The winners of the 2016 Youth High Point Awards program have been announced and the 2017 program is underway. See pages 17-18. The 2017 recipient of the Bobra Goldsmith Leadership Award is featured on page 30!

For those of you desiring serious education and training information we have Part 2 of treatment of parasites in your llamas; details on teaching event marker training, and getting everyone (you and your animals) ready to hit the trails.

It's a FULL issue! We hope you enjoy every single page of it.

Ron & Kathy

P.S. Are we missing any topics you would like to learn about? Let us know or send us an article.



Cover Photo:

Linda Hayes with Illumina and Miranda receiving The 2017 Bobra Goldsmith Leadership Award.

President's Letter

Have you noticed? Have you seen what is happening? RMLA is seeing both new, first-time, and continuing members step up to take on some very important jobs. A few of the folks who have been plugging along all these years are still here. But, the appearance of new enthusiasm and energy is sweet. Here are a few members we want to mention who are having fun and making sure RMLA meets the needs of all members.

Christine Abel is streamlining the Election process. Last year was her first time to work the committee. This year we will see some really good changes as to how we elect Directors.

Lisa Blider will be putting together an unusual but entertaining 2018 RMLA Wall Calendar. You will get a kick out of this one and we all should enjoy and have fun with the ideas she brings to an old tradition. *(See Pg 14)*

Marilyn Arnold has been the RMLA Bookkeeper for a few years and now has taken it upon herself to consolidate the Bookstore accounting into the 'corporate' side of RMLA. This will make it about as efficient as we can get.

Lauren Sill became aware by reading an article in the Journal that the Leadville 100 needed a water engineer to see that water was delivered to the high-altitude trail. Lauren found the perfect person and brought him straight to RMLA. How do you do a 100-mile race at altitude without water for the runners?

Ron Hinds knew the Bookstore inventory had to be moved to a new location. Both he and Elizabeth single-handedly found a new, safe location for the inventory and moved all of it on a cold January day.

Mary Vavrina quietly goes along putting her passion into play with her mentoring program. This is something that every new llama owner needs and appreciates.

Jeff Sandberg and Kelvin Eldridge are two new RMLA members and are so enthusiastic about RMLA that they have become the coordinators for the July Fairplay Llama Event. Each is brimming with wonderful ideas and, as a team, are putting together a great committee. And they are loving it. Look forward to a fabulous time in Fairplay in July. *(See Pg 7)*

Kathy Stanko and Ron Hinds poured over notes for well over a year, read old articles and talked to many people about how the important Fairplay Llama Event works and how it is put together. They took it upon themselves to create the amazing spreadsheet of tasks that was well received by members attending the 2016 Annual Meeting. The spreadsheet is now posted on RMLA.com and people are signing up because they can see a place for themselves, a job they like and will feel comfortable with. Small threads make a strong rope.

Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay has a passion for pack and has committed to chair the Pack Committee and contribute an educational article about packing with llamas for each issue of the Journal. Her years of experience bring good information to new and seasoned packers.

We must mention Beau Baty. This is Beau's first year on your Board. He is outstanding! Beau never lets a good opportunity pass by, he is all over it and will make it happen. Beau encouraged Kevin and Jeff to help with Fairplay.

So many folks continue to work, lead, or follow on their favorite committee, behind the scenes at events, shows and all RMLA events.



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Marshal Rutledge is simply amazing. After coming up through the ranks of RMLA as an RMLA youth, he now leads our RMLA Youth Committee and the Youth Awards Program. Members, take a good look at the centerfold of this Journal and see how our RMLA youth shine. (See Pgs 18 & 19)

To our wonderful members, our family in llamas, over half of you have renewed your dues seven weeks before the end of the membership year. This is unheard of! We trust the other half of you will also re-join by March 31 so we can get the Membership Directory to you on time.

All of us welcome the thirteen (13) first-time new members to RMLA who have joined in just the past few weeks.

As you plan for your warmer weather activities, have a wonderful time hiking, showing, running, hugging or whatever it is that you do with your critters.

Respectfully, Lougene Baird, President.

hw

NEW RMLA Members

RMLA IS ALWAYS GROWING

Cassidy & Tim Brush, Breckenridge, CO
Michelle Dally, DVM, Ridgway, CO
Cassandra Durant, DVM, Kiowa, CO
Kelvin & Brittany Eldridge, Littleton, CO
John & Phyllis Fant, Booneville, AR
Russ & Marisa Felton, Port Angeles, WA
Jessa Harms (Youth), Wilber, NE
Sam Harms (Youth), Wilber, NE
Kacey & Julia Henrich, Brighton, CO
Candyce Kaup (Youth), Silver Creek, NE
Jeff Sandberg, Lochbuie, CO
Logan Sillman (Youth), Alvo, NE
Morgan & Kimberly Skinner, Polson, MT

*Welcome! to
our Camelids'
little corner of
the world*

Additional information, farm/business name, phone, address, etc. can be found on the website under MEMBERS.

NOTE: Before youth members under the age of 18 are listed, a signed release is required from a parent or legal guardian. You can find a link for further instructions and that form at the top of the MEMBERS page on the website. *Thank you*

35th Annual

2017 Fairplay Llama Event
July 29

sign up!



By Kathy Stanko and Ron Hinds

The RMLA-sponsored Fairplay Llama Event has a long history – in fact, more than 30 years of history. As is natural, the Event has grown and evolved. Gary Carlton organized the event for 15 years and made many improvements and changes which brought more participants and spectators.

With Gary's 'retirement' last year, new leaders have stepped forward. Jeff Sandberg and Kelvin Eldridge will be the co-chairs for this year's event on Saturday, July 29th. Welcome and thank you, Jeff and Kelvin.

The Fairplay Llama Event is held in conjunction with the Town of Fairplay's Burro Days. Burro Days is now a 2-day celebration of days past. Go to www.burrodays.com for more information on the history of Burro Days and all of the wonderful activities.

This year the llama events will happen on Saturday, July 29th. So just what happens on race day?

Questions, contact
Jeff Sandberg. - 303-829-8144
Likearock87@msn.com

or

Kelvin Eldridge - 720-556-6197
Kelvin.j.Eldridge@gmail.com

To volunteer, go to www.RMLA.com
and click the link on the Home Page for
volunteering.

As the the date grows closer, you'll be able
to register for the race online at RMLA.com.

Race day registration begins at 9:00 AM on Front Street and the races begin at 11:00 AM. You can pre-register by going to RMLA.com, click on the events page, then print the registration form under the Fairplay Llama Race.



Jeff Sandberg



Kelvin Eldridge

Three different races are run beginning at 11 AM and usually ending around 1:30 PM.

- The first and oldest is the Pack Llama Race where all llamas must have saddle, panniers, and 30 pounds of gear. The object of this race is to make it through the 3 mile course to the finish line as quickly as possible. And trust us, this is competition at its finest!
- The second race of the day is the Lama Rama. This event is sponsored by Rocky Mountain Rural Health. This wacky race is run by medical professionals who dress up in costumes. Each team of four participants, dressed in costumes with a medical theme, runs with a single llama. The main goal of this event is to generate awareness of the need for organ and tissue donation.
- The third race is the Public Walk of the three-mile course when folks can take an enjoyable stroll

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NATIONAL WESTERN STOCK SHOW 2017

By Judy Glaser, Show Superintendent



Whoa! Did you miss it?! The first show of the year gets here quickly. This year it arrived even more rapidly because it was the first weekend in January, just ten days after Christmas.

Afternoon with A Llama/Alpaca has become the shining ambassador for our show. Twenty minutes is not enough time for the participants. It's one thing for people to see our llamas in their pens and a whole other experience to stand right next to them, hold a lead and be a llama owner for a picture!

The Steaming Bean Mining Camp was up and running! Saturday the performance classes demonstrated the versatility of the llama as well as the exhibitor! Wally Juntilla and Maryan Baker managed the numbers, moving everyone smoothly through the courses. There was a large showing of entries as well as a good crowd. We had a good number of youth participating too, new and seasoned. Look for them in the shows to come!

The Rocky Mountain Region does not shy away from presenting and representing sound confirmation in the halter classes. Take your winners to Nationals!



We were pleased to have a new fiber judge work with the walking fiber classes. Gogi Villanueva from Oregon gave much insight into not only the quality of the fiber she was judging but what would it could best be used for. Congrats to our fiber llamas!

Congratulations go to Linda Hayes on her achievements and being awarded the Bobra Goldsmith Leadership Award.

A huge thanks to all the exhibitors and the people behind the scenes. It does take a VILLAGE!



with a llama and just get a feel for the wonderful world of llamas at a slower pace. Many llamas are needed for this part of the event.

