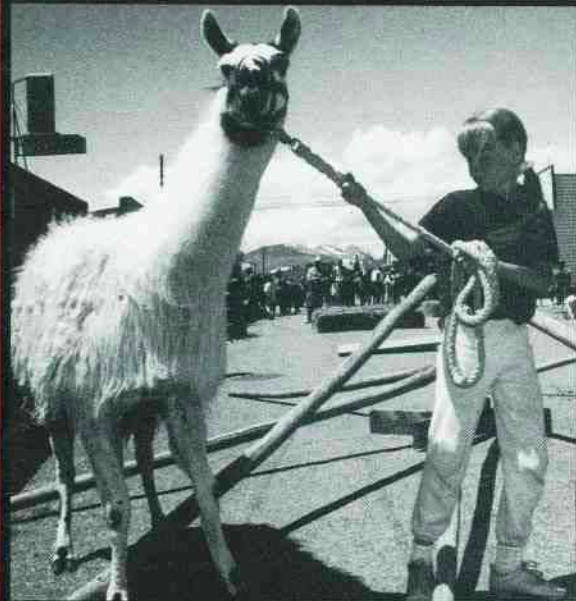


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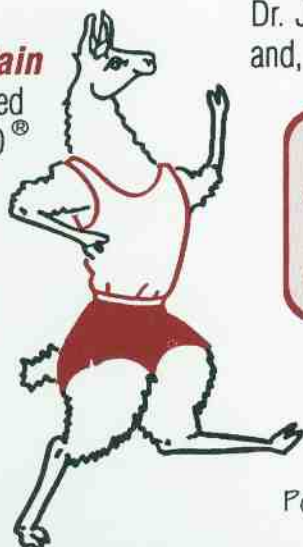
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RMLA YEARLY EVENTS

June:

Estes Park Wool Market ALSA Llama and Alpaca Shows; Estes Park, Colorado

Great and fun Llama and Alpaca Shows in a mountain setting below Rocky Mountain National Park. A Private Treaty Sale will be held for llamas. (Alaine Byers, 303-459-3245)

Llama Pack Festival; Southwest Colorado

A fun-filled weekend for all the members of the family. For beginners and seasoned packers. (Jack White, 303-879-1358)

4th Annual Red Light Run; Cripple Creek, Colorado

A 3-mile Llama race through the streets of historic Cripple Creek plus a parade, youth and adult obstacle courses. (Sally German-Rucker, 719-689-3063)

July:

4-Corners Llama and Alpaca Bazaar; Cortez, Colorado

Booths, llama demonstrations, private treaty llama sale, and lots of fun! (Ted Earley, 303-327-4511)

12th Annual Fairplay Pack Llama Race/ Llama Lunacy; Fairplay, Colorado

A 3-mile cross-country pack race that includes pro, amateur, and walker divisions. Plus Llama Lunacy which includes kids obstacles and other fun things. (Dee Goodman, 303-345-2927)

August:

Wind River Rendezvous; Lander, WY

First there will be a llama trek on the Oregon Trail for all the family, followed by a TTEAM clinic plus ALSA Show on Saturday and Sunday. (Darlene Vaughan, 307-332-7261)

Boulder County Fair ALSA Youth Show; Longmont, Colorado

The Youth Show will include Showmanship, Obstacle and Public Relations courses. (Mary Beth Hartsough, 303-785-2463)

Colorado State Fair ALSA Youth Show; Pueblo, Colorado

A Youth Show which includes Showmanship and Obstacle courses plus an obstacle race. (Chris Brown, 719-784-3220)

Leadville Trail 100; Leadville, Colorado

This is a 100-mile cross-country foot race. And no, we don't run it, we just help crew it with pack llamas. We haul supplies up to Hope Pass. (Dee Goodman, 303-345-2927)

September:

Western Slope Llama Fall Festival; Frutta, Colorado

A fun llama event that includes a Private Treaty Sale. (Judy Sealy, 303-241-7921)

New Mexico ALSA Llama Show; Albuquerque, New Mexico

A full ALSA show with performance and halter classes. (Mary Summers, 505-867-3442)

RMLA Conference; Longmont, Colorado

The Biennial Conference that includes seminars, speakers, classes, fun and food. (Dee Goodman, 303-345-2927)

Big Horn Llama Show; Buffalo, WY

One-Day ALSA Show and Llama auction. (Barb Coffman, 307-683-2548)

October:

Llamathon; Fort Collins, Colorado

A 16-mile endurance pack llama race plus 4-mile and 8-mile races.

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Editors: Bob and Jo Riley
Post Office Box 1189
Lyons, Colorado 80540
303-823-5409

WHY RMLA?

by Dee Goodman

“Why RMLA?”

I know it's a question I asked at one time. But it's a question much like “Why llamas?”. And we all know the answer to that one. To answer our main question “Why RMLA?”, we must first ask other questions much like we did when first asking about llamas.

“How did RMLA get started?”

To know anything about any organization you must know a little about its history. In 1982 there was very little accurate information about llamas available. So, a small group of llama enthusiasts got together and formed the Rocky Mountain Llama Association (RMLA) for the purpose of meeting once a year to share ideas and methods on raising and using llamas. From that beginning, RMLA has grown to an organization of over 500 members from 27 states and 5 countries. It was not the first llama association to start but was the first to be incorporated in North America. Some of the other “firsts” include the first llama lending library, the first published health and management book on llamas, *Caring for Llamas*, and the first *Youth Manual for Llamas* for use in 4-H and FFA.

