

# The Journal of RMLA



**RMLA**   
 Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association

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# 2018 RMLA YOUTH!!

Marshal Rutledge - Chair, RMLA Youth Committee

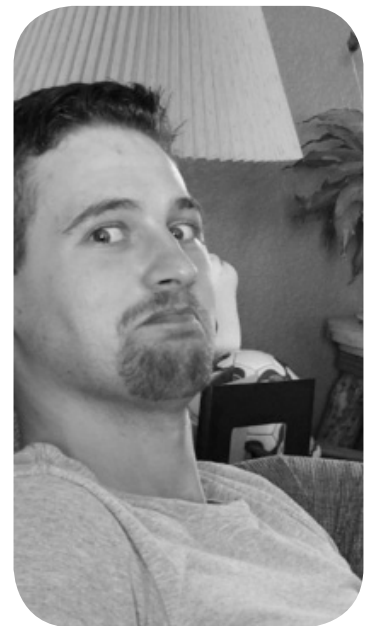
The 2018 Youth Awards Program (YAP) is in full swing.

The 2017 belt buckles have all been given to the winners. This inspired a few new Youth to join the fun. Watching these kids get involved and the new ideas coming in are sweet. But we will take more: If any youth or adult has ideas for this program, we take suggestions!



Christian and Malachi Abel ventured up to Nebraska for a weekend with their "old friend" and kids they met at nationals. Some events are hitting the same weekend, bumper. Morgan Barba is all over the place doing events.

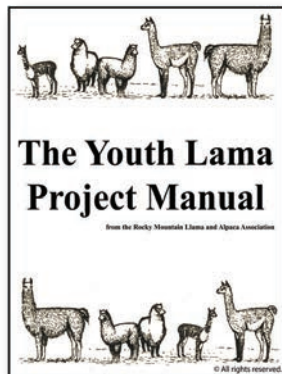
Can't wait to see what everyone does once school is out. Keep it up!



*The Old Friend!*

## RMLA Youth Manual

32 pages of jammed packed information just for the Lamas and Lama Youths



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Morgan Barba's May 21st Youth Award Program submission photo featuring Mason at the Prairie View High School and a visit with the special education students.

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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



Producing each issue of the RMLA Journal is great fun for Ron and me. It is a time to laugh, get creative and learn from all of you.

On a whim I did a Google search of the definition of 'fun'. Here's the one I like best from Spongebob:

"F is for friends who do stuff together! U is for you and me! N is for anywhere and anytime at all down here in the deep blue sea!"

This issue contains articles and information on ways to have fun with your llamas and alpacas this summer and perhaps beyond: hiking, packing, fairs and, of course, the Fairplay Llama Event. Ask the Vet explains pain in camelids plus 'acid reflux'-like symptoms. John Fant talks about mentoring while having fun on a hike or a pack trip. And, Bob Riley digs out information on RMLA volunteers from years ago.

Finally haltering, the importance of 'getting it done' by Linda Hayes and catching strategies by Marty McGee Bennett, and on the inside back cover, take a short quiz on animal tracks.

Enjoy the issue. Have fun with this issue – then go out and have fun with your friends, new and old, 2-legged and 4-legged!



*Ron and Kathy*

Cover Photo: Gambit and a fellow treker looking across the valley.  
Photo by Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay

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

- **Classified Ads**—Member \$10 for up to 50 words  
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- We suggest ads and article graphics be submitted in color at 300dpi. Both will be converted to grayscale for printing.
- For ad design or graphics that require scanning: Use address: RMLA/Ron Hinds -5704 Canyon Trail, Elizabeth, CO 80107-7814 or email to AD-DESIGN@RMLA.COM. Phone: 303-646-1320.
- **INSTRUCTIONS FOR PAYMENT:** Send your check, payable to RMLA, along with a copy of the ad to:
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- Payment and ad copy must be received prior to submission deadline. See the table above for dates.

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Proof Reader - Marilyn Arnold



# Letter from Your RMLA Board

Welcome to summer.

The RMLA membership renewal period has been completed for the 2018-2019 membership year. We welcome all renewing and new members; you are the life-blood of the RMLA.

Thank You for joining RMLA again this year. Your new Membership Directory has been mailed. If you have not received it, please contact Board Member, Ron Hinds. A new section has been added in the back of the Directory. This information will help you learn more about other members and find folks who share your same interests.

The RMLA IRS tax filing for 2017 was prepared by the CPA we have used for a number of years. The filing was approved by the Board and filed on time. If you have any questions about the tax filing, please contact Lougene, President, or Ron, Treasurer.

This is the beginning of another year of having fun at events, reading amazing stories and educational material in the quarterly Journal and exploring what is new at RMLA.com.

This is also time to put spring time touches to and around the farm. While shearing your animals for the warm season, remember to collect all the fiber. If you do not work with fiber, in the Directory you will find a list of folks who enjoy this. Contact those folks and pass your shorn fiber on or, better yet, try something new to do with fiber.

Please join us by volunteering for a committee, sponsoring an event, writing short stories for the Journal or having fun with our RMLA Youth.

Plan to attend the Annual Meeting this fall. Watch for the eblast later this summer with all the details.

If you have an interest in serving on the Board or helping to chair a committee, please contact any Board member. Two positions on the Board are up for re-election this year. RMLA has need for more volunteers to help us continue to succeed and move forward.

Have a beautiful summer, enjoy your family and friends and get out with your wonderful llamas and alpacas.

*Lougene, Beau, Ron, Geri and Jeanne*



*Welcome!*

**NEW RMLA Members**

**RMLA IS ALWAYS GROWING**

*and  
Thanks*

**New Life Member - Allyn Bandell - Castle Rock CO**

**Mike & Martha Swanson - Council Bluffs IA**

**Gerry & Terri Bruening - Calhan CO**

**Ann White - Hereford CO**

**Karissa & Jeremy Payne - Elizabeth CO**

**Olivia Hodges - McCook NE (Youth)**

**Shawn Mellinger - Bonners Ferry ID**

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

NOTE: Before youth members under the age of 18 are listed 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*

# Comments from Our Readers

*Yes, we love to hear from every one of you. We want to hear the good, the bad, and the ugly, but be nice. Kathy & Ron, Co-editors*

From Dick & Jeanne Williams, long-time RMLA members and volunteers.  
*".....we both feel that you and Kathy are doing a fantastic job with the Journal. As a long time publisher of The Backcountry Llama, I know how much work can be involved in getting each issue ready and out on time with the best content possible - so thank you again for the great work!..."*

From Robert J. Callan, DVM CSU Vet Teaching Hospital, on the spring issue of Ask the Vet.  
*"Received copies today. Yes, I am a geek. I think this Ask the Vets is my favorite. Almost over my head! Thank you again for letting CSU participate and be a part of the Journal of RMLA."*

From Ann White, new RMLA member  
*"You are awesome Ron. Thank you for making me feel so welcomed. Appreciate all you are doing for everyone and RMLA. Have a great rest of your week and weekend."*

From Baxter, SWLR volunteer, regarding the Winter issue.  
*"Another wonderful edition of the RMLA Journal. There are articles by folks we know and one article about the rescue llama, Hartsel. SWLR has a well designed ad on page 15. Thanks to everyone involved."*

From Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay, RMLA member and volunteer.  
*"Thanks for the new Journal. Love it! I especially read the Argentine article with great interest as I have a few of these special llamas myself, some of them (including Prince Charming!) from the Taylors. Thanks for that, it reminded me why I love those Argentines."*

From Gretchen Kauffman Milwood, former Youth member of the Llofty Llamas 4H in Castle Rock, CO, and now living in South Carolina  
*"Thanks so much for sending me the 2018 RMLA calendar!!! What a treat to find in my mail box - it made my day. The photos were wonderful. It made me even more excited to get our place set up for llamas."*

From Linda Hayes, long-time RMLA member and volunteer.  
*"In case I haven't told you lately, the journals look great"*



# Fairplay 2018... You Are Going to Want to Be There!

By Jeff Sandberg & Kelvin Eldridge Co-Chairs, Fairplay Llama Event



Saturday, July 28th will be the 36th annual Fairplay Pack Llama Race but only the second year for Kelvin, myself and the Crooked Wood gang. Although we lack the years of experience our successors had, we are getting settled right in.

