

# The Journal of RMLA



## In This Edition

RMLA Board & Committees..... 3	Golden Gate Canyon St Park Hike . 12	Outta Sight Llamas ..... 29
New Members..... 4	1st Year of Youth Awards Program..... 14	The Day My Legs Grow Tired ..... 30
President’s Letter ..... 5	Fiber Booth 2014 Summary ..... 14	Unexpected Rewards of Rescuing... 31
Ask The CSU VET Team ..... 6	USAHA 2014 report ..... 17	Events Calendar..... <i>Back Page</i>
LOSE LLAMA ..... 9	“Fiber as Business” Conference ..... 20	
Rescue Committee-New Members.. 10	Hopeless Crew ..... 22	Advertisers’ Index ..... 29
Journal Advertising Manager..... 11	Loose Llama-Goat Rocks Wilderness ..24	Classified Ads ..... 11
		Journal Advertising Rates, Specifications and Deadlines 4

**First Year of Youth Awards Program Is a Success!... 13**

ADD SOME ARGENTINE "GENES"  
TO YOUR SHOW WARDROBE.

KMJY



KOBRA'S MIGHTY JOE YOUNG

## KOBRA'S MIGHTY JOE YOUNG

ALSA Halter Champion

ALSA Recognition-of-Merit

Top Ten (5th)—2006 ALSA Grand National

Top Ten (8th)—2005 ALSA Grand National

Limited outside breedings available  
exclusively at ChanTar Llamas

Paul & Karen Schwartz

Big Horn, WY 82833

307-672-5144

chantar@fiberpipe.net



[www.chantarllamas.net](http://www.chantarllamas.net)

## -- Board of Directors --

<b>President</b>	<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Member-at-Large</b>
Lougene Baird P. O. Box 385403 Waikoloa, HI 96738 808-747-5023 lougenebaird@ hawaiiantel.net	Dick Williams P.O. Box 1070 Plains, MT 59859 406-826-2201 bcllama@blackfoot.net	Geri Rutledge 2209 Rd 9 Waco, NE 68460 402-366-9304 buckshollow@wildblue.net	Brent Holt 4047 Bear Canyon Cir. Sedalia, CO 80135 281-250-2000 Brent.Holt@cfbmic.com	Linda Hayes 60 Meadow View Lane Glenwood Spgs, CO 81601 970-379-4576 llamas@skybeam.com

## -- Committee Chairpersons --

### **Bookstore**

#### **Jan Adamcyk**

303-621-2960  
adamcyk@earthlink.com  
Liaison Lougene Baird

### **Bylaws**

#### **Lougene Baird**

808-747-5023  
lougenebaird@hawaiiantel.net  
Liaison Linda Hayes

### **Calendar**

#### **Dick Williams & Pat Bradstreet**

406-826-2201  
bcllama@blackfoot.net  
Liaison Lougene Baird

### **e-Communications:**

Liaison Lougene Baird

#### **Facebook:**

Brianna Cozzetto  
719-371-4839  
brianna0215@yahoo.com

#### **Website & E-mail:**

##### **Ron Hinds**

303-646-1320  
web@rmla.com

### **Education**

*(open)*

Liaison Linda Hayes

### **Events/Marketing**

#### **Mary Wickman**

719-687-1423 Cell: 719-651-8871  
mwickman1@gmail.com  
Liaison Dick Williams

### **Fiber**

#### **Cheryl Juntilla & Jill Knuckles**

970-640-8028 970-487-0223  
cajwdj@aol.com  
talltailamas@bigplanet.com  
Liaison Geri Rutledge

### **Finance**

#### **Marilyn Arnold**

303-841-5126  
arnold.marilyn@ymail.com.  
Liaison Brent Holt

### **Journal**

Co-Editors:

**Content-Kathy Stanko**

**Layout-Ron Hinds**

rmlaeditor@gmail.com  
Liaison Lougene Baird

*Journal  
info is on  
next page.*

### **Library**

#### **Dick Williams**

406-826-2201  
bcllama@blackfoot.net  
Liaison Dick Williams

### **Membership**

#### **Dick Williams**

406-826-2201  
bcllama@blackfoot.net  
Liaison Brent Holt

### **Nominations & Elections**

#### **Maggie Merrill Brown**

970-667-7227  
designer95@bluelinesite.com  
Liaison Geri Rutledge

### **Publication Coordinator -**

#### **Lougene Baird**

808-747-5023  
lougenebaird@hawaiiantel.net

### **Rescue**

Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay  
406-586-1155  
llamas@yellowstonesafari.com  
Liaison Linda Hayes

### **Youth and 4-H**

#### **Brianna Cozzetto**

719-371-4839  
brianna0215@yahoo.com  
Liaison Geri Rutledge

The Journal is a quarterly publication of the Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association ("RMLA"). The RMLA Journal Committee and the Board of Directors reserve the right to select and edit all articles and advertisements submitted.

**Reproduction of articles herein is subject to written permission being obtained from individual authors. Lama newsletter exchange editors may reproduce articles as long as such permission from the author is obtained and the author and RMLA are given credit for the original work.**

The information in The Journal is not intended to be a substitute for qualified professional advice. Readers are encouraged to consult with their own veterinarian, accountant or attorney regarding any questions concerning their animals or business operations.

RMLA is not responsible for any losses resulting from readers' failure to heed this caution. The views expressed by the authors of articles are not necessarily those of the Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association, Inc., its officers, directors or members.

## 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 20

Ad Type	Width x Height	Member	Non-Member
Business Card	3.5"x2"	\$15	\$18
1/4 Page Horz.	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
Back Cover	7.5" x 7.5"	\$60	\$90
Inside Cover Front or Back	7.5" x 10"	\$96	\$144
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 bonus of a 10% discount.

• For ads that require scanning: Mail ad copy to RMLA-Ron Hinds-5704 Canyon Trail, Elizabeth, CO 80107-7814 include a check payable to AlpacaGraphics for \$5.00 for each scan.

• For ad design, contact Ron Hinds at ad-design@rmla.com or 303-646-1320.

• We suggest ads be submitted in black and white/grayscale at 300dpi.

• Ads must be submitted via email in MS Word, jpeg, tiff or PDF files to RMLAadvertise@gmail.com.

• INSTRUCTIONS FOR Payment: Send your check payable to RMLA along with a copy of the ad (for clarity) to:

RMLA Journal Advertising Manager – Sonja Boeff  
12920 W. 84th Avenue.  
Arvada, CO 80005

You can reach Sonja at 303-257-6733 or the email address below.

• Email text and/or graphics content to: RMLAadvertise@gmail.com

• Payment and ad copy must be received prior to submission deadline. See the chart above for dates.

### Journal Staff:

Content - Kathy Stanko  
Layout and Design - Ron Hinds } Co-Editors

Email - RMLAEditor@gmail.com

Advertising – Sonja Boeff, RMLAadvertise@gmail.com

Proof Reader - Marilyn Arnold

## NEW RMLA Members

RMLA IS ALWAYS GROWING

Welcome New Members!

- **Denise Robins - Denver, CO**
- **Linda Graviett - Lafayette, CO**
- **Debbie Nichols - Newcastle, CO**
- **Chris & Sonja Boeff - Arvada, CO**
- **Jonah Jensen - Aurora, CO (Youth)**
- **Kira Leland - Ft. Collins, CO (Youth)**
- **Alexandra Leland - Ft. Collins, CO (Youth)**
- **Gerald & Loretta Abbott - Charlo, MT**
- **Beau Baty - Rexburg, ID**
- **Courtney, Mikayla & Garrett Pecka - Wilber, NE (Youth)**

Contact information can be found on the website under **MEMBERS**.

Before youth members under the age of 18 are listed, they require a signed release from 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.

### Cover Photo Credit:

Denali, the loose llama, is bringing up the rear with Rowdy watching her. They are walking out of the Goat Rocks Wilderness, Gifford Pinchot National Forest in Washington with Scott Noga. Photographs by Scott Noga. See full story starting on page 24.

# RMLA PRESIDENT'S LETTER by Lougene Baird

Communicating to the membership has always been a top priority for your Board. After all, to enjoy the full benefits of your membership you need to know what is going on and what has gone on within the organization.

The evening after the Annual Meeting at dinner there were several of us who enjoy a spirited conversation about the "old days" of RMLA - way before internet communications. Post cards were sent to announce events! And the first "Journals" were mimeographed - double-sided, 4 to 6 pages, stapled and folded - newsletters...sometimes on yellow, white or blue paper! During the conversation, a member commented on the efficient use of the RMLA e-mail newslines and asked about the history and policy. So I'll share that with you now.

In the late 1990's, Bob Riley and Bob Hance put their heads together to develop communicating with the membership via email. The two Bobs were first generation geeks! After all, maybe 5% of our membership at the time used email and we were sure more would do so in the future. Little did we know! The Board with the help of a few members who had email helped develop guidelines for using this new service. These guidelines were simple and still used to this day.

The newslines's sole purpose is for RMLA to communicate to its membership information about RMLA events, activities and other matters of business such as emergencies (fires, animal health issues, and member memorials). RMLA respects the privacy of all members and will not send unnecessary emails. The newslines is not used for the personal benefit of a member (no advertising) or that of another organization.

The Website has become a primary source of communication and assists RMLA in meeting its Mission Statement. Journals also keep members informed and are an educational tool which follows the Mission Statement.

The RMLA Website and Journal will soon join together in a new special RMLA.com section which is being developed by Ron

Hinds. Past newsletters, Journals, conference material and other event publications are being scanned. An enormous amount of information is being assimilated. The membership will be able to use these past publications as educational resources once the new section goes live.



With this said, RMLA will continue into the future with the goal of the best communication possible to serve each member and their interests. The combined resources of the RMLA Journal, Website, e-mail Newslines and Library assures you that RMLA will meet the Mission Statement as designed by our founding members. Each of these resources adds value to your membership in RMLA.

Travel safely as you, your friends, family and animals enjoy the gift of love and friendship throughout the holidays. Stay warm and happy. Ron and I send our warmest greetings of love and Aloha to all of you for a Blessed Holiday and sparkling New Year. Come see us!

*Lougene*



## Help SWLR with your Amazon.com Purchases!!

### Here's how:

- Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible **smile.amazon.com** purchases to the charitable organization of your choice.
- **smile.amazon.com** is the same Amazon you've always known. Same products, same prices, same service.
- Support your charitable organization by starting your shopping at **smile.amazon.com**.
- Log in to your Amazon account. A 'pick your charity' screen is displayed. At the bottom, type in **Southwest Llama Rescue**, then click on search. **Southwest Llama Rescue** will appear on the next screen, click on select. Now, each time you purchase through **smile.amazon.com**, SWLR will benefit!



==== Keep that **smile.amazon.com** bookmark handy!! =====

*F.E. Baxter, SW Llama Rescue, Inc.*

# Ask The CSU VET Team

By Kathy Stanko & the Colorado State University Camelid Vets & Interns

**W**elcome everyone! Ever wonder if you lama has a hearing problem? Dr. Elizabeth Topliff-Yee offers us some good advice. Dr. Stacey Byers provides an update on the Vitamin E research that has been going on since 2012. Dr. Byers then explains an exciting new research project to give all of our vets new tools to help our animals.

**Question: Do camelids go deaf? How can you tell if they have hearing problems?**

**Response from Dr. Elizabeth Topliff-Yee:**

Deafness in camelids can be either an acquired condition, or a heritable congenital condition. Acquired deafness is most commonly caused by trauma or infection of the ear that damages the auditory apparatus or the specialized sensory cells responsible for conducting and interpreting sound. Middle and inner ear infections can result in deafness of the affected ear. Just as in other animals, hearing loss associated with age may occur in camelids but there is limited information describing this.