“Who runs RMLA?”

Its members own and operate RMLA. This is an all volunteer organization. There is a five member Board of Directors that is voted into office once a year. They run the day-to-day business, while the events are run by volunteer event chairs. There are also committees such as Youth, Research, Education, Marketing and others that help direct RMLA.

“How much does it cost to join RMLA and what do I get?”

The dues are \$30 per year for a single membership and includes 1 vote. Ranch membership is \$50 which includes 2 votes. A junior membership is \$10. All memberships include a bi-monthly newsletter, a listing in the annual Owners Directory, access to an extensive and growing lending library, discounts at RMLA sponsored events, including conferences and semi-

nars, and low cost advertising in the newsletter. Considering you get all this and that the dues have not been raised since 1986, that's not bad for any organization.

“What events does RMLA sponsor?”

RMLA has always believed events are the best way to show off our llamas and to have fun with them. Our events include the RMLA Pack Festival (an event for the entire family which includes hiking, camp cooking contests, races, and other fun things for llamas and their people friends to do), Estes Park Wool Market Llama Show, the Cripple Creek Red Light Llama Race (a 3-mile llama and people race through the streets of Cripple Creek, CO, plus an obstacle course and parade), the Fairplay Pack Llama Race and Llama Lunacy (a 3-mile cross-country pack llama race in and around Fairplay, CO, plus a kids obstacle course and other FUN events in downtown Fairplay), the Wind River Rendezvous (a llama show and other great events all in the Lander, Wyoming vicinity), the RMLA Conference and/or Education Seminar, the New Mexico Llama Show, and the Llamathon (a 16-mile cross-country pack llama race). Other events that RMLA helps with include the National Western Stock Show and parade, county and state fairs, the Denver St. Patrick's Day Parade, and anywhere else we can go with llamas. We're always looking for new events to sponsor.

“What kind of information do they have available about llamas?”

First, there's the Newsletter. More like a magazine, it's published bi-monthly and contain all the latest news about RMLA, events, training llamas, research information, and other fun articles about llamas and their people friends. RMLA also has a large, free lending library which contains books, tapes, and articles on llamas including health, training, and usage. The Herdsire Directory includes pictures and information about herdsire available through the RMLA membership. This is free use for both the herdsire owner and the person looking for a sire. The Vet Network helps you find a vet for your llamas.

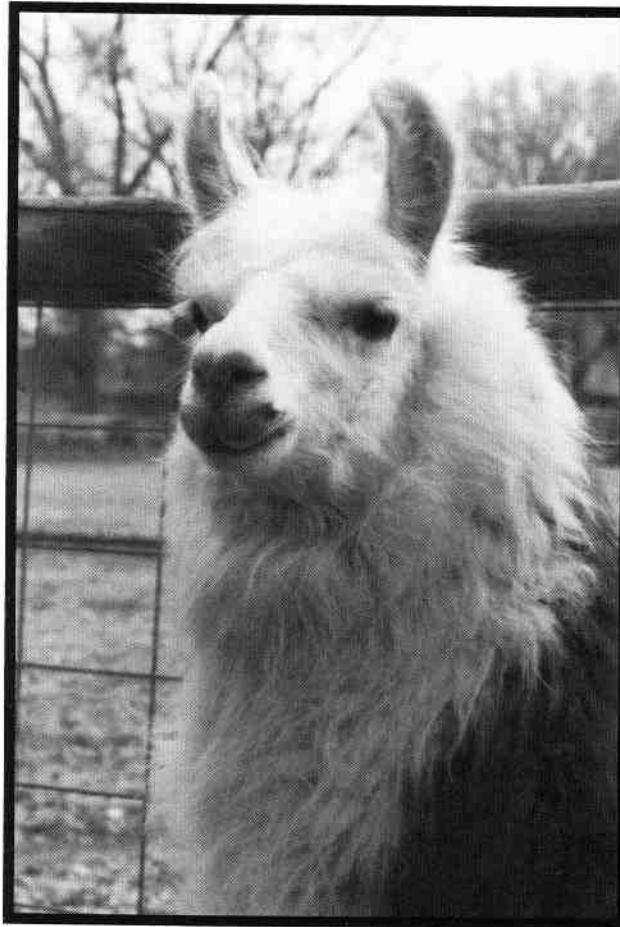
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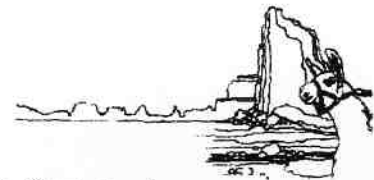
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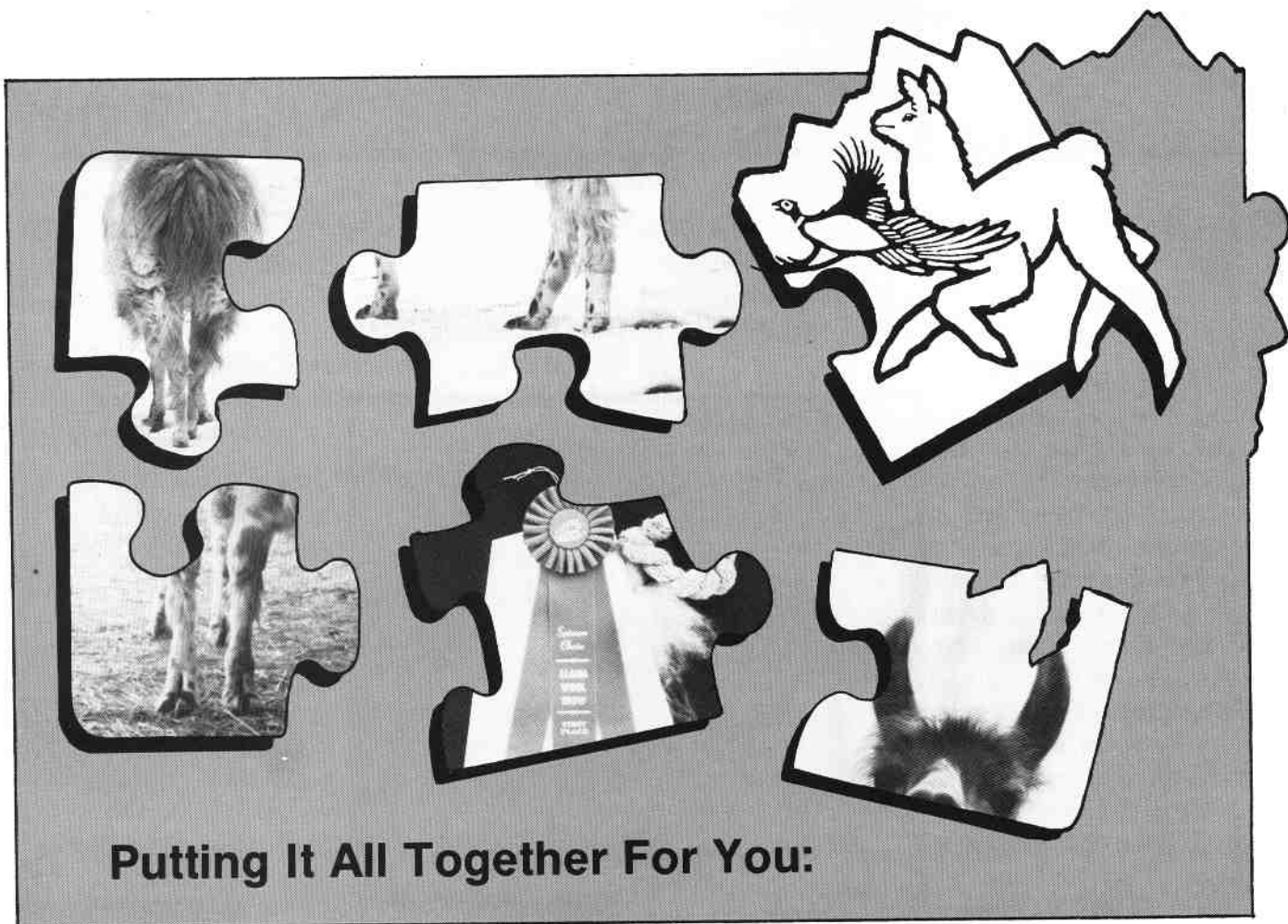