This year's Pack Race will see some changes from the more recent years and ease the race back into its

both human and llama. In addition to individual winners, we will also acknowledge the ranches whose llamas perform the best overall.

We have enlisted a new tee shirt designer this year and expect to see more shirt sales. And as always, we will have a public walk/run (see insert), the llama lunacy course for children under 12 years, and the Lama Rama race to benefit organ donating. We are arranging for better prizes for the winners as well.

This race has a great history in the town of Fairplay and with everybody's help it will continue well into the future. The events are held in conjunction with Fairplay's Burro Days. Please see the insert for more information.

As always, the biggest problem this race has faced is the uncertainty of ranches showing up with pack llamas and walk llamas. Last year was a record turn out and we expect even more participants this year. Only with the help of RMLA members and their llamas, can we continue to see this event grow.



roots (see article in Spring Journal). We would really like to highlight and showcase the amazing abilities of the llama. Therefore, we will no longer have a "team" division in the pack race because we feel this does not accomplish that goal. Individual participants with one llama will navigate the course showing the ability of

We are doing our part organizing the event and making sure it is safe and enjoyable for each contestant, llama and ranch. What we need to know from you prior to race day: are you bringing llamas? Please go to [www.rmla.com](http://www.rmla.com), click the Fairplay Volunteer link and let us know. Thank you!

**Questions,  
contact Jeff Sandberg.  
Likearock87@msn.com**

**303-829-8144 or Kelvin Eldridge  
Kelvin.j.eldridge@gmail.com  
720-556-6197**

**To volunteer, go to [www.RMLA.com](http://www.RMLA.com)  
and click the link on the Home Page  
for volunteering.**

**To register for the race, go to [RMLA.com](http://RMLA.com),  
click the link on the Home Page  
for race registration.**

## Educate & Promote Your Llamas

Llamas and alpacas are always needed for the Public Walk/Run. This year YOU can walk with the participants and your animal at no charge! A huge opportunity to have fun and promote llamas while ensuring the well-being of your animal. Sign up on the Fairplay Volunteer page.

*Also see page 27*



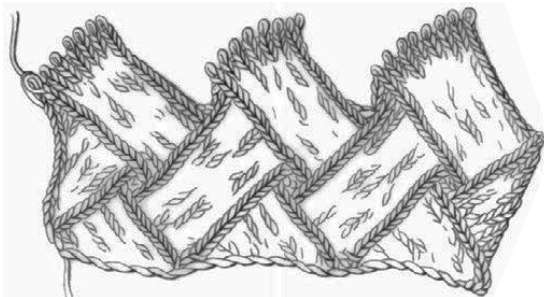
# Entrelac Knitting

By Kathy Stanko  
Chair, RMLA Fiber Committee

This past winter a friend showed me a hat she had made using the Entrelac knitting technique. She said I should try it and gave me a pattern...

Entrelac is a knitting technique used to create a fabric that appears to be woven; sort of a basket weave-look with tiers of tilting blocks appearing to run over and under each other. But the fabric is actually worked all in one piece as a series of interconnecting rectangles and triangles. Stitches are picked up and knit from the edges of previously knit sections.

According to the Random House Unabridged Dictionary, the origin of the word 'entrelac' is French: akin to the word entrelacer meaning to interlace. Beyond that, I have been unable to dig up any information on the origin of this technique. I have done internet searches, written to yarn history people, contacted folks I know and received the same answer every time: I really don't know anything about that! I'd love to find out too. If any one reading this article can



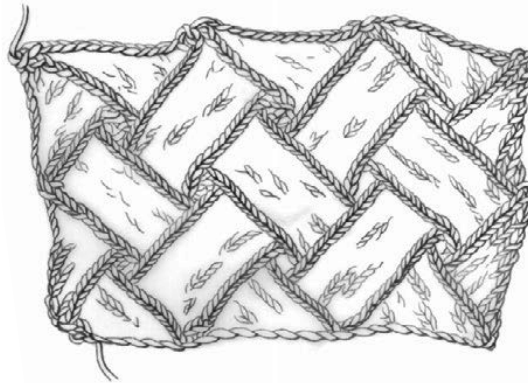
answer my question, please do so.

The technique can provide an

interesting framework for other texture or color-work techniques. And this use of texture and colors is what grabbed me.

Now to the technique, which is fascinating and a bit challenging (made even more so by the poorly written pattern). But I love to learn new things and I do like a challenge. So I just dove in trusting that I could figure this out.

But first I needed to kind of 'rearrange my thinking' as Entrelac is an entirely different knitting puzzle. In the end I used two poorly written patterns, my friend's hat for a real hands-on visual and finally, internet videos.



I selected my llama yarn, a nice grey from Boreas. And I paired it with a unique blue linen yarn I found in a yarn store in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii a year ago. For one direction,

I would use the llama and the linen would be used in the other direction. I knit about half-way up: this is not working! Eight stitches per block were too many and the blue linen was too thick. So I ripped it all out and began anew, this time using 6 stitches per block and Boreas' yarn going one direction and a double strand using Boreas with a lace weight green (dyed) from Phoebe Snow. Much better! In the photo, the Boreas with the green shows up as the lighter colors.

But now I understand the concept of the technique and it is very fun. The next hat will go more smoothly. And, I am still looking for a well-written hat pattern for the Entrelac technique.

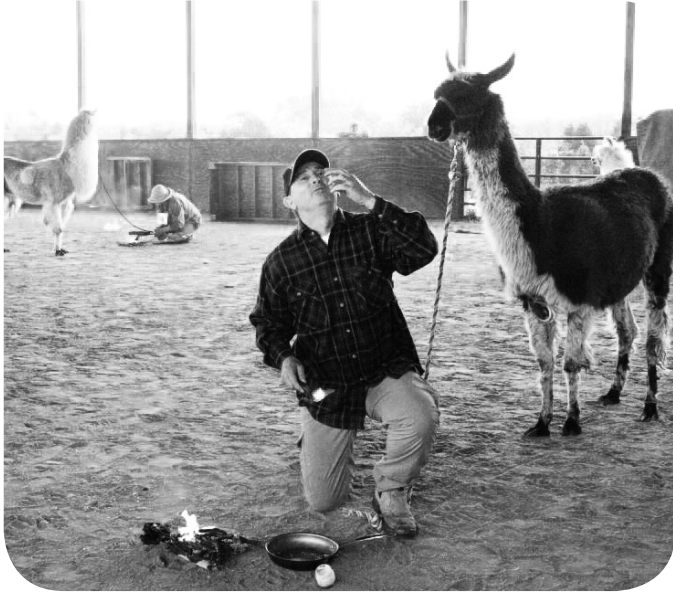
Please, use your llama and alpaca fiber. If fiber is just not your thing, look in the "Interests" section of the RMLA Membership guide and contact a fiber person close to you.





# Llama Pancake Race, huh??

From May, '18 GALA Newsletter



A Pancake Race was part of the show at Sherwoodstock Llama Show, held recently in Charlottesville, VA. In a pancake race, participants build a fire and make pancakes as fast as possible while their llama stands behind them.

Photo by Eva Lightfoot



## Truly Amazing

It's what the volunteers & contributors of Southwest Llama Rescue can accomplish. \*Help Is Always Needed: your time and money go a long way.  
\*Contact: [www.SouthwestLlamaRescue.org](http://www.SouthwestLlamaRescue.org) or [SouthwestLlamaRescue@yahoo.com](mailto:SouthwestLlamaRescue@yahoo.com) or 184 Hoofbeat Trl, Kerrville, TX 78028  
\*Designate SWLR as your charity while shopping online at such stores as

[smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)

Go Ahead - it works!

