

The Journal of RMLA



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Education & Outreach: For New Llama and Alpaca Owners - Page 14

Llama Camp 2018

Kaitlyn Winter, RMLA Youth — Sutton NE

Llama Camp 2018 was filled with lots of fun crafts, working with our animals and catching up with friends. Camp was a two-day event held in Waco, Nebraska. This year we had 10 campers ranging in age from 8 to 19 and all were RMLA youth. Campers came from Nebraska and Colorado.

On Friday we had twenty-two residents from Legacy Estates Retirement Community in Lincoln come out to the farm. Campers worked with their animals and answered

any questions from the Legacy residents. After working with animals, we had lunch and then took wagon rides. Everybody was able to take a ride in the draft horse drawn wagon to see the beautiful countryside.

When returning from the ride, each resident worked together with a camper on a craft. We had three crafts to choose from: Navajo weaving, felting flowers, and another weaving project. The residents enjoyed their time at the farm and went home with a project they made. See the videos on the RMLA website.

Afterwards campers continued to work on crafts like wool dying and egg felting. Friday was a night of catching up and roasting s'mores by the campfire. Saturday morning started off with pancakes and eggs cooked and served in the barn. After finishing breakfast, campers felted eggs and worked on finishing up crafts. We ate dinner and then cleaned up.

Everyone enjoyed their time at Llama camp and will be back for next year. If you are interested in learning how to do the crafts we did while at camp, visit the RMLA website to see our 'how to' videos.



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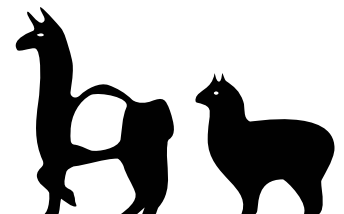
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Journal Submission Dates, Ad Rates and Specifications

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

Ad Type	Width x Height	Member	Non-Member
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Two Page Spread	15" x 10"	\$200	\$300

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Good Day and welcome to the Fall issue of the RMLA Journal. Among all the topics covered in this issue we are sure you will find something of interest to further your learning or tickle your funny bone or warm your heart.



We especially want to call your attention to the new RMLA committee: 'Education and Outreach'. Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay has volunteered to chair this committee. Please see her article on page 14 to learn more about the exciting plans she has in mind.

Ron Hinds, our illustrious and industrious webmaster, continues to expand and enhance the RMLA website. His article is on page 23.

Two members who have a bent towards fiber have written some great articles about their exploration of the uses of llama and alpaca fiber. New directions that I found amazing; see page 12 and page 21.

Skin cancer is common in all species; no exceptions. The Ask the Vet article lays out the various types of skin cancer they see in llamas and alpacas. And, we have a second article on common maladies for the camelid eye written by Dr. Charlene Arendas, DVM and reprinted from February 2018 GALA Newsletter.

Inside you will find articles on RMLA Youth activities, the Fairplay Llama Event and much, much more. Thanks to all of you who sent in articles and photos! Without you, there would be no RMLA Journal. Please enjoy and let us know what else you would like to learn about.

See you at the Annual Meeting in Castle Rock, CO on October 20th. Let's play and have fun.

Kathy and Ron



Cover Photo: It was a Photo Finish at the 2018 Fairplay Pack Race. The winner was Toby Stensland (on the left) with his llama "Uncle Leo" and on the right is Doug Masteller with RM Awesome owned by Patti Morgan - Rock-n-M Llamas and Alpacas.

Photo taken by Ron Baird.

Letter from Your RMLA Board

It is Annual Meeting time again. A large group of RMLA members live along the front range in Colorado. With that said, this year we are returning to Castle Rock, Colorado, with the hope that most of our long-time members and the recently new members will plan to attend.

The Annual Meeting is a special time to hear what is new in RMLA, ask questions about how you may become involved and share information and stories about what you are doing with your llamas and alpacas.

Please save the date – Saturday, October 20, 2018. The meeting will be held in the Douglas County CSU Extension Office’s meeting rooms located at the Douglas County Fairgrounds. We have had several Annual Meetings there and each has been well attended. This is a great central location for many members. Should you need to stay the night, Castle Rock has a good number of motels and interesting shopping. We are looking forward to seeing many of you and visiting.

On meeting day, we will begin with a social hour about 11:00 A.M. followed by a light lunch, provided by RMLA, at noon. The meeting will begin about

1:00 with a goal to end by 2:00. After 2:00, there will be time for more socializing, a little dessert and chat before we part.

On another note that we are super excited about – you will see on page 14 of this issue that Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay has volunteered to Chair the Education Committee. Susi has come up with amazing ideas to educate the growing number of enthusiastic, but often misinformed new llama owners who need serious help with herd care and management. Thanks, Susi, for filling this all-important Committee. Your work will assure RMLA meets its Mission Statement – “To educate”. Also, note the Committee name has been expanded to reflect the updated program and it is now the Education and Outreach Committee.

With this issue, the Journal Volunteers begin their 5th year of bringing llama news, education and items of interest to our members. The Journal Volunteers work as an amazingly cohesive team to see that members receive an outstanding, on time publication. Thank you, Ron, Kathy and Marilyn, for your professional approach to your organization’s publication.

*See you at the Annual Meeting,
Lougene, Beau, Ron, Geri and Jeanne.*



Welcome! **NEW RMLA Members** *and Thank You*
RMLA IS ALWAYS GROWING

Jim & Ellen Roller — Rolling R Ranch — Littleton CO
Catherine Collins — Escape Ranch — Parker, CO

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

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Question: What types of skin cancers are found among camelids?

Response: So your alpaca or llama has a bump on their skin, what could it be? There are many things that can cause lumps and bumps in these animals but today we are going to focus on the most common skin tumors. These tumors include fibropapillomas, squamous cell carcinoma, fibrosarcomas, and melanocytomas. In fact, tumors involving the skin are the most common types of tumors seen in llamas and alpacas. The names can all be confusing and blend together but in this article we will define each one and discuss how common they are.

Fibropapillomas:

Fibropapillomas, also known as fibromas or warts, are benign proliferations and thickenings of epithelium (skin) and fibrous tissue. These are considered to be the most common skin tumors seen in camelids. As mentioned, these growths are considered benign and not generally malignant. They are usually seen in camelids greater than 4 years old. An interesting fact about these growths is that they are often attributed to a papilloma virus. There are various papilloma viruses out there, including bovine papilloma virus and canine papilloma virus among others. A recent report suggests that the virus causing these lesions in camelids is closely related to the bovine papilloma virus.

These growths are generally located on the face, particularly the nose, lips, and inside of the cheeks. They are usually grey in color, large, and nodular. The surface of the lesion may be crusty or ulcerated as well. Fibropapillomas usually present as multiple masses around the face rather than just a single lesion.

Your veterinarian will diagnose a fibropapilloma based on a biopsy of the lesion and the surrounding skin. If a fibropapilloma is diagnosed, the papilloma can be removed surgically or via cryosurgery. With cryosurgery, the mass is removed by freezing with liquid nitrogen. The lesion may recur after surgery and multiple surgeries or cryosurgeries may be needed for full resolution. Commercial or autogenous wart vaccines can also be tried to treat these lesions in

areas where surgical access may be more difficult. There is a commercial bovine wart vaccine that can be tried. Alternatively, tissue from the lesion can be sent to a variety of labs to create a vaccine specific to that individual isolate.

Squamous cell carcinoma:

Squamous cell carcinoma is the second most common skin tumor seen and the most common malignant tumor in llamas and alpacas. Squamous cell carcinoma refers to an abnormal proliferation of the outermost layer of the skin. Squamous cell carcinoma can affect all skin however the most common areas seen are the face, the prepuce in males, the perineum (the skin around the rectum), and the axillary (arm pits), inguinal (inside of the thighs), or mammary gland areas where the fiber coat is thin.

These masses can come in various colors ranging from pink to grey, are proliferative, and very often become ulcerated. They usually present as multiple masses connected to each other rather than one large mass.

Squamous cell carcinoma is diagnosed by a skin biopsy as well. Treatment for these include surgical removal, cryosurgery as previously mentioned, and chemotherapy at the mass location. Depending on the location and size, multiple doses of chemotherapy may be preferred over surgery for treatment.

Conservative treatment with piroxicam, an anti-inflammatory, has been used successfully in various species to treat squamous cell carcinoma on the skin and oral cavity as well. These masses are considered malignant and may spread either to local lymph nodes, the lungs, or to other nearby skinned areas. In one case, squamous cell carcinoma of the skin was found to invade the underlying bone of the mandible. Your veterinarian will work with you to determine the best treatment plan based on the location, size of the masses, and likelihood of spreading to other areas.

Fibrosarcoma:

The third most common skin tumor is a fibrosarcoma. This tumor is also considered to be malignant and can spread to local lymph nodes or other tissues. Fibrosarcomas are similar to

continued on next page

Ask The CSU Vet Team continued

fibropapillomas in that they are mainly a proliferation of the skin and fibrous tissue but they are not associated with papilloma viruses. They are generally found on the face, mainly the lips and the gingiva in the mouth. Similar to the other masses described, they are diagnosed via skin biopsy and treatment options include surgery, cryosurgery, and chemotherapy depending on size and location.

Melanocytoma:

The next mass we will discuss today is a melanocytoma. This mass is considered benign and is a proliferation of melanocytes, the cells containing darkly colored melanin. As you may know, melanin is the pigment that gives your skin and hair its color. These masses are not very common compared to the others discussed. They have been reported in various areas including the armpit, pectoral skin, and eyelids. In general, these masses are small, round, darkly pigmented, and smooth surfaced compared to the others described earlier. Melanocytomas will be diagnosed by a skin biopsy and can generally be removed surgically by your veterinarian if there is sufficient surrounding skin. Melanocytomas can often be confused with melanomas which will be discussed next.

Melanoma:

As previously described, a melanoma is also a proliferation of the cells that contain pigmented melanin. These cells are termed melanocytes. Melanomas in general are considered malignant and may spread to local lymph nodes and various organs. They are less common in camelids compared to the benign melanocytomas. However, melanocytomas and melanomas can be difficult to differentiate from each other as they look very similar. The differentiation is done under a microscope by assessing the individual cells by your veterinarian and trained clinical pathologists. Similar to melanocytomas, melanomas can be removed surgically if there is sufficient surrounding skin.