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Putting It All Together For You:

WHY RMLA? (Con't)

And don't forget, RMLA publishes *Caring for Llamas*, a health and management book.

“Does RMLA sponsor research projects?”

Yes. Both medical and usage research.

“How about marketing of llamas?”

RMLA has a large display booth that is at most livestock shows and is available for fairs and other events. Included are information brochures, the service directory, order forms for books and other general information about llamas and RMLA. Members can also get free llama brochures to help their ranch sales. RMLA does other marketing such as RV and travel shows and parades. In 1993, RMLA sponsored author Cindy Ross and her family as they hiked across the 470 mile Colorado Trail with llamas. Another marketing event, the Fairplay Pack Llama Race, has a crowd of around 3,000 people watching each year.

“Does RMLA sponsor and support youth?”

RMLA knows its future is its youth! That's why we sponsor youth so much. Plus, kids and llamas just go together! First we have the Youth Foundation. This Foundation is a source of funds for kids to help buy their first llama, get scholarships for their education, funds for show fees and other financial help. Then, there are Youth Project Manuals to help in 4-H, FFA, and other youth programs. Our events include children's activities. Plus, RMLA and ILA are now co-publishing “Camelid Kids”, a magazine just for kids, printed 4 times a year.

“So, why RMLA?”

For llamas, and for the people who love them and work with them. Any more questions? Just ask any RMLA member and they would be happy to help you anytime! That's what RMLA is about!



WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT A LLAMA?