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### NOTE on Journal 4 x Advertisements

1/4, 1/2 and full page advertisements can be modified for each issue when 4 consecutive ads are purchased (like the SWLR ad above). If you would like your ad changed, send a note to [rmlaeditor@gmail.com](mailto:rmlaeditor@gmail.com) what you would like.

Thanks --- Journal Staff

## RMLA Position Listings

Two positions on the Board are up for re-election this year. RMLA has need for more volunteers to help us continue to succeed and move forward.

**Journal Advertising Manager** You can design this position however you want. Bottom line: get ads for the Journal. There are no quotas, no rules. Spend as much time as you want when you want to. Contact Kathy & Ron at [rmlaeditor@gmail.com](mailto:rmlaeditor@gmail.com) for more information.

**Journal Advertising Coordinator** Using an Excel spreadsheet, keep track of new ads, renewing ads, and forwarding payment to the RMLA treasurer.

This position requires under 10 hours per each issue of the quarterly Journal. Contact Kathy & Ron at [rmlaeditor@gmail.com](mailto:rmlaeditor@gmail.com).

**Wall Calendar Committee member** Work with the Committee to gather ads and photographs. Help in distribution of the annual calendar.

**Education Chair** needed - To educate everyone.

**Fiber Booth Coordinator** - Contact Kathy at [rmlafiber@gmail.com](mailto:rmlafiber@gmail.com)

# Mentoring and Packing... *They Go Together Naturally!*

By John and Phyllis Fant  
Howling Moon Farm  
Huntsville, Arkansas

It has been a few years since I sat down and wrote my first article on "The Importance of Mentoring". I decided I need to write a new and fresh article for this issue, especially with the Leadville 100 just around the corner in August. Mentoring is very important and hopefully this article will allow you to see just how easy it is.



Saddling Chee Chee up for a pack trial in Kansas.

My wife and I came to a decision back in early 2014 to change our herd into packers and performance show as well as halter. This would be for our fun only in the real world and what we call "the make-believe world" of the show ring. This decision was prompted when we bought several real nice classic llamas at an auction. So, needing to know where to start, I went full throttle reading and doing research on llama packing. Since no one in Arkansas packed llamas at that time, except in performance shows, I researched the net. That brought me to Burns Llama Trailblazers and what they had to offer in teaching how to pack.

So in late June of 2014, my wife and I went to Oregon. Our goal was to learn about packing and handling. The two of us learned that and more! In the process of being mentored in packing, we were able to teach our mentors as well. My wife, Phyllis, took an evening to train them on how to shear a llama. So, the mentors received mentoring as well. Way Cool!

With this new-found knowledge, we decided this was going to be fun! From 2014 to 2016, we have given several llama packing demonstrations and have been in the show ring performance classes. "Show ring is so different than real life!" I also spent a lot of time in the woods and mountains here in Arkansas, just packing.

At the same time, I was still being mentored by Pack Llama Trial Association (PLTA) members. We had the opportunity to do several pack trials in Kansas and Georgia. While I was being mentored, I became a trail certifier and a Director at Large for PLTA. which started me down the path of mentoring.

Now for some shameless advertising for PLTA. The PLTA is a wonderful organization that certifies llamas in four different levels of packing: Basic, Advanced, Master and Elite. In the future with ILR's help, those levels will be on the llama's registration papers, if the llama carries a certification. I'm not saying that only registered llamas can pack, I know better than that. Also, the



Summit Medical Center Cancer race with Shadow McFly. Came in first place!!!

PLTA Board is trying to finalize outfitter llama levels as well. So, please take time and look at the PLTA webpage and Facebook page. The PLTA would love to have you as a member.

*continued on next page*



Now that the advertising is out of the way, in 2016 I found myself with a once in a lifetime chance to be on the Hope Pass Aid Station 'hopeless' crew. Being a low lander, 672 feet



Explaining why to use a rump strap.

above sea level, this was going to be new for me. So, I went into learning mode again. Patti Morgan helped me out with this. She took the time and explained what I should expect. With the knowledge she gave me, it prepared me for the trip.

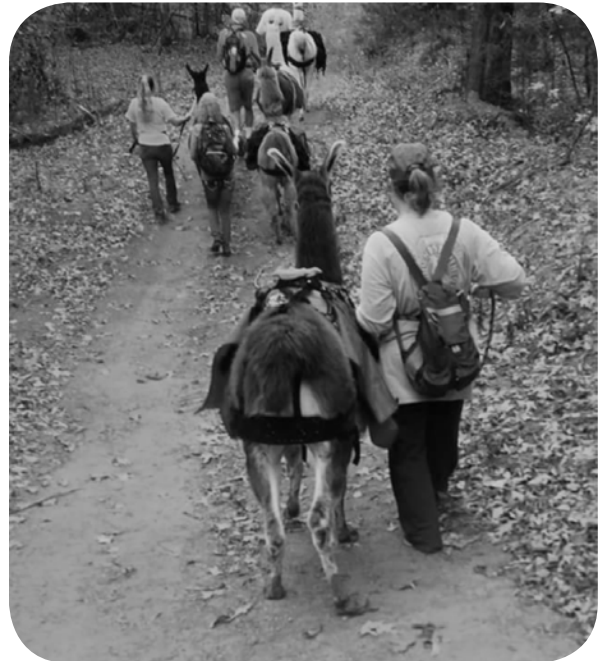
While on the Hope Pass trip, Gary Carlton and Vicky Foster taught me how to use other pack systems. I was thankful Gary asked me to put the saddles and panniers onto his llamas. At that time, I only had real experience with the Flaming Star pack system. This turned out to be a real treat for me and helped me with some future purchases as well. Gary and Vicky had an idea they were mentoring at the time but said nothing. I learned so much on that trip such as how to handle a five-llama string!

After the summer of 2016, I transitioned from being mentored to being a mentor. In Arkansas, there is a whole new generation of young people buying llamas and wanting to learn about them. Phyllis talks to new owners or future owners all the time. She mentors them on the care of llamas. Questions about packing are referred to me. Now I have the opportunity and honor of teaching new people about llama packing. They

are very eager to learn and want to start packing themselves.

In 2018, I am planning to have a pack trial at the Leadville 100. If you are interested, please feel free to contact me. The pack trial will be held the week of Aug13-16 and the 19th. This is before and after the Leadville 100. My phone number is 479-597-9401.

Yes, we still get the same question "llama's spit, don't they?" while we are in public. We smile and reply "yes they do" then explain it.



Walking the llamas.

Once again, I would like to remind all of you that there is no stupid question when it comes to llamas. Also keep in mind that those of us who have the experience and knowledge should be willing to mentor. The new generation of llama owners wants to learn and are thankful for our help.

hw

## Lothlorien Llamas

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Packing & Raising Llamas  
Since 1983



# The Heart and Soul of a Pack Llama

by Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay, Chair, RMLA Pack Committee – Yellowstone Llamas

When I got into llamas, I always knew that I wanted to pack with them. Getting into the backcountry and staying there for longer and in comfort was a high priority. When I chose my first camelid companions, I used my intuition in addition to my newly acquired llama knowledge. I got a lot of good advice from the llama breeders I visited and the many llama conferences and pack clinics I attended in the 90's. I did not grow up with farm animals as a kid and though I was always drawn to large animals and dreamed of having my own horse one day, my childhood companions were hamsters and parakeets. My conviction, though, that all living beings possess a unique spirit that forms their individuality has always guided me when dealing with animals great and small. As a result, my method of selecting pack llamas is a combination of paying attention to both the external and internal traits.