If you notice any lumps or bumps develop on your llama or alpaca, the first step is to call your veterinarian and have them examine the mass. Helpful things that you can do for your vet in the meantime include sending them pictures of the bumps and monitoring their size, number, and growth. These steps can help your veterinarian get an idea of what may be

the cause and make the best plan. Together, you and your veterinarian can make the best treatment plan for your llama or alpaca.

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The 2018 Interns



From left to right, Dr. Ben Turchin, Dr. Elizabeth Crabtree, and Dr. Cileah Kretsch. The article in this issue was written by Dr. Kretsch. Yes, we will be hearing from the other two in the future. They need some challenging questions!!!

Dr. Cileah Kretsch was born and raised in Southern California. She attended Cal Poly Pomona for her undergraduate degree where she majored in Animal Science and got her first taste of livestock medicine. After graduating, she attended veterinary school at UC Davis focusing on large animal medicine. While there she played an active role in many large animal

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Unser Alpacas — Start — Your — Engines



By Susan Unser - Chama, NM

fresh water and there was an old well house right where I could envision their little barn and corral. So, on to the next objection: waste

This is a story about five male alpacas and how they came to live in a beautiful Northern New Mexico mountain valley. This small ranch has a reputation for being the home to a very brave and fast man and his determined and lovely lady, who is authoring the beginning of this adventure.

In our retirement, my husband and I enjoyed having elk, deer, turkeys, geese and an occasional bear pass through our property. It was like living in a motion picture of the wild west and we were happy to just be observers. That was until the day I wandered into an Alpaca Exhibit at a Village Fair. As I stood there observing these docile animals, I was smitten.

I went to find my husband, who was looking at old cars, and tugged him back to the Alpaca pen. He was not smitten. As we drove home he reminded me of just how much work was required to take care of animals; they needed to be fed every day, needed fresh water, a roof over their heads and he particularly wanted me to remember that what went into them also came out.

Realizing this project was going to require considerable pillow talk, some extra special dinners and holding my tongue while he watched racing for hours, I began researching what this big fuzzy animal, with the huge brown eyes, was and discovered these were not like caring for other livestock.

Yes, they needed to be fed and the main crop in this mountain valley is hay. So, no problem. They needed

management. I learned these animals are known to choose a place and everyone politely poops in the same spot so clean up should be no problem and to include my hubby in this adventure I could then wheelbarrow this waste to his tractor, which he likes to fire up, and he could find a spot to dispose of it.

Now for a closing argument. As I pay our property taxes each year I notice that if you have livestock on your property, you can apply for an agricultural use claim. There was the best way I could appeal to my husband's sense of "saving" money.

Well, obviously my plan worked but this is only the beginning of our story. The "deal" didn't come without some restrictions. 1) No more than three Alpacas; 2) no more than three acres to be fenced for pasture and 3) I needed to find a resource to purchase their fleece to offset the cost of the annual shearing. No problem.

So why, you may ask, have we ended up with six Alpacas who now roam a 30-acre pasture? Yes, because my husband has learned that a happy wife makes a happy life.

To be continued in the Winter issue.



You Are Cordially Invited to the 2018 RMLA Annual Meeting

When: October 20th, 2018 11:00am to ~2:00pm

Where: Douglas County Fairgrounds-Castle Rock, CO, CSU Ext Office, Rm#2


A social hour will begin at 11:00 A.M. followed by a light lunch, provided by RMLA, at noon. The meeting will begin about 1:00 with a goal to end by 2:00. After 2:00, there will be time for more socializing, a little dessert and chat before we part.

Let's get together and have some fun!

Ask The CSU Vet Team continued from page 7

clubs, was Vice President for her class, became certified in emergency response, and completed a degree concentrated on leadership and personal development.

In June of this year she moved to Colorado and started as one of three Livestock Medicine and Surgery Interns. While here she has really enjoyed working with the amazing faculty, teaching and mentoring students, and gaining experience with the diverse case load. Her favorite part are all of the llamas and alpacas she has been able to work with and learn from in just a few months. Her ultimate goal is to complete a residency in large animal medicine and work as a faculty member at a teaching hospital.

Besides being a veterinarian, Cileah has a 7 year old Beagle named Zuchinni that she loves spending time with. She also enjoys running, hiking, yoga, cooking, and painting. She recently spent a week hiking Zion and is really looking forward to hiking some of the national parks here in Colorado. 



Truly Amazing

It is what the volunteers & contributors of Southwest Llama Rescue can accomplish. *Help Is Always Needed: your time and money go a long way.

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Neutral Contact

By Marty McGee Bennett
CameliDynamics.com

Neutral Contact is a connection with an animal with your hands or through a lead line, catch rope or handler helper (various tools we use in CAMELIDynamics) that does NOT affect the animal's balance.

I have described it in many ways: light contact, having a connection, releasing to contact. It is also returning to a state in which you are poised for whatever happens next, it could be called coming back to center, or recovering balance. Many sports offer a useful metaphor for 'neutral'. When playing tennis if you do not return to center court after returning the ball, you will be at the mercy of your opponent's ability to place the ball in an area of the court you can't possibly get to. Finding that place of balance when doing yoga is another metaphor for 'neutral'.

Whatever term we use - and I like neutral contact these days -, being able to experience neutral and return to it after using other signals such as preempting (a signal/technique used to help an animal KEEP his balance) and ratcheting (a signal/technique that causes an animal to lose his balance and take a step in the desired direction) is crucial to handling success. It can be difficult to know when you have neutral contact because the connection is so light that it doesn't feel like much.

If you feel something in your fingers or hands you probably have too much weight in your hands. In other words, you are pulling; not simply being connected. Heavy hands result in resistance and often movement in the wrong direction on the part of the animal. And a slack line (often the gold standard in performance classes) does no good if you want to help your animal keep his balance and preempt any attempts at movement or offer subtle signals to move. With a J-line or slack line by the time you notice that your animal needs help and you take up the slack in the line, the misstep has almost certainly occurred and you are now going to have to make a big correction instead of a very tiny preemptive signal.

How can you tell if you are using neutral contact as your default connection? Because neutral is by definition the absence of something, it turns out the best way to know is when you aren't! Animal handling using balance as we do with CAMELIDynamics is using very quick contractions of the muscles and returning to a neutral

state. It shouldn't be physically tiring. If you are leading or balancing an animal and your biceps or hands are getting tired you are not returning to neutral; you are holding steadily.

When leading, look at the hook attached to the halter. When you are offering signals and information with the intention of getting your animal to change his balance you will be using the lead and the hook will be parallel to the ground. This means that the bottom of the hook

will be canted slightly towards you (Figure 1). You are connected and ready.

A slack line or J-line means that the hook is dangling freely and pointed at the ground (Figure 2). If you have tension in the line, the hook will be horizontal to the ground (Figure 3).

Another excellent way to find out if you have a good feel for neutral contact is to get feedback from a human. With a human partner, stand facing each other with a catch rope around the "animal" up under the armpits. The handler is holding one end of the rope in each hand and the "animal" just stands still with his eyes closed and doesn't move. The



Figure 1 Neutral Connection!



Figure 2 Slack or J Line

handler asks the "animal" two questions:

1. Can the "animal" feel a very subtle signal given through the rope?
2. Can the "animal" feel himself locking his knees, gripping the ground with his toes or otherwise feeling the need to resist the handler?

continued on next page

Neutral Contact continued

The answers to the questions should be 1) YES, I can feel the signals and 2) NO, I am not resisting. If the “animal” cannot feel a signal through the rope then there is no contact at all.



If the “animal” is feeling the need to resist in the slightest way to keep his or her balance then the handler is not neutrally connected, he is pulling. By tinkering with the connection and asking for feedback from your “animal”

you can find that sweet spot that means you are in NEUTRAL! Do your best to memorize this feeling and add it to your muscle memory.

Another fantastic learning tool for this technique is to have someone videotape you as you work with your animals. Whether you are trimming toenails or leading, neutral is visually obvious when you see it. The reactions of the animal will surely help you see when you are going beyond neutral to holding or losing contact all together.



PACK ANIMAL

Pack Animal Magazine is about the hiker's companion: the llamas, goats, and other pack animals that willingly haul our gear into the great outdoors. A quarterly print magazine full of color photographs, *Pack Animal* is for anyone who loves our wild spaces and our public lands.

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CLASSIFIED ADS

Our last packing Llama died at Christmas. Eolus was 21. We are selling our truck, trailer and packing gear this summer. Call Cheri Paxson or text to 720-378-2014. Portable wrought-iron chute with neck stabilizer, vacuums, halters, 2-saddles, 2 sets of panniers, '93 Ford F250 (93,000mi) and a Charmac 2-horse trailer (modified to carry 3-4 animals).

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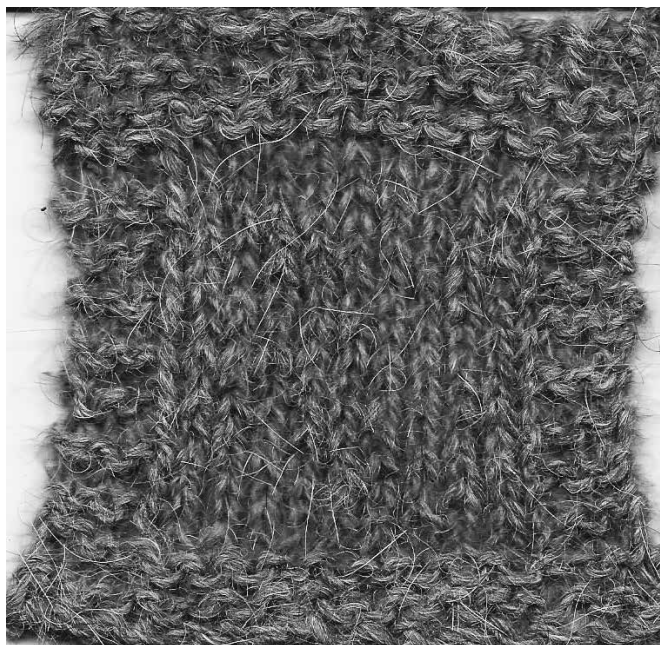
By Nancy Wilson —Camp Verde AZ

You may remember that about a year ago I was asking for donations of double-coated llama fiber for my In-Depth Study, the final requirement for the Master Spinner Program for Olds College in Olds, Canada. Thanks to those donations and other sources of fiber, I am well on my way to completing this last phase of the program.

