

The Journal of RMLA



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Journal Submission Dates, Ad Rates and Specifications

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

Ad Type	Width x Height	Member	Non-Member
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1/3 Page Horiz.	7.5" x 3"	\$35	\$48
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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
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- We suggest ads be submitted in black and white/grayscale at 300dpi.
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Welcome Winter. After a busy autumn, it is nice to be able to slow down a bit. We have some great articles in this issue to help you do just that.

- Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay's article on the people she led into the back country may stir some wonderful memories of your own. Or, maybe inspire a future adventure.
- For myself, I am still thinking about the rescue and rehome that Glenn & I completed with Linda Hayes. We learned so much from that experience. And I still feel and see all the smiles, most especially Virginia's, the 25-year-old llama.
- For Ron, I know he thoroughly enjoyed being on "assignment" at Henry Rivera's shop. He was able to learn first-hand how Henry creates his sculptures. You know, the ones he has donated to RMLA for a number of years.
- Then, surprise of surprises, 12-year-old Libby throws her own birthday party, in a new direction: towards llamas!

We want to thank everyone who responded to our request for questions for the Ask the Vet column. We are now good for several issues. But if you have a question, please send it.

Thank you, Members, for another wonderful year. This is YOUR Journal. If we are missing a topic or topics you would like to see in The Journal, please drop us a note at RMLAeditor@gmail.com. Ron and I welcome all articles pertaining to your activities with your llamas and articles that can help all of us continue to learn about these most wonderful creatures.

We hope this season brings you comfort and joy. Stay warm!



Cover Photo Credit:

Virginia, a happy and healthy 25-year-old llama. See page 18 for the 'rest of the story'. Photo courtesy Kathy Stanko.

FROM YOUR RMLA BOARD

As 2015 draws to a close we are appreciative of the dedicated members who volunteered to organize many RMLA events. These folks have worked hard and with big smiles as they made great events take place.

RMLA events were held with the purpose of meeting the RMLA Mission Statement – to educate our members and the public about the breeding, raising, care and use of llamas and alpacas. Because of these events thousands of people learned a little more about the animals we love and care for. Thank you to the organizers who coordinated these events and the many members who served as event support crew.



Judy Glaser – National Western Stock Show Llama Show – Denver CO

Geri Rutledge – Camelid Kids Winter Wonderland – Sutton NE

Jim Rutledge – Stars and Stripes Shows – Waco NE

Patti Morgan – Golden Plains Llama Conference – McPherson KS

Gayle Woodsum – 25th EPWM Llama Show Member Appreciation Dinner – Estes Park CO

Geri Rutledge – Llama Camp – Waco NE

Gary Carlton – 33rd Annual Fairplay Llama Race – Fairplay CO

Jill Knuckles – Estes Park Wool Market Llama Show – Estes Park CO

Gary Carlton – Hope Pass Aid Station Support Crew – Leadville CO

Dick Williams – MT Becoming an Outdoor Woman – Lubrech Experimental Forest, Missoula MT

Jerry Dunn – ABC's of Llamas with Kids – Golden CO

Al Ellis – North American Ccara Association Llama Screening Workshop – Sedalia CO

Jerry Dunn – Speaker at Rocky Mountain Regional Animal Control Workshop – Golden CO

Cheryl Juntilla – Grand Mesa and Kokopelli Classics – Grand Junction CO

Bob Burton – Black and Blue Pasture Show – Florissant CO

Mary Wickman – Clerk and Ring Steward Training – Florissant CO

Jill Knuckles – Fiber Co-op at Black Hills Fiber Festival – Rapid City SD

Cheryl Juntilla – Fiber Co-op at Estes Park Wool Market Estes Park CO

Sandra Lockwood – Fiber Co-op at Burro Days Craft Fair – Fairplay CO

Cheryl Juntilla – Fiber Co-op at Salida Fiber Festival - Salida Colorado

Jill Knuckles – Fiber Co-op at Taos Wool Festival - Taos NM

Brent and Donna Holt – Hosts for the RMLA Annual Meeting – Sedalia CO

WOW! This list just puts a huge smile on everyone's face! Please, check your calendar and make your plans to volunteer as a crew member for one or more of the events RMLA members are working on for 2016. You will have lots of fun and meet some great people.



A Sculptor Among Us

By Ron Hinds,

Co-editor RMLA Journal, Layout & Design

Henry Rivera began sculpting as a youngster using the aluminum foil from his Mom's kitchen. Today his work is a bit more sophisticated. I was thrilled when asked to visit Henry's workshop to learn about his craft.

Many of us, I suspect, in the world of llamas and alpacas have seen Henry's work as he has designed, made and donated his sculptures to most of the llama organizations. Most recently, Henry has donated for the last 5 years the llama trophy for the Bobra Goldsmith Leadership Award. The RMLA Board of Directors is very thankful for generous and talented members like Henry.

Henry and his wife, Jan, have two llamas and two horses on their 8 acres outside Peyton, CO. They have had llamas for the past 25 years and have been members of RMLA for about 15 years



of that time span. During the week, Henry manages 3 mobile concrete plants in Colorado Springs and one in Steamboat. I guess he just likes to work in some form of 'clay' all the time!!!

The creation of a sculpture starts with an idea; the idea is then sculpted in either wax or clay. This wax or clay mold is then sculpted over using Styrofoam or aluminum foil. In this way Henry can get the sculpture to the correct size using something light and easy to work with.

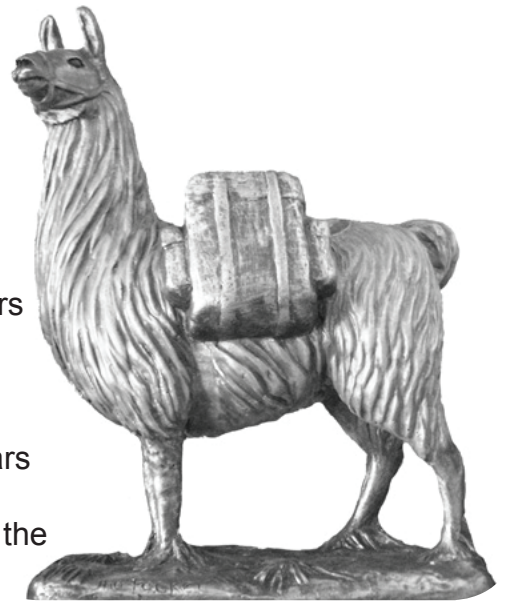
Once the original sculpture is finished and ready for a mold to be made, a dipped latex rubber is used to cover the sculpture. Several layers are applied; then a rigged shell is poured over the latex rubber to keep it from stretching and deforming. The original sculpture is then taken out of the mold and the mold is now ready for casting.

Hydro-Stone® is poured into the mold creating a very hard dense cast that has the weight and feel of bronze. In a few days, the reusable rubber mold is carefully removed.

The sculpture is then cleaned up and painted with a hard black paint, followed by a paint mixture of gold, copper and bronze powders. The sculpture is carefully painted by hand with small brushes to create the appearance of bronze.

The heaviness of the filler gives the sculpture the weight of a full bronze sculpture with a fraction of the time and cost. Henry has made bronze sculptures, but today's cost of bronze makes them extraordinarily expensive.

Henry does more than just llama and alpaca sculptures, but he does tend to stick to animals and wildlife. RMLA wishes to send a huge thank you to Henry for his many years of service and contributions to the world of llamas.



Sculptor Henry Rivera

18380 Countdown Dr - Peyton, CO 80831

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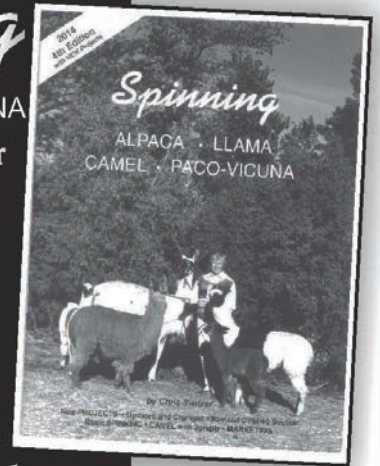


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ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 2016 Wall Calendar is still available. Contact Jan Adamecyk at adamecyk@earthlink.net or order at www.rmla.com
- Your RMLA annual membership renewal is due by March 31, 2016. Look for your renewal packet coming in the mail in January.
- 2016 llama races at Fairplay will be here before we can halter a lama. Volunteers are always needed. Contact Gary Carlton at 303-503-1324 or llama@jmhfarm.com.