The Llama Lunacy Course for the children is free and opens around noon. Each child who walks a gentle PR llama through the small obstacle course receives a ribbon and a coupon for an ice cream cone at the Silver Scoop Creamery.

This year instead of watching someone else head down that trail and off over the horizon, please join us in Fairplay for the annual Fairplay Llama Event. It could just change your life forever.



This Year's Show Fleece....

By Judy Glaser, Certified ALSA Fleece Judge

Shearing for a show depends upon a few things. It depends on the time of year, length of fiber and skirting the fleece for competition.

For llamas 24 months of age and under, the length of fiber should be a minimum of three inches with no maximum. Over 24 months of age, the length of fiber should be a minimum of three inches and a maximum of eight inches. That first shearing of the year will yield your best length. If your show is in the dead of winter, it's hard to justify taking your llamas' winter coat off and having them parade around in their bathing suit.

You'll also need to look at what shows you plan to attend throughout the year. With this said, one must understand that a shorn fleece has a "life span". The first show a shorn fleece is shown in, it's in its best shape. This means that it was laid out and skirted from your hands to the bag. In the

judging process, a fleece is gently removed from the bag but from there, it may become more jumbled and areas picked out by the judge for evaluation. Once home, it's your job to get it back out of the bag and let it breath. Fleece can felt just sitting in a bag.

When you take it to the next show, take the care you did when it went to the first show. That same fleece can be shown for two years, within the date of the show. So, there is a probability of having two of the same llama's fleece in two different age groups.

Part O in the ALSA Handbook has all the information concerning the fleece divisions.

Further questions can be forwarded to me at judy.glaser@yahoo.com. Please let me know how I can help!



Parasites, Part II: Treatment and Control Strategies

Editors' note: This is Part 2 of our refresher 'course' on parasites found in camelids. Part 1, An Overview of Parasites, was presented in the Winter 2016 Journal.

In Part 1 an overview of common gastrointestinal (GI) parasites was provided. In this article, treatment and control strategies will be discussed.

Before we treat for GI parasites, we really need to know what the camelid is infected with and how severely. This is most easily determined using a fecal flotation test. A sample of fecal pellets is mashed up and mixed with a solution that helps the eggs (e.g. nematodes) or oocysts (e.g. coccidia) to float to the surface. There are several types of fecal flotation methods available. I think one of the best flotation methods is a double centrifugation method with a salt or sugar solution. The sample is spun at a high rate which helps pull the eggs to the surface of the fluid and attach to a glass coverslip for examination under the microscope. There are other fecal flotation methods available; the main differences are the types of solutions used, processing methods, and how well they float the heavier eggs/oocysts.

Fecal flotations can be performed "on farm" by owners/managers, veterinary clinics, private laboratories, and university diagnostic laboratories. It is recommended to find out what method is being used since some labs will report "few/moderate/large" amounts of eggs/oocysts seen and other times you will get an egg/oocyst count per gram of feces. This latter information is helpful for evaluating response to treatment or if there is a potential for treatment resistance. If you are performing your own farms' fecal flotations, I recommend checking in with your veterinarian or a diagnostic laboratory every so often to make sure your evaluations are correct. Some plant pollen and seeds and air bubbles can look similar to coccidia. Also microscopes can start having issues and lead to misleading results.

I recommend checking individual animals if concerned and do periodic fecal flotation testing of your entire herd or a sampling of the herd, depending on the number of animals. It is good to test some of the high-risk animals such as crias, sick or poor growing/weight loss animals, in addition to a few healthy animals. One recommendation for herd evaluations is to test 10% of a pen or a minimum of 6 animals per pen.

When you get your lab results back it is important to remember that there will always be the potential to see eggs/oocysts in a fecal sample. It is impossible to "sterilize" the GI tract of parasites and tolerating a small number also helps keep the immune system stimulated to help keep the infection in check. This number varies with many factors such as regional environmental differences, herd stocking density, closed versus open herd, juveniles versus adults, etc. Therefore I strongly recommend talking with your veterinarian to determine the best deworming strategy for your animals.



In the past, veterinarians, owners, and drug companies recommended or used a more blanket approach to deworming. This conventional strategy of regular deworming is one of the contributing factors to the development of widespread resistance to deworming medication (anthelmintic) in many parts of the world. The GI parasites tend to retain drug resistance genes more tenaciously than most bacteria do for antibiotic resistance genes. In fact, drug resistance is thought to be a permanent characteristic of a given resistant worm "line." As with antibiotics, deworming medications should be considered a resource to be preserved, because they do create selection pressure on the worms!

Recent data also indicate that, for most livestock populations, **80% of the worm burden in animals is concentrated in only ~ 20% of the animals.** The use of regular fecal egg counts, body condition scoring, and production parameters such as weight gain/loss can be used to help determine this high risk 20% population. In an ideal situation, this high-risk group would be removed from the group; however that is not always acceptable to owners. These animals should be dewormed as needed while limiting deworming to the remainder of the pen mates, and even better, kept separated with a companion to reduce exposure to the rest of the pen mates.

Unfortunately there is no a single anthelmintic (deworming) product that can treat all the various parasites so in some cases an animal or group of animals may be provided a couple of different medications. Some of these are over the counter and can be

continued on next page

bought in feed stores and online without a veterinary prescription, whereas others do require veterinary prescriptions.

Common deworming products are listed in the table on page xxx

Coccidia (Eimeria species)

Treating an animal for coccidia will not immediately resolve the loose feces or diarrhea. The intestinal tract requires time to heal due to the damage the coccidia organisms cause. Diarrhea may persist for a couple of weeks so provide good nutritional support, keep quarantined with a companion, and provide additional supportive care as recommended by your veterinarian.

Medications aimed at prevention and reducing shedding of coccidia organisms are useful additions for farms that have persistent coccidia problems. Continued problems are usually due to high stocking densities, favorable coccidia weather, lots of juveniles, animals coming/going from the premises.

Nematodes [e.g. Strongyles (Haemonchus), Nematodirus, Trichuris, etc.]

Try to use only ORAL treatment to decrease GI parasite resistance. Following the use of an injectable product, the medication is secreted into the gastrointestinal tract over an extended period of time unlike when an oral medication is used. This longer persistence of the medication in the intestinal tract exposes the GI parasites to a longer subtherapeutic level of medication and aids in developing resistance.

Injectable and topical products can still be used for other medical conditions but these routes should not be used for GI parasite control. Also absorption of topical products is not known and it also can gunk up the fiber if not applied directly to the skin.

In addition to treatment strategies, management methods should be implemented as these can greatly reduce exposure and risk of disease due to GI parasites and reduce or eliminate the need for deworming treatments.

- ✱ Dung pile management – clean up the feces before the parasites have a chance to hatch out. Juveniles with diarrhea are not always fastidious about the dung pile and can defecate in other areas. Also contaminated feet (animals and people) can lead to pen contamination.
- ✱ Move to dry lot management methods or increase dispersal of animals.
- ✱ Do not feed on the ground and keep spilled feed cleaned up around feed bins, troughs, etc. Ensure good nutrition and trace mineral status for a healthy immune system.
- ✱ Reduce stocking density and stress from overcrowding or peer pressure.
- ✱ Quarantine animals showing signs of diarrhea.
- ✱ Increase farm diversity and alternate species on pasture. If using cattle or small ruminants, this isn't as effective due to sharing similar nematodes but equine, turkeys, chickens, or guinea fowl will reduce contamination outside of the dung pile area. Note: The coccidia found in domesticated fowl are not the same species that infect camelids.



An increasing number of owners want to use more organic treatment and prevention methods. There is a lot of web based discussions on products such as diatomaceous earth and copper oxide wires. Research has found that these products are not effective in treatment or preventing parasite infections. There is research occurring in the use of plants high in condensed tannins, however the plants are not that palatable and are considered invasive species in some areas of the country so I do not recommend their use until we learn more. Organic methods that can help include using the management strategies discussed above and routine fecals to determine if there is a need to treat with the traditional medications.

continued on next page

Common deworming products

Trade Name	Generic Name	Purpose	Duration
Coccidia (Eimeria species)			
Albon (and generics available)	Sulfadimethoxine	Treatment	5-14 days; longer duration for <i>E. macusaniensis</i>
Corid	Amprolium (1)	Treatment, prevention/reduction in shedding	5 days, 6-14 days for <i>E. macusaniensis</i> . See note below.
Marquis	Ponazuril (2)	Treatment	One time
Baycox	Toltrazuril (3)	DO NOT USE	
Deccox	Decoquinat	Prevention/reduction in shedding	Daily during high risk times (parturition, juveniles). Can be top dressed or formulated into pelleted feeds with a veterinarian's prescription
Salinopharm, Bovatec, Rumen-sin, and others	Salinomycin, lasalocid, monensin (4)	Prevention/reduction in shedding	Not recommended.
Nematodes [e.g. Strongyles (Haemonchus), Nematodirus, Trichuris, etc.]			
Prohibit, Levacide, and others	Levamisole	Similar modes of action so parasite resistance to one of these is likely with the other products	Once
Rumatel, and others	Morantel tartrate, pyrantel pamoate		Once
Ivomec, Dectomax, and others	Ivermectin, doramectin, (5)	Treatment	Once
Panacur, Safe-guard, Valbazen, and others	Fenbendazole albendazole, (6,7)	Treatment	Various protocols depending on infection load. Usually once or once daily for 3 days are common.