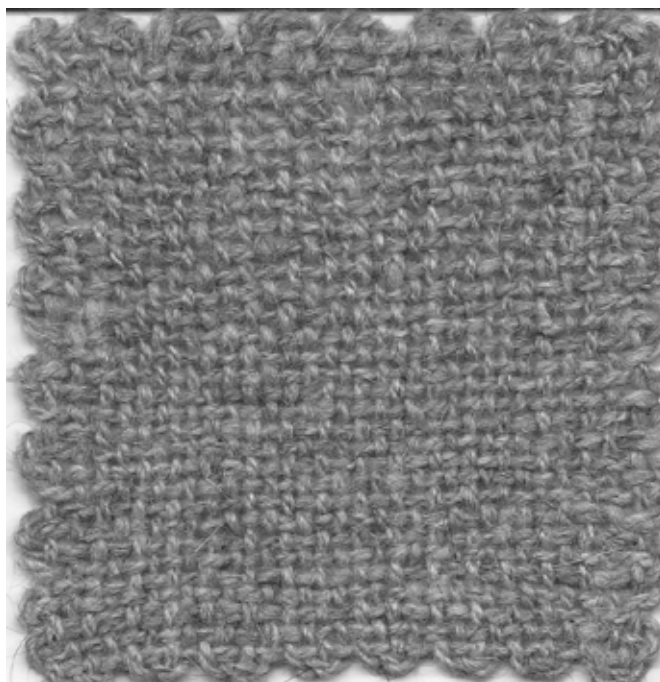
Along the way, I have learned about home processing and spinning this fiber. You may wonder why I am interested in double-coated llama fiber anyway. Well, my husband and I acquired our first llama in 1987 with interest in pack llamas. In those days, that generally meant the fiber was going to be double-coated to get the larger size animal desired for packing. I had no experience with fiber other than a degree in textiles and clothing and a long-time interest in cloth and sewing. However that was enough that after acquiring our first two llamas, the light bulb went off in my head that I needed to learn to spin the fiber from our animals. I took what may have been Chris Switzer's first class on spinning llama and alpaca fiber in 1988 at a shop in Tucson. I've been spinning ever since.

But I digress. Back to my Study: the first step was to look at the various fibers. I decided to sort them by staple length into two rather informal groups: shorter and longer. I combined samples from the two groups as I carded the llama fibers. What worked best was a sandwich of longer fiber, four layers of shorter fiber, one layer of longer fiber,

four more layers of shorter fiber, and a final layer of longer fiber. This also ensured that I got a more homogeneous blend.



Yarn 1 Knit: a blend with Clun Forest



Yarn 10 Woven: a blend with CVM

I removed the batt and then split it in thirds lengthwise. I remembered Mike Brown's book: *Aunt Millie's Guide to Llama Fiber* and kept track of which end came off the carder last. After pulling a section of fiber longer and thinner, I fed it back onto the drum carder a second time, leading again with the last end that came off the carder. This process was repeated a second time and then set aside ready to be blended with other fibers.

The blends were to be 25% llama and 75% other fiber, 50% llama and 50% other fiber, and 75% llama and 25% other fiber.

The other fibers I chose were different types of wool: California Variegated Mutant (CVM), California Red, Shetland, and Targhee. I also replicated some mill carded blends and did some blends with mohair. All wool was carded into batts prior to the blending phase. The sandwich I created for the blends was wool alternated with llama fiber in at least a total of five layers, starting and ending with wool. I did the same process of splitting the batts and re-carding for a total of three additional passes.

Lucky for me, my default spinning style seems to suit the double-coated llama fiber well. I don't know how I

continued on next page

stumbled upon it, I'm just glad I did. It's important to use a spinning method that allows the guard hairs to add loft to the resulting yarn. So if you're an inchworm type of spinner, that's OK, just don't slide your fingers back down your yarn to get the next draw. After pulling the fibers toward the wheel, open your fingers and go back to the fiber supply. If you've been doing short forward draw for a long time, you may need to make a conscious effort to do this. Another tip that will make it easier to draft is to use the thumb and index finger of your fiber hand (closest to the wheel) to slightly roll the fiber counterclockwise as you pull it from the fiber supply.

My default spinning method is sort of a combination of forward and backward drafting. My front hand (for me the right hand) untwists and pulls out on the fiber supply while my back (left) hand is pulling back from the wheel. I follow the back hand as it moves away from the wheel and then wind on as if long-draw spinning. If you're a long-time subscriber to *Spin-Off Magazine* (or have access to old issues) look at the description on page 58 in the right-hand column of the Winter 1996 issue (and yes, I was a subscriber then).

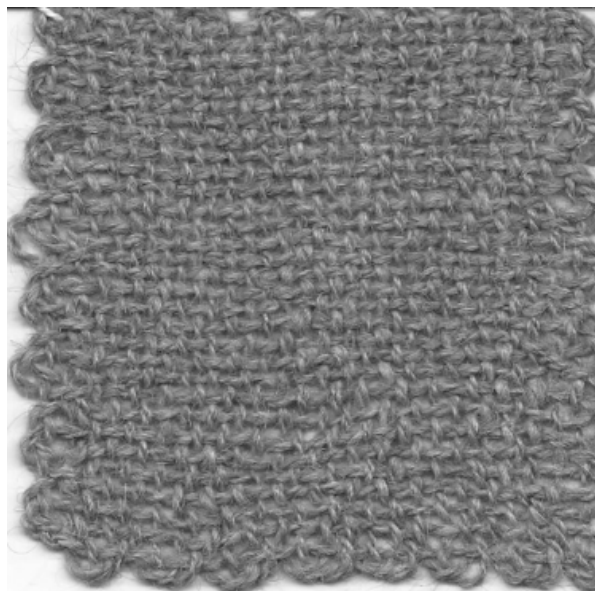
I'm now in the scrapbooking phase of my project. The written portion is off for editing. Perhaps by the time this article appears it will be in Canada being reviewed by one of the instructors. Scrapbooking involves labeling the knitted swatches and Zoom Loom squares that I made from each blend and labeling the individual skeins for marking (as they say in Canada). I have 28 sample yarns, so this involves a lot of mail merge and printing on business card forms.

The big take-aways from this study have been:

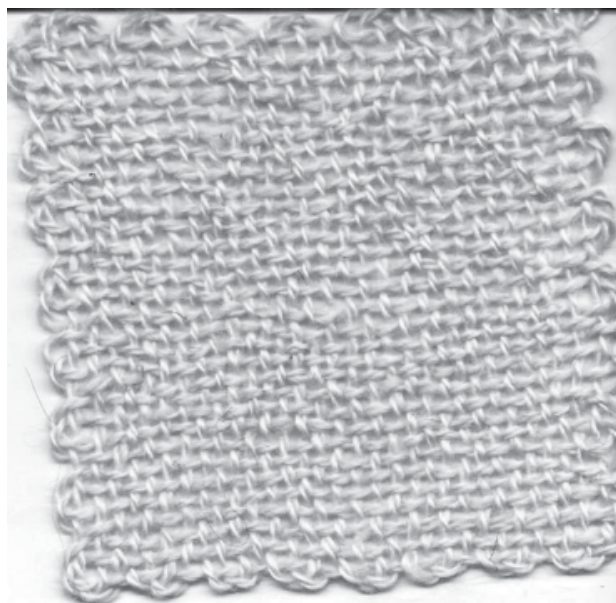
- Not to disregard double-coated llama fiber and to choose appropriate items for its use (no surprise that you will not be using it for next-to-the skin items).
- Spin it in a way that allows the guard hairs to provide loft to the yarn.
- Spin a low-twist yarn.

It is also important to think carefully about what type of fiber to use for blending. My go-to breed for llama is California Variegated Mutant (CVM), and not just because they've got a cool name. It's a fine fiber that isn't very fussy to work with and is available in different colors. The mill I use in Arizona also likes blending with Clun Forest because it helps the fibers transfer between rollers easily and cleanly. Besides, Clun Forest is a rare breed (as is CVM) so you can help with conservation efforts.

Mostly, I'd like to encourage those of you who don't have time to dehair your double-coated llama fiber to use it! The guard hairs add loft and water resistance and can be used effectively especially when blended with other fibers.



Double-Coated Llama Yarn



Dehaired Llama Yarn

Post Script from Nancy:

It just occurred to me that it might be useful to have a picture of a sample made with a dehaired llama blend and a sample of a double-coated llama blend. Both samples are 75% llama and 25% Targhee wool. The gray sample is double-coated llama and the white is dehaired llama. Both yarns were spun and finished in the same way. You can see that the double-coated yarn has better coverage than the dehaired sample.



Education & Outreach: A Greater RMLA Presence on the Web for New Llama and Alpaca Owners

By Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay, Chair, Education & Outreach Committee

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Happy grins are pasted on the excited faces of the four hikers who just crashed our camp following the lure of the llamas they saw grazing by our camp in Yellowstone National Park. They could not resist, took a zillion photos, hugged the llamas that were willing and now they can't get the questions out fast enough.

Happily obliging, I tell the strangers about llamas while my clients stand proudly by, knowing they will spend two more days with these cool creatures. I launch into my lecture about llamas, their endearing personalities, their strength and agility as pack animals, their unique physiology, their exotic heritage. "I want one", coos the young woman at her beau. Well, so here comes the old potato chip joke: "You can't have just one!" And before I know it, I am educating these people about llamas until they have to leave and resume their hike, turning around a few times and calling "llamallama!!"