Dear Members, as space allows, one column in each issue may be used for Board, Committee or event announcements. An announcement, limit of 50 words, does not take the place of an advertisement, committee report, article or calendar item. Send your announcement to rmlaeditor@gmail.com.

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He's Driving Me &?#% ! I Mean... He's Driving Me!

By Tom Hudgin
Photos by Mary Lou Hassell

"Giddy up." A few seconds followed with no response.

I said, "Giddy up." Again, I sat there in the driver's seat, hands holding the loose reins in vain while the large hunk of gray matter in front stood there chewing his cud and gazing off towards the Tennessee mountains. The only movement in that hot bod was the chomping jaw full of cud and twitching ears. Great! Maybe this is how they define progress in Tennessee, but it ain't where I came from. I tried again with a lot more determination.

"HEY, YOU UP THERE! MOVE IT!"

At that point, Tevye put his ears back and wham: he kicked the cart. "What the ----! I spent months learnin' you how to pull this contraption, and this is what I get?"

At that moment a pickup truck approached us from ahead. The driver, in bib overalls and straw hat, had his left arm hanging down the outside of the door. I assumed the door would have fallen off if he let go. I heard things are different in Tennessee. He slowed to a crawl and stopped.

"Howdy there. How's your donkey doin'?"

"Sir, he ain't no donkey. In fact, he's smarter than your old rusty truck!" I snorted.

The farmer reached around with his left arm and opened his door from the outside.

"What did you say about my truck?!"

"Tom, wake up! You must be having a nightmare. You were mumbling to someone about a donkey," she said as she shook me.

"Yeah, it was weird, something about... oh, never mind."

It all started last spring when I was searching for another llama to train to drive a cart. I knew that 80% of a successful llama cart driver is the overall temperament, attitude, demeanor and intelligence of the llama...*before* you start the training. The training part is fairly straight forward, for some anyway. So the trick is to find the right llama in the beginning. Only a few llamas have the right combination to become a good driving llama. I had already trained two, one

of which was a grand champion. But Matador had gone down on his pasterns and was semi-retired.

I thought I found a llama last winter, but when I started to work with him, I discovered he was afraid of cars, dogs, tractors, and people. This was not the characteristics of a good cart llama. Oh sure, over a period of time I probably could have settled him down and removed those fears, but I did not want to spend months just getting him to the point of cart training.



Mary Lou Hassell suggested one of her older, male llamas might have the right temperament. Never having met Tevye, and in desperation, I headed out to the pasture with a halter and lead in my back pocket. He was busy grazing on the lush spring grass and did not pay attention to me initially. I stopped 50 feet away and started to talk to him quietly expecting him to look up and walk away. He continued eating. I moved closer to 10 feet. He still ignored me. Slowly, I walked up, extended my hand and touched his back. He looked up for a couple of seconds and continued eating. I moved my hand up to his neck, then to the top of his head. He continued eating. Finally, I reached in my back pocket, removed the halter and lead, and held the halter up to his face. Tevye lifted his head up to my shoulders, looked at the halter and stood still. I slipped the halter and lead on. He remained still. Then we

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Libby's Birthday Party

By Libby Condon,
Llama Lover Extraordinaire!

Hi my name is Libby Condon. I am 12 years old and I live in Littleton, CO. My friends and I are obsessed with llamas! We sing this song together: "Happy llama, sad llama, mentally disturbed llama, super llama, drama llama, big fat mama llama".

For my birthday this year, I thought it would be nice to adopt a llama instead of gifts. We went to the Southwest Llama Rescue website, read through the list of llamas and their funny stories. I found a super



cute one whose name was Luigi. His story was so sweet and he was so cute, that I decided to sponsor

him. I asked each of my friends to bring \$5-\$10 for Luigi so he could have food, treats, and medicine to stay healthy. Overall, we collected \$120 for Luigi, and it was the best birthday EVER!!

Pictured to the left are Libby's friends headed out for a scavenger hunt at her birthday party. From left: Hannah, Izzy, Annie, Kenna, Allie, Maddi, Libby, Ella, and Grace, all 5th and 6th graders at Governor's Ranch Elementary, Littleton, CO.



This is Libby in her favorite shirt, making a "llama" sign with her hand.

(FYI: Shirt found on smile.amazon.com)



NEW RMLA Members

RMLA IS ALWAYS GROWING

Janice & Paul Day - Plains, MT

**Dave Salge & Alicia Santiago -
Snowflake, AZ**

**Morgan Barba - Henderson, CO
(Youth Member)**

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

NOTE: 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.

Thank you

Truly Amazing

Is what the volunteers & contributors of Southwest Llama Rescue can accomplish.* Help Is Always Needed: your time and money go a long way.* Contact: SouthwestLlamaRescue.org or SouthwestllamaRescue@yahoo.com or P.O. Box 405, Mountain Home, TX 78058.

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walked around the pasture for awhile with Tevye directly behind. And the best part was that he was NOT afraid of dogs, cars, trucks, tractors and strangers. He was the right llama.

We began the training with daily, 30 minute, simple walks on a lead to build a mutual bond of trust. After a week, I was ready for phase one of ground driving training. When I placed a driving halter and reins on him, Mary Lou hooked up a normal lead line to his halter. She led Tevye along as he had been trained to do, while I followed behind with loose reins in hand. To start the forward motion, I said quietly, "Tevye, walk on." Of course, Tevye had no idea what that meant, so Mary Lou tugged on the lead at the same time and off we went.

"Good boy, Tevye", I said.

When it came time to stop, I ordered, "Tevye, whoa."

I gently pulled back on the reins while Mary Lou stepped in front of him. Tevye stopped.

"Good boy, Tevye" I repeated.

We continued the "walk on" and "whoa" process 15-30 minutes a day for several weeks. Tevye had to get this part down perfectly before we moved further. In fact, the most important command to learn without hesitation or second thoughts on his part is "WHOA." Each day we made progress. Each day I could see subtle signs that Tevye just might be enjoying this. Eventually, we reached the point where Tevye would "walk on" and "whoa" without the aid of the reins or Mary Lou tugging or blocking his path. He was consistent. We were ready for phase two after a little over a month of training.

The next part involved teaching Tevye to turn right and left. I added the empty driving harness strapped on his back. Again, Mary Lou would lead Tevye with a line while I followed behind with the reins. Shortly, I said, "Tevye, turn left" and pulled the reins slightly and gently to the left. At the same time Mary Lou turned to the left and towed Tevye with the lead rope. We continued this process for a week turning only left. The idea was to teach him the association of the words "turn left" and a slight left tug on the reins. After a week, he caught on. Then we did the right side. All along we continued to reinforce the "walk

on" and "whoa." In another month of 30 minute sessions, Tevye had it down pat. He now could start, stop, turn left and turn right... without the cart.

Then came the big challenge – the cart itself. This is a huge transition, because suddenly you are physically restricting his movements forward, sideways and backward and you are adding a lot of weight to pull. I have seen some llamas that passed the test in temperament, attitude, etc., and passed the test of training up to this point with flying colors, then freak out when the cart is attached. In fact, I had a female llama that did beautifully up to the point of attaching an empty cart. She panicked and never was able to go further.

At this stage, we moved our training to an oval, fenced horse ring in case Tevye went wild with the cart hook-up. We tied Tevye to the fence and placed the cart harness on his back while whispering sweet nothings in his ear. Mary Lou stood beside Tevye's head and held onto the lead while I slowly placed the empty cart into position from behind him. Tevye stood perfectly still. We slowly slipped the lower and upper tugs from his harness onto the cart shafts at the same time on both sides so no sideways weight would be felt. Then we let go of the shafts so he could feel the weight. Tevye continued to stand.