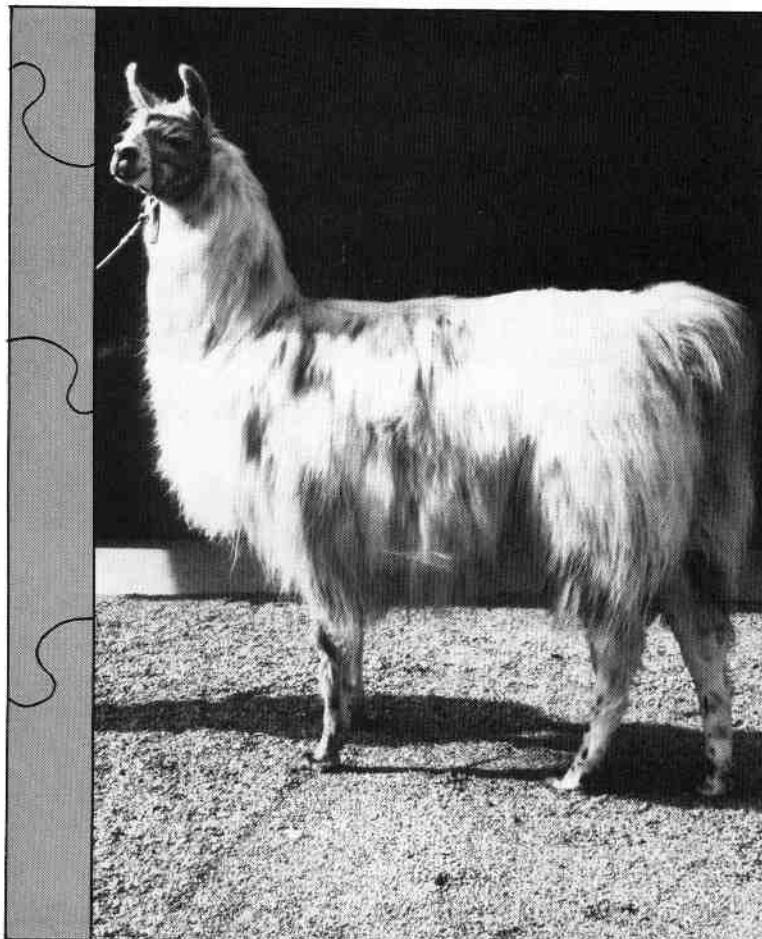
by Mary Beth Hartsough

"So, what are they good for?" I don't know how many times I've heard that question, and variations thereof, since our first Llama moved in (probably, rounding down to the nearest tens, about a zillion). I, myself, was guilty of asking my 'other half', Joe, "What the heck would we do with one of those things?". He was enthusiastically showing me some article he had copied out of one those "granola" magazines that one of his buddies had brought to work. I really did think they were cute -- those huge dark eyes with the long lashes, and the long rabbit ears; and I thought that fuzzy split lip was really neat, too. Then I read the paragraph about how much they cost and swallowed my Pepsi down the wrong pipe. This caused tears to well up in my eyes and, as I tried to focus on the photos in the article, Joe thought I was having some sort of religious experience. I told him "What the heck -- we'll just sell one of the kids and pick us up a pair of these fuzzy critters!" Well, those of us who take our llamas to fairs, parades, schools, or other public events, know how difficult it is to counteract the general misconception that all llamas

are outrageously expensive. When people learn that you can buy a nice young male for no more than a grade horse, they're genuinely surprised. But then I tell them it gets even better -- you can feed 4 or 5 Llamas on the same amount you're feeding that one horse (they don't call them hayburners for nothing!). Good breeding stock runs higher, how high depends on the quality, but that's no different than any other type of livestock.

So, now that you know that llamas are very affordable, back to the original question -- what do we tell people when they ask at the County Fair, "What are they good for?". Well, to the family with kids: Remember that last fishing trip Dad took you all on? You know how he is -- always looking to discover that ideal fishing spot where no man has gone before, much less fished. So you end up hiking this trail through virgin wilderness (swearing that even the deer couldn't follow) carrying all

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WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT A LLAMA? (con't)

the gear. The pack on your back was the size of a Volkswagen, and not five minutes into the hike little Herby had one of his shoes sucked off in the muck as you crossed the creek and little Zelda began whining and crying that she was so hungry that she couldn't possibly be carried another step. That's when you realize you need Llamas. They will carry that tired toddler, and the pack that carries the extra socks and shoes, an extra pair of pants for each kid, jackets for everyone, assorted Matchbox cars and trucks, Barbie dolls, tablets and crayons; all of Dad's fishing gear (are that many different kinds of bugs really necessary?), and an assortment of baggies full of stiff, dried fruit, those hard candies that always get glued together, pretzel crumbs, and some other stuff that looks like squirrel food (multiply that by three kids and you've got a K-Mart branch store!). Of course, those of us who have hiked and camped out with the aid of llamas know that you can eat in style when you don't have to limit the menu to freeze-dried peas and jerky trying to conserve on the weight on your back. We Llama hikers dine on fresh fruits and vegetables, savor entrees such as "Pork Medallions" and "Marinated Steak", and wash it all down with a chilled drink carried in a soft-side cooler -- all carried on the backs of our woolly friends who just enjoy following along and checking out the awesome scenery.


Or maybe you're trying to pry your kids' fingers off the Nintendo and get them interested in some hobby (something that doesn't involve a tire iron). Or, you hoped to teach them responsibility by getting them those cute little goldfish (that look like they've been doing the backstroke for 3 days now). Well, Llamas are, again, the perfect answer! They are fast catching on all across the country as an ideal 4-H project. They just seem to be on the same wave length as kids -- and the kids gain a new friend that really likes to hang out with them while they learn

things like responsibility and patience, and gain self-confidence and a sense of accomplishment (all BIG words sounding like something good for them that should never be said out loud in front of children lest they roll their eyes and leave the room muttering in that strange language they use).

Or maybe, you're a sheep rancher who's tired of providing the weekly buffet for the local relatives of Wily Coyote. The answer again -- you guessed it: Llamas! Word is out that Llamas are a great diet aid for insatiable coyotes. Having one of those long-necked, two-toed things running at them with head lowered and front feet striking convinces them it's time to beat feet!