On these llama treks, I do a lot of educating about llamas. Will any of the folks who have joined us on these treks over the years ever have their own llamas? Who knows? But what is important for them as well as for anybody who embarks on the journey of owning any animal, is knowledge.

Knowledge is key. How do I take care of this animal's needs? How can I prepare myself best? Am I ready to take on an animal that can live 20 years? Can males and females live together? How do I train a packer? But most importantly: who can I turn to for information?

When I was starting my life with llamas, I turned to a local organization called Northern Rockies Llama Chapter (NRLC) of the International Llama Association (ILA). I joined and participated in their conferences and workshops. In addition, I took classes with John Mallon, bought books and talked with other NRLC members frequently.



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Education & Outreach..... for New Llama and Alpaca Owners continued...

This seemed to be a no-brainer to me! But today, many people turn to the internet. I recently started getting messages from a few Facebook forums that took me by surprise. People discussed the same issues that we discussed way back then. Except, their questions were answered by equally naïve and uninformed individuals on these platforms. A few attempts on my part to intervene were brushed aside. It was then that I felt that more needs to be done.

The questions of the "new wave" of camelid owners indicate a disturbing level of being "lost" when it comes to basic knowledge of llamas and alpacas. What this says to me is that these people are not connected to organizations like RMLA and other professional resources. It appears that many people selling or giving away their animals are not providing or don't know to provide basic information to the new owners.

In this digital age where information and misinformation are just a keystroke away, RMLA's presence on the internet must grow for the sake of the many llamas and alpacas out there coming from dispersal sales, rescue situations, etc. and ending up, in part, with folks who have no idea what to do next. It is important that the new owners know where to safely turn for information about their animals' needs, health, nutrition, and behavior.

My Solution/Goal: Let's form a "think tank", if you will, of internet savvy individuals, as well as trainers, breeders, shearers, packers, veterinarians and other members to find a way to reach out and direct the new camelid owners to RMLA and other appropriate organizations. Within the framework of RMLA's newly formed Education and Outreach Committee, we can provide appropriate and accurate information and referrals. As Committee Chair, I am looking

for individuals from our membership who feel they can contribute to this goal. As an organization, we can respond to these new owners who seem to be struggling by offering a helping hand.

I am chairing this new Committee and welcome your ideas, input and talents! Ron Hinds, our webmaster, is standing by on the IT side of things and Kathy Stanko will help in an advisory capacity. So let's put our heads together and make this happen for the sake of the animals and their owners.

If you would like to help, please contact me at education-outreach@rmla.com. I look forward to hearing from you!



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Need more information? Send a note to rmlaeditor@gmail.com and let us know what we can do for you.

Thanks --- The Journal Volunteers

Bobra Goldsmith Leader

Honoring RMLA Leaders



**Charlie
Hackbarth
2011**

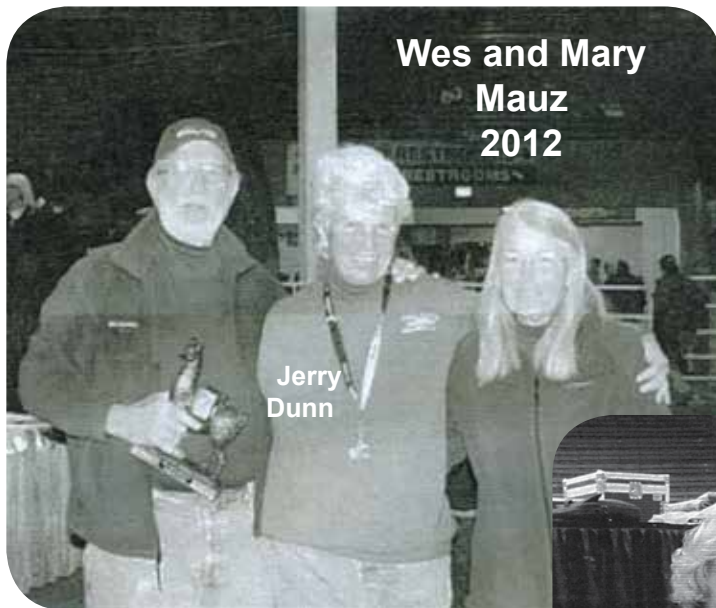
For the past 8 years, RMLA has awarded The Bobra Goldsmith Leadership Award to honor Bobra by recognizing an RMLA person, or persons, who have demonstrated a passion and a love for educating the community about llamas as she did. Bobra passed in December 2010.

Eight awards were to be given. The recipients of the award demonstrated a level of commitment and involvement in activities focused on educating llama and alpaca owners, writing articles, hosting workshops, speaking at conferences, and participating in organized llama/



alpaca events. Each recipient was presented with a bronze statue created and donated by RMLA member Henry Rivera.

With the eighth award being given, The Bobra Goldsmith Leadership Award is now complete. Enjoy the photos on this page!

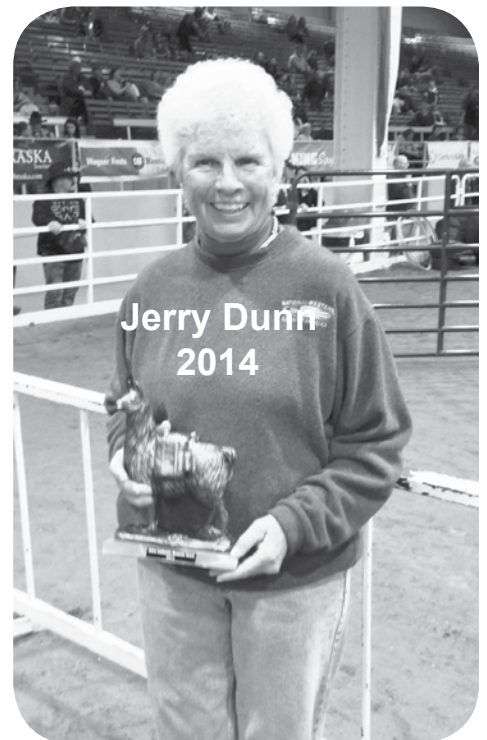


**Wes and Mary
Mauz
2012**

**Jerry
Dunn**



**Karen
Kinyon 2013**

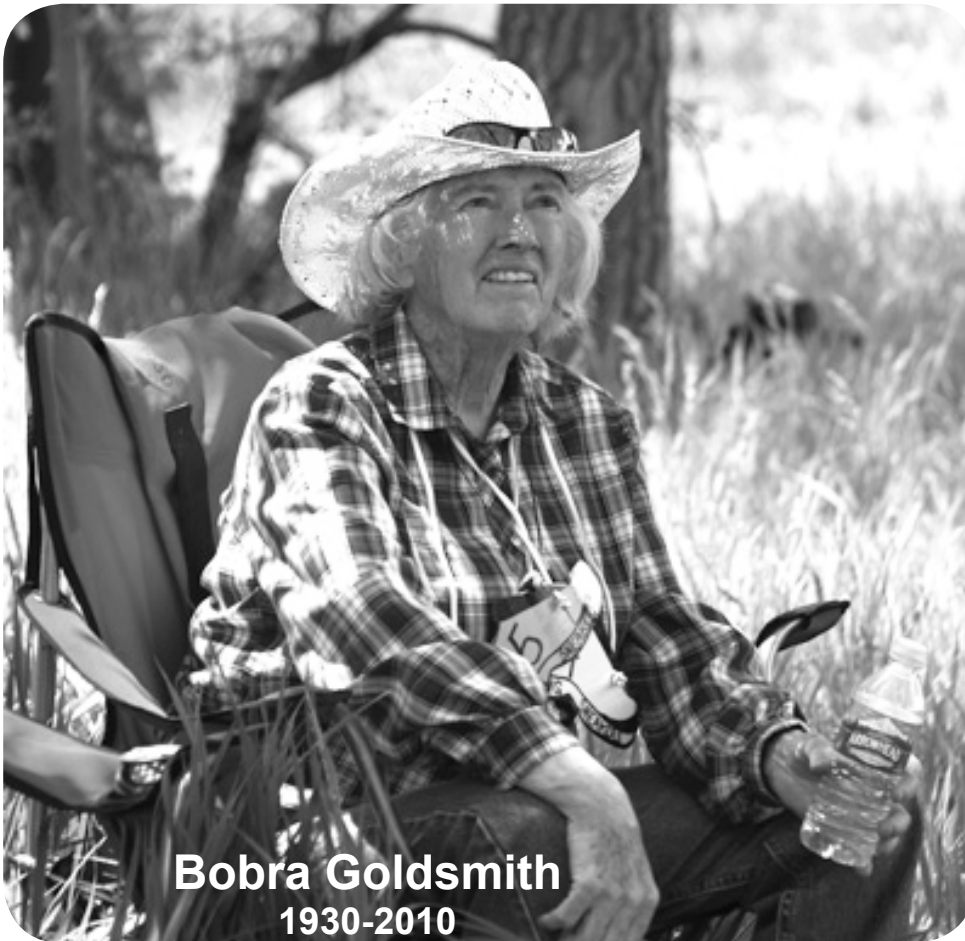


**Jerry Dunn
2014**

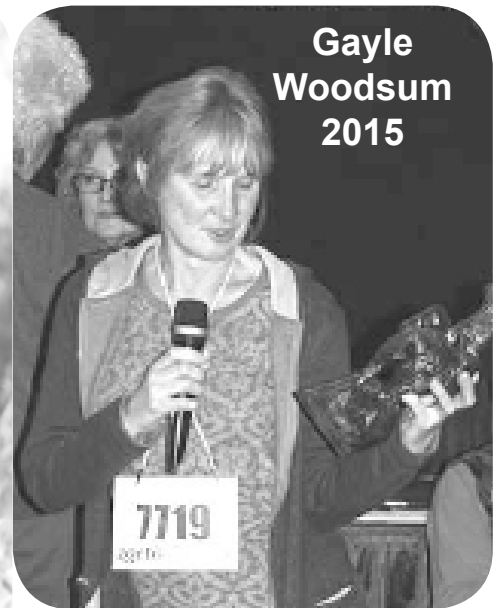
**Llama Statues
graciously provided
by sculptor Henry
Rivera
See his business card
ad on page 11**