"Bravo, Tevye" We gave him a big hug. I took the lead rope, untied it from the fence and slowly led him around the oval with no one in the cart and no reins. In a sense, we were regressing because we were only introducing the weight of the cart and restricted movements and forgetting about the "walk on," "whoa," and "left and right turns" for the moment. During the first half of the loop around the ring, Tevye offered some resistance. He tried to move sideways, then stopped, then jumped forward in an attempt to shake off that cart. He was obviously uncomfortable with the contraption hanging on his back. I expected this reaction, however, and we continued around the ring not giving in. We did nothing but just walk. No commands, no side movements as practiced in the past, just

continued on next page

walk. By the time we returned to the starting point in the oval ring, Tevye had relaxed and was trotting right along with no argument. We



went around a second time. Finally, I gave the lead to Mary Lou, and I walked behind him and the cart with the reins. The cart remained empty. For the next several weeks, we practiced the commands I had taught Tevye from the beginning while walking behind the cart.

Then the day of reckoning arrived. Tevye was going to pull me in the cart... maybe. We returned to the oval horse ring. Tevye stood perfectly still while we hooked him up to cart. Mary Lou, again, held Tevye in front with a lead rope. I climbed in, ever so gently, and commanded, "Tevye, walk on." Tevye eased forward. After a quarter trek around the ring, I asked Mary Lou to release the lead rope. It was now or never. I held my breath in anticipation of the worst as we smoothly rode a complete loop around the oval without a flaw.

"WE DID IT! WE DID IT! GOOD BOY, TEYVE!" I shouted, stopped, got out of the cart and gave Tevye a hug and a treat of a handful of feed. I gave Mary Lou a hug and thanked her for her help. I sang "We did it! We did it!" all around the ring, three more times. Every week since that moment, we have taken Tevye out for rides. He has improved each time. We now have booked him for two Christmas parades, one in Jonesborough, TN and one in Boykin,

SC. As you can see, it takes the right pick initially and a lot of patience, but it pays off in the end. The last step is teaching Tevye to back up with the cart. I have a plan.

Watch out performance people, we'll see you at the shows.

One final comment, I had a face to face meeting with one of the nearby Tennessee State Parks Superintendents about the possibility of bringing Tevye and other llamas to the park on a one time trial basis. We were granted permission for a one shot test. No horses or other livestock were allowed, except dogs on a leash. I said we could abide by the dog rules. We took Tevye to the park for a test run in the cart. It was a hit, and we have been granted permission to bring llamas to the Davy Crockett State Park anytime without prior notice. The next step will be to visit

another state park in Tennessee using the same "trial approach." Knowing our success in North Carolina State Parks, I anticipate going to the State Parks Division office in Nashville sometime down the road and request the same permission for all of Tennessee State Parks... just like we did in North Carolina. We are on a roll.

This article originally appeared in the Fall 2014 issue of the Southern States Llama Association Llama Journal. Reprinted with permission.



Ask The CSU VET Team

By the Vets, Residents and Interns of the Colorado State University Veterinary Teaching Hospital

We have 4 fantastic areas of discussion in this issue: scent glands, chewing, gelding and Vitamin D supplementation. Thank you everyone. Read on...

Question: What are scent glands, why do animals have them, and what is their significance in llamas and alpacas?

Response from Dr. Kate Huebner Have you ever wondered how llamas and alpacas communicate with each other?

They communicate largely through vocal cues and body language. However, pheromones produced by scent glands may also play a role for reproductive, social, and sexual interactions.



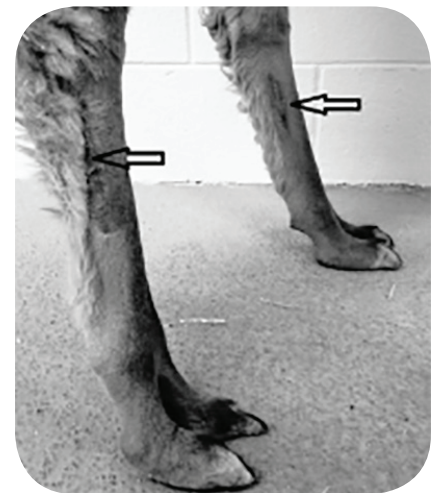
Camelids reportedly have scent glands located on their metatarsus (long bones of the hind leg) and the interdigital space (between the toes). There is very little information about camelid scent glands in the scientific literature. The tarsal and metatarsal scent glands are the bare patches of skin on the inner (medial) and outer (lateral) surface of the hind limb, respectively. There is some evidence in cervid species, including impala antelope and deer, that these glands play a social role for maintaining and restoring contact between herd members via pheromone secretion. When examined under a microscope, the tarsal and metatarsal scent glands of llamas and alpacas have limited glandular tissue. Some authors have reported that they secrete a pheromone that signals danger or alarm. Because of their poorly defined glandular tissue, it is possible that the metatarsal scent glands have limited function. It has also been suggested that they may only be a vestigial digit (remnants of an unused toe) similar to “chestnuts” in horses. Llamas and alpacas also have a scent gland located between the toes. We could not find any detailed descriptions of this glandular tissue in llamas and alpacas, so the function is also not known. Bactrian camels have an occipital scent gland at the top (pole) of their head. This gland does secrete a variety of steroid and volatile fatty acids during the rutting season and is associated with sexual activity.

The occipital scent glands do not appear to be present in llamas and alpacas. There are some reports on the internet of scent glands at the base of the tail in llamas and alpacas. However, we could not find any scientific descriptions of these glands in New World camelids and their existence is questioned.

Though there is not a lot of information on pheromone transfer in camelids, it is interesting to compare to other closely related species and postulate that they may be communicating with each other chemically in a way we cannot sense. So, what is known from other animals?

Several mammalian species, including sheep, goats, cows, deer, rodents, primates and felines, communicate via pheromones. Pheromones are volatile, air-borne substances that are detected by scent, touch, or other sensory neurons. Pheromones are excreted into urine and feces, or secreted from skin glands and are capable of eliciting specific behavioral and hormonal responses in members of the same (and sometimes different) species. They often play an important role in sexual maturation, reproduction and maternal behaviors. For example, in sheep and goats, a phenomenon called the ‘*Male Effect*’ is mediated by ram or buck pheromones.

These pheromone signals are capable of inducing ovulation in ewes or does by acting through the hypothalamus to modulate hormone production. Ram or buck odor from wool, wax and urine are sufficient to stimulate ewes to ovulate, and a buck jar containing the odor of the buck can be used as an aid in detection of heat in does. In swine, the presence of a boar at the time of artificial insemination of the sow improves sperm



continued on next page

transport. Sex attractant volatile compounds have been identified in the urine of the cow, buffalo, and horses as well.

Pheromones in camelids are not very well studied. However, like other species, camelids have been documented to have a vomeronasal organ for sensing pheromones. The vomeronasal organ is a tiny organ located beneath the nasal septum in the roof of the mouth that is involved in sensing sexual odors and pheromones. Have you ever seen your llama or alpaca curl their upper lip to the air and tilt their head back, almost in a grimace? This is called the *Flehman response*, and it is a reflex that concentrates air and molecules to this organ, helping it pick up small amounts of volatile signals.

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Question: What are the mechanics of chewing?

Response from Dr. Kate Huebner: The digestive strategy of camelids is classified as “ruminant-like” or as pseudoruminants. Their rumination process is slightly different from that of true ruminants (deer, antelope, bison, buffalo, giraffes, moose, cattle, sheep, goats, etc.) and other foregut fermenters. Rumination is a type of foregut fermentation that helps to digest cellulose fibers and plant material in part by using repeated mastication, more commonly referred to as “chewing cud”. There are also mammals that are classified as non-ruminant foregut fermenters, including species such as koalas, kangaroos, wallabies, hyrax, capybara, proboscis monkeys, and even a species of bird in South America, the

Hoatzin. The non-ruminant foregut fermenters exhibit mercurism, where stomach contents are regurgitated and then repeatedly masticated (chewed) voluntarily.