- (1) This medication has been associated with polioencephalomalacia in some livestock species. It is safe at the intended dosage and if used as directed. For longer duration treatments (>5 days), some veterinarians will prescribe thiamine supplementation. Need to treat individuals rather than the water since camelids, especially crias, often don't consume enough water to ensure adequate intake.
- (2) Only ponazuril is efficacious against all coccidia life stages. The medication is effective in treating clinical coccidia infections with one dose.
- (3) Baycox is being imported by owners and unfortunately prescribed by some veterinarians. This product is not legal for use in the US. It is commonly used in other countries for treatment of coccidia in a variety of species. In the US the equivalent drug is Marquis (ponazuril). It was originally used to treat a protozoal infection in horses.
- (4) There are reports of adverse reactions and deaths, however it is unknown if the deaths were due to overdose or actual adverse reactions. Reports are generally anecdotal while some farms have been using some of these products without problems. Please consult with your veterinarian before using.
- (5) There is considerable GI parasite resistance to avermectins in camelids due to use in *Parelaphostrongylus tenuis* prevention in eastern US. Trichuris is resistant to avermectins so need to use benzimidazoles.
- (6) Nematodirus appears to be relatively resistant to treatment so higher dosages are typically needed.
- (7) Albendazole should not to be administered during first third of gestation as it is potentially teratogenic.



UPCOMING PLTA PACK TRIAL

By John Fant, Certifier - Pack Llama Trail Association

Many of you may have read the article "Hello from Mount Hope" in the Fall 2016 Journal. In that piece, I mentioned a pack trial in August 2017 to be held in conjunction with the Leadville 100 Race. It is still in the planning stages, but hopefully I will have everything finalized in the next month. So, warning in advance, it will not be a normal pack trial. It will show you what you and your llama are capable of doing. It will be held during the third weekend in August.

The first day will be Friday the 18th, which will be a basic and an advance trial level going up to the Mount Hope Aid Station base camp. The basic course will be 3 + miles in length and the advance course will be 5 miles total. Check the PLTA website, www.packllama.org, for details on what you can expect on the trials. We will be spending two nights at the pass, Friday and Saturday. The second day of trials will be held on Sunday the 20th. It will consist of the same return trials with a briefing and awards ceremony afterwards.

The reason for the day in between is for the Leadville 100 race. If you are not familiar with this race, it is a 100-mile foot race that runs through the backcountry and over Mount Hope. Plus, I want everyone to have the opportunity to witness this race for themselves. The

Mount Hope Aid Station has been manned by volunteers within the llama community for years. They pack supplies and equipment up on llamas and bring it down. They provide food, drink and medical aid to the runners. Take time and look up this race for more information.

The Mount Hope Aid Station does need volunteers. Besides the great view, on Saturday you can help with a great cause. If you are interested, please contact Gary Carlton at llama@jmhfarm.com

I will be putting up a Facebook page with the details soon. If you are interested and want more information about the trial, I can be contacted at coloradopacktrial17@gmail.com. Please feel free to contact me. Hope to see you soon!



Magnificent Men of the Rocky Mountains Come "Strut Your Stuff"!

Calendar Committee: By Lisa Blildar, Chair ; Ron Hinds, Graphics

We are looking for photos for the 2018 RMLA "Fun-d Raising"
Calendar... But this year we have a special theme!!

We are seeking photos of our "Special Guys" being partially clad while wearing shorts, swimming trunks, Speedo, etc. hidden behind AND "showing off" their favorite Llama(s) and/or Alpaca(s) or prop of your choice!

Men: here is what we are looking for... So, be very creative for your photo shoot:

- Pick your own "prop" to cover those important areas worth covering!
- You can choose your theme/ setting to emphasize your hobbies, occupation, lifestyle, your sense of humor & personality. For example, Lisa's husband, who is always repairing fencing and loves to hike, chose to use a post hole digger as his "prop" while showing off his hiking boots! (He was wearing a piece of clothing.)
- If your photo is chosen, we will attempt to place it in your birthday month and we will add your birthday date (no year!) so fans can send you a birthday wish!

So, dust off that weight machine & head to the tanning booth!

WE NEED PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY June 18, 2017, (Father's day)

If you want to participate, contact Ron Hinds and Lisa Blildar at 2018calendar@RMLA.com
...and you will be mailed a package:

1. Complete instructions, photo requirements and form for your name, address, etc.
2. Sample full color photo(s) from the Ohio Llama calendar printed in 2005.
3. Instructions to send your photo(s) online.
4. A release form that MUST have your original signature and be returned in the envelope.
5. A return address label to mail forms back.
6. Optional: A \$25 check and a Business Card for the Calendar and for The Spring 2018 Journal.
Don't have a business card? Ron can fix that (@ no co\$t)

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Lisa Blidar at 330.701.6950 (yes, it is 330) or Ron Hinds at 303.646.1320
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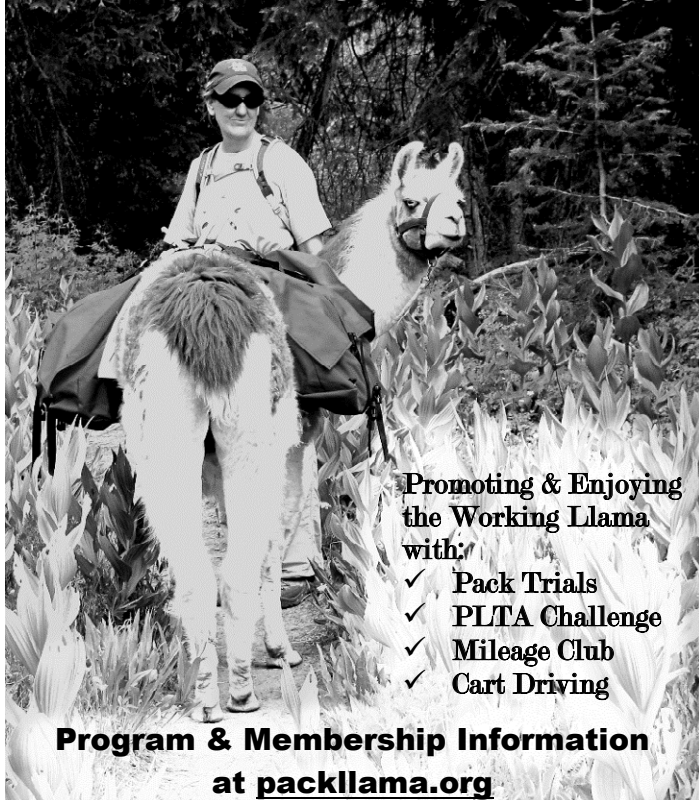
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PLEASE TOUCH! ||

By Reba Matern, Storybook Alpacas, Ohio

Reprinted from TopLine, May 2016,
Ohio River Valley Llama Association

It's done! Shearing is finished and our yearly harvest sits in a rainbow of the barn. Next it's skirting and sorting, deciding what to send to the Co-op collection and what to have processed at the mill. Then there's the wonderful anticipation of waiting and the sweet satisfaction of opening boxes of elegant yarn when it arrives back from processing. As I take a moment out to write, the fiber is calling me. I just can't wait to get my hands into it!

Because we have a fiber-minded shearer, the sorting won't be so hard. But going through our fiber will do more than make my hands happy. Looking through each alpaca's fiber also gives me a chance to evaluate our herd for health, breeding decisions and processing choices. It's hard to really know your alpacas until you've had your hands in their luscious fiber.

Visitors laugh when they read our sign that says "Please Touch," but you just can't beat the luxury of good alpaca. It seems that our whole world has gone "online." But though new advances in technology can almost bring you into the room with sight and sound, touch is still missing. The hands-on of actually feeling alpaca is truly a sensory opportunity that you just can't get on line. Oh, I can tell you that it's warmer and stronger and lighter than wool and that it's so durable that garments have been found almost entirely intact in 2000-year-old archeological finds. I can tell you that it wicks moisture and keeps your feet from getting blisters. I can even tout the benefits of its non-wrinkling and odor resistance and the luscious drapiness when it is knit in to something beautiful. But until you touch it, you'll never know the delight of alpaca. Until you wear it, you'll never truly understand the answer to "why alpaca." But once you've felt good alpaca, it will explain the opportunity for luxurious products from practical socks to high end sweaters.