Perhaps you're feeling a bit stressed out after a tough day in the concrete jungle (that hyena you work with really drives you up a tree, and your boss reminds you of a wildebeest); you need a way to unwind those corkscrew nerves, instead of a couple of highballs (can't afford the calories anymore with all those Jane Fonda disciples running around!). Voila! An invigorating stroll with your fuzzy little hummer will have your mood altered in no time (and it's not even illegal) -- and you didn't even realize you were doing something good for you at the same time. Why, you'll look like Cindy Crawford

Continued on page 33



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How Do I Buy My First LLAMA?

by *Alaine Byers*

You're now ready to make the leap into llamas. You've joined a local association, you've read pamphlets, read books, and viewed tapes on preparing your acreage and shelters. You've made their new home safe with predator resistant fencing and have ordered your grass hay and llama mineral supplements. We will take for granted that you've also set your goals for owning llamas in the first place; breeding, packing, pet, wool production, showing, 4-H, cart driving or guard llamas. Whatever the reason behind your llama purchase, there are some common factors involved to consider. Each of you want to enjoy your llamas. The enjoyment of owning and living with these wonderful creatures will be enhanced by purchasing healthy, "sound" llamas.

A sound animal simply means, "free from flaw, defect, disease or injury. Exhibiting normal health" (Murray Fowler). Sound llamas provide greater enjoyment because they are healthier and better producers (on the trail, milk, cria, wool). They will be more valuable to your operation.

Conformation is the second most important ingredient in your purchasing recipe. Again, no matter what the end use, good conformation, or how your llama is proportionately put together, should be a top priority in your purchase. Good conformation results in a balanced, free flow of movement. If your llama is to perform a specific function, a more detailed observation is called for. A pre-purchase exam of potential breeding, pack or show llamas should provide an in-depth survey of heart, reproductive, respiratory, sight and limb condition. No llama is perfectly conformed. So, by also using your powers of observation, prioritize

each llamas weaknesses and its strengths according to your goals. And ask questions! Get to know the breeder. Do they offer reproductive guarantees? Do they supply complete medical, birthing and breeding records? Observe the function of their llamas and the priorities of their breeding programs. Get to know bloodlines. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the various lines? Obtain an "eye" for movement and conformation not only in a particular llama you're interested in but the other family members as well.

You may choose to purchase through auction, privately run sales or from a particular ranch. Though there are advantages and disadvantages to all of the above, buying privately from a breeder makes the most sense. (See "Selling off the Ranch," RMLA Newsletter, Sept. 1993.) Many breeders have opted to put more time and energy into self promotion and are able to provide you with background information, medical histories, photographs and video footage of their operation that enables you to do a lot of information gathering at home. Especially with video footage being provided, you can save yourself travel time and expense, learn a great deal and gain the "eye" we discussed earlier.

Attending llama shows is another way to educate yourself in a very fun and exciting way. You have the advantage of observing an "expert" make her/his judgements on conformation, disposition, wool quality and performance. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet and "talk llamas" with regional breeders and see some of the best these ranches have offer. Bringing llamas into your life is a reward in itself, opening avenues for new friends and life experiences. Enjoy!



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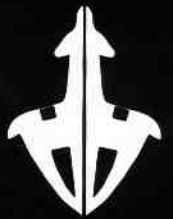




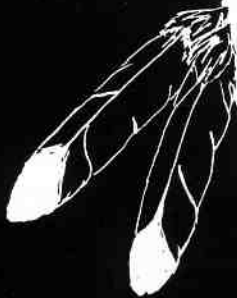
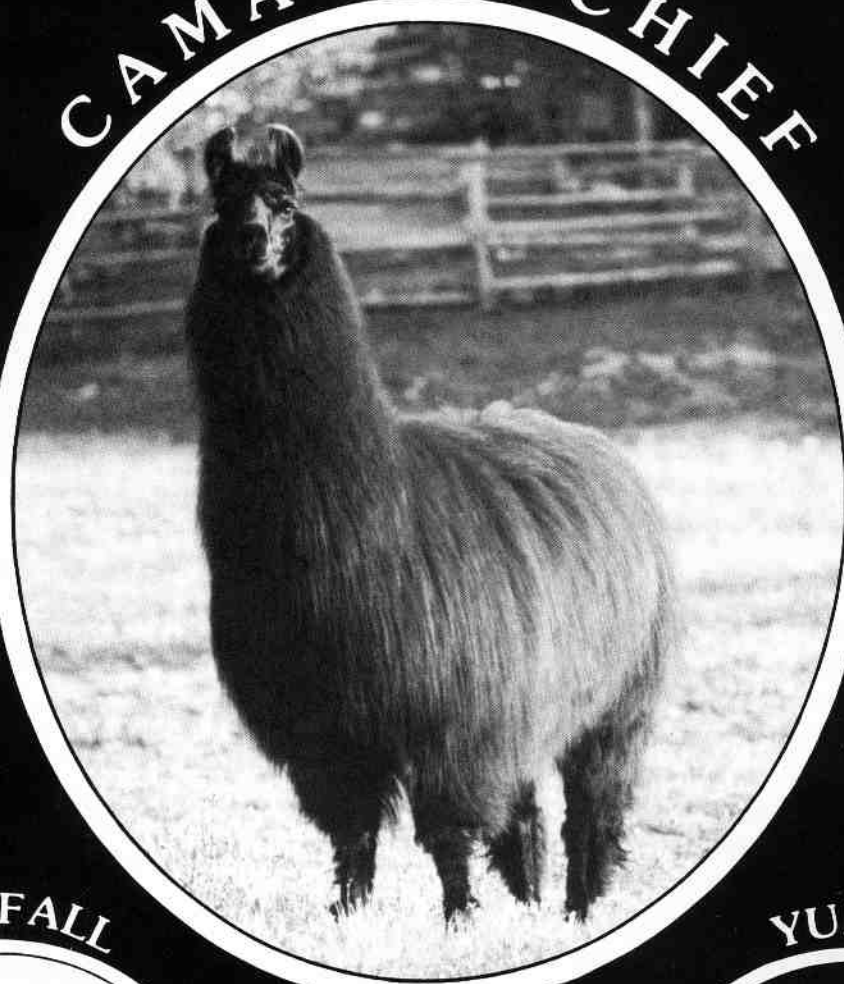
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A FINE AND PLEASANT MYSTERY