The purpose of cud chewing is to break down feed particles of longer fiber length to increase the surface area for microbial digestion. In addition, saliva contains bicarbonate and digestive enzymes which mixes with the cud while chewing to help buffer acidic products and further break it down. Cud chewing involves propelling the cud from the first gastric compartment back up the esophagus into the mouth, where it is chewed repeatedly before re-swallowing or spit at a source of irritation. However, there are several key differences between true ruminants and camelids. Ruminants chew their cud in one direction usually (right to left, for example), whereas camelids chew their cud in a figure-8 pattern (one side then the other). Ruminants also have different anatomy, with four compartments (rumen, reticulum, omasum, and abomasum), whereas camelids have three gastric compartments, called Compartment 1 (C1), C2 and C3. In addition, camelids have different forestomach motility patterns, slower metabolic rate, and longer retention of feed material in the stomach.

Healthy camelid cud chewing behavior is important for owners to monitor and take note of to ensure they are doing well. Camelids typically chew each cud about 25-30 times or more before re-swallowing. One can easily watch the cud bolus travelling up and down the neck of the alpaca or llama if the fiber is not too long. The most active cud chewing time of day is early in the morning. The absence of cud chewing behavior for prolonged period of time (>24 hours) may indicate the animal is not feeling well, and a veterinarian should be consulted. Additionally if you see wads of partially chewed feed on the ground, not associated with spitting, consult with your veterinarian. This is not indicative of a specific problem but can occur with oral trauma, dental disease, or esophageal problems.

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Question: How long should I wait after my llama or alpaca has been castrated before safely exposing to females?



Response from Dr. Robert Callan: Spermatozoa multiply and develop in the seminiferous tubules of the testicles. After release from the seminiferous tubules, the flow from the testicle, through the rete testis and into the epididymis. The epididymis is a structure tightly adhered to the testicle. Maturation of the spermatozoa occurs in the epididymis. From there, the spermatozoa continue to travel into the vas deferens and then into a structure called the ampulla that is located right before the vas deferens connects to the urethra. Spermatozoa remain alive and healthy during this transit.

When castration is performed, the testicles, epididymis, and a portion of the vas deferens is removed. However, a section of the vas deferens and ampulla still remain. The spermatozoa still remaining are fertile and slowly degrade and die over a time period of up to a month. Fertility steadily decreases but the animal may not be completely infertile for up to a month after castration.

So, if you don't want to have any unexpected pregnancies, keep your new geldings separated from females for 1 month after castration.

And as a reminder, it is generally recommended that llamas and alpacas are not castrated until they are at least 12 months of age. Early castration is associated with conformation abnormalities in llamas and alpacas. This is because testosterone influences normal closure of the growth plates in long bones. When testosterone is removed early by castration,

the long bones can continue to grow resulting in a tall and upright conformation. There is some evidence that this upright conformation can increase the risk of arthritis and patellar luxation. Growth plate closure and long bone growth is normally complete by about 18 to 24 months of age. In response to this, there are a number of differing recommendations for the age of castration in camelids ranging from 12 to 24 months and these recommendations may then be adjusted further based on specific husbandry factors and other considerations of the owner.

Question: Should I supplement my llamas and alpacas with Vitamin D and how should I do this?

Response by Dr. Robert J. Callan: Vitamin D and Vitamin E are very important for maintaining the health and wellbeing of your llamas and alpacas. Vitamin D is particularly important in the regulation of calcium and phosphorus in blood and bone. The active forms of Vitamin D are produced by a complex synthesis that starts with the conversion of 7-Dehydrocholesterol to Previtamin D₃ at the level of skin. Sunlight, particularly UVB irradiation, is essential for this conversion in mammals.

Animals that fail to receive sufficient sunlight can become vitamin D deficient (hypovitaminosis D). UVB irradiation that reaches the earth's surface is significantly reduced during the winter months in northern latitudes from the months of October to April. This can result in Vitamin D deficiency or hypovitaminosis D and can result in low blood phosphorus levels and abnormalities with bone growth and development. While this can occur in any mammals, including humans, llamas and alpacas are at particular risk due to their dense fiber coats that limit sunlight penetration to the skin. The risk is even greater in animals with dark pigmented fiber, animals that spend a greater amount of time indoors, or areas with dense cloud cover.

Animals with hypovitaminosis D are at greater risk of developing angular limb deformity of the fore and hind limbs. In some cases, the

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Ask The CSU VET Team, continued

animals may develop significant bone and joint pain. These animals often stand and walk with a hunched back appearance. They are unwilling to stand and move around and may have a decreased appetite. Checking blood phosphorus levels is a simple way to screen for possible hypovitaminosis D. Blood phosphorus levels less than 5 mg/dl in llamas and alpacas <12 months of age suggests hypovitaminosis D. Blood can also be submitted for specific vitamin D analysis.

Prevention of hypovitaminosis D is easy. In the areas from Colorado North, we recommend that all llamas and alpacas are specifically supplemented with vitamin D from the months of October/November to March/April. Supplementation can be either by injection or with oral pastes. Injectable vitamin D products come in several different formulations so it is important to read the label closely and know how to calculate a dosage. The recommended dose is 2000 IU/kg body weight administered subcutaneously once **EVERY OTHER MONTH.**

Most vitamin D products contain 75,000 IU Vitamin D per ml. So, a typical dose is 0.1 ml per 3.75 kg body weight (about 0.1 ml per 8 lb BW). Oral vitamin D paste products can also be used. Just follow the label that is on the product.

Vitamin D is a fat soluble vitamin and can accumulate in the body. Administering too much vitamin D, or administering more often than is recommended can result in vitamin D toxicity, which is a highly fatal condition. So, follow your veterinarian's recommendations closely and don't give too much or too often!





Jerry Dunn
Bear Track Farm
Llama Training Center
303-277-1129 beartrak@q.com


PACK'EM


STACK'EM


DRIVE'EM

2015 Youth Award Program Winners

We have wrapped up the 2015 Youth Award Program (YAP) with the help of long time RMLA Members. Twenty-one Youth signed up, sixteen were solid participants. The Youth submitted information about their various llama projects: parades, nursing home visits, llama camps, volunteer efforts, days at the Farm Supply store, county fairs and shows

The fundraiser at Estes Park Silent Auction generated funds to allow all the youth to be awarded a banner to hang on their stall or door to their bedroom. And the overall youth got the famous RMLA personalized belt buckle. Congratulations to everyone and to a very successful year.



Courtney Pecka
Overall High Point Winner



Other winners are on facing page >>>

2016 RMLA Youth Award Program by Marshal Rutledge - Chair, Youth Committee



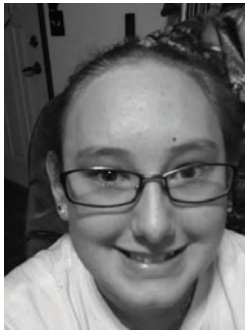
We are now ready to kick off 2016. The Youth Award Program has been updated for 2016 on the RMLA website. We hope to have all the current eligible youth return and are looking for new members. The 2016 Program begins January 1, 2016 and runs through December 31, 2016. Winners will be announced in early 2017.

The YAP committee will be looking for ideas in 2016 to continue and generate income, so we can reward the youth participants and keep our llamas and alpacas in the public eye so everyone understands what gentle creatures they are and how we can use the fiber for so many purposes. When you register this year, make sure to keep your email, phone numbers and address updated!!!! The YAP committee will no doubt add projects & events throughout the season. We will send you the information if we have your current contact information.

I am looking forward to meeting each you sometime during the show/summer season and learning about your 2016 projects.

To participate in the 2016 YAP program, go to www.rmla.com/youth. Here you will find program details & guidelines; point values of each approved activity, approved activities to earn points, your reporting forms, and the e-mail to contact the Youth Committee. Go lamas and let's have fun in 2016!