Alpacas are prized for their luxurious fiber. That's what they told us when we started our herd. But the profit on the breeding stock was so high for many years after alpacas first arrived in the states that much of that luxurious fiber ended up stored in barns somewhere

without being put to use. More effort was put into the breeding stock than the fiber it provided. Then something wonderful happened. Disaster happened. Funny how that works.

When the economic crash happened in 2008, it caused alpaca prices to tumble just like prices on everything else. I'm sure you're asking how that could be wonderful. Although it's not

particularly wonderful for breeders like us who didn't have a chance to get in on the sale of alpacas at fantastic prices, in the long run I believe it will be wonderful for the alpaca industry. Not only do the lower prices on alpacas give many a chance to get involved in the industry that never could have been in the beginning, it has turned the focus of the alpaca industry to its luxurious fiber. From individual processing for farm stores to commercial processing, from a renewed interest in fiber artisanship to the return of textile industry, and even the incredible benefits of alpaca insulation, efforts are being made in all areas of the use of alpaca fiber. And as efforts are being made to bring textiles back to our country, it leaves plenty of room for growth of the alpaca industry to meet the needs for enough fiber for commercial purposes.

So, go to an alpaca farm near you. Get unplugged and "Please Touch." See why alpacas are populating the pastures of our country in record numbers. But just a warning, they'll not only warm your feet, they'll warm your heart as well!



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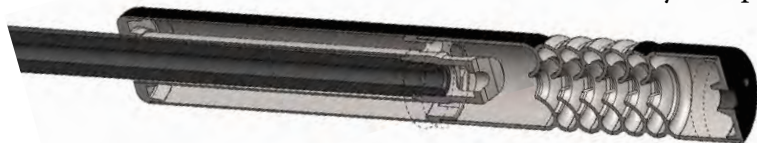
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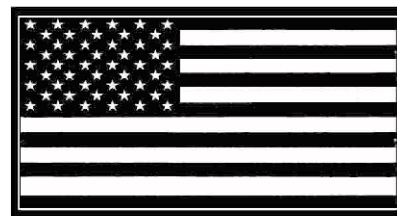
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IT'S A WRAP!

ANNOUNCING THE YEAR OF 2016

By Marshal Rutledge,
RMLA Youth and 4H Chair

YOUTH ACTIVITY 2016

In 2016 there were 11 participants in the YAP program. The following list shows the number of participants attending each activity. Very impressive!!!

8 LLAMA ALPACA CONFERENCES
12 PACK TRIALS
11 MEDIA INTERACTION
13 SCHOOL FARM DAYS
16 NURSING HOME VISITS
27 EPWM SILENT AUCTION
8 CHURCH MEET AND GREET'S
7 SHOWMANSHIP CLINICS
52 4H MEETINGS
4 MOSIAC VISITS
8 LOCC LLAMA SHOW
8 ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGIONALS
8 KANSAS STATE FAIR
5 NATIONAL WESTERN STOCK SHOW
3 GRAND MESA/KOKOPELLI SHOW
16 ESTES PARK WOOL MARKET
6 ROUND ROBIN
3 CSU VET TECH SCHOOL
3 GREAT WESTERN ALPACAS SHOW
2 ALL AMERICAN
9 LLAMA CAMPS
2 BECAUSE OF THE ECONOMY SHOW
16 FARM VISIT DAYS
4 LARIMER COUNTY FAIR
6 NEBRASKA STATE FAIR
2 WALKING FIBER CLINIC
6 PARADES
9 SHEARING DAYS
9 ESSAYS SUBMITTED
2 BOMGAAR FARM DAYS
4 STARS N STRIPES SHOW
5 POLK COUNTY FAIR
6 HOSPITAL FUN FAIR



The Youth Awards Program High Points recipients for 2016 are Christian Abel, Malachi Abel, Kira Leland, and Alexandra Leland. The 11 youth in this year's program participated in over 300 activities across 6 states. The youth join RMLA as a member for \$25, then record their activity by logging onto RMLA.com and entering their events. They attach pictures and event information to explain what the purpose of the activity is.

It was amazing to watch the youth entries over the summer months. I can't say enough about the youth, parents, grandparents, 4H leaders, and others who sponsored these kids and helped them throughout the year. Just think of all the public contact these kids had with over 300 events, and the education they gained and gave along the way.

During the year we offered double or triple points for certain events during certain time periods. At times you had to wonder,



continued on next page



are the kids reading the Journal? YES. YES. Because the activities rolled in during these offers. And the feedback from the youth to others? "Did you see me in the Journal?" "I was in the Journal!"

The Top 4 Youth were so close in High Points and attending events, it was crazy to watch. Christian and Malachi would be out front and then here comes Kira and Alex. The best part of this is, the kids have no idea where they are in competition with the other kids, because it's all computer entry and some don't see each other because of the distance between them. Throughout the year there was a steady stream of entries into the database made by the 11 youths participants. And once in a while they would miss the deadline to enter. So there are more events out there that are not entered!

The photos are great and have been used in the Journal throughout the year.

So here we are, off to another year of amazing kids and fantastic events. All the information to join the YAP Youth Awards Program can be found at www.RMLA.com. Youth must be a member by paying their \$25 dues by April 15th and the program is 365 days, the entire calendar year. Once again, we will find things that offer double points. And I'm pretty sure we will do triple points for the items (\$15 value or more) for the Estes Park Silent Auction. So keep an eye on the Journal and watch those email blasts. A great big round of applause for these kids getting out there, sharing our animals with the public, gaining their own education and sharing it with others. Looking forward to 2017 and seeing what you all can do.



ALL FIRED UP? AND READY TO GO!

by Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay, Chair, Pack Committee

As the snow swirls around the barn, summer packing adventures into the backcountry seem so far away. But before we know it, the days will get longer, the grass will grow again, and the llamas and I will look with longing towards the mountains and dream of wilderness trails and nights under the stars in Yellowstone's backcountry.

camaraderie we enjoyed and the llamas who are not with us anymore. I also remember mistakes I made over the years. In fact, I believe that mistakes have an effective way of teaching us.



We were all fired up and ready to go. Four women, six llamas, the wild country waiting for us. Nothing could stop our enthusiasm or our ignorance. The mountains beckoned, the air was warm, the panniers were filled with tents, sleeping bags, kitchen gear and food and the llamas were loaded in the trailer as we headed down Yellowstone's winding roads to the trailhead. We were going to do a "training trek", to get us and the llamas in shape for the season ahead, except that our goals were "a little" too ambitious.

As the llamas snuggle into the straw and I stand bundled up looking south to where Yellowstone lies frozen under mountains of snow, I remember the many treks we have done together, the adventures and

We had done only marginal getting in shape training before heading out. I had not been on this trail before but it looked good on the map! After an enjoyable hike to our first campsite,



we left too late the next morning. The hike took us to the base of Bliss Pass in Yellowstone's Northeast corner, then up a badly rutted trail winding steeply up the mountain. Halfway up, we found ourselves in the midst of a thunderstorm and icy downpour. It was getting late in the day, we were cold and the llamas were tired. So much for "easing into" the season!

The sun came back out but the rain had changed the trail condition from bad to worse as we trudged on up. DotCom's legs started to shake. He sat down, exhausted. We stopped on the narrow trail. The gorgeous views didn't help

continued on next page

All Fired Up? And Ready to Go!..., continued

and there was no turning back. We had to make it to our reserved campsite at Slough Creek on the other side of the pass.

increase muscle tone and stamina, this routine will get both you and your llamas in shape and ready for an enjoyable packing season.

We divided our group. I went ahead to the top, unloaded Amadeus, my lead packer and went back with him to get DotCom's panniers. Then the rest of the llamas and people trudged up the mountain. On top, we lightened DotCom's load by distributing it onto the other llamas and people. The sun was slowly going down as we hiked down the other side of the mountain. By the time we entered the forest, it was pitch dark. Amadeus was showing fatigue and kept sitting down. I felt bad but there was nothing we could do but try and get to our campsite. We were now in survival mode. This should not have happened. I had underestimated the distance and elevation gain and overestimated the llamas' strength at the onset of the season. Even though my llamas had packed in years before, this choice of trail for a training trek with minimal prepping was a big mistake.