by *Charlie Hackbarth*

"..... backpacking is a refined sport, noted for lightness. The gear consists of such things as silk packs, magnesium frames, dainty camp stoves. Their sleeping bags are filled with the down of unborn goose, their tents made of waterproof smoke. They carry two little packets from which they can spread out a nine course meal. One packet contains the food and the other a freeze-dried French chef."

Patrick F. McManus

• *A Fine and Pleasant Misery*

You would like to continue to experience the wilderness but alas, you have turned forty! You have back pain, flat feet, weak knees and freeze-dried aphobia. Okay, maybe you're not falling apart physically yet. Maybe you are just tired of lugging around those 70 pound backpacks filled with unborn down and smoke. And now you have two kids to complicate things. You'll have so many packs protruding from your body that fellow hikers will be mistaking you for Big Foot - with a bad case of warts.

Fear not, there is still hope for you. Backpacking author, Cindy Ross and her husband Todd Gladfelter, thought their backpacking days were over, at least until their children were older. Yet their family just completed a two-month trek over 470 miles of The Colorado Trail. They traversed mountains at altitudes above 13,000 ft, averaging 10 miles a day during the trip. And they didn't have to send their kids to boarding school.

This amazing feat was not done with mirrors. Three well-trained and well-conditioned llamas carried the necessary supplies and three year old daughter Sierra. One year old Bryce, still in diapers, rode in a special pack on Dad's back. Todd and Cindy, who didn't own llamas before the trek, bought three llamas, pack equipment and a trailer before returning to their home in Pennsylvania. "I'm not an animal person" says Cindy, "and I hadn't planned on falling in love with them. We just needed them to do a job for us. The llamas are wonderful and I don't mind not carrying 60 pounds. In fact, I don't care to do it again."

People, young and old, from California to Florida, hiking 13,000 foot peaks and flat prairies, are enjoying seeing the back country with llamas as their packing companions. Llamas are their inspiration for getting out, and in some cases the link between them and the country around them.

What makes llamas such great pack animals? They have been bred for packing in South America for over 5,000 years. Llamas are made for packing. They are agile, sure-footed and can go places even horses can't go. They don't tear up the trail. Compared to other large animals used for packing, llamas are very safe around children. Five year olds are leading llamas up wilderness trails regularly. Llamas are intelligent, hard working, non-complaining trail companions that are easy and economical to care for. It took me years to find a human companion with those qualities!

Hunters like llamas because of their calm quiet nature, tremendous eyesight and keen hearing. Gun shots and packing out game seem to be second nature to llamas, and they are easily transported to the trail head. Commercial outfitters like them because clients aren't intimidated by the llama's size and nature - an average male llama is under 6 feet at the head and weighs 330 pounds, yet he will carry 60 to 100 pounds. Amateur and professional photographers and artists are using llamas to get their equipment into the back country, and llamas are trail companions for trail runners, allowing them to take extended trips.

Packing isn't the only reason people are buying llamas. Llamas are beautiful animals. Their alert posture, large eyes, soft wool, interesting behavior and personalities make llama owners say things like, "I can't see myself not having llamas around."

If you are interested in using llamas as pack animals, keep one thing in mind. Wonderful as they are, like people, all llamas do not perform at the same level. Mental and physical make-up, training, conditioning, general health and the owner's knowledge of packing and pack equipment all play a part in the pack llama's ability to

Continued on page 46



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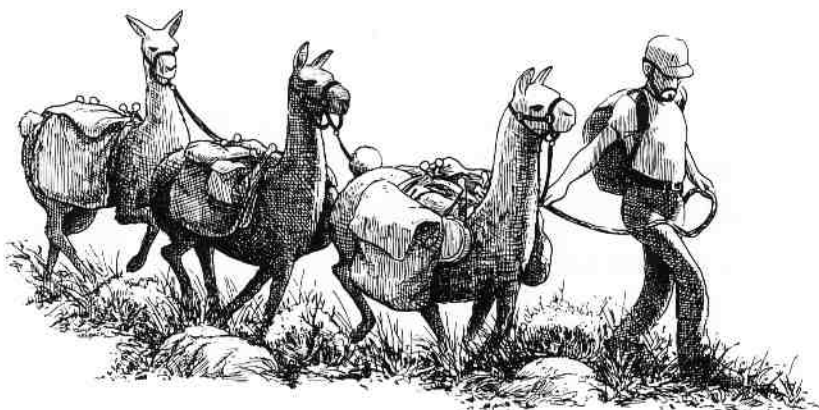
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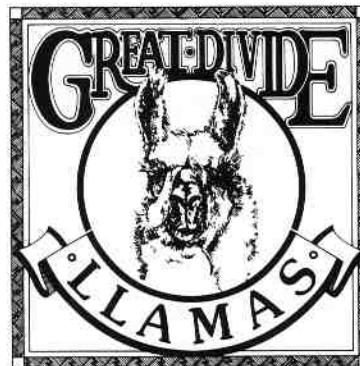
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SMILE, YOU'RE DRIVING A LLAMA

By Jerry Dunn

The snow is still flying in the high country, but the days are becoming warmer with each Chinook which has encouraged my aspen trees to begin budding. My driving llama has wintered well and looks like a lumpy rag rug with pieces of hay and straw sticking out in all directions. Today feels like a great day to renew the grooming ritual and go for a drive. Spring always stirs the inner drive in me to clean and put things in order for the summer. After blowing away the winter dust and brushing out the winter treasures in his wool, I check teeth and toenails and do the required maintenance.