High Point Grand Champions:



Kaitlyn Winter
Senior



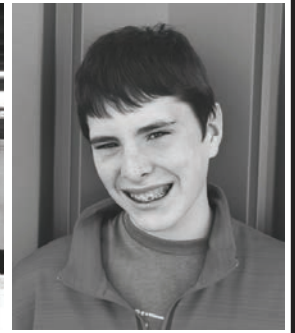
Kira Leland
Intermediate



Alex Leland
Junior *with Sully*



Kyce Morgan
Junior



Kale Morgan
Junior

High Point Reserve Champions:



Jonah Jensen Senior



Mikayla Pecka
Intermediate



Jane Wanek
Intermediate



Arika Jensen
Intermediate



Garrett Pecka
Junior



Lyndsay Jensen
Junior

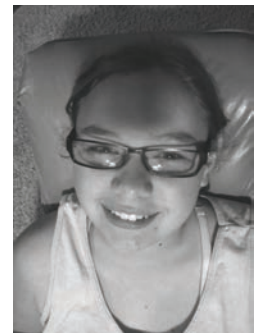


Ellie Wanek
Junior

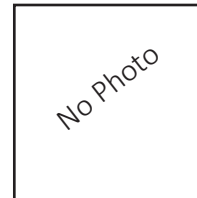
Honorable Mentions:



Whitney Winter



Elyzabeth Winter



Mary Kate
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Ron Hinds and Elizabeth Cline
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The face of a Hero

By Linda Hayes & Kathy Stanko

A few years ago four llamas had the misfortune of being turned out on the desert in western Colorado. There, they were expected to fend for themselves. The owner said he didn't want them and if they were a bother, just shoot them. This hit a raw nerve with Steve Grubb who lived nearby.



Steve loves animals and knew he could help. With free hay supplied by Elmore Ferganchick of Eckert, he began caring for his new friends. The desert doesn't have water nor trees for shelter. The only thing that kept the llamas alive through cold winters and one hundred degree summers was this one elderly gentleman.

Steve is a retired millwright who spent his career building doors for most of the buildings in the Delta area. He now hunts dinosaur fossils in the desert around his home. The llamas quickly became a focus of his life.

Steve is 'Santa Claus' to these wooly beings. Every day for three years, regardless of the



weather, Steve has driven his jeep over a mile to take hay and water to them. Over time the llamas learned to trust him and he could mingle with them while they ate.

He will be moving from his place in a couple months. That left no one to care for the llamas. This distressed Steve as he had spent years calling Humane Societies, vets and others, with no one willing to help or even suggest a place to go. A chance meeting with an alpaca owner who told him about Southwest Llama Rescue (SWLR) changed everything.



Steve contacted Linda Hayes of SWLR and

a plan was put in place. With Glenn and Kathy Stanko's help, a trailer and corral were set up at the llamas' feeding station. Because of the bond Steve had formed with the llamas, they were able to be locked into the corral for an hour or so each day.

During this same time period, a request for llamas came in to SWLR. A family in Western Colorado had owned llamas for years but most had died of old age. There was a lone surviving female that was despondent. A companion was



needed and there was room for several. The prospective new owners had shelter, feed, water and were knowledgeable. They met Steve and passed site inspection.

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Planning for Your Lamas' Future

By Kathy Stanko
Whitewater, CO

Do you have a plan for your lamas' future without you? It's not a fun topic to think about, but probably necessary as the end of life can be unexpected. I recently received some information from the Humane Society of the United States about making a plan to provide for one's animals when the unexpected happens. I have listed some major points for which all responsible animal owners should plan.

- Find at least two responsible friends or relatives who agree to serve as temporary emergency caregivers in the event that something unexpected happens to you. Provide them with keys to your home; feeding and care instructions; the name of your veterinarian; and information about the permanent care provisions you have made for your animals.
- Make sure your neighbors, friends, and relatives know how many animals you have and the names and contact numbers of the individuals who have agreed to serve as emergency caregivers. Emergency caregivers should also know how to contact each other.
- Carry a wallet "alert card" that lists the names and phone numbers of your emergency animal caregivers.

- Consider a formal arrangement with the short term and long term caregivers and the executor or personal representative of your will so that your wishes for your animals are fulfilled.
- Consider authorizing your executor to expend funds from your estate for the temporary care of your animals as well as for the costs of looking for a new home and transporting the animals to it.
- If you are considering entrusting the care of your animals to an organization, do some research first and try to make a visit.
- Before making formal arrangements to provide for the long-term care of your animals, seek help from professionals who can guide you in preparing the legal documents that can protect your interests and those of your animals.

These points will hopefully start you thinking about both the immediate and long-term welfare of your animals should you be unable to care for them. For more information you can start with www.HumaneSociety.org and go from there.



Face a Hero, continued

So on a beautiful Friday morning, the 'rescuers', Steve, and new owners all met to get the llamas into the trailer and off to their new home. We all moved slowly and quietly inside the pen. Linda Hayes had brought a roll of perforated plastic garden fencing. We all grabbed on and slowly walked the llamas into the trailer.

The llamas are now happily settling into their new lush location miles away from the adobe desert. Steve is now free to move without worrying about "his girls". And, a 25 year old, female llama is no longer alone and depressed.

Please Everyone: Remember to let your local vets and animal control people know how to contact SWLR <http://www.southwestllamarescue.org/> That way when someone asks, like Steve did, there will be answers.



Advertising Angle

The RMLA Board and Journal volunteers wish to thank each of you who advertised in the RMLA Journal this year. And we want to acknowledge those of you who are advertising for the first time. This is always very special for us.

Then there is the group of you who continue to renew your annual subscriptions. Your continued support is very appreciated.

Advertising in the Journal let's our entire membership, and beyond, know about you! The Journal is your publication, thank you for being a part of it.

Does Labeling Define Your Perspective?

The A-B-C's of Behavior

By Marty McGee Bennett

You can teach an old dog new tricks! In this particular case I am the old dog. I began my work with animal training in the 1970's while in college, studying animal behavior. I graduated from the University of Georgia with an interdisciplinary degree in the subject. This degree was to serve as the jumping off point for a career in veterinary medicine. Luckily I discovered (by flunking physics) that I was better suited to the study of behavior than medicine.

Once I began working with camelids and after discovering Linda Tellington-Jones and her innovative approach to educating animals, I found both the inspiration and the answers to my questions in her work--TTEAM and TTouch. I came to believe that the science of behavior was interesting but limiting when it came to working with domestic barnyard livestock and companion animals. Last year, one of my Camelidynamics students, Dr. Susan Brown, a veterinarian and camelid owner, reintroduced me to

the science of Applied Behavior Analysis. I have now come full circle back to the science.

Based on Dr. Brown's recommendation, I recently completed a course for animal training professionals, "Living and Learning with Animals" taught by Susan Friedman, PhD, from Utah State University. Dr. Friedman's academic work is in the area of child psychology but a personal interest in parrots brought her to the world of animal training to share learning theory and applied behavior analysis with animal teachers. I am relieved and pleased to find out that what I have been teaching for, lo, these many years is completely supported by the science of applied behavioral analysis (ABA).

After finishing Dr. Friedman's course I came away with a different way of seeing the work that I developed. I also have an increased understanding of learning theory and applied behavior analysis that will shape my work going forward.

Join a conversation about animal training and you will inevitably hear folks argue about whether or not animals can think and learn. As it turns out, the entire animal kingdom, from bacteria to Bactrian camels, learns. **Learning is defined as a behavior change as a result of experience.** Recent studies reported in the journal **Science** have shown that even simple organisms such as bacteria are capable of pretty sophisticated "associative learning" for example, using temperature as a cue to prepare for upcoming danger. It follows then that whether or not animals think really depends on which definition you choose for the word *think*. Only the animals really know whether they think or don't think, and does it really matter? Animals learn from their experience, and that is what is relevant to our interaction with them.