Congenital deafness occurs in about 80% of camelids that have blue eyes, white fiber coloring, and no other pigmentation of the skin or iris. The association of deafness in blue eyed white coated animals is well documented in other species as well. This inherited type of hearing loss is caused by a degeneration of the ear's sensory cells during development of the fetus and is believed to be associated with a defect in migration of melanocytes from the neural crest.

Recent genetic research performed in Australia has identified two mutations within a gene as the cause for a "blue-eyed white (BEW)" phenotype in camelids. The gene has also been implicated in other species. Hopefully, genetic research will lead to a commercial screening test for breeders. For the time being, it may be prudent to avoid breeding animals with BEW characteristics or BEW direct relatives until we can better predict outcomes of their offspring.

It can be very difficult to detect hearing loss in camelids, as the acuity of their other senses will



...hearing loss is not a significant concern in regards to the animal's quality of life.

## In This Edition:

- **Hearing Loss in Camelids**
- **Update: Vitamin E in Camelids**
- **Blood Work at YOUR farm**

heighten to compensate for the deficit. Camelids and other livestock adapt very well to hearing loss through visual and other non-auditory cues that help them stay aware of their environment and other herd dynamics. Because of this adaptation, hearing loss is not a significant concern in regards to the animal's quality of life.

A subjective evaluation of hearing capacity in an animal can effectively be done in the home environment where the animal is most relaxed and not on high alert. Testing an individual animal using noises, like clapping, shouting, or a horn, may be done while the animal is not able to detect the impending stimulus using other senses. Performed at various distances, this simple tool may estimate the extent of hearing loss as well.

Confirmation and characterization of hearing loss can be achieved with a diagnostic procedure known as Brainstem Auditory Evoked Potentials or Response (BAEP/BAER) testing. BAER detects waves of electrical output from the brainstem in response to noise stimulation. The equipment needed to perform this test is generally only available at specialty hospitals with a neurology service. To perform the test, the animal is anesthetized or heavily sedated. Headphones are placed over the ears to transmit sound to the ears and electrodes are placed over the scalp to identify the response in the brain to the sound. This test is particularly useful for confirming congenital deafness caused by the BEW phenotype in camelids and other animals.

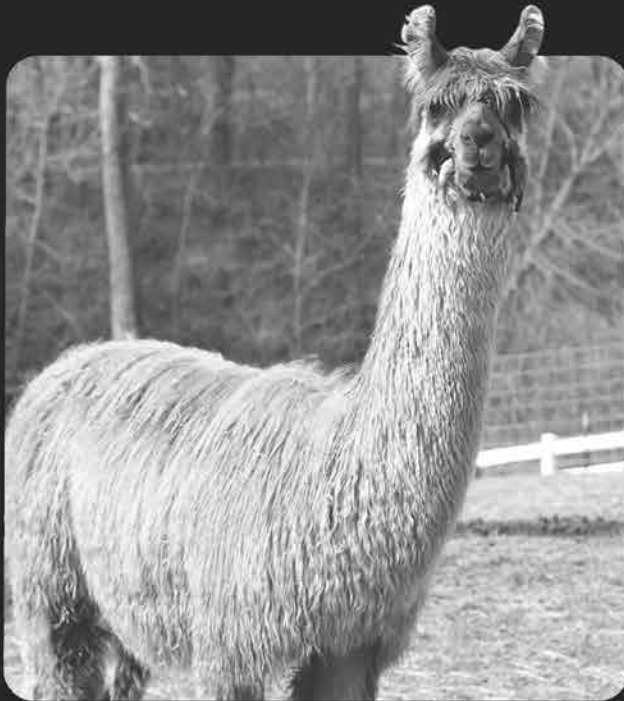
## CSU Research Projects by Dr. Stacey Byers

### 1) Update: Vitamin E in Camelids

Drs. Andi Lear and Stacey Byers have completed a 2-phase project evaluating the use of vitamin E by Camelids. Funds were



*continued on page 8*



exploring  
new ideas



premium  
products  
uniquely  
formulated

perfecting  
animal  
nutrition



We know you take them seriously, which is why we keep working to help you meet your goals for breeding, growth and fiber.

For almost a quarter of a century now, we've partnered with zoo and veterinary professionals and conducted extensive research to improve the nutrition of the most unique animals around the globe. Our products are proven to support the health, longevity and fiber production of alpacas.



Sign up for our newsletter today at  
**MAZURI.COM/RMLA14**  
and be the first to learn about:

- Latest Product Information
- Product Promotions
- Tradeshows & Events



**Mazuri**  
A World of Good Nutrition

provided by a CSU College Research Council grant provided by the USDA. The first phase of the project was to determine the collection, storage, and processing factors that could affect the vitamin E levels in a blood sample.

Diagnostic laboratories have conflicting information on effects of these factors. were able to determine proper handling recommendations for veterinarians collecting and submitting blood samples



for this vitamin. The results of this project were published: Lear AS, Byers SR, Callan RJ, McArt JAA, 2014, Evaluation of Sample Handling Effects on Serum Vitamin E and Cholesterol Concentrations in Alpacas, Vet Med Int, Article ID 537213, 5 pages, doi:10.1155/2014/537213.

The second phase of the study was designed to determine if pregnancy, colostrum, or lactation affected vitamin E levels in crias. In cattle we know vitamin E is not transferred across the placenta and calves get their first big dose with colostrum. We were unsure if this was true in camelids as well. In addition, grazing animals on the Front Range of Colorado are typically fed a hay based diet which has very little vitamin E left in it after harvesting. We periodically see cases of juvenile camelids suffering from neurologic conditions such as diaphragmatic paralysis and they are found to have very low vitamin E levels.

We monitored blood vitamin E levels in a group of females and their crias from preparturition to weaning. Similar to cattle, we discovered crias obtain their vitamin E primarily from colostrum and their levels decrease as weaning on to forage occurs. We hope to continue the study to determine the most appropriate vitamin E supplementation method (oral versus injections) and how frequently supplementation is needed. Additional funding is needed for this research.

## 2) New Research: Evaluation of the Heska EPOC Blood Gas and Electrolyte Analyzer

Dr. Stacey Byers and Katlin Hornig (Class of 2016 veterinary student) received a \$3500 grant from the Young Investigator Grant program in the Center for Companion Animal Studies at CSU to evaluate a new portable device capable of running some basic blood

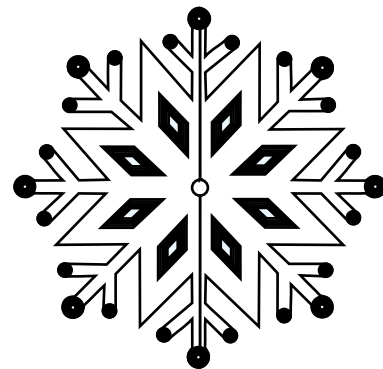
work on the farm. The device is being evaluated for use in camelids and goats.

Animals from small acreage farms often do not receive on farm critical care monitoring due to equipment cost and availability. Most of these animals are cared for by ambulatory veterinarians who typically do not have immediate blood testing capabilities. Blood samples are typically submitted to a clinical pathology laboratory and it can take 24-48 hours to obtain results. In the meantime, the veterinarian institutes medical therapies based on physical exam findings but these therapies may not be appropriate if there are severe derangements in hematology or electrolytes. Current portable analyzers have been available but the equipment and cartridges are expensive, require special handling, are prone to failure, multiple cartridges are required to test a variety of parameters, and the equipment had not been validated for use in livestock species so results were questionable.

Heska has developed the Element POC™ Blood Gas and Electrolyte Analyzer that is portable, provides rapid results (35 seconds), only requires a single test card for various parameters, and relatively inexpensive (\$11-20 per card). The objective of this study is to compare the blood gas and electrolyte parameters measured with this analyzer against a laboratory biochemical analyzer to validate the results of the Heska portable analyzer and if the performance is acceptable, develop reference ranges for these species. The information from this project may be useful for veterinarians providing medical care to a growing population of backyard companion animals.

To date, we have tested over 80 healthy animals (40 alpacas and 40 goats) and are testing hospitalized camelids and goats to expand our data set. Then Katlin gets the fun part of data analysis. Preliminary results are encouraging! We will keep you posted.

If you want to help fund these or other projects, please contact Dr. Byers ([stacey.byers@colostate.edu](mailto:stacey.byers@colostate.edu)) or Dr. Callan ([robert.callan@colostate.edu](mailto:robert.callan@colostate.edu)).





# LOSE LLAMA

By Charlie Hackbarth  
Mt. Sopris Llamas - La Veta, CO

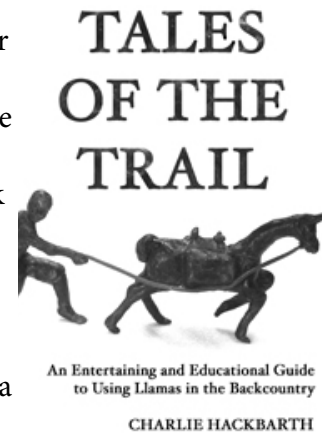
The following are some tips to avoid losing your llama in the backcountry:

- Train your llamas so that such things such as a handler falling down won't spook them.
- Know your llamas and the people who are leading them. Have all your llamas bonded, or do you have a loner? Keep an eye on your high-strung or green llamas, and match them with more experienced handlers. Pay particular attention to the llamas when crossing bridges and streams or in difficult terrain. The more experienced the llama and the handler, the less chance there is of losing the llama.
- Learn to tie the quick release knot securely to prevent your llama from getting loose after you have tied him to a tree.
- Train your llama to the picket line before you take him on an overnight trip.
- Double-secure any snaps on your picket lines (use a piece of cord or a wire, or duct tape) or use locking snaps so your llama can't rub or twist the snap open. Failure to secure the snap in some way is probably the most frequent cause of llamas getting loose in the backcountry.
- Llamas will rub their faces on the ground when their line is tangled around a bush or when they are trying to rid themselves of flies. In the process, they will free themselves from the typical lead rope-type snaps.
- Make sure your picket stake is secure, and check it regularly.

If you should have an escapee in the backcountry, the situation may require you to be creative. Points to remember:

- Don't panic. Most llamas can be caught fairly easily if you use your head. Even the independent ones will eventually submit to being caught. Hug a tree until you have recovered your wits, and then explore options for catching that particular llama as you observe how he is reacting to his freedom. The worst thing that you can do is to start chasing him with no plan in mind.

- Options you have may include, but are not limited to: tempting him with grain; constructing a human fence; adding ropes or tree branches to enlarge your human fence; using another llama (preferably the escapee's buddy) to get close to the loose llama; using natural objects such as rock outcroppings, thick timber, brush, downed timber, or water to corner your llama; using grain and/or another llama to lure the loose llama into a rope corral built in the trees.
- Always carry some inexpensive, lightweight rope to construct a corral or to use as a part of a human fence. If you forget to bring rope, use your picket lines. Rope is seldom used to lasso a llama.
- Most importantly, make sure all of your llamas have acquired a taste for grain. After getting loose in the wild, most llamas will hang around their buddies, and this is good. However, if you don't have any grain to offer, chances are you will not be considered a buddy, and he could still be hard to catch. As my earlier stories demonstrated, a llama's taste for grain becomes increasingly important if the escapee is a green or wild loner who doesn't have any buddies. At times you might also be hiking with a single llama that gets loose.



*Excerpt published with permission from "Tales of the Trail: An Entertaining and Educational Guide to Using Llamas in the Backcountry" by Charlie Hackbarth*



# RMLA Rescue Committee Welcomes New Members!

By Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay - RMLA Rescue Committee Chair

Llama and alpaca rescue has become an important item. To help with my work as the Chair of the RMLA Rescue Committee, I requested an e-mail blast to the members. As a result, two experienced llama and alpaca owners have come forward to commit their efforts to the causes of the Committee. I am pleased to introduce Joy Buckley and Jessica Storm.