A good starting point is to review the basics with my driving llamas, check out the new pot holes in the road and seek out new, interesting places to drive. We begin by walking our favorite routes and practicing the verbal commands of walk, trot, whoa and back. He remembers! We visit the greenbelt where we are greeted by young skateboarders with dogs pulling them along, baby carriages, and curious joggers. Next stop is Pet's Mart, a pet supermarket chain. Here manners are reviewed by standing quietly while children playfully look under his tail and touch his toenails. We revisit the store frequently just for fun and publicity. Each visit is a challenge!

The snugness of the girth strap on the surcingle is a good indicator of the quality of our hay during the winter and certainly suggests ground driving road work is in order. Ground driving is one of the best ways to get in shape with your llama. The pace is quick and exhilarating and purposeful. My llama trots, I WALK, briskly! In the beginning of the season the ground driving outings are 30 minutes, or about 2 miles long. As the season progresses we work on change of pace and turning around obstacles. Frequently, my dog will go with us and everyone gets their exercise and training. I'm always looking for different kinds of terrain to ground drive over to keep the outings fun and interesting.

The next order of business is to check the harness and cart for needed repairs and maintenance. The harness undoubtedly will need some adjustments in order to fit my over conditioned winter llama. I use a damp cloth for cleaning the nylon harness and remove the nylon pads and throw them in the washing machine. The tires on

the cart need air and the shafts need a touch of spray paint and it's done.

I often fantasize during the cold, snowy winter about the first drive of the season, the joy of passing through the scenery driving my llama to cart. Today, the drive will be through the old Fairmount neighborhood of small farms and tree nurseries. A full thermos of French vanilla coffee and cream and warm gloves will make the drive comfortable and much more pleasant, Targhee and I venture down the driveway at a nice easy pace. I think people in the neighborhood also look forward to our first outing of the season. They offer friendly waves and a cheery hello as we pass by. Targhee smiles back in return! The pace quickens and horses along pasture fences lift their tails and flee the strange looking vehicle rolling down the street. Dogs jump up and down greeting us with happy barks and yelps. Targhee leans into the breast collar as we start up the hill to the greenbelt and he keeps his pace nice and even. Shortly, we are at the top and we stop for a moment so I can take a couple of sips of hot coffee. We move on down over the hill heading home. Targhee's ears focus on something behind us, and then I hear it. The sound comes from a horse drawn vehicle. It's my neighbor from down the street, a fellow driving enthusiast and trainer. They pull up along side of us on a quiet street and we drive along together talking. How strange it must look to see a tall Standard bred moving along side a little round llama! We enjoy our chat and turn our separate ways at the corner.

Arriving home, I remove the cart and harness and give Targhee a good massage to relax the winter muscles. He shakes his whole body in response to the therapy and smiles!

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Continued on page 42

LLAMAS FROM A MEDICAL POINT OF VIEW

by *Tim Thompson, DVM*

Ah, Llamas. The curious, inquisitive, big brown eyes of these intelligent fuzzy creatures will take you in. The noble history of these animals in their native South America draws you to them with an insatiable appetite to learn more.

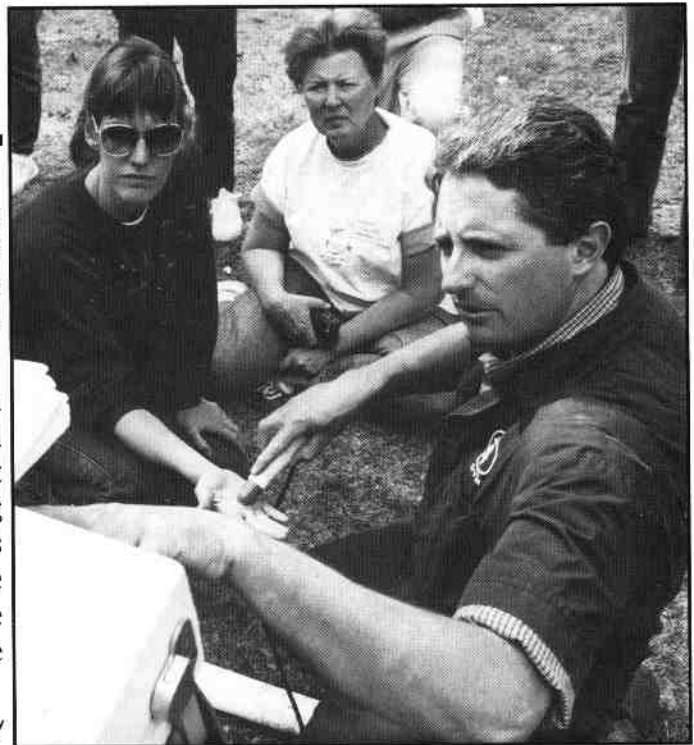
The wool invites you to bury your fingers in it. It makes the nicest sweaters! If you have a yen for mountain climbing, they are the perfect companion. If you get into primping and fluffing and socializing at animals shows, these animals are stunning in the show ring. Now, if all of these attributes aren't enough to draw you to these camelids, then ponder this... these animals are easy to care for, with few health problems.