Focus on the Behavior, not the Human Interpretation

One of the most powerful lessons I gained from my studies in applied behavior analysis is how crucial it is to focus on the **behavior** instead of our human interpretation of the behavior. When I field questions about behavioral problems, owners want to create explanations for the problem; complicated stories about how the animal was raised, how he was treated

by other animals or whether or not he was abused by humans. These stories are full of labels -- words like obnoxious, dominant, stubborn, happy, sad,



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and lonely -- that we use to describe what we think is going on. Labels are problematic for a couple of reasons:

- 1) Labels give us a false understanding of the problem when we have only just given it a name.
- 2) Labels create self-fulfilling prophecies causing the owner to get what they expect. Additionally these labels are often handed down to the next owner, trapping the animal in a box not of his own making.
- 3) Our interpretation or *misinterpretation* of the label can lead us down the wrong path when we try to change the behavior-perpetuating ineffective and unfair training methodologies like "I'll show him who's boss!"

We could all take a lesson from Sergeant Friday of *Dragnet*, whose famous line was, "Just the facts ma'am." Focusing on the behavior changes the description from: "my alpaca or llama is happy," to: "my animal is quiet, is ruminating and doesn't offer to get up when I walk close by," or from: "my baby camelid is friendly or loves me," to: "my baby camelid runs up to me in the field and presses his body against mine."

Describing the behavior itself and not what we think the behavior means is called operationalizing it. Developing the discipline to think and speak this way will help you solve, and more importantly, prevent behavioral problems.

For example, labeling an animal as "dominant" is a common practice in our industry. In fact, as an industry we have gone one better and created a super label, the Berserk Male Syndrome. This label makes it seem as if the llama or alpaca was either born with this malady or caught the problem like a cold. Someone hearing about an animal with the Berserk Male Syndrome might easily assume that humans had nothing to do with it.

Many years ago I offered a different take on the Berserk Male Syndrome. I proposed we call it the Novice Handler Syndrome instead. "Friendly" baby alpacas or llamas that run up to you in the field and lean on you might seem pretty innocuous. But a 200-pound alpaca or 300 pound llama charging up to you at full tilt and "leaning" on you without slowing down is a big problem.

Encouraging behavior in a young animal that will become inappropriate simply because of the ultimate size of the adult animal has nothing to do with love or dominance. Novice handlers do not have the prior experience to understand that what looks like a pretty light in the distance is really the headlight of an oncoming train.



The A-B-C's of Behavior

Animals behave for a reason. They respond to a cue in the environment: try a particular behavior and if the outcome of the behavior serves a useful purpose, the behavior is repeated. This complex web of

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behavior can be simplified by using a process called the A-B-C's of behavior. Each behavioral interaction is made up of three elements:

A=the antecedent-- the stimulus or event that immediately precedes a behavior and sets the occasion for or signals the behavior. For example, when the owner opens the feed room door and walks in or bangs the buckets (the antecedent stimulus), the animal understands that feed is coming.

B=the behavior: the animal walks to the feeders.

C=the consequence-- an event that influences the future strength of the behavior it immediately follows. Once the animal gets up and walks to the feeder the consequence is that they are fed.

Dr. Susan Friedman, PhD, puts it this way, "The cause of behavior is found in contexts, not in animals. Behavior never occurs in a vacuum or sprays out of animals like water from a broken showerhead. There are always conditions on which behavior depends."

The good news is that as animal caretakers we have considerable control over the environment in which our animals find themselves **and** we have control over our own behavior giving us considerable influence over both the antecedent stimulus and the consequences of a behavior.

To use the A-B-C's of behavior to understand and change a problematic behavior requires that you first decide on a target behavior. For example "my alpaca runs over, sticks his nose in my face and spits" describes a whole string of behaviors. Once you have decided on the smallest meaningful unit of behavior, which in this case might be, "my lama spits," and then you can observe its occurrence and determine what the animal gains from the behavior-- the consequences, and then note what is happening immediately beforehand-- its antecedent stimulus.

In a herd environment, the consequence of spitting is that the thing being spat at usually goes away. The "something" might be, among other things, the unwanted advances of a male, a herd mate that is encroaching on food or a pesky baby that is being weaned. Why does your llama or alpaca spit at you? The short answer is probably, to make you go away. You can avoid being spat on by understanding the effect of your behavior on the animal and changing your behavior if possible. So you must watch keenly at the precursors to the behavior and adjust what YOU are doing BEFORE the spit. In this example, I would adjust my approach so that spit doesn't happen. It can be this simple.

I get that we must manage our animals and there are times when our llamas or alpacas want us to go away and that is just not possible, however it is amazing to me how often it IS possible to simply stop pushing the spit button or the kick button or the kush button, and so on. Of course, if you are going to avoid pushing these buttons, it is really useful to know where they are—identifying the antecedent stimulus will tell you.

I can remember many years ago working with a llama owner who described the llama that he brought to the workshop as a "terrible spitter." As I stood inside the catch pen this seemingly cooperative and placid llama watched me with interest as I quizzed the owner about the spitting. I asked, "What are you doing just before she spits at you?" He replied, "Well, usually I am picking little bits of straw out of her fleece." Before I could stop myself, I replied, "*Why don't you just not do that?*" My reply was genuine but sounded flippant, even to me. Far from being annoyed the owner very graciously said, "You know, I hadn't thought of that!" We then discussed 1) Whether or not it was really necessary to pick things out of the wool 2) when it was necessary to remove debris from the fleece, as in show preparation, were there other ways to accomplish the same thing with less drama. As it turned out there were many options to change the behavior. Most importantly the owner looked at the llama with a new awareness... and didn't see an unreasonable animal that was a "terrible spitter" but an animal that was behaving in a way that worked for it for perfectly logical reasons.

The A-B-C's of behavior are so tied in to each other that part of the challenge for us humans is learning to see them as separate. It seems so simple but in fact there are complex chains of behavior and it can be difficult to figure out what is really acting as the antecedent stimulus and what is providing the reinforcement. So, look at the very fine details, and practice, practice, practice. Or, taking a memorable line from the movie, Karate Kid: 'wax on, wax off'.

Watch for future articles in The Journal from Marty McGee Bennett. Or contact her at www.camelidynamics.com



Llama Magic

By Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay
Yellowstone Llamas, MT

Today, I was thinking about what I am thankful for. There are many things, actually. One big item on the list is how grateful I am that I ended up near the great biosphere that is Yellowstone, the world's first National Park. And to top it all, I get to guide folks from all over the world into the park's backcountry, where nature's wild soul heals and inspires us. Needless to say, I couldn't do all that without the cooperation, wisdom and strength of my woolly, banana-eared friends, the llamas.

Through the years of taking the public on llama treks, be it a women's group, families with kids, honeymooners, bachelors, business friends, mother/daughter trips, special needs kids, or wounded warriors – I have always been fascinated by how quickly people bond with the llamas. I typically worry about things like the weather, if we brought enough food, etc. Yet, when the llamas jump out of the trailer at the trailhead, they are the main attraction. Everything else seems to be secondary. The initial meeting between llamas and people soon morphs into a bond and is one of the most important ingredients of a successful trek. The llamas are not only pack animals; on our treks they are ambassadors of the wild providing a bridge from people's comfort zone in civilization to a comfortable temporary home in the backcountry. The llamas are guides, sherpas, hiking companions as well as guard animals. In short, they provide a stable component throughout a number of categories crucial to the outdoor novice.

Here are some of my favorite stories of how the combination of being out in nature and the companionship of llamas affected people on our treks.

His name is Tien Duong. He is 10. He was born in America and so was his brother Huey who is 8. Tien and Huey's parents are from Vietnam. When the Duong family decided it was time for an adventure they opted for a 4-day llama trek in Yellowstone's wild Northwest corner. Not only did they get an adventure, but Tien fell deeply in love with "his" llama, Nahani.



The memories involving the Duong family trek will stick with me as one of my favorites. Rarely did I encounter such delightful children as Tien and Huey or such humble adults as Tom and Nancy. The family who traveled to Yellowstone from Florida, who had never camped before, had never hiked in bear country, let alone lead exotic-looking creatures through the wilderness, approached this expedition of a lifetime with genuine eagerness to learn and experience new things.