Joy A. Buckley lives in Divide, CO. Joy owns 17 llamas. She uses her animals for companionship, therapy work and fiber. She rescued 6 llamas last summer, kept 3 and found good homes for the other 3. She has been an RMLA member for 10 years. Joy would love to help with education and whatever else needs to be done. Joy says "I would love to be part of the solution to this very sad and real problem."

Joy can be reached at 719-200-7209(cell) or 719-686-9410(home) or wbfarm@aol.com.

Jessica Storm lives in Avondale, CO (near Pueblo). Jessica has



Joy Buckley

owned llamas for 12 years and actively showed in 4-H. Right now, she owns 4 llamas and is working on teaching one of them to pack. She also uses her llamas for educational purposes. They visit schools and after-school programs and teach kids about llamas. "I am interested in helping other llamas and alpacas". Jessica has been an RMLA member for a year. She may be reached at 719-948-0131 or himalayan791@yahoo.com.

We are delighted to welcome Joy and Jessica to The Rescue Committee. More information on projects and strategies will be forthcoming.



Jessica Storm



**Zander Farms**  
Arvada, Colorado

303.257.6733      czandera@yahoo.com

*"Specializing in Argentine Llamas"*

www.zanderfarms.com

**Lothlorien Llamas**

Dick & Jeanne Williams  
P.O. Box 1070  
Plains, MT 59859  
(406) 826-2201  
bcllama@blackfoot.net  
Packing & Raising Llamas  
Since 1983

# The Journal Has An Advertising Manager!

Please welcome Sonja Boeff to the RMLA Journal Staff. Sonja, her husband and two sons live in Arvada, CO.

They started with llamas in 2010 when they purchased a guard llama for their pygmy goats. By the end of the year, they were “stuck on” llamas and began their journey. In the Spring of 2011, they added suri alpacas to the mix. Presently they have 20 plus llamas, 3 alpacas, 18 chickens, and a dog on a small farm.



Sonja has recently been changing up her breeding program and switching to full Argentines. She says “They have such a unique look and personality. They are all great! We also started showing this year which has been so much fun! Our first show was at the 2014 National Western Stock Show. My son took Grand Champion in his first class! I am so proud of him. Each year our life with llamas keeps getting better and better. I can’t imagine life without them.”

Sonja just oozes enthusiasm for all things llama. With a full time job, a family and a farm, we are especially pleased that she is finding time to work with the Journal Staff. Sonja has been a RMLA member off and on for about 3 years. When asked why she so very willingly agreed to be the Advertising Manager, she said: “I am a llama junkie and LOVE anything to do with them. I felt like I needed to give back and contribute to the llama community. It seems like the same people are always giving/volunteering of their time which is amazing to see! If new owners can, then we should help out too. We’re all in this together. Plus llamas are GREAT!”

## THE BACKCOUNTRY LLAMA



Subscribe today to the publication written for the outdoor enthusiast who packs with camelids.

\$20 1 year (4 issues)  
 \$37.50 2 years (4 issues)  
 \$25 (US) 1 year to Canada  
 \$30 (US) 1 year outside continental US & CAN

visit [www.thebackcountryllama.com](http://www.thebackcountryllama.com)  
 for more information

# CLASSIFIED ADS

### Fiber Processing

Fire Mountain Fiber Mill is a family-owned and operated business in Hotchkiss, CO.

As RMLA members, Fire Mountain Fiber Mill wants to turn those bags of fiber stored in your basement, shed or even the living room into a finished product you can sell or use. They can turn even coarse fleeces into soft roving, yarn or felt.

Email [firemountainfiber@tds.net](mailto:firemountainfiber@tds.net) or call 970-872-7746

### Custom Knitting

Let me knit you a hat, scarf or handwarmers from your llama yarn or mine. Great gifts. Reasonable prices and satisfaction guaranteed!

Also, I can custom blend your fiber with silk, cashmere, Angelina, or something else. Contact Kathy Stanko at [turkeytrots2@gmail.com](mailto:turkeytrots2@gmail.com) so we can talk about your options.

**Your Ad Here!** Just \$10 for 50 words.

# EUREKA! A Fall Hike with Llamas in Golden Gate Canyon State Park

By Jerry Dunn - Bear Track Farm - Golden, CO



**W**e celebrated our tenth fall hike to view the fall colors in the park with our friends and llamas. Nine RMLA members arrived with llamas and pack systems in hand to hike along the trail to Frasier Meadows. The aspen trees were in full color. A few trees were hit by a heavy wind a couple nights before we arrived and lost some of their leaves particularly in the area where historically the groupings revealed bright orange foliage.

The day was gorgeous and we were on the trail by 9 o'clock. The warmth of the sun and the aroma of fall were in the air as we hiked along the well groomed trail with our little group. The pace was slow enough for us to take time for special photo opportunities along the trail. After arriving in the meadow we found our favorite lunch site on the edge of the meadow and settled in to enjoy our lunch. The grass in the meadow was so tall we had to keep a close watch on the animals when they kushed. Their ears were



barely visible through the tall grasses.

On the return we encountered literally dozens of dogs, mostly on leash, two headed 'monsters' (humans carrying their babies in back packs) and finally five very large horses. We cleared off the trail for the horses by moving downhill a great distance for the horses to pass but still there were a few exciting moments as some of the horses



were extremely nervous at the sight of the long eared fuzzy critters. The llamas took advantage of the time for the horses to pass by to taking lengthy poops and to munch on some tree bark.

We were soon back to the trailhead with everyone a little bit tired but happy.

Come join us next year!



# First Year of Youth Awards Program Is a Success!

By Brianna Cozzetto – RMLA Youth Committee Chair

**O**n October 25th in Park City, Kansas at the ALSA Grand National Show four RMLA Youth Members were awarded for their participation with the RMLA Youth Program. Those receiving the custom Montana Silversmith buckles and high point awards were Kaitlyn Winter, Whitney Winter, Elyzabeth Winter, and Aubrynn Cozzetto. Buckles were given to the four youth and they were purchased 100% by the Youth Fundraisers, which included 30th anniversary T-shirts and the silent auction held at Estes Park. Everything which is bought from a RMLA Youth fundraiser goes directly back to the kids. Thank you to all who donated and



bought from these two events! We couldn't have done it without you.

Since the implementation of the new youth program, the RMLA Youth Members has increased from 4 members to 14 members! Right now rules for the 2015 Youth Awards Program are being revamped and will be distributed soon! Stay tuned for more information in the form of emails and an update on the youth page of the RMLA website!



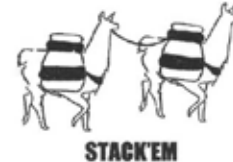
## Attention Annual Members

The membership year runs from April 1st to March 31st each year. In order for your listing to appear in the annual Membership Directory your renewal must be received by the end of March! Please don't forget to renew – either online at [www.rmla.com](http://www.rmla.com) or by sending a written application and dues to:

RMLA Membership Committee  
P.O. Box 1070  
Plains, MT 59859



Jerry Dunn  
Bear Track Farm  
Llama Training Center  
303-277-1129 [beartrak@q.com](mailto:beartrak@q.com)



Ron Hinds and Elizabeth Cline  
5704 Canyon Trail  
Elizabeth, CO 80107  
303-646-1320  
Cell 303-999-6103

WHERE QUALITY, COLOR AND PERSONALITIES ARE BLENDED WITH PRECISION.

BREEDING - HEALTH - CARING  
BOARDING - FIBER AND ANEWERS

[www.elZorroColorado.com](http://www.elZorroColorado.com)  
[alpacas@elzorroc Colorado.com](mailto:alpacas@elzorroc Colorado.com)

# RMLA Fiber Booth 2014 Summary

by Cheryl Juntilla – Fiber Booth Co-Chair

In 2014 the RMLA Fiber Booth traveled to six different events, starting with the Estes Park Wool Market in June. This is an important event for RMLA because Estes Park attracts visitors from all over the world and the llama show creates a unique opportunity to introduce people to llamas and demonstrate their versatility. The Town of Estes Park has made a lot of improvements to the

In Taos our usual crew of volunteers was joined by Lynda Liptak who is a RMLA member from Albuquerque and a supporter of Southwest Llama Rescue. Lynda was a great help in the booth and also had information about a couple of llamas available for adoption which we posted and shared with people who indicated an interest.



Our final event of the year was the Palisade Quilt and Fiber Festival. This was the first year the Town of Palisade



At Sneffles Fiber Festival - Ouray, CO



Palisade Quilt and Fiber Festival – Palisade, CO

fairgrounds, including a new building for the vendor booths, which unfortunately made for a longer walk for volunteers who were also helping with the show.

In July Sandy Lockwood and Sandi Nolan managed the booth at the Fairplay Burro Days Craft Fair. The weather in



Taos Wool Festival – Taos, NM

Fairplay can be challenging and unpredictable, but it is another important event for the booth. Many people enjoy seeing the animals in the Pack Race & Walk and then come to the RMLA Fiber Booth to learn more about the animals and their fiber.

September and October were very busy months for the booth. In September we traveled to the Salida Fiber Festival for the third year in a row and then to the Sneffles Fiber Festival in Ridgway for the first time. The beginning of October found us at the Taos Wool Market, which is always an outstanding event. It is very gratifying to see repeat customers, especially at a big fiber festival where there are many vendors. This year we got a wonderful compliment from a repeat customer who said the RMLA Fiber Booth is her favorite booth at Taos because the quality and wide variety of fiber products make it a fun place to shop.

had a stand-alone fiber festival and we were pleasantly surprised at how well it went. It was held in a beautiful town park and vendors were able to set up pens for animals right next to their booths. This made it really easy to answer questions about llamas and alpacas and point out the similarities and differences. There were also vendors with sheep and goats so the public got to see a variety of fiber producing animals and compare the products made with their fiber.

This year we added more educational books to the booth's inventory. In addition to Caring for Llamas and Alpacas, we now have copies of Chris Switzer's book Spinning Alpaca Llama Camel Paco-Vicuna and RMLA's Youth Lama Project Manual for sale. At every event we give out RMLA brochures and past issues of The RMLA Journal and direct people to the RMLA website.

Overall it was another successful year, but it is important to remember that the real success of the RMLA Fiber Booth cannot be measured in dollars or the amount of products sold. The real success is in the new members who join RMLA because of seeing the booth at an event and in the ways it contributes to RMLA's mission of educating people about llamas and alpacas. Thank you to all of the volunteers and consignors who make it possible for the RMLA Fiber Booth to carry out RMLA's educational mission.





Rocky Mountain Llamas

Niwot, CO - 303-530-5575

www.RockyMtLlamas.com

Leave the city behind and head for the hills.