Lesson: Start with a few hours and with minimum elevation gain. With llamas new to packing, stop often and let them look around and graze. Make it fun for them. Bring grain. If possible, bring experienced packers along, so

Lesson: As you prepare for the summer packing season, set the bar low for your first hike out to get yourself and the llamas in shape. Use a trail you know. Hike up a road behind your property or trailer your llamas to a nearby state park. If your llamas are used to packing and are out on the trails regularly year after year through the trekking season, they require less time to get back in shape than if you only go out once or twice or if this is the first trekking season for your packers.

Your llamas have been lazing around all winter while you have been skiing and so they need a period of time over which to build up their strength and stamina. Pace yourself and your llamas to go out on the trail every other day or so for 3 to 5 days with increasing mileage each time and increasing weight in the packs. As you



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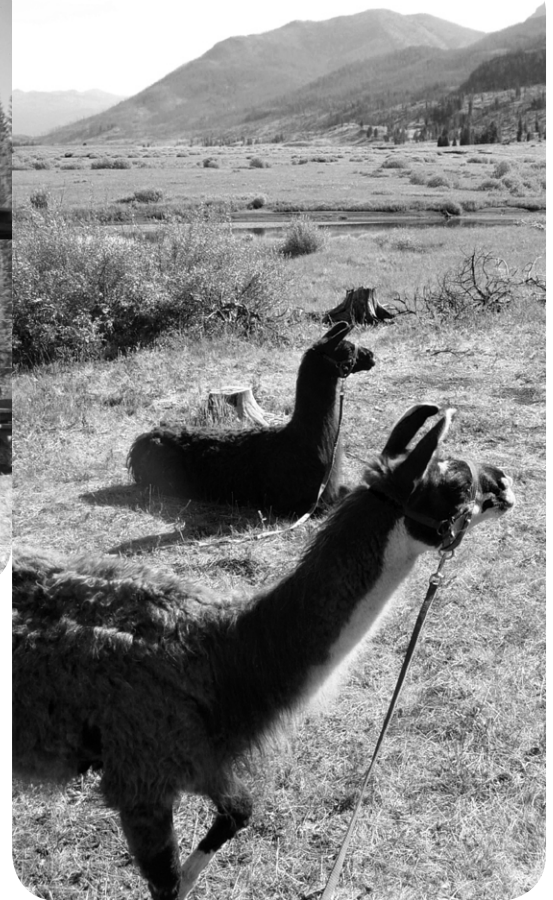


the rookies can learn. This is also a good time to practice tying two or more llamas together. You may need to do that on a narrow mountain trail or when crossing a stream.

After a few hourly or half-day treks, go on an overnight trek if possible so the llamas learn (or remember) the routines of camping. This routine will be good for you as well to get ready for hiking and packing and dealing with unforeseen situations that often arise and require extra strength and energy. Remember, always have extra: extra strength, extra time, extra water, extra shelter and so on.

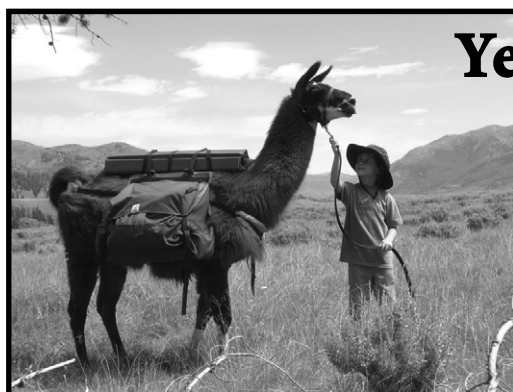
Don't forget to check and clip your llamas' toenails and shear their winter wool off in preparation for packing season. A hot llama with sore feet will not be a happy hiking companion.

We were unable to make it to our designated campsite. The humans took refuge on the porch of a park service cabin, the llamas slept tied to a hitching post. We crammed the food panniers into the outhouse and hoped it was bear-proof. We had only a vague idea of where we were. There was no moon. As we awoke the next morning, Yellowstone's stunning landscape was displayed before us, Slough Creek glistening in front of the



cabin, a blue sky beaming. We had made it through the night. We were saved! The hike out was easy, the llamas were refreshed and I silently promised them and myself never to take them on a trek without adequate training again!

Lesson: Don't be over-ambitious. Get yourself and your llamas up to speed before you climb a mountain. Before you get all fired up, make sure you are really READY TO GO!



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Using Event Marker Training with Your Camelid

by Marty McGee Bennett

This article is a basic introduction to Event Marker/Clicker Training along with some of the specific considerations for using this method with camelids. The process of pairing a specific marker with a behavior and then offering some sort of reinforcer is essentially the same, whether you are training a dog, a giraffe, a parrot, or a camelid. In this article I am presenting the basics of the process and some specific information about how to create a good physical set up that will help when working with camelids. There are many fine books on the subject of event marker training and workshops for dogs in almost every town. Learning with dogs is a great way to learn the process.

If you are really keen, you can go to a chicken camp. These are 2-6 day trainings with chickens where you learn the mechanics of clicker training and the science behind it. I have attended a chicken camp and found it to be a lot of fun and very helpful. It gives you a LOT of respect for the learning ability of chickens! I

animal and it is up to you, the trainer, to figure out what is sufficiently important for the animal to stay in the training game and work. Food is the most logical choice but there are other things that camelids find reinforcing. An escape route if they are concerned, TTouch bodywork if they have learned to appreciate that, or in the case of males, access to a female. More information about food options later in this article.

Think of the mark like the shutter of a camera. The mark is delivered as precisely as possible at the moment the desired behavior occurs and the reinforcer is then offered as soon as is practically possible—usually within 1-3 seconds. Markers can be a sound such as a clicker, whistle or a sound you create with your voice. Marks can also be a visual signal. Whatever your mark is, the more consistent it is, the better it works. The most important thing is that the animal understands that the mark is going to result in the offer of a desired outcome, again usually food. From this point forward for simplicity's sake I am going to use a clicker as the marker and food as the reinforcer and she, llama or alpaca to refer to the animal.

Charging the Clicker

You can teach your llama or alpaca to make the connection between the clicker and the food by doing what is called 'charging the clicker' or helping the animal-student become "clicker-wise." This process is quite simple—click and then treat (C/T) enough times in a row, usually 5-8 repetitions, so that the alpaca or llama begins to expect that the food follows the sound of the clicker.



also teach a clicker training day or half day as a part of my CAMELIDynamics clinics. Check the workshop information to see if event marker training is on the agenda for the specific workshop you are interested in.

What It Is...

Clicker training is actually more properly called Event Marker training. The clicker is only one of many choices for marking a behavior. The key concept is that you are marking a behavior that you will reinforce (usually with food) within a few seconds. A reinforcer is something that is meaningful for the ANIMAL and that the animal will work for. There are many options depending on the



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Observe your animal closely looking for indications after the click that your animal is expecting the food. Indications might be a pricking of the ears forward, turning the head moving or in the direction of the handler. The location of the food as it is delivered is important and it should be somewhere that is in neutral territory—as in not in your personal space. Animals should learn to be polite as they eat the food and should wait for it to be offered in a space that is between the handler and the animal.

Teaching a Behavior - The Basics

Once your animal is clicker-wise or at least there are indications that the clicker has some relevance, you can begin to pair the delivery of the click with a specific behavior. Once the alpaca or llama begins to figure out that the click and behavior and reinforcer are all related she will begin to deliberately offer the behavior you have marked to get the reinforcer. When it becomes very obvious and consistent that the animal is offering a specific behavior to get the reinforcer, it is then time to put the behavior on cue.

Putting a behavior on cue means teaching the animal a very specific indicator that is paired with a particular behavior. The verbal cue “sit” means something very specific—it means to a dog that he must arrange his body so that his butt is on the ground and the front legs are still straight. Dog trainers might want even more specificity from the dog—sitting perfectly straight without rolling over to one side on a hip for example—more on changing a behavior in a bit. Cues can be visual or auditory. A cue differs from the clicker in that the clicker is a general indicator that the behavior the animal was performing at the time of the click will be reinforced. Depending on the training agenda the click is used for many different behaviors. A cue is a request for a specific behavior and unless that specific behavior is performed there is no reinforcer offered.

Capturing and Shaping

There are two basic ways to get behavior; you can capture it or shape it. Capturing behavior is when you wait until the exact behavior that you want occurs and then click and reinforce that behavior. This is most useful when you can predict that the desired behavior will happen. Otherwise waiting around for a particular behavior can take a long time! I am hard pressed to come up with an example of capturing a behavior in

camelids, but one example might be when you enter the barn and an animal naturally gets up to come over and see what you are doing. You can choose a specific animal and when you walk through the barn door, mark the getting up behavior when the specific animal gets up. It would be a good idea to choose in advance which part of the getting up sequence you want to capture and then click when that happens. The mark could be delivered when the animal is fully standing or at any time along the way. Once the connection between the specific behavior and the click occurs, you can put the behavior on cue. In this case the cue might be “stand up.” The behavior is said to be on cue when the animal stands when you say, “stand up.”