The llamas immediately sensed the respect and quiet curiosity coming from the Duongs and - as is their style - returned these sentiments in kind. Tien was especially attentive to his llama, wanting to know everything about him and llamas in general. Tien never tired of tending to his llama, brought grain to him in camp, brushed him and hung out with him until it was dinner time and before breakfast. He wanted to walk him like a dog in the morning, talked to him incessantly and – to Nahani's surprise – picked grass and a few flowers for him to eat. Even though Nahani remained aloof towards these gestures of affection, Tien's faced beamed whenever he laid eyes on his llama.

The night before we were to pack out and return to civilization after a time that truly was an adventure complete with a hail storm and a bull moose walking into camp (who quickly retreated

continued on next page

Llama Magic, continued

upon beholding the excited and alarm-calling llamas), we sat by the campfire in between rain showers and asked Tien and Huey what they wanted to be when they grew up. Without hesitation, Tien announced: "I want to be like Susi! I want to pack with llamas!" I am still in email contact with this young man, who wants to come back as soon as he can.

When Nancy Topkin and her husband Mark signed up their family on a llama trek with us, they took a leap of faith. Of their two kids, their 15-year old boy, Gray, was autistic.



While his parents and sister quickly bonded with the llamas, it was difficult to detect whether he enjoyed the company of his woolly hiking companion on the first day into camp. As we reached our destination, the llamas were unsaddled and turned out into the meadow.

Once the llamas were out of sight, Gray remained sitting on a log, bent intently over his notepad. As I stepped behind him, I watched him sketching each llama with minute and accurate detail, paying great attention to particular characteristics such as a droopy ear, particular markings or aloof body posture. He did not stop drawing all six llamas until he was satisfied. And he was right on! His parents told me that sketching is over Gray's great passion and expression of his deep feelings. He did not draw anything else on the whole trip.



Sophie Tan came with her husband and brother-in-law on a trek this last August. The petite woman with a shy smile had never spent any time in the backcountry. In fact, she hadn't spent much time away from her desk lately, which was why her husband planned this trip for her. Sophie was born in China, came to the US ten years ago and is now a highly successful IT executive. She was polite and spoke very little on the first two days. She seemed uncertain about the llamas and the concept of spending a few days and nights in the wild. Her husband, on the other hand, was confident, adventurous and often spoke for her.

The llamas took in the human dynamics with their usual calm and off we went. I pair up llamas with humans trying to match personalities and most of the times I am right on. Candido was the perfect fit for Sophie. She didn't know that but he did. The first night was very cold. I imagined my Chinese friends huddled in their sleeping bags and did not expect them to emerge too early. As I made my way early from my tent to the core camp the next morning, I was surprised to see Sophie standing in the meadow close to Candido, gently stroking his white fleece, both of them just now touched by the first rays of the rising sun. Candido had done his llama magic.

On the hike back to the trailhead the last day, Sophie marched confidently and chattered about the beauty of nature. She led Candido carefully around obstacles and every time we stopped she hugged him. "I love my llama", she announced for all to hear. Her husband smiled quietly.

continued on next page



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Llama Magic, continued



So, on Thanksgiving Day I feel grateful for being able to share exceptional experiences with many different folks in my wild backyard, and for the llamas who by touching people with their "llama magic" add yet another dimension to the wonder of it all!

See Susi's ad above.



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Why Not Mentor?

By Mary Vavrina, Education Chair

Intact males make the best guard llamas*

Llamas can go 4 days without water**

You shouldn't trim a llama's toenails because they use them to defend against coyotes***

These statements have been presented as fact recently by people who raise and sell llamas. Most experienced llama owners would take issue with these statements, or be able to put them in proper context (see below), but given the availability of free or cheap llamas on Craigslist, there are a lot of people new to llamas and alpacas who don't know any better. If those folks have previous livestock experience, they are more likely to be skeptical about claims that don't really make sense.

Interestingly, free llamas and alpacas seem to attract people who have no large animal experience at all, and those people need a good resource for factual information about camelids. I get many emails and phone calls from new llama owners just in my area (Longmont/Boulder, Colorado) so I imagine there are people all over the RMLA region who have questions.

Llama associations like Greater Appalachian Llama Association (GALA) have a mentoring program in place to help new owners gather the information they need to best care for their camelids. GALA mentors undergo training before volunteering their time and knowledge to new or potential owners. GALA tries to pair the volunteers with new owners who have the same interests, i.e. packing, fiber, carting, etc.

The purpose of a mentoring program is to give people interested in llamas the information they need to develop a productive and useful relationship with their new-found friend. Ultimately such a relationship can provide these llamas with a safe, healthy environment and a useful life, and hopefully reduce the need for rescue and rehoming that is so prevalent. Many people just end up with a llama or two, and are intimidated by them, or think they aren't good for anything but guarding.

RMLA has a great website with a lot of information, but maybe it would be a good idea to implement a mentoring program here as well. At the very least, we could provide:

- RMLA members who would be willing to answer questions, either via phone or email, or onsite.




- Veterinarians who will treat llamas, as not every vet is interested in treating camelids.
- Members who are available (perhaps for a small/ reasonable fee) for training new owners to handle their new friends.

The education committee is looking for RMLA members who would like to help establish this new RMLA program. If you're willing to be contacted by new llama owners, or if you have ideas for a mentoring program, please contact me at llamas@rockymtllamas.com or 303-530-5575.

*Some (very few) intact males are great guards, but the risk of them injuring the sheep or goats in their care is considerable.

** Llamas drink less water than other livestock, it's true, and in unfamiliar situations they seem to drink even less than normal. Out on the trail, when they're working hard, it's important that they have access to water in camp. Even if they don't drink much, they DO need water every day.

***This is just, what's the technical term? Oh yes, B.S.

Mary Vavrina is the new chair of the education committee. She got her first llamas in 2003 and was very fortunate to find Bobra Goldsmith to answer her questions. She tries to continue Bobra's mission of helping people have fun with their llamas by providing Bobra's tack and trail gear and training DVDs at www.rockymtllamas.com (See her ad-next page →) 



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Thank you for your continued RMLA support

Oral Dosing Made Easy

By Al Ellis
Highline Trail Llamas

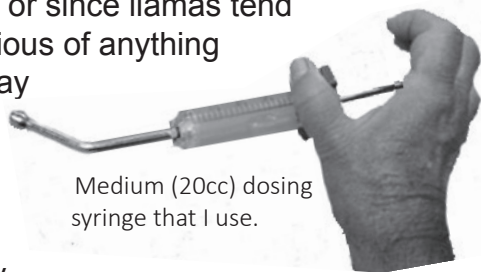
Llamas have a great reputation as being easy care which is absolutely true; however, that is not the same as “no care”. The traditional “just provide shelter, hay and clean water” may be valid in some very limited locations, but the vast majority of llamas live in areas and circumstances that require more attention for optimal health.

No doubt, at some point in a llama’s life, it will need some type of supplement or medication. The first point when giving ANY supplement (even vitamins or dewormers) or medicine is talk to your veterinarian to find out how much, when, and for how long. Second point: each medicine requires a different way of dosing: some are given via injection whereas others are given orally.

Some things are only available in the oral form, and some can be either oral or injectable. If given orally, the full dose must be completely swallowed, very basic and obvious, but too easy to ignore if spitting is involved.

When given the choice we always choose oral, and within this choice there are two more options: in their food or oral dosing. Obviously it’s ‘in the food’ if possible. It’s much easier for us and for the llama. However, adding the medicine to the food is not always practical: the animal may be too young to eat reliably or at all; the volume of the dose may be too large; it may be unpalatable, or since llamas tend to be suspicious of anything new, they may only nibble until they get used to the flavor. So inevitably there will be times the oral dosing is the only option.

We make it a part of a cria’s life giving oral vitamins (per our vet’s instructions) and typically some other oral treatment is needed during the early years, so as adults our llamas are pretty used to the oral procedure; this is not to say they like it, but it is at least familiar.



Medium (20cc) dosing syringe that I use.