Outfit your packers with gear that's

Trail-Tested, Llama Approved.®



New & Used Ollie Llama and Timberline Pack Systems, Trail Gear, and the Best-Fitting Llama Halters

## A Good Reference For An Experienced Breeder. An Excellent Gift For The New Owner!

Buying an Animal ♦ Restraint ♦ Traveling with your Animal ♦ Newborns  
♦ Herd Health ♦ Wounds ♦ Mastitis ♦ Lumps ♦ Skin Disorders ♦ Lameness  
♦ Nutrition ♦ Digestive Problems ♦ Respiratory Problems ♦ Down  
Llama ♦ Poisonous Plants ♦ Reproduction and Birthing ♦ Giving Injections  
♦ Teeth ♦ Passing Stomach Tubes ♦ Normal Llama and Alpaca Vitals

**Only \$29.95** (plus \$6.00 postage and handling)

Make your check payable to RMLA for \$35.95

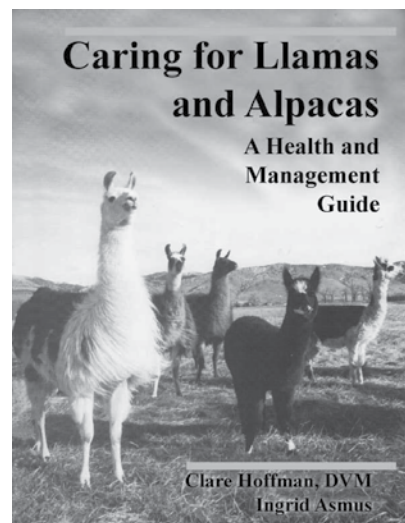
(Colorado residents please add \$1.17 sales tax = \$37.12)

Mail to:

**RMLA Attn: Janice Adamcyk**  
**39420 Olson Court**  
**Kiowa, CO 80117-9604**

Include your name, mailing address, phone number and \$35.95 (CO residents: \$37.12)

**Non-US Mailings:** Contact Jan Adamcyk at adamcyk@earthlink.net for postage amount.



### THE STANDARD IN THE INDUSTRY

Caring For Llamas and Alpacas- A Health and Management Guide by Clare Hoffman, DVM and Ingrid Asmus. Now in its Third Edition, 172 pages—with many updated comments by the authors. Spiral Bound 8 ½" X 11" for easy reference in your barn. Larger type with over 60 detailed illustrations. An excellent gift for new owners of llamas and alpacas and serious visitors to your ranch.

Now order online at [www.RMLA.com](http://www.RMLA.com) - click on Bookstore

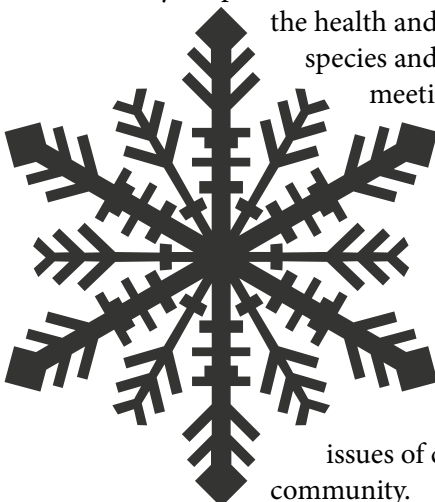
# Report on the US Animal Health Association 2014 Annual Meeting

Compiled by Karen Conyngham, ILR  
representative to the USAHA Board of  
Directors and Susan Tellez, Camelid Alliance.



The 118th annual meeting of the US Animal Health Association was held in Kansas City, MO October 16-22, 2014. Camelid owners who attended this year included Susan Tellez representing the Camelid Alliance, Karen Conyngham, representing the Intl. Lama Registry on the USAHA Board of Directors and Dr. Pat Long, representing the Alpaca Owners & Breeders Assoc. on the USAHA Board of Directors. 1,250 people attended this year's meeting.

USAHA is an international forum where producers join state and federal regulators and researchers/scientists from a wide variety of specialties to discuss issues affecting



the health and welfare of livestock species and wildlife. The annual meeting gives the camelid representatives a chance to talk with state veterinarians, US Dept. of Agriculture, Animal Plant & Health Inspection Service (USDA/APHIS) personnel and researchers about issues of concern to the camelid community.

The following report covers committees in which camelids or diseases of interest to camelid owners were mentioned.

## **MERS-CoV Update**, By Karen Conyngham, Intl. Lama Registry representative

After being first reported in humans in 2012, Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) continued to be a problem in several countries in the Middle East this year, with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia the hardest hit. As of Oct. 16, 2014, the Saudi Ministry of Health reported 765 MERS cases, including 325 deaths, 429 recovered patients and 11 patients still in treatment.

November of 2013 brought the first, and to date the only, confirmed case of MERS being transmitted to a human by an infected dromedary camel (Saudi Arabia). This man owned 9 camels and one showed respiratory distress and was treated by the owner who died of MERS 18 days later. The camel recovered. RNA from human and camel nasal

swabs showed the same strain infected both. (NEJM Jun 4, 2014 DOI: 10.1056/NEJMoa1401505)

The summer of 2014 brought a large increase in human cases of MERS in Saudi Arabia with most patients having pre-existing conditions and weakened immune systems but only a small minority had direct contact with dromedary camels or camel milk. Health care workers also came down with MERS and are suspected in transmission to patients. The World Health Organization (WHO) urged greater biosecurity precautions be taken in Saudi hospitals and by late July the rate of new infections had dropped. On Sept. 8, 2014 the Saudi Ministry of Agriculture announced plans to do health surveys and an owner inventory of all camels in the Kingdom, implement a 10-14-day quarantine period for all imported dromedaries and study the development of a vaccine to be used in young camels.

During this time, studies were done on frozen camel sera that showed antibodies to MERS have been prevalent in dromedaries for 30 years. Most camels in Middle East countries come from Somalia and Sudan.

The OIE closely monitors MERS and states that "... the exact relationship between MERS-CoV infections in camels and humans remains unclear." It has been suggested that MERS may be traced to bats and camels may be an intermediate host.

NO camelid species in Australia, the US or Europe have shown MERS antibodies. The OIE and WHO encourage people in the Middle East such as dromedary owners and veterinarians who have direct contact with camels practice good biosecurity procedures when handling dromedaries. Consumption of raw camel milk or meat products carries a risk of infection in humans and is discouraged. The virus has been isolated in camel milk from an infected camel in Qatar. (<http://www.eurosurveillance.org/ViewArticle.aspx?ArticleId=20829>). Camels may not show signs of infection and at this time the precise infectious period of MERS in dromedaries is unknown. However the director of the Central Veterinary Research Laboratory in Dubai reports: "Only very few young camels excrete the virus and they are not handled [until] they are broken as 1 year-olds. According to our field investigations the young camels harbor the virus only for a short period of time, not more than 8 days, and many of the excreting camels [do] not even have nasal discharge." A study done by Colorado State Univ. and the National Institute of Health's National

*continued on page 18*



# Call me for a free Farm & Ranch Survey

---

## (281) 250-2000

---



**Brent L. Holt, CLU, ChFC**  
Farm & Ranch Specialist  
Brent.Holt@cfbmic.com  
900 Castleton Road # 130  
Castle Rock, CO 80109

**Real service. Real people.**



**Auto • Home • Life**

AP-NP-38

Colorado Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company  
Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company, Jackson, MS

Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (Hamilton, MT) was pre-published online in the journal *Emerging Infectious Diseases* on Sept. 24, 2014. Three US camels were inoculated with human MERS virus isolate and became infected with clinical signs being benign but each animal shed virus from the upper respiratory tract. They remained infectious for 7 days and viral RNA was detected 35 days post inoculation.

The *Lancet Respiratory Medicine* reported in an online edition August 29, 2014 that isolates of MERS-CoV from Saudi and Egyptian dromedaries can replicate in the human respiratory tract. (<http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanres/article/PIIS2213-2600%2814%2970158-4/abstract>)

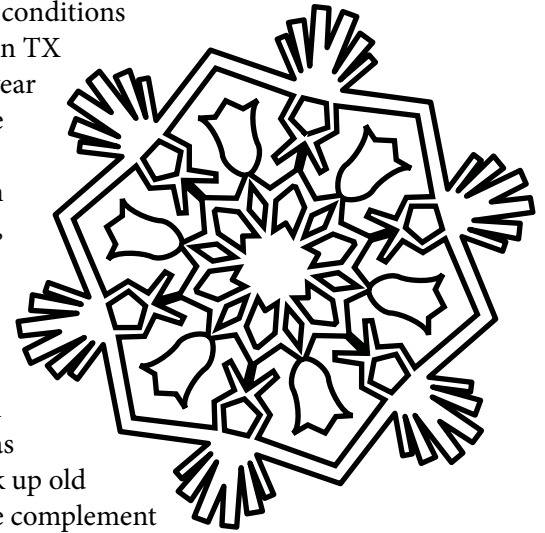
OIE Member Countries are obliged to report a confirmed case of MERS-CoV in animals to the OIE, as an “emerging disease” with zoonotic potential in accordance with article 1.1.3 of the OIE.

### Committee on Parasitic Diseases

Dr. Angela Pelzel-McCluskey, National Epidemiologist for Equine Diseases at USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services, gave a very informative presentation on the 2014 outbreak of vesicular stomatitis (VS) in Texas and Colorado. VS occurs in the Americas and has symptoms that are very similar to foot-and-mouth disease which makes it a disease of concern to USDA. Llamas and alpacas are considered as susceptible to VS but only “occasionally”. In affected livestock, the incubation period for vesicular stomatitis ranges from 2 to 8 days. Often, excessive salivation is the first sign of the disease. Close examination of the mouth initially reveals blanched and raised vesicles or blister-like lesions on the inner surfaces of the lips, gums, tongue, and/or dental pad. In addition, these blister-like lesions can form on the lips, nostrils, coronary band (the small area between the toenail and the fiber on a camelid foot), prepuce, vulva, and teats. The blisters (which contain the virus) swell and break, which causes oral pain and discomfort and reluctance to eat or drink. Lameness and severe weight loss may follow. Body temperature may rise immediately before or at the same time lesions first appear. This is a zoonotic disease - humans can be infected as well when they come in direct contact with lesion fluid. VS can be spread within a herd via shared water and feed sources and by insect vectors.

VS is most common in horses, but cattle were affected in the 2014 outbreak as well. USDA did investigate several Colorado premises that had both horses and camelids, but as of the time this report was written, no infected camelids had been found. Dr. McCluskey noted that VS is endemic in southern Mexico and in 2014 the weather in the southern US was ideal for the vectors of the disease which

are black flies, sand flies and biting midges. Heavy rains following a period of drought fill streams and provide the right habitat for black flies which are the primary vector for VS. Those conditions were present in TX and CO this year but ANY state can be at risk for VS. When testing for VS, veterinarians should not use either virus neutralization or Elisa tests as those can pick up old infections; the complement fixation test is the best one



to use to determine current infection. Horses that have been infected with VS will have high titers for the disease for the rest of their lives. Farms and ranches that have infected livestock are placed under a 21-day quarantine from the date lesions have healed; no animals leave or enter the premises until the quarantine is lifted. Of course individual animals can become infected at any time, so many farms had a quarantine period longer than 21 days; quarantine ends when the last infected animal is declared free of the virus. Generally VS dies out after a killing frost, but the Texas outbreak ended in mid-October with all affected premises released from quarantine. Colorado still has quarantine sites in place as of Nov. 1, 2014. To see the weekly situation reports for the 2014 outbreak visit: <http://tinyurl.com/l6puje7>

VS is reportable to the OIE (international animal health organization) and having the disease present in the US can have trade implications with other countries. However since VS infection is not associated with significant morbidity or mortality in domestic animals or wildlife, the OIE will be delisting VS as of January 1, 2015 and countries will no longer be required to report outbreaks to the OIE. It is unclear at this point in time just how USDA/APHIS will handle reporting of future VS outbreaks; a guidance document is expected sometime in 2015.

### Committee on Livestock Identification

Llamas and alpacas are not included in the USDA Animal Traceability program but states and municipalities can enact regulations that are more strict than the federal rule. That means that local fairs and shows could require

*continued on next page*

permanent ID in camelids; be sure to carefully check each show's entry requirements.

Dr. Kent Fowler presented the Equine report on ID and noted that horse owners have found that the bio-thermal microchips are not fully reliable in recording accurate temperatures; taking the temperature rectally is still recommended. These microchips are also showing a higher failure rate than chips without the temperature function. He also noted that USDA accepts both microchip ID in horses or high-quality digital photos of the horse taken from the front, rear and each side.

**Committee on Bluetongue and Related Orbiviruses, By Susan W. Tellez**

A report from the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) by Eileen Oslund listed one alpaca diagnosed with Bluetongue Virus (BTV) as the cause of death. Knowledge of three alpacas with the same diagnoses was discussed.