Shaping behavior is when you change a behavior with a series of small approximations from a simple behavior to a more complex one. A good example of shaping is teaching an animal to put a body part on an object. This is called “targeting.” Examples of targeting are putting a nose on a flat surface like a Frisbee for example or putting a foot on a platform. If you want to capture this behavior, it might take a long time for an alpaca to spontaneously put his foot on a small platform. Shaping offers a way from here to there—from simple to more complex or from general to more specific.

Before you can train any behavior, it is really important to have a very specific vision of what the finished behavior (the one you will put on cue) looks like. Animals offer a wide variety of nuance and variation in their behavior. This natural variation is in part what makes the process of shaping work, but it can also mean



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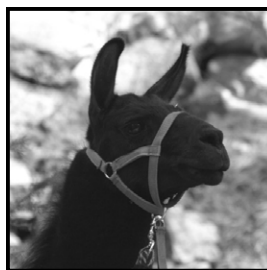
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that without a specific plan you may get caught on a side road that will take you away from the behavior you want. These side roads can lead to getting stuck. It is easier to have as clear a path and plan and even then your animal student will throw you some curves. The good news is that event marker training can never be coercive because the choice to participate is always the animal's.

Targeting...an Example of Shaping a Behavior

Since it is the easiest thing to teach, let's look first at targeting with the nose. You will begin with an animal who is clicker wise. My vision for the finished behavior is to have the animal place his nose ON the target (a plastic Frisbee) for a moment with the nose in the center of the Frisbee. You can begin the process by bringing the Frisbee from behind your back to a place out to the side of your body and then clicking when the animal simply looks in the direction of the Frisbee. Click and treat and put the Frisbee behind your back again to restart the process. Once you are sure (you would bet someone a hundred-dollar bill) that the animal will do the behavior when you provide the opportunity, it is time to change the criteria for reinforcement.

Decide what the next level of approximation will be. It is always good to have a game plan in mind ahead of time. Training on the fly particularly when you are inexperienced can create strange behaviors you don't intend to teach. In the case of targeting, I would suggest waiting for the animal to move his nose closer to the Frisbee.

Now, when you present the Frisbee and the animal does what he was doing before— simply looking in the direction of the Frisbee, you don't click or treat but continue to hold the Frisbee out to the side. The animal will be momentarily confused and will try to figure out what to do to get the treat. This is where the magic happens. Animals will inevitably and naturally offer variations of the behavior and you will click and treat the variation that moves you towards the ultimate finished behavior. This is why it is important to have some kind of a general plan in mind—so you can be ready to click what you want next.

The art inherent in the science of event marker training is this process of moving the process forward—shaping. Hold out for too big a leap and your student will become discouraged and quit the game, not what you want but NOT the end of the world! The beauty of the process is that mistakes are forgiven and it is an easy thing to simply back up to what was working and reinforce that

behavior a couple of times and then make the leap to the next approximation easier. In the case of targeting the animals will often get the idea very quickly and skip many steps and put their noses on the target right away and by all means click and treat that!

However there will probably be some flashes of brilliance like this followed by some confusion. Because an animal leapt forward doesn't mean you hold out for this big leap from then on. You may need to go back to some of the in between steps. There are really no mistakes only opportunities to get more information. One very important thing... I am going to put this in bold letters... **when you are clicker training: if you click you must always reinforce.** This is the contract that you make with your animal student. There are going to be times when you jump the gun and mis-click you still pay up.

Putting a Behavior on Cue

Once you have taught a finished behavior it is time to put that behavior on cue. This is a pretty simple process. The hardest part is figuring out good cues—ones that are logical, easy to remember and are distinctive. Remember a cue can be verbal or visual. If you choose a verbal cue it should be a word that is easily recognized and is going to be distinct from other verbal cues. For example, in targeting I use the body part rather than the word "target" since I may be teaching an animal to target with other parts of the body. So in the case of targeting with the nose I use the cue "nose." When putting the behavior on cue, as the animal heads toward the target with his nose I now say NOSE just before his nose touches the target AND as the nose actually touches the target I click and then treat.



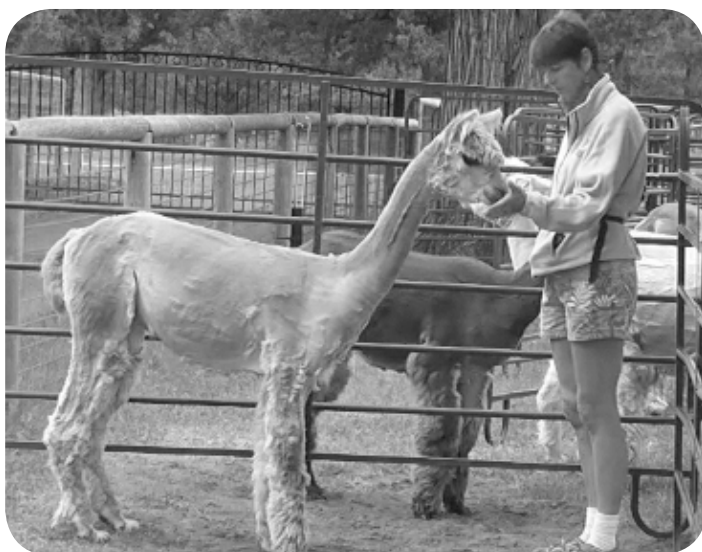
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Using Event Marker Training., continued

Now it is a matter of creating more and more time and distance between the delivery of the cue and the target. With each repetition you begin to say the cue earlier in the process— when the animal is further way from the target. You still click and then treat each time the nose touches the target and reinforce. At some stage you could say to an animal that is wandering around perhaps distracted... 'NOSE' and he will look for the target, walk some distance to it and touch it with his nose. Now you know that the animal knows the specific behavior that goes with that cue.

Once you have taught a behavior and put it on cue the clicker is no longer necessary for that particular behavior. If you need to brush up you can always bring the clicker back for a review session. As for offering a reinforcer consistently when you cue a behavior... there are diverging opinions. Some trainers feel that unless you consistently offer some kind of meaningful reinforcer when cueing a behavior you will see a deterioration of the behavior. Others think that offering a reinforcer each time will create an animal that needs a reinforcer for everything! I think the truth is somewhere in between and varies from animal to animal. BUT the answer when a behavior breaks down for some reason is MORE practice with valued reinforcers.

What about teaching an animal to target with the foot? You might think you could start by teaching the animal to look at the target but I think this is a mistake. I think you have to get the animal's attention very quickly on the body part and leave the target to later on. I would click and reinforce taking a step and teach that behavior



before adding the target. If you want to teach an animal to put his foot on a platform, you can start with something on the ground, for example, a square piece

of carpet. Next put something under that to raise it off the ground just a little bit. Learning how to chunk things down and build one behavior on the one before is how you shape behavior. The process can be slow at first but once an animal learns the process it teaches creativity and initiative and the animal learns each new behavior more quickly.



Clicker Training Set-up or The Antecedent Arrangement for Camelids

When it comes to the set-up or the antecedent arrangement, clicker training camelids is different from teaching dogs. In order for an animal to learn and try out new behaviors, they must feel safe. Most camelids feel safer in a group. Isolate one animal from the group and the animal can become so distracted that she can't concentrate and learn. Event marker training requires focus from both the learner and the teacher. This is one of those times too when there are differences between llamas and alpacas and from one animal of the same species to another. It is perfectly fine to try different things and see what works for you and for the animal you are teaching. Here are some options:

1. Work inside a catch pen with other animals in adjoining areas that are small enough that the animal in the pen doesn't feel all alone. Although working in the typical 9x9 foot catch pen that I recommend for haltering and other types of training can be too small. Room to move around is important.
2. Work with the animal inside a pen either alone or with one or two other animals either in the pen or in an adjoining pen, with you on the OUTSIDE of the pen. This keeps your learner close but safe because you are not inside the pen with her.

continued on next page

Using Event Marker Training., continued

3. Work in a small paddock with one or two animals with other animals in an adjoining paddock.

4. Work in a large field with a group of animals choosing to work with the animal that is most interested. In this case my experience is that the most assertive animal will usually go first but will often tire and the next one in line steps up. This set up is much less of a problem than you would think. In fact working with a group of animals, even a big group, can be the easiest way to work.


If you have an animal who is particularly food aggressive you may be pleasantly surprised with how they respond to clicker training with food. In most cases when 'foodies' learn how to work for food they put their energy into figuring out what you want so that they can get the food instead of trying to take it from you.