A steady surface to stand on to achieve the correct height.

head slightly tilted upward; your shoulder needs to be higher than the llama’s jaw and you need a stable stance. Use a platform to stand on if you need to. Since my animals are quite tall, I always stand on a wooden platform so that I am in the correct position.

A couple of things need to be pretty constant: a confined space so there is no dancing; the llama’s neck needs to be erect and the



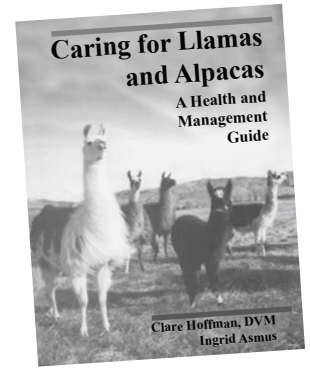
Cradle the head & use your index finger to open the mouth.

To start, cradle the head, open the lips and touch the tongue with your index finger while you slip the syringe inside the jaw and alongside the tongue. You do not want to squirt it down their throat. Your finger on the tongue should trigger a lapping and swallowing reflex. Do not try to rush the process: give them time to keep swallowing with no drooling or pooling inside the mouth.

continued on next page

IT'S ALL IN THE BOOK!

- ✓ If your lama has a malodorous breath, dropped wads or partially chewed feed in its feces, what is it evidence of? (See Teeth)
- ✓ Do you know what is the most uncomfortable skin problems in lamas which has small raised, red painful bumps? (See Skin Disorders)
- ✓ If intestinal parasites are a problem in you herd, do you know the preventative measures that should be taken? (See Herd Health)



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Oral Dosing Made Easy, continued from previous page



Cradle the head with your finger in the lip and in front of the molars alongside the tongue as you are inserting the syringe. When the syringe is in place, press the plunger.

When the syringe is empty, keep your finger in place until you are sure it has all been swallowed. With extremely large doses you may need to give it in 2 or more separate stages. CAUTION: you do need to be aware of fighting teeth, and this procedure assumes they have been removed in the males and the females do not have them or they are very minimal.

Hopefully the following annotated photos will clarify the process of oral dosing.



2015 Camelid Jamboree

By Sheila Fugina and Barb Baker
Camelid Community

A Great Program on a Beautiful Fall Weekend

The weather couldn't have been better for the Camelid Jamboree at the Pierce County Fairgrounds in Ellsworth, Wisconsin, in September. A strong program was designed to



Jamboree speakers: Ohio camelid veterinarian Dr. Pam Walker, Carol Reigh of Pennsylvania and Marc Page of Massachusetts.

attract new and potential camelid owners. Classes and demonstrations were held on how to choose, care for, train and handle llamas and alpacas while enjoying them and also generating an income flow from their fiber. Excellent speakers came from eight states throughout the East and the Midwest to share their knowledge and try to encourage new people to join our camelid industry.

Demonstrations on the many ways llamas and alpacas may be used ranged from animal assisted therapy, 4-H projects and fiber producers to packing, showing and cart driving. 4-Hers helped the public take llamas and alpacas through a fun obstacle course and on walks around the fairgrounds.

One building was completely devoted to fiber where attendees could learn how camelid fiber is processed and discover the vast array of products that can be made from alpaca and llama fiber. After watching demonstrations, young and old alike could also create their own fiber projects to take home. Another building housed vendors who offered a wide range of fiber and fiber products for sale as well as other camelid related items. In addition, both llamas

and alpacas were offered for sale in both the sales barn and 4-H barn.


4-Hers from Minnesota and Wisconsin faced off in a "Border Battle" show with their animals and entertained an enthusiastic crowd much of Saturday with a variety of competitions and classes that highlighted the skills of both the 4-Hers and their camelids. In the end the Wisconsin kids won the battle! The top prizes, a donated llama and alpaca, went to the two 4-Hers with the highest overall points. Yes, these animals went to new homes where the handlers have the proper education and facilities to care for them. The other participants were excited for the winners and cheered as the two winners claimed their very special prizes.

Though attendance at the Jamboree wasn't as high as initially hoped for, many of those who came stayed an entire day and were enthusiastic in their appreciation for the variety of fun and educational opportunities provided. Approximately 20 animals found appropriate new homes either during the



Mady Paquet of Ellsworth, Wisconsin, was the top performer in the 4-H Border Battle. Here she is with the llama she won as top prize in the show.

Jamboree weekend or on farm visits during the weeks following the Jamboree as a result of contacts made that weekend.

Camelid Community's Camelid Jamboree was sponsored by the Alpaca Owners Association (AOA), the International Camelid Institute (ICI), Midwest Llama Association (MWLA), Greater Appalachian Llama & Alpaca Association (GALA), Ohio River Valley Llama Association (ORVLA) and Southern States Llama Association (SSLA). Thank you everyone! 

(a different kind of) **CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

Find the next word in the first 6 sentences on page #. *Punctuation is Ignored.*
 Example... 23 across 'Mary' found on page 11, word following is 'Lou'.

- | ACROSS | | DOWN | |
|--------|-------------------|------|-----------------|
| 1 | scent Pg# 12 | 2 | rain Pg# 24 |
| 7 | against Pg# 26 | 3 | large Pg# 21 |
| 8 | eight Pg# 30 | 4 | county Pg# 16 |
| 9 | least Pg# 19 | 5 | touching Pg# 25 |
| 11 | Super Pg# 9 | 6 | guide Pg# 23 |
| 13 | many Pg# 5 | 10 | owner Pg# 18 |
| 15 | phosphorus Pg# 15 | 12 | Busy Pg# 4 |
| 16 | flunking Pg# 20 | 14 | herd Pg# 14 |
| 18 | Mom's Pg# 6 | 17 | sensing Pg# 13 |
| 22 | trucks Pg# 10 | 9 | box Pg# 21 |
| 23 | Mary Pg# 11 | 20 | shelter Pg# 28 |
| 24 | Tennessee Pg# 8 | 21 | feed Pg# 22 |
| 25 | lama Pg# 7 | | |



POSTSCRIPT

Have a happy & fun-filled winter
 Ron, Kathy, Marilyn & Sonja

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



EVENTS CALENDAR BY MARY WICKMAN (EVENTS CHAIR)

For more details and live links, go to www.RMLA.com, select Events, and hover your cursor on the event.

- **January 7 - 10, 2016 National Western Stock Show**, Denver, Colorado. Contact Judy Glaser, judy.glaser@yahoo.com or 303-646-6311.
- **February 13, 2016, Golden Plains Llama Conference**, McPherson, Kansas. Contact Patti Morgan, pmmorgank@gmail.com or 620-441-8830. One day llama and alpaca educational conference for youth. Learn Kumihimo braiding.
- **April 30, 2016, Stars and Stripes Show**, Waco, Nebraska. Contact Jim Rutledge, buckshollow@wildblue.net or 402-366-9304.
- **June 24 and 25, 2016, Camelid Kids Llama & Alpaca Camp**, Bucks Hollow Farm, Waco, Nebraska. Contact Geri Rutledge at buckshollow@wildblue.net or 402-366-9304. Lama camp for all ages, safety training, making crafts and a tour of St. John's School.
- **July 30, 2016 Fairplay Llama Races**, Fairplay, CO - Three great events: Pack Llama Race, Lama Rama & the Public Walk. And of course, the Llama Lunacy Course for children. General public can borrow a llama for the race. Camp with the llamas in the national forest before and after the race. Start time is approximately 9 AM. Contact Gary Carlton at llama@jhmfarm.com or 303.503.1324.
- **August 20, 2016 Hope Pass Aid Station Support Crew** for participants in the Leadville 100 mile race. A great deal of preparation goes into getting the aid station and supplies up the mountain and operational prior to race day. Contact Gary Carlton llama@jhmfarm.com or 303.503.1324 for more information.
- **September 24 and 25, Annual PacaBuddies Open House**, Douglas County Fairgrounds, Castle Rock, CO. Contact Ron Hinds or Elizabeth Cline at www.PacaBuddies.org or 303-646-1320. Learn about the care and use of alpacas. Alpaca products will be for sale.