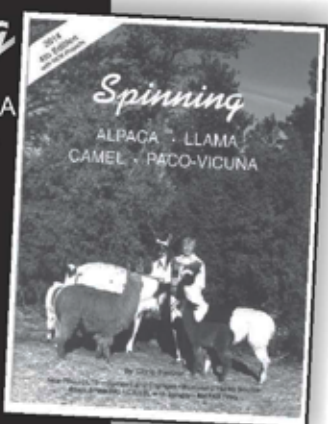
Bluetongue is carried by infected mosquitoes and midges such as midge *Culicoides imicola* and *Culicoides variipennis*, so owners should be aware if these vectors are prevalent in their area and be diligent about controlling mosquito infestations around their farm and animals. This is the same transmission mode for West Nile Virus, and other orbiviruses.

On-going individual state and international trade regulations regarding the presence of active Bluetongue in the USA was discussed and a USAHA resolution (#6) was filed for a proposed National Strategy for animal exports and movement. The current regulations prevent live animals being exported from the USA.

**Committee on Import-Export**

Regulatory restrictions and bans due to diseases, or disease status such as Bluetongue and Vesicular Stomatitis, affect the movement and trade of agricultural products and live animals. Noted was the change in OIE status for Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies such as BSE in the US now being that of undetermined risk, which allows more freedom of animal movement.

Foot-and-Mouth disease (FMD) – the Southern Patagonia Region of Argentina has been listed as FMD Free for the movement and exportation of animals and animal products. Additional reviews are being considered



**Spinning**  
ALPACA • LLAMA  
CAMEL • PACO-VICUNA  
by Chris Switzer  
4th Edition • 52 pages

- NEW Projects
- Basic SPINNING
- Camel with Sample
- MARKETING
- Revised Dyeing Section
- Updates and changes

Chris Switzer  
1236 Glacier View Lane  
Estes Park, Colorado 80517  
(970) 586-4624 • FAX (970) 577-0775  
www.alpacaland.com

**Retail**  
**\$18.00 each**  
**Plus \$3**  
**Postage**

under the USDA's Regionalization Program for areas of various countries. This could affect camelid movement.

Under the Streamlining Process, the 9CFR regulatory Rules – Parts 94, 95, 96 – are being reviewed for potential changes and improvements. This will hopefully result in more feasible and relevant rules for agricultural and product movement and trade.

The travel restrictions due to the worldwide emergence of Coronaviruses such as MERS and SARS were discussed.

The next USAHA Annual Meeting will be held October 22-28, 2015 at the Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence, RI. Information on USAHA is always available at: <http://www.usaha.org>

Karen Conyngham would like to thank the officers and members of the following associations for their most generous financial support to the ILR Government Relations account in 2014: Greater Appalachian Llama & Alpaca Assoc., Kentucky Llama & Alpaca Assoc., Llama Assoc. of the Middle Atlantic States, Michigan Lama Assoc., Midwest Lama Assoc., Ohio River Valley Llama Assoc., South Central Llama Assoc.



# “Fiber as Business” Conference

By Lisa Blidar  
Parker, CO

“NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF THOUGHTFUL, COMMITTED CITIZENS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD; INDEED, IT IS THE ONLY THING THAT EVER HAS.” Margaret Mead.

**A**s I sit in my seat on board a plane heading back to Denver, my head is still buzzing. I just attended the first “Fiber as Business” Conference, hosted at the O.S.U. Agriculture satellite, The Shisler Conference Center, in the charming town of Wooster, OH.

There was a phenomenal attendance of 130 people representing 20 states & Canada! Barb Baker & Shelia Fugina were the brainchildren behind this event and it was a year in the making. The conference ran for almost two days and was jam packed with a heap of information geared toward camelid owners coming together to learn how to “do something” with that fabulous fiber!

Barb and Sheila had an intense itinerary of presenters covering a wide variety of topics applicable to our industry. Presenters ranged from owners of processing mills, leaders of fiber co-ops organized in a variety of ways, a web/marketing guru, a very energetic CPA, and a representative from the USDA. Their collective message was loud and clear: we must come together as a “Team of Camelid Lovers;” (llama & alpaca) to do something viable with our fiber if we are to move forward into the 21st century! The conference was the seed to get us motivated.

The following is a synopsis of presenters & topics. Check out their websites for more detailed information on how each operates and what services and products are provided.

- Wade Gease, Alpaca Fiber Co-op of North America (AFCNA). Wade informed us that AFCNA realized more than half a MILLION dollars (wholesale!) in just “sock” sales!!! PLEASE GO BACK AND READ THAT SENTENCE AGAIN!! [www.afcna.com](http://www.afcna.com)
- Paul Egan, The Alpaca Blanket Project. Their mill collects alpaca fiber for producing blankets with Pendleton Wool Co. in Oregon. [www.alpacabp.com](http://www.alpacabp.com)
- Chris & Shelley Riley, New England Alpaca Fiber Pool (NEAFP). Their mill can do it all from processing to providing over 30 finished products for wholesale



sales. [www.neafp.com](http://www.neafp.com)

- Robin Kuhl, Natural Fiber Producers. Robin described their unique concept of “pay as you go” and by-passing the middle man. Member farms have access the wholesale pool of fiber if you cannot sell your fiber. [www.naturalfiberproducers.com](http://www.naturalfiberproducers.com)
- Margaret VanCamp, Bluefaced Leicester (Sheep) Union. Margaret gave a humorous and dynamic presentation on the differences/similarities between camelid fiber and BFL sheep fiber concerning processing/harvesting etc. She spoke candidly about raising all fiber animals as a professional business. Check out their farm at Pitchfork Ranch in Swartz Creek, MI. [www.pitchfork.org](http://www.pitchfork.org)
- Larry McCool, Pacific NW Llama Fiber Co-op. Larry started the Co-op in 2005 and his main client is also Pendleton Woolen Mills providing llama (only) fiber for Pendleton’s rugs and blanket products. [www.llamafibercoop.com](http://www.llamafibercoop.com)
- Heather Dee, New Era Fiber Mill in Gallatin, TN. NEFM is a small mill, offering all services plus some custom requests (blending, design, etc.) and processing small orders. [www.newerafiber.com](http://www.newerafiber.com)
- Alliey Kuzupas & Craig Eslep, 84 Alpacas Fiber Mill in 84, PA. They showed us a video of their mill operation.

It is awe inspiring to see what it takes to produce just one skein of double plied yarn. [www.fibermillat84.com](http://www.fibermillat84.com)

- Tara Swiger, author of “Market Yourself.” gave two presentations. The first, “Marketing your Fiber Farm with Live Events” and the second one “Online Marketing for Your Fiber Farm.” In the first talk, she discussed prioritizing your farm goals concerning your fiber/

products and the activities you can plan to do so. In her second talk she spoke about online marketing. We discussed the HUGE arena of using social media and marketing to better sell products. [www.taraswiger.com](http://www.taraswiger.com)  
Before we broke for a nice BBQ dinner, there was a Q&A panel discussion where the speakers from that day had a chance to answer our questions. There were many great questions and everyone was very excited. That evening concluded with a live auction of the gorgeous, one of a

*continued on next page*

## Just Pennies per Day to Insure Your Llama and Alpacas' Health

Cache la Poudre Minerals are free choice Vitamin and Mineral Supplements formulated specifically to balance your llama and alpacas' diet.

- ✓ Tailored to meet different feeding situations.
- ✓ Palatable so the animals will consume them willingly
- ✓ Safer than pellets, which may cause them to choke.
- ✓ Supplements do not add unnecessary calories or protein to the animals' diet



### Supplement #1

Diet consists of: Late or non-irrigated summer, fall or winter pasture; feeding grass hay. Supplement #1 contains a 2:1 calcium/phosphorus ratio and additional vitamin E.

### Supplement #2

Diet consists of: Late or non-irrigated summer, fall or winter pasture; feeding alfalfa or grass hay low in phosphorus. Contains additional phosphorus and Vitamin E.

### To Order

Call 800-758-0825

Local 303-420-1659

OR

online at: [www.CLPMinerals.com](http://www.CLPMinerals.com)

Randy and Jody Sharp - Owners of Arazmatazz Alpacas

### "Fiber as Business" Conference, continued

kind, felted fiber table centerpieces created by the well-known fiber artist, Laura Harrawood. Each piece was unique: some held vases inside for flowers, some were fiber birdhouses, while others were simple decorative pieces. Wade was sweet talked into becoming the animated auctioneer for these pieces and the bidding war had some great friendly haggling. All the lucky bidders will have a very special memento of fiber art from this first year event!


- Dave Krebs, CPA & CEO of CPA Advisory Group, gave a humorous and engaging talk entitled "Making Taxes Less Taxing & How to Keep the IRS Happy." He had great ideas, helpful tips and informed us of all the new tax policies as it concerned farm business, raising livestock/fiber etc. [www.cpaagi.com](http://www.cpaagi.com)
- Randy Hammerstrom from the USDA Livestock, Poultry, & Grain Market News Office gave a presentation on "The Benefits of Anonymous Fiber-Pricing". He came all the way from Colorado, as I did, and spoke about how his group does not focus on the market, but gives "unbiased info" concerning data on things such as head counts/volume/weight/micron size/pricing for fiber etc. Eventually and with much work, this division will provide useful information for



the camelid community to help predict market growth/demand and supply, etc. The AOA is overseeing this for the camelid community.

The conference concluded at lunchtime on Sunday for people to make their flights back home. This conference was a HUGE success from my perspective and for a first time event, I still can't get over how well attended it was, how fabulous ALL the speakers were, the plethora of info that was presented. There was a CD provided to all conference attendees which included all the speakers' notes/topics.

A common theme was there is a niche for every animal's fiber; whether alpaca or llama, low or high micron count, older or younger. Each camelid owner needs to discover which of the many avenues works best for them, then take the steps!

Now, in conclusion: yes, I got motivated to 'do something'. Since I no longer own llamas (but, I am still an RMLA member!) the first thing I did was open a "wholesale" account with NEAFP. I will be offering finished products at the Flare Co/CO Artisans retail space at the Flatirons Mall (N. Denver area) for their holiday season! Lee Ann King & Wendy Gerken have also sent me their yarns to sell. This is a great opportunity to introduce & showcase the beautiful yarns & products made in the USA from animals raised in USA. 

# Hopeless Crew: An Injection of Youthful Enthusiasm & Energy!

By Vicky Foster - Lightning Ridge Llamas - Allenspark, CO

The weekend before I was to meet Gary Carlson in Leadville to prepare for the Leadville Trail 100 Run and our annual volunteer effort with the llamas and llama packers at Hope Pass, I landed in the hospital with pneumonia. I headed to camp with enthusiasm but was sad since I was sure I wasn't going to be able to make the hike this year. It was my plan to send the llamas up and stay in base camp for the race.

Arrival in camp was wonderful since Gary had already set up and was able to help a somewhat weakened camping buddy get the tent up and llamas unloaded. The Hopeless Crew is always generous to give of time, energy and help and this year I really needed it! Sunday, I was low energy and dragging; Monday—feeling quite well. If I had realized all I needed to do was go camping, I would have been in the wilderness sooner!

The organization from the race sponsors was much better this year than last (experience is a great teacher) and Gary and I sorted, stored, organized and weighed gear and supplies for several days before heading up. Gary's

fellow llama outfitter, Kevin Kallenbaugh, who has volunteered his llamas but never made the trip to Hope Pass, hiked with us this year. He was a welcome contributor. Friends Lauren Munger and Alison Fisher drove up to help the crew get organized and get on the road. After 'leaves of absence' from the Hopeless Crew, these llama packers are planning to volunteer again. Welcome back! The initial group of hikers went up on Wednesday—and I made it!—taking longer than ever before, but getting to camp feeling fine.