Domingo came into my life in 2008 when he was about one and a half years old. When I picked him



Domingo and Susi

up at Paul and Sally Taylor's ranch and looked at his abundant reddish-brown wool, sturdy legs, big feet and intelligent eyes, I felt an excitement building in me. This was a different type of llama from what I knew and had been packing with over the years. I had heard of Argentines, of course: the unique llamas that the Taylors found in Argentina and in Chile in the early 1990's. These llamas that came from the Catamarca Province of Argentina had never been

crossed with alpacas and had primarily been bred for wool and meat. As a result, they were heavy-boned with an abundant wool coverage. Somehow, another trait sneaked into that breeding program and produced an animal with a charmingly laid-back personality. Looking at Domingo when he was fully grown a year and a half later, I saw a strong and well-balanced body paired with an easygoing demeanor and a sharp, intriguing mind.

The first day of training, Domingo watched me intently as I tied his lead with a quick-release knot to the outside of the trailer. He did not take his eyes off my hands. As I moved on to the second llama who was also being trained that day, Domingo had already opened the knot and was marching down the driveway in search for something else that might attract his exploring mind. He didn't object to be caught and led back since there were lessons to be learned that quickly grabbed his attention and satisfied his inquisitive mind. This was the beginning of our relationship and we became happy partners on many pack trips into Yellowstone National Park - though I have to shear tons of wool off him every year to keep him cool during the summer season. Domingo's huge feet have left their mark on Yellowstone's trails, his strong body carries packs, chairs, coolers and tables into our camps, his sturdy



Domingo looking tall



*continued on next page*



# Yellowstone Llamas

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The Heart and Soul of a Pack Llama., *continued*

legs never tire and his ever-active mind occupies itself with little tricks and mischief along the way. He likes to tug at my backpack when he gets bored and - to the delight of the kids on our treks - pulls my hat off my head, maybe to remind me that there is not a mindless

splayed feet will result in irreversible injuries later down the trail. Many look for long legs and necks. In short, we want an animal whose body structure will support the rigors of packing heavy loads while hiking long hours and ascending and descending mountains without putting pressure on bones, muscles and ligaments that don't work in balanced unison.

Gambit was a small llama in comparison to Amadeus. He had skinny legs compared to Domingo's. But Gambit was an athlete. His conformation was balanced and correct though he did not look strong at first glance. He was an all-business llama, intelligent and reliable and he could fool you with his almost delicate body style. Gambit was an



Gambit with a friend

Sherpa trotting along behind me but an intelligent and alert hiking partner. Yes, when I look into Domingo's eyes, there is definitely somebody home waiting and ready for the next adventure!

Domingo is the latest in my string of outstanding lead pack llamas. Amadeus, whose story I told in an earlier issue, was my longtime leader until his retirement in 2012: tall, handsome and reliable, always there, always strong. Nowadays, he would probably be called a "ccara". My first lead llama, though, was Gambit, son of Catman. When it comes to selecting a good pack llama, I look for a balanced body and strong conformation and avoid an overly long back paired with short legs. Knocked knees or



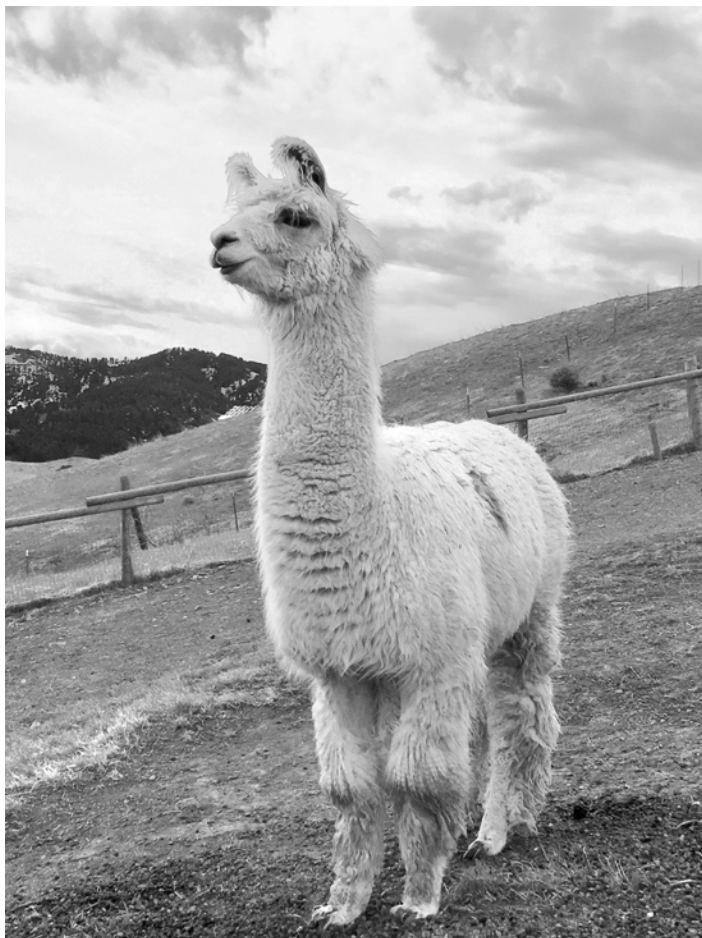
Amadeus is a Lover

excellent lead packer, energetic, eager and in charge. I loved that little guy who trained me during those early days, taught me how it's done. He showed me what a llama with heart and soul can do. From him I learned that you don't have to be big to be great. Gambit's little feet marched many miles and left their mark on Yellowstone's trails and forever in my heart.

*continued on next page*

Just as not every llama is a pack llama, not every packer is a leader. I have had the pleasure to know and train good, solid pack llamas who did not care to be out front but were great supporters in the middle of the line or in the back. It usually works out well and everybody finds their perfect spot after a few position changes in the beginning of the trek.

At the same time, I have tried to train llamas to pack who did not care for the business at all. You can look for perfect conformation and a promising attitude when choosing a pack llama, yet the true personality



Cuzco

will most often reveal itself later. The heart and soul will be drawn out through time, one-on-one training, encouragement and patience. So, whether you choose a fine-boned, long necked animal or a super-wooly guy with huge feet; whether you call the llama a ccara, a classic, a Chilean, Peruvian, a wooly, or an Argentine: as long as you choose a healthy, calm animal and look for a well-balanced conformation, you can't go wrong – most of the times.

Yes, breeding is important but not all-important. Rescued llamas with no papers and unknown parents can become just as reliable as packers as breeder-bought, registered animals. Heart counts for much, meaning are they interested and willing to work. And if you think size is all that matters – think again! What matters more, in my opinion, is who you guide them to become: faithful partners who will follow you anywhere.



Picasso

Last spring, I brought two llamas home from the Flathead Lake country of Western Montana. Both are half-Argentines. Alicio, big-footed and wooly, is related to Domingo. He is laid-back, easy to train. Cuzco, on the other hand, who is the younger of the two was extremely hard to catch initially and actually reared and screamed at me on my first attempt to train him. Over the winter, Cuzco has matured physically and emotionally with the attention and support from the herd and me. I respected his space, didn't touch him for months. He now comes over to greet me in the morning and follows me around, inviting physical contact. In addition to his gorgeous body style, I do see great potential. He is showing me his heart and I

*continued on next page*





Ishi looking good

know that when we will finally hit the trail together, I will find his soul. At age three, Cuzco has now reached the optimal age to be trained and then to begin packing in about six months.

So my message is: A good look at the whole animal is necessary to discover your packer. Take your time,

use your eye for balanced conformation but also listen to your intuition, look a little deeper, and don't limit yourself by excluding candidates based on the latest fad in the llama world. Whether they are tall or small, woolly or short-wooled, skinny-legged or heavy-boned: there is potential in all of them. The heart and soul of your packer will get you out there into the backcountry and safely back home. Just as you always dreamed it would be! Good luck, have fun!

Let's go llamas!!



Packer in-training



# Camelidkids Winterfest

By Geri Rutledge - Bucks Hollow Ranch - Waco, NE



As always, the Camelidkids get together over their Christmas break. This year the focus was painting and making signs for the Mid-Plains Fiber Fair in York, NE. This will be the 2nd year for an event that features vendors, classes, and demonstrations on all "things fiber".