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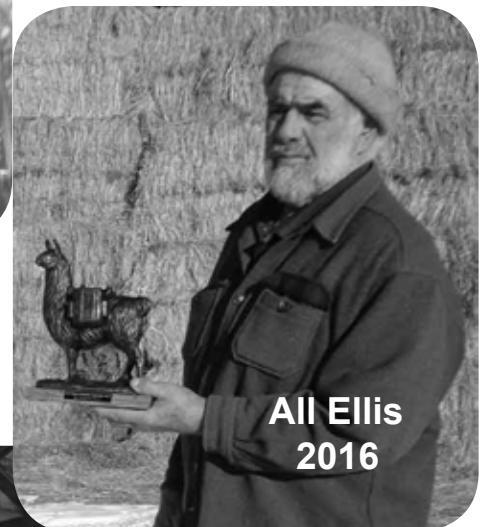
ship Award Recipients



Bobra Goldsmith
1930-2010



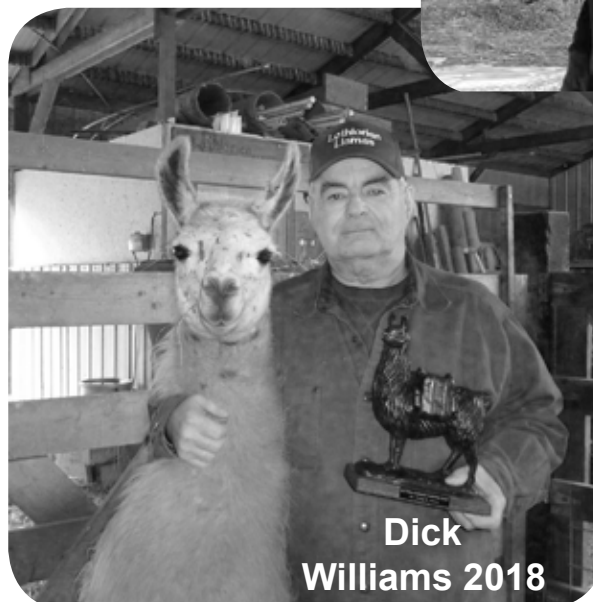
**Gayle
Woodsum**
2015



All Ellis
2016



**Linda
Hayes** 2017



**Dick
Williams** 2018

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STARTING AT A YOUNG AGE

By Kathy Stanko, Chair —Fiber Committee

Getting hooked on fiber can happen at any age. For me it was at 60; I have always been a late bloomer. For my great niece Adalyn, it was at 5. This morning, I received the photo of Adalyn with her first needle felted piece. The note said that Adalyn really enjoyed making it. And she knows where she wants to hang it in her room.

The mission of the RMLA Fiber Committee is to educate and support All members in ALL things fiber. Fiber is a broad topic and can cover everything from learning about the structure of fiber vs. wool



to spinning, weaving, and knitting to becoming a fiber judge in the showing.

To see what the committee is doing, please check out the Fiber Education tab on the RMLA website. And if you would like to participate in committee activities, please send an email to me at rmlafiber@gmail.com. Committee participants will determine what the committee does. It is a work in progress and right now the 30+ participants are just sharing and getting to know each other via group email. Please join us.



A GREAT ADVENTURE STORY!

By Marie Bernard, RMLA Member



Just in time for Christmas!!! A 36 page true adventure story for kids 9 years and younger.

Q-Tip and Prince Remington are in for an adventurous one-night, two-day trek into the wilderness, where they embark on their first pack trip with their Lama Mama. What could go wrong?

Well lots of things! The pack trip is full of surprises with twists and turns for a story that is based upon true events. This fun adventure will hold your little ones' attention. They will want to read it over and over.

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Contact Marie at hikenbike393@yahoo.com or follow her on www.facebook.com/LamaMama393

Llama Appreciation Day

By Marie Bernard
Berthoud, CO

The Greater Appalachian Llama & Alpaca Association (GALA) declared June 21st as National Llama Appreciation Day. RMLA spread the word and offered 5 bumper stickers to any member who held an event.



Well I jumped in with a resounding 'Yes, I'll do it.' I invited several of my friends over to get an up close and personal experience with my herd of 3 llamas and 2 alpacas.

My friends had a great time being with the animals. They loved getting nose kisses from Q-Tip. Most llamas and alpacas come running up to see who is visiting and then stop short of about 6 feet from you, kind of saying "oh, that's far enough"; but not Q-Tip. He will always come slowly walking up and be

very curious about your face and loving your attention.

My friends loved getting the bumper stickers. And I get frequent comments

on the sticker I put on my truck. I guess you can say we are spreading the word that llamas do light up your life.

Thank you for sponsoring the first annual Llama Appreciation Day.



Speechless Brothers by Andy Tillman

Book review by Linda Hayes
Prescott Valley, AZ

When I realized that the RMLA library had a copy of *Speechless Brothers* I decided it was time to read it. It was the very first book on llamas published in North America (1981). At the time, author

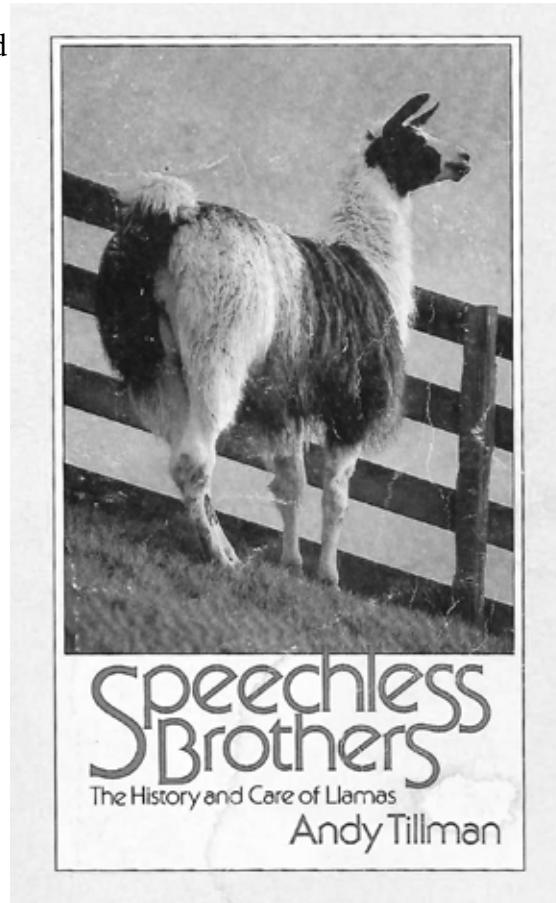
Andy Tillman was a young whippersnapper who first started raising and packing with llamas in 1975. He has since gone on to be one of the foremost experts on alpaca fleece, noted lama breeder and international authority on llamas and alpacas.

The book covers the history and care of llamas and I was impressed by how much hasn't changed. His advice on training is still solid and the information on vet care, feed, etc. is still useful today. What did make it a fun read was some of the terminology and ideas that have since gone by the wayside. For example, he called male llamas "bulls", which is not the best description of the gentle male llamas we are familiar with today.

Back when the book was written there were very few veterinarians who worked with llamas and there was only a handful of alpacas in the country. Tillman's book was designed to help the newbie raise llamas with confidence. His health advice came from 6 plus years of concentration on llamas, travel to Peru and mentorship by the likes of Dr. William F. Franklin of Iowa State and Dr. Julio Sumar of La Raya High Altitude Research Center in Peru.

I found it interesting to learn where the llama industry was back then. By reading the book I found that the Registry did not exist and that blood testing for DNA was in the future. While his comment that there were no known twin births may have been true in the eighties, since then numerous twins have been documented.


When the book was written, he did not know that alpacas descended from the vicuna and llamas from the guanaco so his chapter on Taxonomy is a bit dated. His description and terminology of wool types was interesting and worth the read.



He makes an interesting observation that I have not seen elsewhere: "If they were born in the fall they will shed in the fall. So don't be upset if your speechless brother begins to shed just as the weather is turning cold, probably means he was born an even number of years ago! As far as I can tell, the llama is the only animal that does this." By this, I believe Mr. Tillman means that they were born 12 months from when they shed for the first time and they will shed on the same month each year after that.

Tillman is the first to use the word "orgle." He apologizes for "not coming up with a less juvenile name...but 'orgle' is what it sounds like." He also said it "sounds like an outboard motor idling in the water".

His training points are practical and I did find his chapter on "Dominance Training" to be intriguing. He recommends teaching llamas to kush as soon as they are halter broken. Most owners have found that llamas use this as a way of saying "no". Current training techniques discourages this behavior.

I found the chapters on packing to be very useful for potential packers to study today. In fact, I would recommend the book to anyone who has llamas. Nearly everything in the book is either interesting to learn or useful to use. It is well written and full of pictures demonstrating his points. For being as old as it is, the book is still worth the read for both for the entertainment value and also for the wealth of useful information. You can buy it on [ebay](#) or [amazon](#) or may be borrowed from the RMLA library. 

Let's Weave Around a Cardboard Box!

By Betty Hollman — Turpin, OK

I was told several years ago “there is not much you can do with llama fiber”. I thought this was either derogatory or a challenge and an opportunity. I took it as a challenge since I had already made wet felted llama hats and vests.

Then I saw an article about weaving around a cardboard box. I ordered the article and when I got it, it was incomplete. I ordered it again; it was well written with pictures to get started but it did not tell or show how to complete the project. So I took the information and after several tries, I made a winner. It was 100% llama and a Grand Champion at the ALSA Grand National Show 2017! Yea! That made it even more fun.



These boxes can be used for decorative boxes, storage boxes, pencil/pen desktop sets, etc. YOUR imagination and the size of the box is the limit to what you do with it.

Timeout: I always want to give credit where credit is due and acknowledge the author, article and magazine BUT I can no longer find the article, nor can I find it online. This I do know: the author was a talented and creative person who did a great job sharing the fun of weaving around a cardboard box. It may have been a magazine connected with Interweave Press but I cannot say for sure. I can tell you this, it was not my original idea.