Food Considerations

You must be IN CHARGE of the food. The worst thing is for the animal to get the food from you by poking her nose in your pocket or pushing into your body. The clicker kit offered by CAMELIDynamics includes a pouch that I selected after trying many different options for controlling the food. The pouch allows you to use a small dish to offer the food. I think it is better with camelids to offer food in a dish and to keep the reservoir of food in the pouch. Many animals either don't like to take food from a hand or are afraid to. The small dish I think is a better way to offer food than your naked hand. It has the added benefit of separating the clicker training process from hand feeding which can turn into food-oriented inappropriate searching.

Using this system, you can be in complete control of the food and it is not visible to the animal. Additionally you can leave the gear in the house and your animals are not always following you around wondering if you are going to offer food. It is a good idea to practice with your dish and pouch so that you get skilled at scooping out a small amount of grain from the pouch and offering it to the animal in a way that avoids dropping the grain on the ground. Grain on the ground is FREE and the animal becomes confused about working for food and getting it for doing nothing. I also selected a clicker that makes a loud but not jarring sound that works well outdoors or in a barn.

Train in the winter when animals are more dependent on the food we give them. When the animals live in lush pasture, they are less motivated to work for food. This gives you something to do in the winter that you can do bundled up with gloves on that your animals will love.

It is always a good idea to weigh your animals regularly, but it becomes more important if you use concentrated food for training and do a lot of training. Remember that if you give your animals concentrated food on a regular basis, you must subtract the amount of food you offer for training from their regular ration. 



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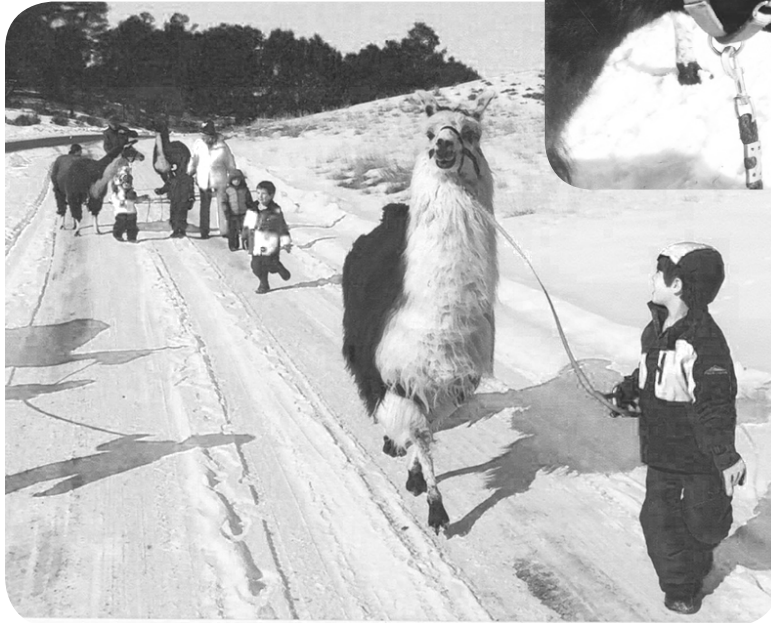
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www.facebook.com/Rescue.Llamas

Preschoolers Learn About Llamas

Close to a dozen preschoolers visited Llama Linda Ranch in Glenwood Springs, CO. The 4 and 5 year olds brushed, fed, and took the llamas on a walk, all in the cold of winter. They finished their visit by sharing a stall with Sara, a rescue llama while ranch owner, Linda Hayes, read them a story about a young llama who grew up to save a herd of goats.



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2017 Bobra Goldsmith Leadership Award

From the RMLA Board of Directors

We want to congratulate Linda Hayes, the recipient of the 2017 Bobra Goldsmith leadership award. This award originated in 2010 to honor Bobra by recognizing an RMLA person, or persons, who has demonstrated a similar passion and a love for educating the community about llamas and alpacas as Bobra did. The nominee's level of commitment and involvement in activities centered on educating llama and alpaca owners, writing articles, hosting workshops, speaking at conferences, and participating in organized llama/alpaca events acts as the guidelines for the award.

Since she bought her first llama in 1989 while living in north Texas, Linda Hayes has quietly gone about educating people about llamas and serving the llama community in many diverse ways. Linda continues to be enthusiastic and tireless in her mission to teach, mentor, and inspire the llama world. The following is a summary of a lifetime of leadership in the world of llamas and alpacas.

She has served in many leadership positions in our llama organizations:

- She is a retired judge for ALSA, ILR and AOBA/AOA.
- She served on the RMLA Board and is currently Vice President on the ILR Board.

She is always looking for opportunities to educate and mentor owners about llamas:

- First and foremost, she mentors and educates new llama owners so they get off to a great start.
- In both Texas and Colorado, she held many monthly training and fun shows at her ranch as well as hosting judging clinics for ALSA. She continues to lead events at her ranch for disabled and underprivileged children.
- She takes her llamas to schools where children are studying the Incas. She set up an obstacle course so children in an after-school program could get a hands-on experience with llamas.
- She teaches about llamas at the Colorado Mountain College in Glenwood Springs.
- She continues to write educational articles for the RMLA Journal and other publications.

Rescue

- Currently Linda is setting up a web site sponsored by the International Llama Foundation to help animal control officers around the country learn how to rescue llamas. It should be finished in late 2017.



- Her rescue and re-homing work with Southwest Llama Rescue (SWLR) is extensive as she served as an adviser for SWLR for 2 years where she assisted in re-homing over 50 alpacas and llamas and educating the new owners about the care and use of their new animals.

International Leadership

- Linda has traveled to llama and alpaca ranches in Australia, New Zealand and South America to meet with her peers to exchange information and ideas on the llama industry in these parts of the world.

The Board wants to acknowledge and sincerely thank Henry Rivera, sculptor, for donating the beautiful leadership award. Please see Henry's ad on the previous page.

And just what does Linda Hayes think about receiving this award? She sent the following letter to the RMLA Board of Directors:

I can't begin to tell you how honored I feel to have been selected for the Bobra Goldsmith Leadership Award. Bobra did so much for llamas and their owners over the years, I don't think I can ever come close to doing all she did. But, since that Henry Rivera trophy is so darn beautiful, I humbly accept.

As much as I love llamas and alpacas, it has been the people that have made this journey so meaningful. I thank each of you for honoring me and hope that I can continue to live up to what the award represents.

Sincerely,
Llama Linda



Llamas and Alpacas on a Higher Ground

by Gayle M. Woodsum



Everything old is new again. I think I became a believer in that saying when the llama and alpaca performance and fleece shows burst to life at the autumn 2016 debut of the Higher Ground Fair in Laramie, Wyoming. Even as I rushed my way through high winds



beneath moisture-sodden clouds, careful not to slip on the snow that had – amazingly – fallen during the previous September night, I recognized the budding of an old feeling. Simple joy. Giddiness, even. A llama show was about to start.

I've been showing llamas, superintending and judging shows since the late '90s. And while my love of these competitions remains strong, it had been a long time since I'd felt the light pleasure of what it was like when my llamas and I first started out. But there it was, coming back around. The weather was bad, the turnout was small, the person in charge of setting up all the performance courses had been called away at the last minute on a family emergency, and I was not only the superintendant of record for the llama and alpaca show, I was also in charge of the entire, brand-new regional fair of which camelids were merely one small part.

In other words, I was crazy busy. And I was more invested in the success of the Higher Ground Fair than I had been in anything else for a very long time. There were bands and music producers to contend with, agricultural displays, vendors, presentations, workshops, a couple hundred staff and volunteers – enough going on to keep me away from the llamas for the entire weekend.

Yet that was precisely where I was headed – to see the 30 or so llamas and alpacas ready to start performance and walking fleece classes. I couldn't help myself. For me, camelids and camelid-lovers were center stage in this unique event I'd been trying to create for years.

I burst through the door to the show barn to be greeted by a jumble of questions. Where were the championship ribbons? How did the microphone work? Did I have the pack courses ready to be posted? Where were the rest of the fleece show score cards?

The heat of embarrassment over my poor preparation began to dry the damp hair falling across my face. These wonderful people had braved the weather, swallowed the outdated burdens of vet-check entry requirements to enter

Wyoming, packed up extraordinary fleece displays and entries, hauled their animals over multiple mountain passes, just to be part of the very first Higher Ground Fair. They deserved only the best in preparation and delivery. It began to dawn on me that they were about to get the kind of show we all got 15 and 20 years



ago – performance courses designed at the last minute, volunteers being hauled into service from the bleachers, exhibitors working as hard as the people who were supposed to be in charge.