The kids made signs for the classrooms, parking, vendors and food. They were also offered to run the food booth as a fund raiser. Of course, they readily accepted.



We had several discussions about crafts for llama camp and what the kids want to focus on with their animals. The kids are inviting the nursing homes again; they enjoyed this interaction last year. Some of the older kids will be running some groups and we have new interest already for this year's camp which is June 22-23.



# For the Love of a Llama ... and hopes for a grant

by Gayle M. Woodsum

In late May, I was sitting in on a two-day meeting of the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund for their annual grant review and award-making process. We were housed in the beautiful National Museum of Wildlife Art in Jackson, Wyoming, and for hours on end the Trust Fund board members were discussing dozens of proposals for extraordinary projects involving fine

thing.” (By “this thing,” he meant the Higher Ground Fair itself.) “I’m not sure I fully understand it.”

So there I was. My turn to speak to these protectors of our regional culture, tradition and advancement of the arts. I had maybe two minutes to explain the fun, the uniqueness, the value of the Higher Ground Fair — and to do it in a way that would convince them to choose to give some



On Parade at Higher Ground Fair

art, dance, film, historical preservation, cultural events, and more. It left me in awe to hear about the extent of the talent, skill and passion for making the world a better place to live in that was spreading out across my own Rocky Mountain backyard. The entire experience was a little surreal, and definitely humbling.

My only role in that room was to be available to answer questions the grant reviewers might have when the Higher Ground Fair grant application came up for consideration. I did not have permission to speak unless someone asked me to. As it turned out, they did have a question. “To be perfectly frank,” said one of the board members, “there’s an awful lot going on at this

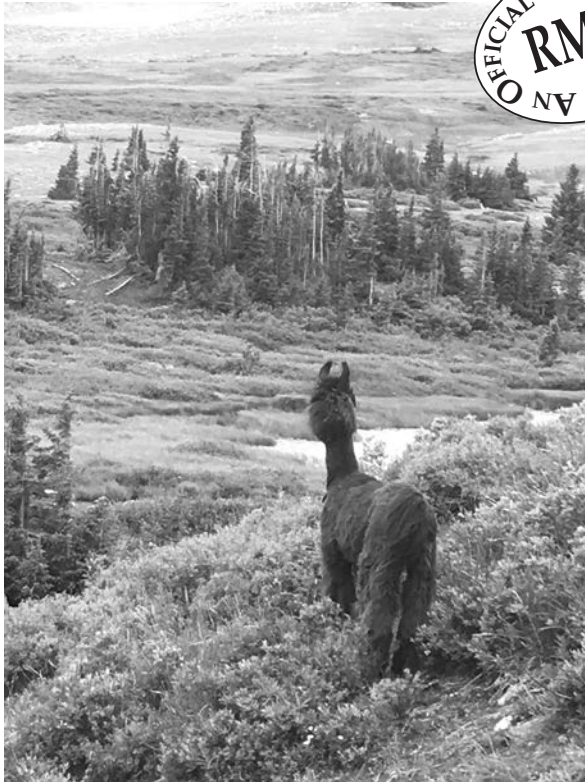
of their limited grant funds to us, even over dozens of other worthwhile projects that would have to walk away unfunded. I had to get them to understand the dream and the reality of this still-in-its-infancy event, where all kinds of people came together to celebrate and learn about all kinds of things that are wonderful about life in the Rocky Mountains, including culture and art.

I tried not to panic, but knew I had to get right to the chase. There wasn’t time to list the big bands that would play every hour on the hour all weekend long, or to tell them about the food trucks signing up to be there this year with fabulous regional cuisine of all kinds. I wanted

*continued on page 28*



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# CATCHING...THE TOOLS AND THE PROGRESSION

By Marty McGee Bennet - CameliDynamics(.com)

Traveling always brings a new perspective and interesting discussions with clinic students and hosts. Hubert and Monica, located in Germany, use their llamas as part of a business that includes children's birthday parties, walks in the forest and as animal guides and teachers for adults. Hubert and Monica have been to several CAMELIDynamics clinics and incorporate many of the principles in their work. Hubert can walk up to most of his animals in the pasture with a halter in hand and put it on. He is justifiably proud of this accomplishment. I was very impressed and we had an interesting conversation about catching.

Many people think that until you can walk up to an animal in a field and catch him that he is not fully trained. I don't think that all owners need to aspire to this and in fact I have never owned an animal that I caught in the field. I have had plenty of animals that were comfortable with me walking up to them, or they to me, for a lovely interaction but I have always structured catching in a way that gives me the advantage.

The questions about catching go like this: When should I be able to walk up to my llama or alpaca in a pasture and catch him? When do I no longer need the wand and the rope? Will I always need a handler helper? Do I always do TTouch before I put a halter



on? Now keeping in mind that one size does not have to fit all here are my thoughts on the subject of catching and its progression.

My question about walking up to an animal in a field halter in hand is "why?" I find it so much easier to call the animals in to a confined area and catch them there. In this scenario the animals do the walking and come to me and I can easily teach them to come when called for some sort of reinforcer. This system seems much easier than teaching each animal to stand in a big field while I walk up.

Of course, if you have a reason to teach this behavior you can create a training plan to do it, BUT there is always a problem: in an open field the animal is always free NOT to stand.

For some reason that you might never know or understand on one particular day the animal is simply not going to allow you to catch him and in a big field you really can't make it happen. Now you are in a bit of a pickle.

What I have observed is many people feel it is then important to shadow the animal for as long as it takes to catch him. In a big field this could take a LONG time. I think it is much more efficient to create a herding system that puts you in the driver's seat. And, if for some reason, the animals don't come when called you switch to plan B and herd them into the catching area.

In terms of how long you might consider using a catch pen, catch rope and wand I would say this: every time you catch your llama or alpaca it is a brand new day. Some days the animals feel quite calm and you can easily pen them, then walk up and hand yourself the handler helper or catch rope or use the non-hook end of the lead rope as a way to guide the head into the halter. I don't want to put my arms around a llama or alpaca's neck to halter him because the animals are then in a position to use their larger size to pull me off balance. Then my choices are to let the animal go or



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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).

## Member News:

RMLA Annual Member renewed as a Life Member... *Thanks Ali*

Allyn Bandell - *Alispacas* - Castle Rock, CO !

Stacey Byers, DVM (+ husband) are leaving RMLA at the end of this membership period. Stacey has a teaching position at the School of Veterinary Medicine - St. George's University - Granada, West Indies. *No Camelids in Granada:-(*

# 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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Catching... The Tools and the Progression, *continued*

get into a pulling contest. Therefore, I need something around the top of the neck to act as an aid to haltering.



How do I know if I should use the wand? I walk into the catch pen and if the animal moves away from me I assume that he needs for me to incrementalize my approach. I am happy to do that by using a wand and catch rope. It is my thinking that the more I work at making the animals feel safe, the more I am rewarded with their trust.

As far as going through all of the intermediate desensitizing steps of haltering, I do NOT do them all every time I catch an animal. I do only the steps that I need to do in order to get the halter on easily without fear or force. Once the animal accepts my approach and the halter, I slip something around the top of the neck and put the halter on without doing any TTouch.

Remember, every day is a new day for you and your animal. Be prepared, with your 'tools', to use what ever haltering steps are needed for that moment in time.



# Ask The CSU VET Team

by Brandy Stewart, Sara Mackey and  
Dr Robert Callan

**Question:** How can I determine if my llama or alpaca is in pain?

**Response by Brandy Stewart and Sara Mackey (DVM 2019 Students), Dr. Logan Wood (Intern) and Dr. Robert Callan (Faculty).**

At this time there is no recognized pain scale in camelids and because these animals are prey species they tend to hide their pain very well. Due to this, camelid pain is generally assessed using visual cues such as lethargy, decreased appetite, grinding teeth (bruxism), anxiousness, or an elevation in respiratory rate or heart rate. Painful

pain neurons in inflamed tissue so that they are more sensitive to stimulation resulting in greater perceived pain.