I used “bulky” llama, 4 ply yarns for my projects. You will also need:

- Cardboard box, size of your choice
- Box cutter or good scissors. DO NOT let young

children prepare the box

- Ruler
- Pen or pencil - make sure you can see the mark on the box
- Yarn for warp – use a yarn that has very LITTLE stretch; llama or alpaca works fine but you can also use cotton.
- Yarn for weft – single color or multiple colors, without much stretch.
- Large plastic or metal darning needle, that your fiber will thread through. I prefer plastic because they didn't pierce the yarn as easily.
- Adhesive - I used “ShoeGoo” and/or opaque tape. I liked “Gorilla Tape” (Note: for “glue” I used an adhesive like clear ShoeGoo. I will use the term glue but it always refers to an adhesive)

For you non-weaving folks, the term warp refers to the yarns on a loom that run vertically, or up and down the length of the fabric. The warp yarns act like a net, catching the weft threads and holding them firmly in place. So the weft yarn is woven around the vertical warp.

Let's Begin:

1. Choose your box, cut off the top four folding flaps as evenly as possible.
2. Measure and mark approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ " increments all around the top of the box. Include corners, you can adjust a little smaller to get equal marks all the way around the box.
3. Cut slits down about $\frac{1}{2}$ " on each corner and at every mark on the box. The slits will serve to hold the weft yarn that is

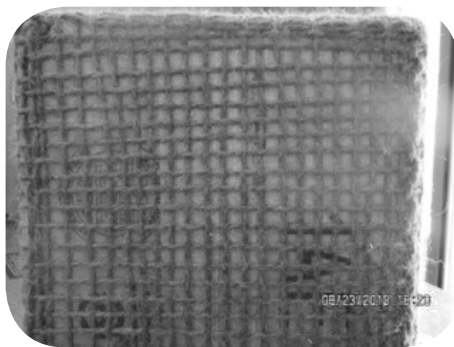


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wrapped around the 'loom', which in this case is a cardboard box.

4. Start in the first slit after a corner. Place the yarn in the slit leaving a six-inch tail inside the box. Bring the yarn down the side and under the box and up to the same slit position on the opposite side. Wrap the yarn into the slit from outside to inside, then around to the next slit and pull the yarn through that slit from inside to outside. Bring the yarn down and back under the box and up to your first side, wrap around the next slit. Continue in this manner until you have the warp in position on both sides.

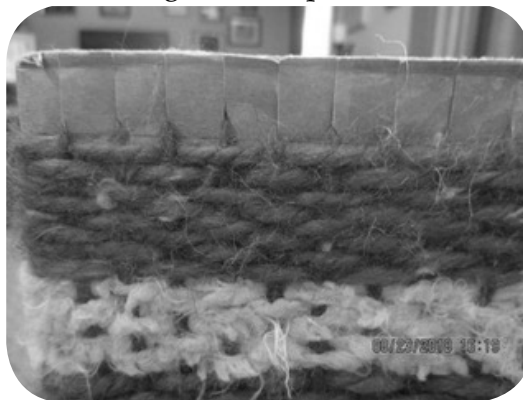
5. When both sides are complete, do the same thing on the ends of the boxes including the corners BUT when you go under the box actually weave the



bottom going over and under the warp yarn (there's a picture of a bottom) before you come back up on the other side and make the next inside loop. I used a large loop plastic darning needle to do the weaving on the bottom of the box. (Hint: I tried just laying the yarn on top of the yarn already crossing the bottom from the sides and ended up gluing fabric over it because it easily snagged when finished and that moved the weft threads.)

6. You are now ready to weave the weft. Start at a corner, leave an approximately 6" tail inside the box. Bring your weft through the corner and go under the warp. I use a darning needle to easily move the yarn over and under each of the warp threads. Yes, you are weaving from the top down.
7. As you weave keep pushing fiber up so you have a nice even line with the slits in the top of the cardboard.

8. Change colors in a corner; use the same corner each time. To change color, bring the first color to the inside of the box by pushing your darning needle up under the weave you have completed.



When this yarn is at the top of the box, leave about a 6" tail and cut. Place the new color in the same

slit, leaving a 6" tail on the inside and with yarn threaded on darning needle, go under the weave you have already completed until you get to the bottom of the weaving and then continue weaving.

By using the same corner all the time for color changes, won't there be a big lump of fiber going up and down? No, it is not noticeable when you finish but until then you will see it. Remember, you are pushing your weft up to make a nice tight weave. When you are very close to the bottom and the weft fiber keeps sliding under the edge of the box at the corners, push it back up tight; you don't want the box showing on the edge.

The weaving is complete, but you have fiber inside the box and the inside of the box does not look good. Options: duct tape, cloth, faux leather, leather, or other ideas you may have.

First, decide if you want to leave the tails inside the box or bring them to the outside. You can trim off your "tails" inside the box since the weaving is complete, nothing will come undone. Or don't trim the tails and bring them back to the outside of the box as a tassel.

Second, decide what you want to do on the inside of the box: material or opaque tape?

Using material or leather: It can be tricky to glue cloth and get a nice line on the outside and inside of the box, but that is what you strive for.

1. Make a "hem" around the edge of the material so it is nice and tidy when you glue it around the outside of the box at the weaving edge.

continued on next page

2. Lay the hemmed edge of the material against the edge of your weaving with glue already in place. Use clothes pins to hold until dry, carefully removing when dry; just a little wiggle and they will come undone. Start with a side of the box; glue and let dry; then, fit your material in the box and up the other side and over the top to make it set very nicely against the edge of the weaving with the hem.


3. Now with material sized, trimmed and hemmed again; glue on the inside 'side' of the box in the same manner. Glue in sections as it is so much easier to handle the material and get it laid out smoothly. Repeat this process to glue the bottom and ends of the box.

Using duct tape or opaque tape:

1. Begin by cutting a strip of tape two inches longer than the side of the box. Place the long edge of the tape against the weaving, not over, and bring to each end, covering the slits.
2. Before folding the tape down cut a slit in the corner of the duct tape just to the box edge, so it will lay flat when folded over the inside of the box. Fold the duct tape down on the inside of the box on the side and the inch on the ends. Repeat on the other side of the box.
3. Tear or cut tape the length of the end of the box. Place the long edge of the tape against the weaving and press it on the box, now fold over the top of the box and press it down. Repeat on the other on end.
4. I prefer to cover the entire inside of the box with the opaque tape. So I put tape strips on each side (vertical or horizontal does not matter) until covered. Then I cover the ends of the box. Then use strips of tape to cover the bottom. I thought it looked best to put a strip of tape vertically in each corner, so I measured strips of tape the width of the box and folded the non-sticky side to the inside and pushed the tape and rubbed it into the corner of the box, for all four corners. I rubbed over all the tape seams to make sure they stuck well.

Congratulations: Your weaving a decorative box is complete.

A few comments; I have put the duct tape on the outside edge of the box meeting up with the weaving and then covered the inside of the cardboard box completely. I liked this best. I have also left the outside top of the box showing the slits and start of the weaving. It is interesting but does not quite have that finished look. I have used faux leather material and glue and had a very difficult time getting a clean edge on the outside of the box. In the end it looked okay, I just wanted a more "polished" look. Have fun as you weave and finish your box. It is your individual work of art!

So who was it that told me 'you couldn't do anything with llama fiber'? Fiber is Fun! If you have questions, please e-mail me at hollmanbetty@gmail.com or call 580-528-1232. 

Wonderful Changes on the Website: New Information and New Ways to Use It

By Ron Hinds, Webmaster

RMLA's YouTube and Facebook Accounts

The link to RMLA's YouTube account has been added on the upper right corner of the home page. It is just above the Facebook link.

Please, as 'old timers' we are really having trouble using YouTube and Facebook to the best advantage for RMLA. We desperately need help on how to use these platforms to increase RMLA's presence on the web. Please contact Ron Hinds, Web Master at ron@rmla.com.

Membership Directory

The complete printed membership directory is now on the website. It contains Members listed by last name, by interests (according to the last membership form), by business name and by State and City. New members are automatically added when they are added to the roster.

If your listing needs to be updated, send the new information to membership@rmla.com.

continued on bottom of page 31

The Camelid Eye

By Dr. Charlene Arendas, DVM

Reprinted from February 2018 GALA Newsletter

Big beautiful eyes and lashes are such a striking feature on our llamas and alpacas, and it becomes painfully obvious when one is injured. The eye can be a delicate tissue to deal with, and dealing with a problem sooner rather than later can make a giant difference in the outcome. Ideally, call your vet ASAP for eye injuries.

Think of the eye as a gelatin-filled sac, where the outermost layer is the cornea. Suspended in the gelatinous center is the hard lens, surrounded by some delicate tissue known as the iris. The eyelids surround the eye and the inner layer of the eyelid – the conjunctiva – is a moist pink protective tissue. The long eyelashes help keep excessive dust and dirt out the eye in the first place. Most eye injuries involve the cornea – scratches/punctures.

Common Eye Conditions

Conjunctivitis: Simply put, this means “inflammation of the conjunctiva” (the pink part of the inside of your eyelid). The tissue tends to get very bright pink, glistens, and swells in size, sometimes obscuring your view of the eyeball itself! Anything can cause inflammation – dust particles, a chemical splashed into the eye, a foreign object, an infection with a bacteria/virus, allergies or even a growing tumor.

Although it’s not a specific diagnosis, conjunctivitis tends to be itchy & painful, so we usually administer pain medications to the animal such as Banamine (flunixin).