I felt a slight hiccup in that giddiness I'd floated into the show barn on. Then Rhonda Livengood (clerk, announcer, de-facto woman in charge) gently pushed me toward the opposite side of the ring where everyone was gathering for the exhibitors' meeting. I needed to welcome them. I needed to warn them this was a work in

progress. I needed to ask for forgiveness in advance, and

**For the
2017 Higher
Ground Fair,
see ad on
page 35.**

continued on next page

Llamas and Alpacas on a Higher Ground, continued

beg them to understand how glad I was to have them there. As I gathered myself and my thoughts together, I looked at the group sitting before me in their winter parkas, with their hands wrapped around cups of coffee, tea and hot chocolate. I looked at the gorgeous fiber arts displays behind them from Geri Rutledge and Sally Brandon. I thought about the RMLA live llama information display outside with Mary Vavrina and Leigh DiNatale, and the packing display from Charlie Hackbarth's Sopris Packs and Alexa Metrick's Backcountry Llama Magazine. So much generosity, so much effort to be there because I'd asked them. I took a deep breath.



Then I realized that everyone was grinning at me. Full-on beaming. They were cold and wet and being silly. They were teasing me. They were talking about the challenge of grooming a wet llama or alpaca. They started volunteering to take on various tasks that needed to be done so the show could get underway. We all began to share stories about the good old days when none of us knew what we were doing, but loving it all the same. There was a group of youth exhibitors watching and listening – paying attention to a past they hadn't been part of, but recognizing they were part of something new and special for them to use to build their own memories and futures.

Just like that, the lama people clinched their place at the center of the new Higher Ground Fair. For the next two days, they had fun. They competed with each other and cheered each other on. Judges Mary Wickman and Margaret Drew filled in the gaps in my performance course maps. Exhibitors led llamas and alpacas through the fair grounds to meet people who had never met one before. Sally Rucker lent color to the show by giving

nonstop narrative to the audience regarding performance classes and llama and alpaca fun facts, repeating important information whenever someone new joined the audience. Fleece Judge Karen Kinyon conducted live judging in the separate fleece show barn, talking through her decision-making on shorn fleeces, yarns and finished products, then later on during walking fleece in the show barn. She and I shared warm memories of years before on that same spot in Laramie when she, Sharon Beacham and I created the first classes for what is now the ALSA-recognized walking fleece show division.



The Higher Ground Fair celebrates rural living in the Rocky Mountains. It did something new in 2016 and is on its way to expanding in 2017. It's designed for people to experience the best of regional tradition and ingenuity



in one extraordinary weekend – with llamas and alpacas holding a place of honor. Last year, over 1000 people attended the fair, and 250 additional people worked to put it on. In our collection of questionnaires filled out by fairgoers, llamas and alpacas came up more often than any other component of the fair as people's favorite thing at the fair. It was like the old days – but new. Definitely something to celebrate.



Earth Day April 22, 2017



The theme this year is environmental & climate literacy.

Go to www.earthday.org for more information on how you can participate.

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Abandoned Alpaca Adopted

Submitted by Michelle Dally, DVM

An abandoned alpaca found adrift near Lyons in November underwent successful eye surgery and has been adopted.

The alpaca, nicknamed "LC" by Boulder County deputies because she was found near Lyons Crest, was turned over to the Knick O' Time Animal Rescue in Longmont. LC had an injury to one of her eyes and surgery was needed to remove it before she could be adopted out.

Huge 'Thank you's' go to Dr. Richard Wheeler, of Poudre River Veterinary Clinic, and Dr. Michelle Dally, of Dally Veterinary Medicine LLC, who donated their services to perform the successful surgery. Stephanie Wendorf, the executive director at Knick O' Time, said LC is recovering at Knick O' Time.

"The surgery was absolutely textbook," Wendorf said. "It's a long recovery but she's done wonderfully and we couldn't be happier." Wendorf said they still want to do some last



checkups on LC, but said the alpaca should be up for adoption sometime in early 2017. And that is just what happened!



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Llamas Are a Big Hit at The Ag Expo

by Linda Hayes a/k/a Llama Linda



When Llama Linda heard that there was going to be an Ag Expo in Rifle, CO that focused on all things agricultural, she jumped in. Offering to give a talk on using llamas as guard animals, the committee agreed to let her set up a pen and bring 3 PR llamas. She and Kathy Stanko added a booth showing off Kathy's llama yarn and handmade llama wool products. Next to the llamas they set up a display with llama information, photographs and information on RMLA. Llama owner, Debbie Nichols of New Castle also came to answer questions and share one of the llamas she had rescued from the program offered by Southwest Llama Rescue.

Held in an indoor arena, it was easy to bring the llamas out of the pen for hands on inspection. Kathy explained the uses of the fiber as well as some training tips. Linda let the



audience pick up feet, feel for weight scoring and take part in other hands on demonstrations. Several sheep and goat ranchers attended the lecture and were impressed at how easy it was to work with the llamas. Questions asked included: "Can they be in the same pasture as a horse? (Answer, it depends on the horse.) and "Will they guard chickens?" (Answer, there have been known cases of llamas being very protective of chickens and ducks.)



After the lecture the kids showed up in droves. Some were carrying balloons and others had noise makers, balls and other distracting items. Since Linda knew that her llamas had been desensitized to all of these, she allowed the children to lead the llamas around to visit the other booths that had been set up in the arena. One horse-

man came over and remarked that he was amazed that llamas were so calm. He said the horses would never have let the balloons get that close and that the noises would have upset them.

The llamas could have found new homes had they been for sale. Not only did the attendees want them for guards, but there was a big interest in having llamas for packing and for pets for their children.

Events that cater to ranchers and farmers are the best place to sell llamas. In western Colorado there are few llamas for sale and finding gentle llamas from the rescue organization is getting difficult. Now that the recession is over, more and more people are looking at llamas as something they might like to share their lives with. The demand is building. If you have llamas to sell, get them gentled and out in front of the public. They will sell quickly.



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Thank You!



Marilyn, Sonja, Kathy, Ron

Postscript from the Journal Volunteers

We thank all of you for your incredible energy, articles, and photos. YOU make RMLA proud!

"Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value." Albert Einstein

Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association
P O Box 1070
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EVENTS CALENDAR BY MARY WICKMAN (EVENTS CHAIR)

For more details and live links, go to www.RMLA.com, select EVENTS, and hover on the blue dots.

- ✿ **April 29, 2017, Stars and Stripes Show**, Bucks Hollow Ranch, Waco, NE. – Contact Jim Rutledge, buckshollow@wildblue.net or 402-366-9304.
- ✿ **May 20, 2017, Grand Mesa & Kokopelli Show**, Grand Junction CO – Contact Cheryl Juntilla, cajwdj@aol.com or 970-640-8028. ALSA sanctioned show; halter, performance and fleece events for llamas & alpacas. Two shows / 1 Day!
- ✿ **June 10 & 11, 2017, Estes Park Wool Market Llama Show**, Estes Park, CO. – ALSA sanctioned Llama Show and Fiber Festival. For more information, Contact Jill Knuckles, talltaillamas@gmail.com or 970-487-0223.
- ✿ **June 23 & 24, 2017, Camelid Kids Llama & Alpaca Camp**, Bucks Hollow Farm, Waco, NE. – Contact Geri Rutledge at buckshollow@wildblue.net or 402-366-9304. Lama camp for all ages, safety training, and making crafts.
- ✿ **July 29, 2017 Fairplay Llama Event**, Fairplay, CO – Three great events: Pack Llama Race, Lama Rama & the Public Walk. And of course, the Llama Lunacy Course for children. General public can borrow a llama for the race. Llamas available on a first come, first serve basis. Camp with the llamas in the national forest before and after the race. Start time is approximately 9 AM. Sign up on www.rmla.com to volunteer to help the team put this event together. For questions, contact event co-chairs Jeff Sandberg, Likearock87@msn.com or 303-829-8144 or Kelvin Eldridge, Kelvin.j.eldridge@gmail.com or 720-556-6197.
- ✿ **August 19, 2017 Leadville Trail 100 - Hope Pass Aid Station Support Crew** Leadville, CO – Contact Gary Carlton at 303-503-1324 or Llama@jmhfarm.com to volunteer. For info visit: www.LeadvilleRaceSeries.com/run/ .
- ✿ **September 23 & 24, 2017, Higher Ground Fair**, Laramie, WY. – Celebrating rural living in the Rocky Mountain Region. Llama and Alpaca Performance and Fleece Shows. Llama & Alpaca Demonstrations. Contact Gayle Woodsum at gayle@highergroundfair.org or 307-399-3815. Visit www.HigherGroundFair.org