Darin Olson, who volunteered with us last year, brought scouts from Scout Troup 66 in Colorado Springs. Camden Martin, Justin Brand, Mark Bloomfield, JJ DeVoe, Sam DeVoe, Loudon Archuleta and Calvert Bystroff were the scouts who pitched in to become members of the Hopeless Crew. Adult volunteers who came with these wonderful young men were Greg Brand, David Bloomfield, Mark DeVoe and Darin Olson. The adults also joined in with much needed assistance and enthusiasm.



*continued on next page*



## Hopeless Crew..., continued

The scouts all packed in their own gear leaving the llamas free to carry the aid station supplies. For me, though, it was really special that three of the scouts needed to work towards their cooking badges. They were willing and most able to assist in the cook tent during the race. Family and friends were all concerned about me overdoing and getting sick in camp, but the scouts did the work this year and I was able to mostly supervise. This is NOT my usual role, but necessary this year and the scouts were totally GREAT!



My niece, Vicky Homan, volunteered again this year, bringing with her additional younger Hopeless Crew members Gopal Shah, Katy Bodine, Holly Hein, and Cole Davis. These 'youngsters' left work early Friday afternoon and power-hiked to camp, arriving just at dusk. Ahhh—youth!! Vicky (my niece) had developed a new flow plan for cola and water at the aid station and she and her friends worked tirelessly with other volunteers to keep the runners hydrated. Cole assisted Tom Blackwood with the water purification. The hard work and great spirits of these young adults are so truly appreciated!

Finally, the crew from Golden High School (over 20 strong) hiked up on Saturday to once again make sure we could keep up with the runners' needs during the race. I actually don't remember how many years Chris Colucci has been bringing up a team of volunteers, but it's been quite a while! These track team and Senior Seminar members really do an amazing job of working wherever and however they are needed at Hope Pass...from gathering wood to working the food shelter with Mary Jo Blackwood to assisting ailing runners....they do it all. It was so fantastic

to have their help, enthusiasm and energy again. These folks also hike up with the cups every year—helping cut down on the bulk in the llama packs.

Darren Maurer, Gail Davidson, Deb Paparelli, Patty Morgan, Tom and Mary Jo Blackwood—are long time Hopeless contributors in many and significant ways. And next year, we welcome

the return of important Hopeless volunteers Curt Puritt, Elaine Johnson and Sylvia Murphy who were on the injured list or sidelined with family obligations this year.

From Gary Carlton, Hopeless Crew Leader, and Vicky Foster, loooongtime Hopeless volunteer, THANK YOU to everyone for your help and energy. We will be at it again in 2015 so please contact us if you want to volunteer...you will have a memorable experience. Gary: llama@jmhfarm.com or Vicky: vlfoster@aol.com



### HELP!

RMLA has most of the past RMLA Newsletters/Journals in print form. In an effort to save this important information and make it available to members, they are all being scanned to PDFs. RMLA needs to create a search index for articles, stories, etc. in the publications. What's needed is a member experienced with indexing publications to develop (or help develop) the list of indexed items, words, phrases, etc.

In addition, we need member(s) to read and actually index these publications. The scanned Journals/Newsletters are already online. Not really a big hurry, but indexing is something RMLA needs to get done for future generations. If you can help in any of these areas, send a note to rmlaeditor@gmail.com. Your help will make this valuable information available for the future of RMLA.... *thank you*

# Loose Llama in the Goat Rocks Wilderness

by Scott Noga - Rattlesnake Ridge Ranch - Pasco, WA

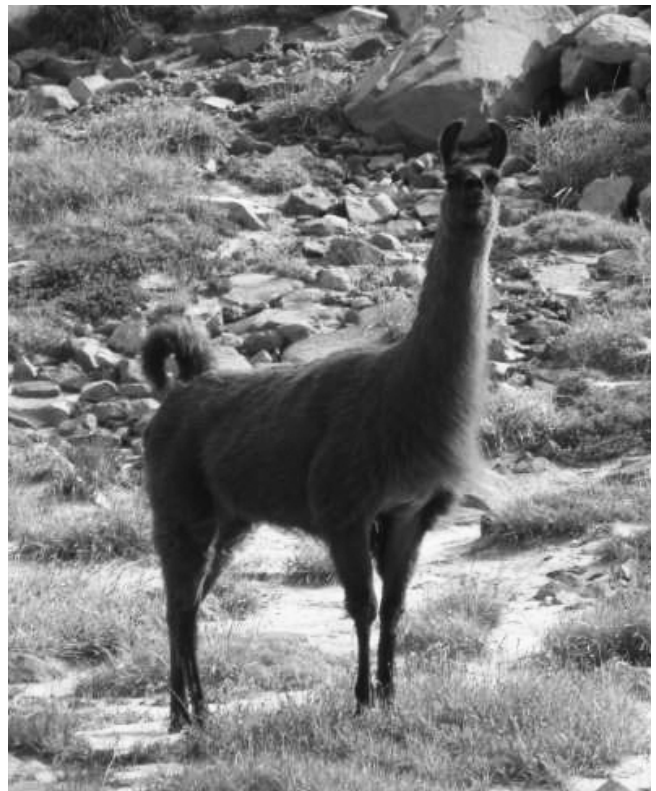
The Goat Rocks Wilderness in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest is situated roughly midway between the prominent Mt. Rainier and Mt. Adams in the southern Washington Cascade mountain range. It has the distinction of being the highest elevation of the popular Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) that stretches from Canada to Mexico. Strikingly rugged and beautiful, it attracts large numbers of backpackers in addition to the many PCT through-hikers.

By early August of 2014, hikers began to notice a solitary brown llama roaming around the area from Snowgrass Flats in the south, an alpine meadow, and what is commonly referred to as “the knife” 3-4 miles to the north – a rocky, very narrow portion of the PCT with steep glaciated slopes on either side. Hiker blogs and online forums began making mention of a “loose llama”. This did not come to my attention until the afternoon of September 17th when an unfamiliar person emailed me directly with a link to a Portland Hikers forum thread with pictures. The llama had no halter or collar. Later the same day Gary Kauffman of Roads End Llamas forwarded to the llama-info mailing list a similar contact from another person that may have heard about it via a horse group. Over a month had passed and word was suddenly spreading to llama folks.

While a public discussion ensued on llama-info chat list, I made private contact to a couple of llama people I knew in the area. The closest was Noel McRae, founder of The Backcountry Llama, who resides just a few miles west of there. None recognized or had heard anything about this llama. Noel contacted several more prominent packers in the northwest and received the same response. A Forest Service contact said there was no report of a lost llama from an owner but they were well aware of the llama’s presence. Rangers had observed the llama on numerous occasions and reported she would come right up to them but would run off as soon as they tried to get hold of her. One ranger attempted to find and capture on horseback – an encounter that reportedly didn’t go well when the horse feared for his/her safety near a potentially predatory llama. The llama’s gender was unknown throughout this ordeal but I will use the female pronoun.

An internet search turned up other more recent references to the loose llama made on hiker forums, including a blog post from a group of PCT through-hikers that happened not only upon the llama but in the vicinity found a large red collar on the ground off the trail with the name “Denali” printed on it – the llama’s collar? From here on she would be known as Denali, for lack of any other name. I wrote the person that posted the collar message but never received a reply.

Charley Rosenberry, llama packer from Vashon Island (Puget Sound), volunteered on llama-info to help with a rescue. I contacted Charley privately. That same weekend Maureen O’Neil of Tacoma was hiking in the Goat Rocks and happened to see the llama. The following Monday after receiving word from the Forest Service that they didn’t plan to take any action, she contacted Southwest Llama Rescue about the situation, which was posted to their mailing list. Noel McRae later made contact with the Forest Service to express his disappointment in their lack of timely notification of the loose llama and had passed the word to Jeff Fisker, another llama packer in the Portland area, and others soliciting assistance with a rescue.



Busy schedules didn’t allow for a coordinated attempt until the first weekend of October. Having camped at the trailhead the night before, Charley Rosenberry hiked in with a pair of female llamas early Friday morning as far as “the knife” (nearly 9 actual trail miles and 3150’ climb one way) – assumed to be a physical barrier – and was already most of the way out as Lisa Wolf (Pack Llama Trail Association President), Gayle Noga and I hiked in with three of our boys, Rowdy, Marley and Wizard. Charley had not seen the llama but did make contact with a couple of campers in the area who had also not seen anything. The weather was good with above normal temperature for early

*continued on next page*



October and we arrived at the bypass trail camp at dark.

The following morning, equipped with day packs, we each set out in different directions with walkie-talkies, covering the area trails in search of the elusive llama. Lisa took the Goat Lake trail west, I took the east PCT north to the area where Charley had searched, and Gayle was to search the Snowgrass loop interconnecting trails. About three miles away, north of where the Snowgrass Flats trail intersects with the PCT, I observed what turned out to be two PCT through-hikers well off the trail to the east, but when they saw I had a llama they quickly approached to ask if I was looking for a loose one. They informed me a llama was over a rise to the east. After calling Gayle and Lisa via radio, my plan was to just park it where the llama could see me and see if she would approach, which I fully expected she would do to check out Rowdy, and simply appear non-threatening and possessing treats while awaiting the arrival of the others. I reached the rise and sure enough, there she was cushed about 150 yards beyond. She stood and struck a stunning pose.

Denali postured and Rowdy began clucking. After a brief exchange she started approaching at a fast walk. Then, my two informants walked up from behind and up to the rise, out of curiosity I suppose. At that point Denali inexplicably froze, then turned away and took off up the hillside and out of sight. I waited, hoping she would just check us out from a high point, but that was the last she was seen. I suggested the two should move on, which they did.

With no return of the llama, Lisa, Wizard, Rowdy and I spent the rest of the day scanning with binoculars and scouring the rugged slopes to no avail until nearly nightfall, walking for many miles. She seemingly vanished into thin air. Tracks indicated she kept going higher, far up the slopes to the south. I learned from some nearby campers that prior to my arrival my two "informants" had spent well over an hour (they said two hours) chasing her, armed with twine. To the campers they spoke of riches thinking they could take this llama into town to sell for big bucks. The llama had been out in the open earlier in the day but had been chased out of view. Needless to say, thanks to that our chances of actually securing this llama were pretty hopeless from the start.

We had to leave the next day since I didn't have any time off from work. The miles of hiking the day before at least provided important information. Out of view of any trails, I discovered numerous bean piles, a bedding area and many tracks. With this I was armed with a strategy for a return trip to camp with staked out llamas at this out-of-sight spot Denali frequented.

On the way back we posted our contact information for sightings at the Snowgrass and Berry Patch trailheads.

Second hand information had been received, presumably due to an unofficial comment made by a forest ranger to a camper, that the Forest Service planned to shoot this llama rather than let him overwinter, fearing disease transmission to the mountain goats in this area. Hunting season was getting underway. The weather was changing and this rugged area with lots of deadfall in the lower elevations (treeless in the upper) is known for very heavy snowfall, often with over a foot at a time and tens of feet over winter. Time was running out.

Coordination of another expedition started right away with the first opportunity for multiple people to make the journey three weeks away – the last weekend of October. Noel McRae, Jeff Fisker, Charley Rosenberry, Maureen O'Neil and I volunteered. I could travel as early as Friday, Jeff and Noel could do early Saturday morning, while Charley and Maureen would arrive Saturday afternoon. Charley had a rope corral. I had portable fencing. I'll spare you the sundry details but each of us had to overcome many complications leading up to this second attempt.

Due to the posted trailhead notice, each weekend I received a report from a hiker that they observed the llama in the same area I had seen her, which was encouraging. Some tried to approach the llama, but she would not let anyone get close without moving away. The picture below was sent from a hiker, taken from the PCT. I've added an arrow to point out Denali in case you can't see her.