Once a more thorough exam of the animal has been done, we may have a better idea of the cause. Maybe all that is required is a good flushing of the eye to remove any irritants and some ointment to relieve itch. Perhaps if an infection is suspected, an antibiotic would be helpful. If the conjunctivitis is irregular or

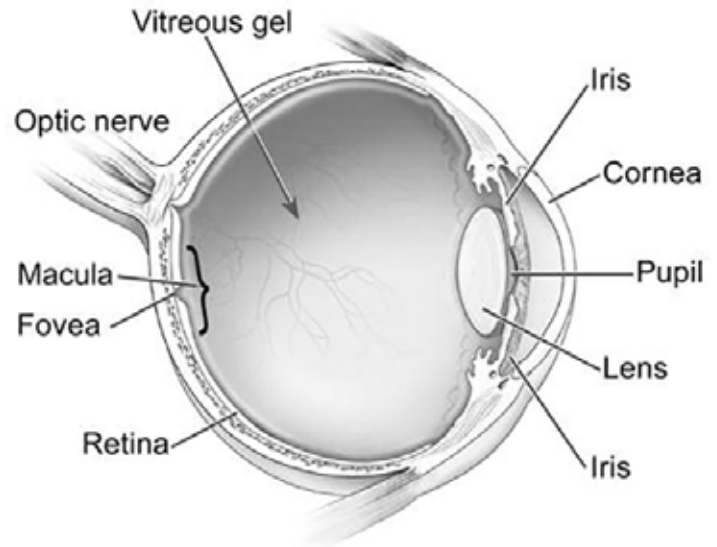


Illustration by <https://nei.nih.gov/health/eyediagram/nodular-looking>, maybe there is actually a tumor growing and it needs biopsied. The main point is that anything can cause conjunctivitis!

Corneal ulcer/injury: The cornea is a thick outer “skin” of the eyeball. It is tough, but it can be injured!

An animal that walks into a sharp branch, rubs its face on a pine tree, or gets an object stuck in the eye can be at risk for an injured cornea.

Most times, when the cornea is injured or ulcerated, you will see a white foggy/cloudy area on the surface of the eye centered around the injury, and the animal will usually squint some.

This is called corneal edema, and is inflammation within the cornea. Corneal injuries need treated quickly, before they progress through the layers of the cornea and break into the eyeball itself. Many times these will begin to heal quickly with an antibiotic ointment such as Terramycin applied 4-6 times a day for several days.

However, if the animal seems to be getting more painful and the eye is not improving

continued on page 29

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The RMLA Book: Caring for Llamas & Alpacas

by Clare Hoffman, DVM and Ingrid Asmus for RMLA 176 pages with over 60 illustrations. A Health and Management Guide. A good reference for the experience breeder and excellent gift for the new owner.

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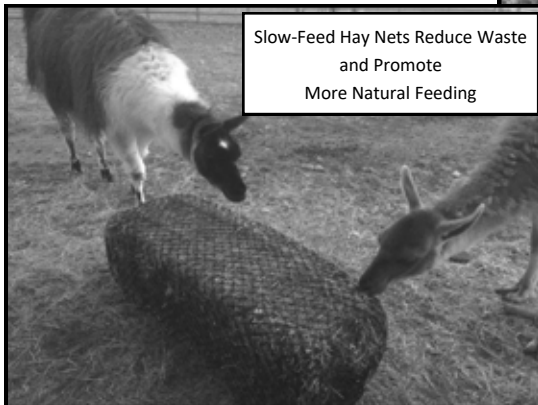
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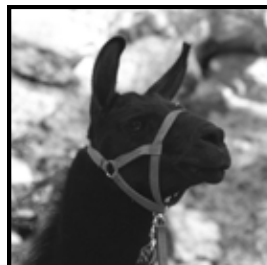
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The Success and Fun Continues!



It was another beautiful day for the 36th Annual Fairplay Llama Races, Lama Lunacy, and Fun Walk. It does appear that everyone had a great time.

RMLA is fortunate to have Jeff Sandberg and Kelvin Eldridge at the helm for this all important event. Their organization skills, their enthusiasm for the day and the smiles on their faces when participants crossed the finish line were contagious.

The Numbers

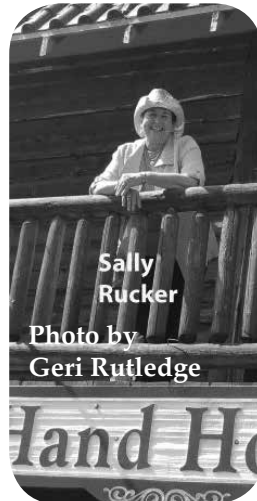
Just in case you were wondering, the proceeds from this Event are very important to your organization. After income from entry fees and T-shirt sales are deposited and all expenses are paid, the profit from the day is deposited in the RMLA Insurance Reserve Account. The liability insurance, available for all RMLA events, is paid from these reserves. Thanks to all who helped raise the 2018 net of \$3,085. We could not do this without amazing volunteers – both people and the llamas and alpacas.

This year 20 people participated in the Llama Pack Race and 62 people participated in the Public Walk/Run. In addition to the llamas that were 'scheduled' to be there, a number of participants arrived at the registration table with their llama or alpaca in tow!!!

"Thank you - we had so much fun and Chewbacca found his calling as a trail runner - unfortunately I am his



rate limiter. Here I am making him run circles around me so that I can keep up. He loved the water. I need to get him a pack and a runner." From Allyn Bandell with Chewbacca



Sally Rucker has been the long-time event announcer, but due to her surgery earlier in the year, we did not expect her at this year's event: Surprise!!!! With no elevator, she made it to the balcony of the Hand Hotel! "No elevator, but it was slow and steady as she goes. It was fun" From Sally

Llama Lunacy a Huge Success

From Mary Wickman

It was a very good year for Llama Lunacy. We had about 95 kids go through the course. Lots of parents said thank you and offered to donate money.

One gentleman stated that he had lived around the US and had never seen something like this for kids that was free – he was so impressed. A young man brought his fiancée over to take a llama through – he



had been raised in the area and had been coming to the races for 20 years and had done the Llama Lunacy and had enjoyed it so much he wanted to share it with his fiancée.

Thank you to Ann Bruhn, Betty Hollman and my sister, Diane Turner, and to Patti Morgan for bringing the llama stars of the Lunacy, Sammy and Cupcake.

continued on next page

She Came Back in 2018

Editor's Note: This article was written by Tracey Metcalfe Rowley who, with her daughter, ran in the 2017 Fairplay Llama Event. The article was published in the Spring 2018 issue of Tail Wind Magazine. Tracey graciously gave permission to RMLA to use the article. Tracey came back to Fairplay for the 2018 Event.

I ran in a race with a llama named Sunrise. I traversed a fast-moving river three times, through thick mud and prickly plants, blood streaming down my leg ... with a llama. My run could be considered wimpy by some, because I could have run up a mountain and back down for 29 miles with a burro. However, my experience of the three-mile race is still worthy. I don't care what you've done: mud and obstacle runs, trail races or triathlons. My story of running with a llama named Sunrise is still better than what you can offer.

[Edited for length]

The 35th Annual Llama Pack-Run Race was organized by llama ranchers, Jeff Sandberg and Kelvin Eldridge. Jeff and Kelvin had never participated in any type of running race other than getting stuck waiting for runners in a car.

But after 15 years, the previous race organizer, Gary Carlton, gave up the reins. The two llama ranchers became race organizers, with zero experience producing races. They recruited their hunting buddies, mostly fellow Veterans, none of which are runners, to make the 2017 run happen. The night before the

race, fellow llama ranchers pulled in to Kelvin's Bar D ranch. The Bar D boasts a healthy herd of llamas that are meticulously trained to be pack animals for hunters, fishermen and hikers and protective llamas for sheep herders.

Kelvin, a Marine who served one tour in Afghanistan, started the company Crooked Wood Outfitters. With the slogan, "Ditch the drama, rent a llama," the company rents out llamas, capable of carrying up to 80 pounds of equipment to hunters and backcountry enthusiasts.



On the morning of the race, trailers full of perky llamas rolled into Fairplay and lined the streets. Their owners are members of the Rocky Mountain Alpaca and Llama Association. Members of the Association, according to Jeff, are happy to participate in order, "to promote llamas because people don't know what they can do." The owners had already determined which were the runner llamas, and which llamas were suited for the kids' area and the walk. My daughter, Paige, and I checked into registration and were told to talk to the llama owners to find a suitable teammate, i.e., a llama.



Editor's Note: for the complete Tracey Metcalfe Rowley article go to www.RMLA.com/tw (as in Tail Winds).



Two Summit County Regulars Find a New Home

By Eli Pace
Summit Daily News

A poster-board sign went up alongside Highway 6 in Dillon, CO in late June, alerting people that a pair of longtime locals, ever curious and always friendly, had ... relocated to New Mexico. They go by Carlos and Sombra. Many people who take the highly traveled route between Dillon and Keystone might, at some point along the way, have noticed the pair, known simply as “the llamas.”



“The llamas were there when I moved here 20 years ago,” one woman wrote to the Summit Daily shortly after seeing the sign. She was curious about what had become of the landmark llamas.

“Oh no,” wrote another man who saw the sign and remembered seeing the llamas during his visits back in high school. “They’re always a welcome sight now that I’m a resident,” he added. “Farewell, llamas.”

It seems that for many people, Carlos and Sombra were a familiar fun sight along the heavily traveled highway. Their late owners, Jim and Pat Dover, had even put up a carved-wooden sign on the fence letting everyone know this was the llamas’ home.

[edited for length]

When Jim and Pat died the family was unprepared to care for the llamas

themselves. They turned to Southwest Llama Rescue, a nonprofit group based in New Mexico that takes



Carlos and Sombra at their new forever home in abused and neglected llamas or animals whose owners are in failing health, aging or facing a lifestyle change. The rescue arranges foster care for the animals while they await placement in permanent homes, and according to director Lynda Liptak, the rescue thoroughly vets anyone who wants to adopt any llamas.

Speaking about Carlos and Sombra, Liptak said last week that they came to the rescue as “very, very sweet” llamas and really didn’t need much training.

On Sunday, she offered this update: Carlos and Sombra have just recently been transitioned into a “new forever home” in Los Lunas, New Mexico,

where they will have a new companion, a female llama that’s about the same age, roughly 15-16 years old.



This article is reprinted, with permission, from the Summit Daily News, Summit County, CO. Photos courtesy of the Dover family and Southwest Llama Rescue. Thank you.



quickly, there is danger of the ulcer penetrating deeper, ultimately causing rupture of the eye. At times, some of these animals with bad ulcers/ injuries need 3-4 different eye medications given every few hours.