NSAIDs inhibit the enzymes that produce prostaglandins associated with inflammation. The primary enzymes that are inhibited by NSAIDs are cyclooxygenase 1 and 2 (COX-1 and COX-2). The COX-2 enzyme plays a more important role in the production of pain sensitizing prostaglandins. COX-1 enzymes produce prostaglandins that are important in gastric protection and kidney blood flow and are beneficial. Thus, NSAIDs that specifically block COX-

2 enzymes provide pain relief with less potential for intestinal ulcers or renal toxicity.

Meloxicam is selective and generally only inhibits COX2, whereas phenylbutazone is non-specific and inhibits both COX 1 and COX 2. By inhibiting both COX 1 and 2, phenylbutazone is considered to have a higher risk of GI ulcers or kidney toxicity than meloxicam.

In llamas and alpacas, we generally use oral

meloxicam tablets. Meloxicam has good oral absorption and has a half-life of about 20 hours. Phenylbutazone comes as oral tablets and paste. It also has good oral absorption and has a half life of about 40 hours. Both drugs are easy to give orally, as long as your camelid is eating or drinking. Meloxicam generally comes in 15mg tablets and is about \$0.15/tablet, whereas, phenylbutazone generally comes in 1g tablets and is about \$0.27/tablet. Based on these prices and recommended dose, the cost of meloxicam is approximately \$0.50/100lbs/day and for phenylbutazone is it \$0.04/100lbs/day. When choosing to use either of these drugs, you will want to work with your



Sara and Brandy with Junior, who is a blood donor llama.

camelids will often lay down on their side with their legs pushed off to the side. However, compared to normal animals, they appear uncomfortable, anxious, and tend to shift periodically from side to side.

In cases of severe colic (abdominal pain) the animal may stamp at the ground, kick at their abdomen, or roll as if in pain. Muscle, joint, or skeletal pain can also manifest as an alteration in gait known as lameness where the animal avoids placing weight on the affected limb.

Both Meloxicam and Phenylbutazone (Bute) are non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) that can be used to treat pain. They work by decreasing prostaglandin production associated with inflammation. Certain prostaglandins increase

*continued on next page*



veterinarian in order to determine an appropriate dosage and duration of treatment.

**Question:** I have a llama, Teddy, age 10, who I recently separated from the herd because of (his) bullying behavior and I can therefore monitor him quite well. Teddy always has had bad teeth and a crusty substance in the corners of his mouth. His breath is quite bad and the other llamas will not eat out my hand if Teddy ate from it earlier. Now that he lives in his own corral and shelter, I can confirm what I have been seeing over the last few years but never knew 100% if it was him: In the mornings I regularly find green puddles of “vomit” on the ground. It is quite a large amount, not like a spit. Do llamas get acid reflux? And: can this also have something to do with his aggressive behavior towards other llamas? I have puzzled over this for a long time. Can you help?

**Response by Dr. Robert Callan**

For your specific question of “Do llamas get acid reflux”, the best answer is no, not really as we think of it in humans. But, here are the details. The llama stomach is composed of 3 compartments. The third compartment is most analogous to a true stomach and is where HCl is secreted as gastric acid. When there is obstruction of the 3rd compartment or in the small intestine distal to that, you can have acidic gastric fluid reflux back into the 1st and 2nd compartments. The fluid is generally buffered in the 1st and 2nd compartments and remains there. As an obstruction progresses in time, the 1st compartment can get so distended that gastric contents will reflux into the esophagus, but generally they are not acidic.

Alternatively, animals with acute grain overload can reflux acid fluid from the 1st compartment to the esophagus.

So, what about this animal? The signs that you are seeing suggest some other possibilities:

- 1) Megaesophagus is a condition where the esophagus loses normal motility and contraction and becomes dilated. Gastric contents will then collect in the esophagus and are seen to periodically be expelled looking like the animal is vomiting. This condition is generally progressive and the animal will have a decreased appetite and lose weight over time.
- 2) Thoracic masses such as enlarged or abscessed lymph nodes or cancer of the thymus (thymoma) can cause pressure on the esophagus so that the feed that the animal swallows does not pass to the stomach. The feed material can then be regurgitated and appear like vomit. Generally, this material is not as fluid as in #1 and contains more coarse feed material.
- 3) There are also other functional conditions of the stomachs that can interfere with gastric motility. If gastric motility is abnormal, excessive fluid can regurgitate and appear as vomit. It is often very difficult to identify a specific cause for these conditions. They can originate from problems in the gastric motility centers in the brain, or from the vagus nerve that helps control gastric motility.



So what can be done? The challenge is identifying the cause so that appropriate treatment can be recommended. This would start with a thorough physical exam and maybe some additional diagnostic tests. Megaesophagus is generally a chronic and progressive problem that results in persistent weight loss and eventually death of the llama or alpaca. It can be diagnosed by radiographs of the chest. The underlying cause of megaesophagus is not known in llamas and alpacas.

Neoplastic thoracic masses such as thymoma or lymphosarcoma may also be confirmed by thoracic radiographs. However, there are limited treatment options for these conditions. Surgical resection in goats is reported to have a poor outcome (i.e. they die). Chemotherapy or radiation therapy approaches could be tried but there is also very limited information on success.

Thoracic abscesses can potentially be treated with long term (4 or more weeks) antibiotics. They can be a challenging diagnosis. And even with treatment, long term prognosis is very guarded.



# Spring Hiking

By Mary Vavrina  
Rocky Mountain Llamas

Spring, for me, is the time to sort through the packs, make sure my gear is in working order, make needed repairs to the panniers, and bitterly regret not doing those tasks over the winter.

Usually, at least one of the panniers has a broken strap or buckle (practically inevitable with young llamas). The saddles, whether wood or leather, need to be cleaned and oiled. I also take inventory of the contents of the panniers. Since I usually forget at least one key item on every pack trip, I keep a journal of each outing with notes to remind me of what I forgot and what would be handy the next time. Here's the last entry, in full:

October 12 Sourdough Trail. more M&Ms

Even though hiking the lower elevation trails close to home can seem like no big deal, I still pack the essential life-saving items: duct tape, baling twine, and a knife. No matter what happens\*, those will keep things together until you get back to the trailer.

The benefits of spring hikes are seeing the early blooms of wildflowers, shrubs, and trees after the drab winter days. The air is warming up, the sun feels great, and it's so good to breathe in the scent of the woods

waking up in the warm sun. Hiking is the cure for pretty much whatever ails a person, so I take advantage of every chance to get out there. It seems like the llamas enjoy

themselves and are glad to get away from the farm for a while.

Drawbacks include muddy trails, where the responsible thing to do is slop through the mud so as not to create detours that damage the surrounding area. It's sometimes challenging to get the llamas to agree, as they try to step daintily around

the muddy sections. Even though their feet are not as damaging as ours, the ground is fragile with many plants just beginning to appear, so it's a good idea to keep them following closely behind.

Spring is the time for ticks to emerge and spend their days looking for me, because they know how much I freak out when I find one crawling up my neck. Fortunately, they tend to walk around for a while, looking for the best place to dig in, so you can often spot them before they settle in, and give them the violent death they deserve. This is also the time when rattlesnakes wake up, another good reason to keep the llamas on the trail and not meandering through the grass.

Another consideration that may be a

*continued on next page*







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## Spring Hiking... continued

benefit or a drawback is that there are lots of other people getting out enjoying the trails, and 80% of them have never seen a llama before. Of that number, about a quarter of them will not care, and the rest will stop and begin asking questions. If you've hiked with llamas, you'll know the questions. Is that a llama or alpaca? How much can they carry? Do they spit? And so on. Then comes the obligatory selfie, and you are free to go, until you meet the next group of hikers.