As our departure time approached, the weather report was not looking good for the entire week, with further

*continued on next page*

*Loose Llama in the Goat Rocks Wilderness, continued*

deterioration forecast through the weekend. Sunday's forecast was 99% chance of precipitation all day and night. My expectation was that Denali would not be an easy catch due to being on her own for so long, being chased repeatedly by people, and judging by her recent observed behavior. I figured we would have only one chance and once spooked she would be gone, at least for the day. This was likely our last weekend to catch her and if unsuccessful there would probably be nothing more we could do. I planned for a slow and methodical approach, camping in the llama's turf overnight, not jeopardizing the capture with a rushed attempt, and allowing some time to locate her and gain trust while awaiting the arrival of assistance. Friday had the least precipitation in the forecast for a more comfortable establishment of a camp, with Friday and Saturday evenings at 90% precipitation, and would provide more time if I hiked in early to await the arrival of the others.

Hedging my bet due to no third chance, I also packed a blowgun with two tranquilizer darts in the event we could get only within a short distance and corralling didn't work out. Darts are problematic in llamas because dense fiber can slide the sleeve off the site-port needle before penetration.

Noel had to bow out due to recent hand surgery but offered his nearby yurt as an overnight camp for those who needed it. I headed out Friday to spend the night in the wet mountains with my hiking buddy Rowdy so I'd have Saturday morning to search. From the Packwood area of White Pass I could see that the higher elevations were already covered in snow. This concerned me as that could drive Denali out of the area where I was expecting to find her, in search of food – all the more reason to get in early and pin down her location.

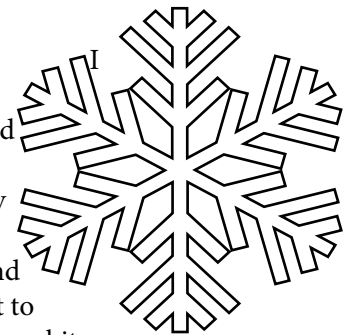
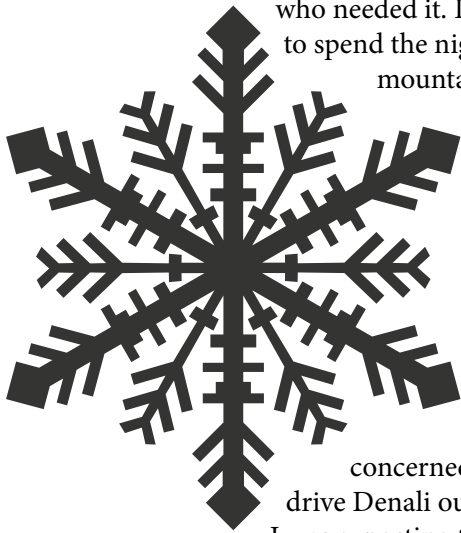
We hit the trail in the early afternoon from the eerily vacant trailhead. All tracks had been swept away by recent rains. It was completely overcast with thick, low clouds and wet with passing occasional light sprinkles, but the forest trees dripped continually. Already at this elevation a cloud would sometimes envelop us in fog, moving on the slight breeze, then pass. As long as we were hiking it didn't feel cold and it was very quiet, dark and tranquil actually, but the skies threatened continually.

We reached the snowline before the bypass trail intersection and kept moving, with the heavy drips from the trees progressively joined by slushballs. I was thankful for my wide brimmed hat. The wind was slight but very gradually increasing, causing the trees to occasionally sway and release a barrage. The open Snowgrass Flats offered a welcome break from the pelting, but time was running out and we needed to reach camp.

As we continued to climb back into the trees, observing occasional small deer tracks, we came upon a set of llama prints in the snow, crossing perpendicular to the trail. Further on, they crossed again in the opposite direction. This was rather unexpected as the high meadow she had been staying in the past several weeks was still about a mile away. Knowing the trail would soon switch back to cross again in the direction of the tracks, I hoped to pick up the tracks again further up the trail. As we made the bend and climbed towards a rise about fifty yards ahead, still in the trees, with the only sound the crunching of snow underfoot and Rowdy's slight jingle of ID tag, suddenly a llama silently sprang into view coming to a broadside stop on top of the rise, having arrived at a fast pace. She had obviously heard us approach.

I immediately and quickly stepped alongside Rowdy and unzipped his upper pannier compartment where I had staged the treat bag, halter and lead. As I released Rowdy, standing at his rear quarter, Denali ran to us and went nose-to-nose with Rowdy. Following introductions, I offered treats which Rowdy first helped himself to, demonstrating there was good stuff in there. She investigated very tentatively, but then dived in and quickly backed off quite a ways with a mouthful. Not one to pass on treats, Rowdy uncharacteristically moved off a short distance leaving the two of us to do our dance. It seemed he knew just what needed to be done. (After all, I had been telling him all along why we were there.)

As the two of us casually conversed in "llama", provided treats and we both moved apart. This went on and she gradually became bolder as I gradually made it less-easy to get to the treats. Over time she had to reach a bit closer and then actually around me to get to them and I kept slightly moving a bit away from her each time, playing hard to get. Eventually she was reaching completely around me, whereupon I made my



*continued on next page*

*Loose Llama in the Goat Rocks Wilderness, continued*

move. She struggled but I hung on, kept a calm tone and also kept the treat bag in front of her nose as best I could. After a bid to get away she relented and dove back into the bag which I lowered to the ground as I exchanged it with the halter in my hand. I slipped it on between mouthfuls while keeping a firm hold on her. In all it took about ten or fifteen minutes as I took my time, not wanting to rush things and blow it, though she concerned me a couple times she appeared as though she was going to take off.



Once I had her lead in hand and retrieved the treat bag, I called Rowdy who promptly returned. I shared some treats with him and pulled the string lead from his pannier and connected Denali to Rowdy, secured his panniers and began to walk to see how she would lead behind him. (see the photo on the cover.) Thankfully she followed right behind as though she had been doing it all day. It was getting late and I knew that if we headed back at this point it would be dark before we reached the trailhead but if she would lead well that seemed much more appealing than setting up a camp in the wet and deteriorating conditions.

The precipitation and wind continued to increase as we hiked out. Light snow turned to freezing rain, then to a steady light rainfall. In addition to slushballs tree branches occasionally broke off and fell to the ground nearby as we descended, but other than the noise and movement concerning the llamas a bit now and again, stopping to investigate, the trek out was uneventful. She loaded into the borrowed horse trailer fine, where hay was waiting, but although Rowdy welcomed the meal she oddly seemed uninterested (and still has little interest in hay). It wasn't until this time I determined the llama was a female.

After leaving a crude note at both trailheads that the llama was rescued, we drove out to the highway – a 21 mile slow slog through washboarded and potholed dirt road – and headed east through the pass. By this time it was a very heavy downpour and pitch black. I was thankful I had converted our truck to HID headlights for better illumination but sorry the llamas had to ride in a cold, wet trailer instead of our “llama limo” custom E350 bus, which was still in the shop.

By the time we arrived home about midnight, Denali was cold – shivering and hypothermic with a 98.8F body temperature. Her wet fiber, only about

an inch or so long, still has sparse undercoat. With the unseasonably warm weather she was not yet prepared for the late but rapidly approaching winter. In Eastern Washington it wasn't raining but a cold wind was blowing from the North. She was placed into a dry shelter with infrared heater and dried with a Circuiteer hot air blower, though it was so humid that she just wouldn't dry completely.

At daybreak she was up and was greeted over the fence by many llamas, eager to meet the new arrival. Intake assessment revealed external and internal parasite issues, none extreme or particularly concerning, and apparent nutritional deficiency with pronounced facial alopecia. Body score was normal. With the cool weather it took another day before she fully recovered from the chill. After only a week she is already visibly responding to the treatments, with new hair just beginning to grow back on her face. She was seen by a vet who pronounced her in good condition and judging by the minimal teeth wear does not appear to be nearly as old as I thought – quite young actually. Large, loose mammaries probably means she has had an offspring though. While the minor conditions are being addressed, she is revealing herself to be a rather friendly and easy to handle gal.

Our rescue ranch is over capacity so Denali is likely destined for a new home, but rest assured she will go to a good home where her talents are appreciated. Who knows, she may visit the Goat Rocks Wilderness again someday – her home a long way from home.

Postscript: \_\_\_\_\_

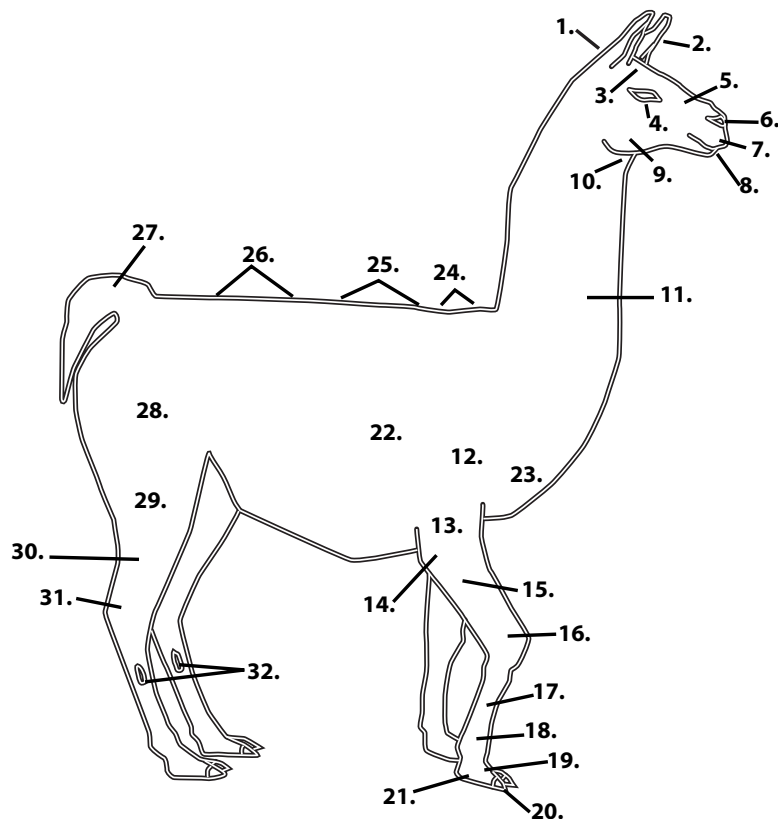
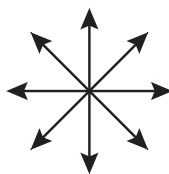
In mid-November Denali was transported to a new home with lots of hilly space with a caretaker that has an active female pack string and a 4-H group that will be providing plenty of regular stimulation. She is very excited to have Denali become part of the herd!