It can get labor-intensive pretty quickly, so never delay in seeking a vet's help to try to avoid losing vision with permanent scarring of the cornea or worse - lose an eye!

Uveitis: Frequently seen in crias, uveitis is inflammation within the inner eyeball.

It can appear as a haze or fogginess within the eyeball itself, NOT on the surface of the eye. Sometimes it can have a grayish or bluish color to it, and sometimes vision is affected. Uveitis is usually caused by a systemic disease such as sepsis seen in crias, viral infections, and there may be some other systemic diseases that can cause it as well. It usually indicates that there is illness going on elsewhere in the animal. Many times, uveitis is treated with systemic medications such as injectable antibiotics, but may also be treated with topical steroids and medications to alter the pressure within the eye.

Cataract: Usually seen in older animals, but occasionally can be an inherited trait in a young cria, a cataract is a disease of the lens – a thick disc suspended in the center of the eye.

The lens is usually clear, but with a cataract it becomes opaque/white and affects vision. It generally is not a painful condition but keep in mind that animal has compromised vision. In dim lighting, it may be difficult for them to navigate through the barn and they may be reluctant to walk into dark areas.

Occasionally, there can be complications from cataracts, but typically you will begin to notice signs of eye pain if that ever occurs. Some universities may offer cataract surgery for camelids – where the lens is replaced with a new synthetic lens.

Glaucoma: This is an increase of pressure within the eye and can become quite painful as time goes on. I have not personally had any cases of glaucoma in camelids, but it can occur.

In severe cases, the eyeball itself can even appear bulging or enlarged, and the whites of eyes can become reddened. A veterinarian can take pressure readings of the eyeball if this condition is suspected and prescribe glaucoma drops that help lower the pressure.

Foreign Body: Our camelids are curious critters and they love to investigate things in their environment. They also like to rub their head in hay and sometimes on trees/bushes. They love to stand facing the cool breeze of a fan. Sometimes, while doing these activities, a piece of something can get stuck to the eyeball and work its way under the eyelid. You know what it feels like – it's happened to all of us – a piece of hay, dirt, even a bug. It drives you insane and your eyes tear up.

Flushing out the eye copiously with sterile saline can help get a foreign object out of the eye. Sometimes, you even need to pull the eyelids back somewhat to see it. If it's in there really deep, your vet may need to sedate the animal to thoroughly examine the crevices of the eyelids and remove any foreign material.

In most instances though, a good flush with saline will do the job. However, if the object has been in there awhile and rubbed against the cornea a lot, antibiotic ointments may be required to treat any corneal ulcer/abrasion or conjunctivitis.

Rupture of the eye/globe: Although we hope it never happens to us, chances are we all know someone with a camelid who was playing or running through the pasture and a stick punctured right through the eyeball. This is a painful emergency and needs dealt with immediately.

Chances are, the eye probably cannot be saved. However, if infection is kept to a minimum, most livestock do well after enucleation (removal of the eye). In some cases, a prosthetic eye can be placed, or the eyelids can be sutured together.

Retrobulbar masses/abscesses: "Retrobulbar" means "behind the eye". So imagine, if an abscess or tumor started to grow behind your eyeball, it would begin to push the eyeball forward and out

Dr. Stephen Purdy Receives GALA grant for 2017 Nunoa Project in Peru

By Mike Sheridan, GALA Andean Committee Chair

In April, 2017 the Andean committee received a request from Dr. Stephen Purdy for partial support of field activities for summer 2017 activities of his Nunoa Project in Peru. The overall goal of the Nunoa Project is to assist farm families in the high Andes of Peru to increase their family income by using their llamas for packing, the reason that llamas were domesticated and used for millennia in the Andes. The specific purpose of the GALA request was to partially support 9 people during 4 days of their field work in early July in an area of the high Andes near Urubamba, Peru. The research team included Dr. Purdy, a Peruvian vet, USA vet students from Kansas State University, Purdue University, and University of Georgia, a vet student from Peru, and three pre-veterinary students from University of Massachusetts.

The request was evaluated by the GALA Andean Committee and their report was presented to the GALA board during their July meeting. Following our review, the board granted the July 2017 Nunoa project \$1,500 to partially support meals for the team in the field, transportation to and from the llama communities, and lodging while in the field. The main part of the project costs were borne by the volunteers and the Nunoa Project.

Synopsis of Dr. Purdy's report of his 2017 field season with Andean llamas

The July 2017 Nunoa Project llama work included visits to work with 10 llama farmers in Huacahuasi, a remote near Urubamba along the Inca Trail to Macchu Picchu. Dr. Purdy's team worked together with Llama Pack Project (www.llamapackproject.com) from Urubamba to

make their initial veterinary contacts with llama farmers along the Inca Trail.

Dr. Purdy's team performed tasks that included inspection of animal stature and body condition with the goal of evaluating their suitability for packing and their overall nutritional status. In addition the team completed ultrasound pregnancy exams on the females. Herd evaluations were used to assess fertility of both breeding males and females and the efficacy

Dr. Purdy's team worked together with Llama Pack Project (www.LlamaPackProject.com) from Urubamba to make their initial veterinary contacts with llama farmers along the Inca Trail.

of the breeding management plans of individual farmers. In some cases they found that the body condition of the herds were low due to insufficient access to pasture and water. This study

informed Dr. Purdy's recommendations to the farmers based on the team's findings.

Overall, the fertility of the llama herds that they saw in 2017 was good (70 to 80% pregnancy rate). To improve the condition of the herds and provide additional income for the herding families Dr. Purdy encouraged them to have their herds join the packing project. As a result 5 new families added packing to their llama programs during this year's visit of the Nunoa team. Although the farmers encountered by Purdy's team were very interested in getting their llamas into productive work, many of the llamas were not deemed suitable for packing due to poor conditioning or breeding. Dr. Purdy expects to return to this area and to other nearby communities in future visits to this region to continue the program and check on the progress of some of the herds visited this year. GALA has Dr. Purdy's full report on file.



The Camelid Eye. continued from page 29

of the socket as it grew in size. The eye may look like it is bulging or protruding or even just appear bigger than the other eye. Abscesses would be more common in a younger animal, or one with some sort of facial/jaw/sinus infection or injury. We would be suspicious of a tumor more so in an older animal. Your veterinarian will use clues from the history and physical exam as well as possibly even an ultrasound probe on the eye or skull x-ray to help determine what is going on. In the case of an abscess, hopefully proper antibiotic therapy and possible draining the abscess will be curative. In the case of a tumor, if it is only contained within the eye socket and eyeball, enucleation (removal of the eye) may be curative.

Summary: The takeaway point of this article is: camelid eyes are prone to injury & infection. Keep some sterile saline on hand at home to at least begin to flush out an eye. Also, another good medication to keep on hand is the over the counter antibiotic eye ointment Terramycin. If you have eye medications from yourself or another animal that may contain a steroid such

as DEXAMETHASONE, HYDROCORTISONE, OR PREDNISOLONE (or if you aren't sure what is in it) – DON'T USE THEM UNLESS YOUR VET TELLS YOU TO! Steroid eye medications can cause corneal injuries to worsen, and can also cause PREGNANT FEMALES TO ABORT. However, there ARE times where a steroid may be needed, just let the vet make that call. A simple condition in an eye can progress very quickly, so I recommend that you get your vet out ASAP for any eye problems!

FUN FACT: What are the "frills" inside a camelid's eye? They are called IRIDIC GRANULES (aka CORPORA NIGRA), and they are part of the iris (colored part inside the eye). In bright sun, these granules can come together to completely cover the center of the pupil to protect it from the bright light. Cattle, horses, and sheep also have them!

Dr. Charlene Arendas is a veterinarian with Town & Country Veterinary Hospital in Howland, Ohio. This article originally appeared in the Ohio River Valley Llama Association's Nov. 2017 Topline newsletter.



Wonderful Changes on the Website: New Information and New Ways to Use It... continued from page 23

Have you ever wanted to send a member's contact information to a third party but you don't want to look it up and type it in? Well, now you can. Go to Members on the home page and select 'By Last Name.' Then go up to your URL and change ... members.php to ... membersac.php (i.e., add the letters 'ac' at the end of 'members.')

and click. Find the member you want and copy the URL at the top of their listing. Paste this into the content section of the e-mail or whatever you are writing. When the recipient receives this, they just have to click on the link you sent to be taken directly to the listing on the RMLA website. Bookmark it!

Fiber Education

Check out the Fiber Education tab on the home page. New subtopics and pages have been added by Kathy Stanko, Fiber Committee Chair. Check back often as new information and videos will continue to be added. FYI: the videos are also available on RMLA's YouTube page.

Education & Outreach

The new Education and Outreach tab on the website reflects the new name of the Education Committee now chaired by Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay. Check here often as more is on the way from Susi.



Postscript from the Journal Volunteers

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success." – Henry Ford

Ron, Marilyn, Kathy

Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association
5704 Canyon Trail
Elizabeth, CO 80107-7814



EVENTS CALENDAR BY MARY WICKMAN, EVENTS CHAIR

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

- **October 13 & 14 Alpacas on the Rocks,, Jefferson County Fairgrounds, Golden, CO.** Llamas, alpacas, seminars, demonstrations and vendors. For complete information, go to www.alpacasontherocks.org. To participate, contact Jane Levene at jlevene@comcast.net
- **October 20, 2018 RMLA Annual Meeting, at the Douglas County Fairgrounds Extension Office in Castle Rock, CO.** A social hour will begin at 11:00 A.M. followed by a light lunch, provided by RMLA, at noon. The meeting will begin about 1:00 with a goal to end by 2:00. After 2:00, there will be time for more socializing, a little dessert and chat before we part. Let's get together and have some fun!

Save the Dates!

2019 National Western Stock Show, Denver, CO. January 10 – 13, 2019. Halter, Showmanship, Performance, Shorn Fleece, Walking Fiber and Meet the Llamas. Contact Judy Glaser for more information: judy.glaser@yahoo.com.

Do you have an event you are planning for 2018 or 2019 but don't have all the 'paper work' completed? Send us the dates, name of the event, and location. We will add it to the list.