In any case, the high country will be opening up soon, and the mountains will be calling. Always answer them. In the meantime, get out and have fun with your llamas, and let the ticks fall where they may.

\*Rattlesnakes and grizzly bears excepted. Search and rescue not included; your mileage may vary. Check your local listings.



# RMLA Members...great success from 26 years ago

"SCRAPING HEAVEN" BY CINDY ROSS

*Authors Note: I am writing this article because I think current members should know what RMLA members did from 1992 through 1996. And perhaps it will jar a memory or two of our older members. --Bob Riley - Stillwater Minerals*

The Colorado Trail (CT) was completed in the summer of 1992. The trail goes from Waterton Canyon (near Denver) to Durango.

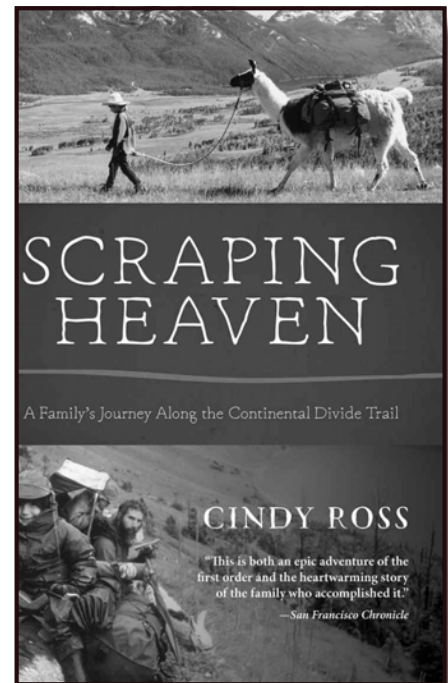
We can thank Wally White, long time llama owner, who met Cindy and her husband, Todd, at a party. Cindy was bemoaning that with their young children their long-distance hiking days were over. He said not so fast . . . you could use llamas. Dee Goodman, RMLA President, was contacted and a plan unfolded to make the journey on the CT possible. Stan Ebel with Buckhorn Llamas was contacted for the use of his trained pack llamas. Charlie Hackbarth of Sopris Unlimited provided his saddles that he modified to carry children and packs.

Dee asked me to go along for the first few days to get them acclimated to the llamas. Many more RMLA members volunteered to meet them at certain trailheads, invite them into their homes and ferry them to town for supplies. This was truly a RMLA team effort coordinated by Dee.

I was a reluctant volunteer in the beginning but after the first two days, I became hooked on the whole adventure. I fell in love with the young children and the concept of long distance hiking with llamas. I knew their schedule and was able to surprise them from time to time along the way with real food from home or a quick trip into town for dinner. I went so far as to hike the last week with them to Durango. Out of the last 7 days, it rained almost 24 hours a day. While I was discouraged by having to put up my tent in the rain, taking down the tent in the rain, preparing meals in the rain, the youngsters were always in high spirits. Sierra was happily talking to her favorite llama, Berrick, as if he was one of the family. Dee hiked up the trail from Durango to share the last night on the CT. Dee brought real food from home and was instantly our new best friend.

The adventure continued in 1994 by beginning the hike of the Continental Divide Trail (CDT)

from Canada to the Mexican border. This portion of the adventure was coordinated by RMLA members as Cindy knew very few llama owners. RMLA members coordinated with other llama owners such as Scott Woodruff, Lander Llama Company in Lander, WY. These volunteers would pick Cindy and family up at a certain trail head and on a certain date, take them to their home etc.



This entire adventure spanned several years and included both the CT and CDT. The story is told in "Scraping Heaven", now in its second printing and available at Amazon. The whole adventure spanned several years and was only made possible with RMLA members volunteering their time and money to support this young family on an epic journey. RMLA board made the decision to support Cindy in the writing of her book, "Scraping Heaven", as part of an on-going effort to promote llamas. The underlying message is that a young family with two children, Sierra, age 3, and Bryce, 18 months old, still in diapers, could hike the 486-mile Colorado Trail (CT) that was only made possible by llamas with support from RMLA.

RMLA supported and continues to support many events. I encourage the membership to get involved as it can build many good memories.





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Recommended for alpacas the year around and llamas during the winter. Same formula as 102 with added Biotin and B-Plex 5 for fiber quality and growth. The highest levels of Vitamin E and Zinc.

10# - \$39.50 25# - \$74.50 50# - \$123.50

We pay all shipping.

**Need Zinc? Zn40:** Chelated form of Zinc to be added to the above Lama-Min free choice supplements when your veterinarian recommends therapeutic levels of Zinc for specific skin and fiber conditions. 5# - \$25.00

### 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.

\$28.95 + \$6.00 Shipping (**Free Shipping** with Mineral order)

## Guard Llama Chases Flight Suspect from a Pasture

*Editors note: This article was sent in by an RMLA member. It has been edited for appropriate use in the Journal. The original article appeared in February 2018 in the Monett, MO Times and was written by Murray Bishoff.*

Monett police received assistance from a llama during a recent fugitive chase that resulted in the arrest of a subject with outstanding felony warrants.

According to Monett Police Sargent, Officer Brian Brown spotted the suspect driving in his pickup and began following. Upon seeing Brown's approach to the pickup, the suspect fled north into the heavily wooded area that serves as a storm water drainage channel.

Additional officers joined the search. They walked the rough, partially frozen terrain and called for assistance from the fire department. The firefighters brought infrared equipment and helped scour the vicinity for approximately 30 minutes.

The pursuit received a break when a Missouri Department of Conservation officer reported seeing a subject run across a highway into a pasture. Officers responded and, using field glasses, observed and identified the suspect approximately a half-mile away. The gates of the field were located, blocking access.

At that point, officers observed a llama, who "appeared very angry," approach the suspect and chased him to the east fence line where police were able to catch him.

The owner of the llama said the family has a pair with every herd of cattle. Llamas are very territorial and were introduced to protect the cattle from roving dogs. "Llamas are very territorial and love their herd," the owner said. "We had a baby calf wedged in a pond and the llama pushed it out. They're just cool animals."



# STARS N STRIPES SHOW

By Geri Rutledge  
Bucks Hollow Ranch  
Waco, NE

This year the Stars N Stripes show was moved from the “farm” to the York County Fairgrounds. The show was held in conjunction with the Mid-Plains Fiber Fair. It was a beautiful 80-degree day; farms from 3 states were represented and everyone had great fun all day!

The show had an audience of over 500 people on Saturday! Our group was able to interact with the public and with the other species of fiber producing animals. Education was everywhere.

Inside the vendor hall, 25 vendors were selling their products including items from llamas, alpacas, sheep and goats. The llamas, alpacas and paco-vicuñas were housed in the cattle barn along with sheep, goats, Pygoras and Nigoras. Next door classes for felting, spinning, looms and weaving were offered both days. And down 1 more building was the food concession run by our 4H kids.

We altered our sub-junior class to the “never walked a llama before” class. Nine kids with a “study buddy” and either a llama or alpaca showed in 2 classes. What a challenge for judge Mike Swanson. Before it was all over, he had them all believing.





# Fairplay 2018...You're Going to Want to *Help* There!

By Journal Staff  
*In case you missed it, see page 7*



## The RMLA Fairplay Llama Event 2018

**37th  
Year!**

### Volunteer Task Signup Sheet

### For Saturday, July 28, 2018

### 9am to ~2pm

## A RACE, AN EDUCATION AND SO MUCH MORE!

Go to the Volunteer signup page on the website to give us your numbers.....

How many experienced pack llama(s) can you bring for the Pack Race? ____
How many user-friendly llamas can you bring for the Public Walk? ____
How many very gentle llamas can you bring for the Llama Lunacy? ____

The public walk is a great public relations event! Llama owners are free to walk along to ensure the well-being of your animal and to educate the novice handlers about llamas.

To help.....Select the task(s) that you would like to lead or participate in by clicking the checkbox(s) on the signup sheet.

Go to RMLA.com home page if you would like links to the schedule and information for Sat.