# Parts of Llama/Alpaca Body

Just for kids (in all of us)

1 Poll	R	I	B	S	D	P	T	T	F	Q	M	N	Z	V	L	X	M	E	I	V
2 Ear	R	W	X	X	F	S	N	J	A	W	R	J	Q	Z	D	B	B	A	C	K
3 Forehead	M	U	I	S	K	T	X	E	R	G	A	S	K	I	N	J	Z	X	E	A
4 Eye	C	D	Q	D	I	C	X	P	C	Y	E	K	Y	Z	J	E	A	F	O	P
5 Face	Q	L	I	R	T	S	O	N	Y	K	R	L	H	E	R	N	H	O	A	O
6 Nostril	U	B	S	H	B	L	S	L	X	H	O	R	E	Y	E	F	U	R	L	Y
7 Upper Lip	S	Q	F	C	L	T	G	P	T	V	F	V	C	Z	D	K	N	E	E	S
8 Mouth	F	G	S	T	J	N	U	P	P	E	R	H	T	M	L	S	F	H	X	J
9 Jaw	N	E	W	L	L	G	O	A	M	N	T	U	X	L	O	O	W	A	A	S
10 Throatlatch	R	A	Y	T	Q	C	G	T	K	C	F	O	I	A	H	B	G	D	E	B
11 Neck	E	R	N	A	K	S	M	E	M	E	Z	M	K	N	S	L	U	L	B	T
12 Shoulder	T	F	T	O	V	A	L	F	A	C	E	D	X	D	N	E	F	H	C	Y
13 Arm	S	H	J	R	F	V	X	D	X	T	A	P	W	N	O	I	S	O	E	U
14 Elbow	A	G	M	H	T	S	Y	C	C	P	A	K	T	I	T	L	R	J	K	V
15 Forearm	P	F	G	T	A	R	C	N	A	L	R	W	B	S	T	H	I	L	N	H
16 Knee	S	O	Z	J	I	N	Q	E	N	Y	M	Q	M	L	E	H	I	A	J	O
17 Cannon	C	S	H	D	L	I	U	E	N	Q	N	X	P	D	Q	H	E	G	N	N
18 Fetlock	X	N	T	B	S	O	F	J	O	T	H	C	I	T	E	C	C	R	H	F
19 Pastern	N	L	D	Z	A	L	N	C	N	L	P	N	L	P	N	R	N	M	S	G
20 Nail																				
21 Pad																				
22 Ribs																				
23 Chest																				
24 Withers																				
25 Back																				
26 Loin																				
27 Tail																				
28 Thigh																				
29 Stifle																				
30 Gaskin																				
31 Hock																				
32 Scent Gland																				



# OUTTA SIGHT LLAMAS

By Petra Janes – Rye, CO

I was born in Texas but grew up in southern California because Texas only had residential schools for blind children. My mother knew that California allowed blind children to attend regular public schools. I moved to Colorado in 1982. I've always said that I caused the blizzard of 1982 because I wanted a white Christmas. I love to ski, mostly cross country, and came to Colorado to have more opportunities to do so.

There are events held around the United States called "Ski for Light" which teach blind people to cross country ski. The Colorado group wanted to do something unique during the summer too. They decided to put together a back country camping trip and use llamas to carry the gear. We got the llamas from Stan Ebel and mine was Suncharo. There were 3 groups made up of 4 guides, 4 blind hikers, and 4 llamas.

My husband and I liked to backpack so it was wonderful to have the llama carry most of the heavy stuff. I decided I would like to own a llama, or 2, or 3 some day. Some long time members of RMLA may remember that I wrote two articles about owning llamas, Mask and Thunder, but we lived in Denver at that time and I could only visit them once a week for about an hour at best.

When we retired (my husband from Lockheed Martin and I from United Airlines), we moved to the country and I decided to make my dream come true. Now we have 5 llamas. Ray and Gail Record, of Cedar's Edge Llama Bed and Breakfast gave us 2 in 2008. We bought Madam Rue from Roger Miller in 2010 and rescued 2 in 2012. In the meantime, Ginger had a baby and we lost one to a rattlesnake. Since we don't backpack any more, they are all well-loved pets.



I love going to the Fairplay Llama Race every summer to be around other llama people and help the general public learn about these wonderful animals. This last July we took Ginger's baby, Snap now 3 years old, and Madam Rue. Snap learned about being around lots of people and Madam Rue let little children lead her through an obstacle course. She's the friendliest llama I've ever met.

I don't think animals understand about blindness. They just know that I do things differently than other people. I laughingly say that they avoid me until I touch them, then they give up the chase. I had the opportunity to work with Bobra Goldsmith before her passing and she taught me ways to get the llama's head down low enough to halter them. We have a 5 acre pasture and I admit, I bribe the llamas to come into a catch pen with treats. Once they're in, I close the gate. I know them by their fiber and attitude. Some day I really would like to set up some sort of an obstacle course for my llamas and me. It would be fun to see how training would go, but for now, they're much loved pets.



## Advertisers in this issue:

BackCountry Llama.....	11	Colorado Farm Bureau .....	17	Rocky Mountain Llamas .....	15
Bear Track Farm .....	13	el Zorro Colorado Alpacas .....	23	Southwest Llama Rescue.....	5
Cache la Poudre Minerals.....	21	Lothlorien Llamas.....	10	Spinning Llama & Alpaca.....	19
Chantar Llamas .....	2	Mazuri .....	7	Zander Farm.....	10
Classified Ads.....	11				

*Thank You.....*

# The Day My Legs Grow Tired

By Gary Carlton - Comanche Creek Llamas - Strasburg, CO

**W**e all reach a time in our lives when our bodies can no longer drive our desire; you still think you can, but your body simply wants another cup of coffee. It's a turning point for the mind of a human; the legs no longer function together as one, the back does not bend forward or backward just because we tell it to, and every time you reach across the table you can feel every bone above your waist.

There is a fork in the road when you are faced with the fond and haunting thoughts of yourself with a younger



body. You no longer ask yourself where the trail ends for you have already been there. The only trips of any great length will be retraced in the memories that are deeply engraved in your mind and soul. A point when watching a herd of deer or a flight of geese invokes the types of feelings once felt only during the pursuit of them.

There comes a time when the sound of the shower takes you back to the roar of a waterfall as it spills into your

favorite canyon. I wonder if a log in the fireplace will remind me of times spent around the camp fire deep



in a mountain wilderness. Could the simplicity of a snowflake take me back to a time when I was stuck in a blizzard unprepared, and did not think I was going to survive?

When the mind is strong but the body weak, each sunrise will mean more than the last one, and every new season will be welcomed with a smile.



Can I be satisfied again with the simple things that peaked my interest as a child, like watching a lizard sun himself on a rock, or the frog waiting for a fly on a lily pad? I was not the kind of child who needed a new pair of PF Flyers, or a Pogo stick because everyone else had them. I had little use for fancy games and toys, or the need to be with lots of other children. All I really needed was a good strong coffee can with a tight lid so I could capture and examine the small and simple creatures of my desire.

My youngest memories of the natural world have intrigued me: the blooming flowers that eventually become a peach or a strawberry; the small sprig of a plant that may someday grow up to be a large tree; and the raindrops that will blend together to become a river.

When that small plant has grown into a tired old tree like me with broken limbs and a sagging trunk, will it be content to watch the sparrow as it rests upon its branches? I look forward to spending time on the banks of the large reservoirs that were formed by the raindrops of my years past, and the rainbow that holds promise of the sunshine that will return. These are a small sample of some of the things I often ask myself. As time goes by I will find the answer to my questions as I create the footsteps that will become those memories on the day my legs grow old and tired.

*Editors' note: Gary is and has been the force behind the Fairplay Llama Race event for a couple decades. Photos by Kevin Kaltenbaugh, Owner, Corral Creek Llamas.*



# UNEXPECTED REWARDS OF RESCUING

By Joy Buckley – Elkwood Ranch – Divide, CO

I just wanted to write a few words about our experience of rescuing llamas, which has been wonderful!

In July 2013, I noticed a disturbing ad on Craigs' list for a herd of llamas. It looked like they were living in deplorable conditions and it sounded like the person trying to sell them was desperate. I gave it a fleeting thought, but I am ashamed to say I soon forgot about it. Not long after, I receive an email from the Southwest Llama Rescue that went out to a large number of llama owners. It concerned these same llamas. This time I could not forget it and made the call. I agreed to take 6; 4 females and 2 males. John and Heidi Gard brought them to us and the adventure began. We now have lifelong friends and priceless memories.

Mary Wickman made a sign about these llamas needing homes and displayed it at the Fairplay Llama Races. Jan and Marty Wilson responded to it, came to see them, and chose one of the males. "Bo" stayed with us for most of the summer while the Wilsons came out on a regular basis to work with him and get to know him. Their experience and help to us during this time were invaluable. A neighbor of ours had a co-worker who lived east of Colorado Springs and was willing to take two females.

We kept the other 2 females, gelded the young male, and began to work with them. Understandably, they were mistrustful and frightened at first. But, I believe that they knew they were being helped and quickly came around to be lovely companion animals. An added benefit is that they are all heavy-coated and have beautiful fiber.

That Fall they rewarded us with 2 adorable crias! What a great surprise! Nothing is cuter than baby llamas!

They came into our herd of 13 llamas that we "inherited" when we moved to this property. Our herd



is aging, so we welcomed these younger llamas. Not only are we privileged to have them, we made lasting friendships through them. The Gards and the Wilsons are now lifelong friends, and we would not have known them if it were not for these llamas. We have kept in touch socially and I spin llama fiber with Heidi.

As a licensed psychotherapist who often does animal-assisted therapy, I have used these llamas and their story in a therapeutic setting. I have found that llamas are great therapy animals. They are safe, and with some of them, you have to work a little harder at gaining a relationship. Just like some people!

The lesson we learned is that sometimes when you step out of your "comfort zone" you can get so much more in return. New friendships, wonderful animals, and the good feelings that come from doing the right thing are a few of the benefits. I would encourage everyone to think about rescue and the benefits it can bring to your family. It is our feeling that there are far too many animals out there that need care and comfort.



**JOURNAL  
STAFF**

## A Postscript From The Journal Staff

We wish to thank all of you for a wonderful year of articles, information, photographs and community! Happy Holidays and may 2015 find us all still going strong!

**Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association**  
**P O Box 1070**  
**Plains, MT 59859-1070**



## **EVENTS CALENDAR** BY MARY WICKMAN (EVENTS CHAIR)

Check out the RMLA website for more details on each event.



- January 9, 10 and 11, 2015 National Western Stock Show, Denver, CO Great place to get exposure for your animals and your ranch, help educate the general public, see other breeds of livestock, shop and see friends. Contact Judy Glaser at [judy.glaser@yahoo.com](mailto:judy.glaser@yahoo.com) or 1-303-618-5951. Volunteers always needed.
  - January 10, 2015 Camelid Kids Winter Wonderland, Sutter, NE 4H crafts, video, education, food, bring a guest to meet a critter. Contact Geri Rutledge at [buckshollow@wildblue.net](mailto:buckshollow@wildblue.net) or 1-402-366-9304.
  - April 25, 2015 Stars and Stripes, Waco, NE Adult and youth llama show, learning, teaching animals. Contact Jim and Geri Rutledge at [buckshollow@wildblue.net](mailto:buckshollow@wildblue.net) or 1-402-366-9304.
  - April 24 & 25, 2015 Black Hills Fiber Art Festival, Rapid City, SD \*\*
  - June 13 & 14, 2015 Estes Park Wool Market, Estes Park, CO \*\*
  - June 26 & 27, 2015 Llama Camp, Waco, NE Crafts, fiber arts, safety, showmanship, training games, and education. Contact Jim and Geri Rutledge at [buckshollow@wildblue.net](mailto:buckshollow@wildblue.net) or 1-402-366-9304.
  - July 24, 25 & 26, 2015 Fairplay Llama Race, Fairplay, CO Three mile llama race/walk with llama, Rama, and llama lunacy course for children. General public can borrow a llama for the race. Camp with the llamas in the national forest before and after the race. Contact Gary Carlton at [llama@jhmfarm.com](mailto:llama@jhmfarm.com).
  - July 25 & 26, 2015 Burro Days Craft Fair, Fairplay, CO \*\*
  - September 12 & 13, 2015 Salida Fiber Festival, Salida, CO \*\*
  - September 26 & 27, 2015 Sneffels Fiber Festival, Ridgeway, CO \*\*
  - October 3 & 4, 2015 Taos Wool Festival, Taos, NM \*\*
  - October 10 & 11, 2015 Palisade Quilt & Fiber Festival, Palisade, CO \*\*
- \*\* Contact the RMLA Fiber Co-op. Cheryl Juntilla [cajwdj@aol.com](mailto:cajwdj@aol.com) or Jill Knuckles [talltailllamas@bigplanet.com](mailto:talltailllamas@bigplanet.com)**