The schedule is always being updated.

When finished completing the signup form, go to the bottom to fill in your name, etc., add a comment and click Submit.



## *Thank You!*

To complete the volunteer form, go to [www.rmla.com](http://www.rmla.com)

### For Schedules:

- For the entire weekend Go to **[www.BurroDays.com](http://www.BurroDays.com)**
- For RMLA Saturday, go to **[www.RMLA.com](http://www.RMLA.com)** for the schedule and full maps of the llama events.

to chat about children’s garden parade that the llamas and alpacas joined in on, the hands-on gardening workshops, the presentations

There was a split second of silence, then another board member piped up enthusiastically. “That’s why I’d go – to see the llamas and alpacas!”

There was a chuckle of agreement at the board members’ table, and the awkward tension was gone. I answered some questions about money, volunteers and tickets, and they closed their discussion with a recommendation that we be given one of their coveted mid-sized grants.

It’s beginning to occur to me that llamas are the answer to just about any question. Or at least the best start to any answer. They open doors and let in the sun to light the way. Am I getting carried away? Going too far? Maybe. But keep in mind, llamas did just help me get a grant from a group of highly discriminating patrons of the arts.

— *Gayle Woodsum is a writer and community organizer who lives in North Park, Colorado with a mixed herd of pack, show, fleece and rescued llamas and one alpaca. She is the founder and executive producer of the Higher Ground Fair. More information on the fair can be found at [www.highergroundfair.org](http://www.highergroundfair.org).*

hw

**Have you noticed?** Llamas are all the rage right now (toys, fabric, t-shirts, etc.). As llama and alpaca owners it probably serves us to take advantage of what is happening in the marketplace. This is a great time to further engage the public with our extraordinary friends. Get out there, talk, show off, educate.



Laurel and Hardy On Course

on our wilderness, on how we all relate to the land we live in. The fiber arts, quilt show, museum exhibits, traditional crafts vendors, health and wellness presentations, draft horse demonstrations, Kids Adventure Zone, and ... and.... oh yeah, I thought. It is a lot to wrap one’s head around. And I had just a couple of minutes to explain it to them.

There was only one thing to do. I went for my default position. Llamas. “You’re right, I said. There is a lot going on at the fair — more each year. The thing is, regardless of what attracts you to it initially, you’re going to discover something wonderful you’ve never experienced before. For example, you might decide to go to the fair because you want to see llamas and alpacas, and on your way to them, you’d hear great music, see wonderful exhibits, and more.”

*Sculptor Henry Rivera*  
 18380 Countdown Dr - Peyton, CO 80831  
 719-749-2651



# Have You Given a Death Sentence to the Lama You Love?

By Linda Hayes - Prescott Valley, AZ - Reprinted from Fall 2014 Journal

**W**e love our lamas. We make sure they have shelter and plenty of food but is that enough? NO! If we haven't taken the time to halter break them and teach them to lead, we are creating a potential disaster.

I do lots of rescue and have first hand experience on how not halter breaking your lama can hurt. When disaster hits, be it mud slide, flood, forest fire or whatever, a lama that can not be handled will not have much chance of survival. People who are trying to help don't have time to deal with unruly animals. They will leave them to die and concentrate on gentle ones that they can actually do something with.

Have you ever seen a llama with burns all over its body? I have and it's not pretty. Could this have been avoided? Probably, if it could have been haltered and led to safety.

I know of a llama that got washed down the river for several miles. It was only able to be rescued because the owner had it so gentle that the llama actually helped the rescuer and got the two of them safely back to shore.

But let's say that your lama is rescued and taken to a facility where he is safe. The vet coming in to help will not be able to medicate him if he can't be handled. Volunteers just don't have the time to deal with uncooperative animals.

I get many lamas from loving homes who just let them live as well-fed pasture ornaments. They give them food and shelter but nothing else. They have not been worked with in years, usually need shearing and toes trimmed. How can this be done if the lama can't be caught and goes into a panic when you try to halter him?


But even if I manage to get a halter on him and take care of his physical needs, will he be adoptable? Most people want a lama that is at least halter broken. They want one they can take on walks or train to do other things. Who do you think gets the great home? It's not the ones who have never been handled.

So many owners say "Oh, he's real gentle. He will eat out of my hand and follow me around." This means nothing if I can't get a halter on him to keep him safe and healthy.


Come on, folks, if you love your lamas, train them! It's a lot easier to train a weanling than a ten-year-old. It's easier for the lama and much easier for the handler. Put a halter on them and tie them up once a month. Let them learn how to be comfortable on a tether. Teach them to pick up their feet and load in a trailer. You are not being fair to your lama if you don't do at least this much.

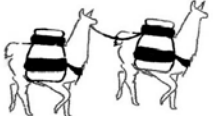
If you love your lamas, do something to make sure they will be safe and healthy no matter where they are. You owe it to them.

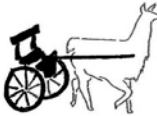




**Jerry Dunn**  
**Bear Track Farm**  
**Llama Training Center**  
**303-277-1129 BTllamas@outlook.com**

  
**PACK'EM**

  
**STACK'EM**

  
**DRIVE'EM**

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# Golden Plains Llama Association

By Geri Rutledge - Bucks Hollow Ranch - Waco, NE



Golden Plains Llama Association held their annual conference on February 3rd at the Kansas State Fairgrounds in Hutchinson. About 20 members of the association attended. Dr David Harder from a local veterinary clinic gave a great presentation on the latest in camelid medicine. When you have geriatric animals, it's good to revisit what the science now says about healthcare.



We were joined by 4 students from the Kansas State University Veterinary program. They had a blast and we have 4 new members! Now listening to pre-med students talk is like listening to another language. They all had previous experience with camelids so it was a great discussion. The craft project was right up their alley (see photos!).



Next year the conference is moving west to Phillipsburg KS and plans are being made to visit Shepherds Mill. There are always good things happening with Golden Plains Llamas and Alpacas.





# Track Quiz

So if you raise Camelids there is good chance you have a few 'other' critters around, right, so here is your quiz.

The most common and deadliest are from the Feline (Mountain Lion, Bobcat, etc.) and Canine (Dog and Coyote) families.

In the Summer Journal of 2015 there was a detailed description of Canines, Coyotes and the Felines. You can check it out (as well as this one) on the website under .. RESOURCES - HOT NEWS.

	_____	
	_____	
	_____	
	_____	
	_____	
	_____	

Answers - on the website :RESOURCES - HOT NEWS

## Postscript from the Journal Volunteers

Marilyn, YOU, Kathy, Ron

We all know that volunteering for a cause that you believe in takes a commitment. We all still feel RMLA is one such cause. It brings the animals we all love to forefront of everyday life. If you can help continue this cause, even in a small time commitment way, we would love to talk about what you love to do that can help RMLA to keep us movin' along.

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](http://www.RMLA.com), select **EVENTS** and hover on the boxes.

- **July 28, 2018, Fairplay Llama Event**, Fairplay, CO. Fun for everyone! Llama walk/races, Llama pack races, obstacle course for kids. Contact Kelvin Eldridge 720.556.6197 or [kelvin.j.eldridge@gmail.com](mailto:kelvin.j.eldridge@gmail.com) Or Jeff Sandberg, co-chair, 303.829.8144 or [likearock87@msn.com](mailto:likearock87@msn.com). To register and volunteer, go to [www.RMLA.com](http://www.RMLA.com)
- **September 22 & 23, Higher Ground Fair Llama and Alpaca Performance and Fleece Shows**. Albany County Fairgrounds, Laramie, WY, Llama & Alpaca Performance and Fleece Shows, Llama & Alpaca Demonstrations - Contact Gayle Woodsum [gayle@highergroundfair.org](mailto:gayle@highergroundfair.org) or 307-399-3815 [www.HigherGroundFair.org](http://www.HigherGroundFair.org).

### Save the Dates!

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.