Llamas thrive on a simple diet of grass and/or alfalfa hay. You must go easy on the grain - these animals easily become fat. We humans are envious at how well they hide those extra pounds. Unfortunately, laying down extra weight internally is not healthy and one of the greatest threats to our frugal beasts. Llamas are ruminant animals with an efficient digestive tract; they rarely colic like the horse.

Llamas require few vaccinations. We generally only recommend a combination clostridial/tetanus vaccine once a year. Worming at least annually is also a good idea. Llamas only need to have their toenails trimmed occasionally, no expensive farrier needed here.

Males that aren't to be used for breeding should be castrated making them a gentler beast and easier to train.

If you have never owned a llama - give it a try! These humming, gentle beasts are perfect for calming the jangled nerves of a stress filled world.



Dr. Thompson demonstrating an Ultrasound machine at the Education Seminar.



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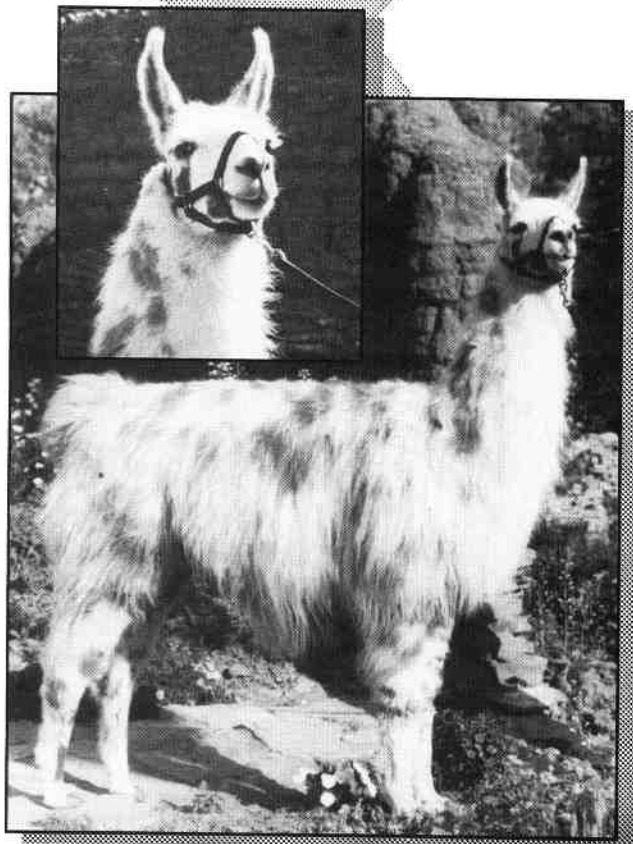
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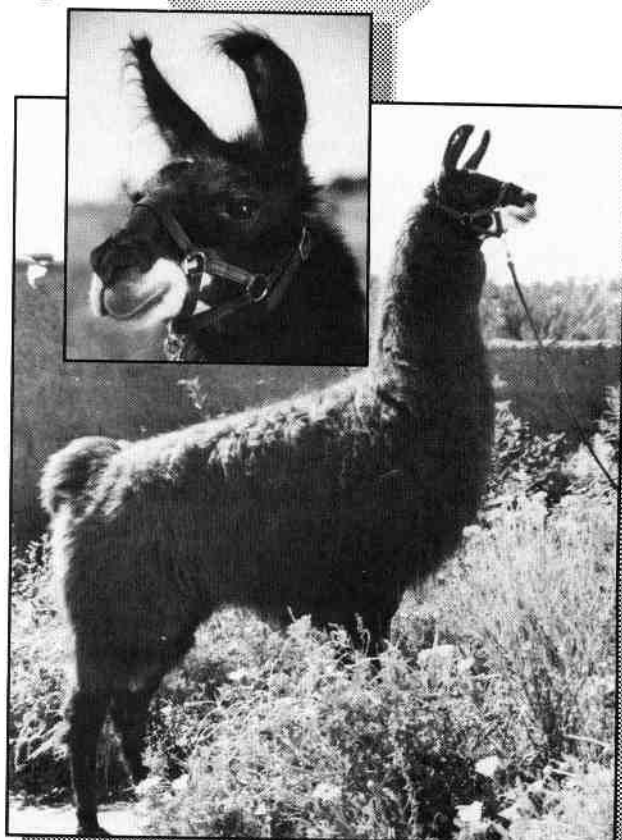
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THE COLORADO TRAIL WITH LLAMAS AND CHILDREN

by Cindy Ross

As soon as the first shreds of light appear, my husband, Todd, throws off his sleeping bag, pulls on his long underwear, and crawls out of the tent to "go to work." We are hiking the entire 470 mile Colorado Trail through the Rockies with our one year old son, Bryce, our three year old daughter, Sierra, and three llamas. The "work" that we're doing out here is collecting data for two books. One is a narrative about our Colorado adventure, and the other book is *KIDS IN THE WILD*, about taking your children into the outdoors to all sorts of sports, hiking with pack llamas being one. It will be published by The Mountaineers Books, Seattle, in the spring of 1995.

Todd and I have a past heavy in long distance backpacking. We've both hiked the entire 2,100 mile Appalachian Trail and I've written and illustrated a book about that journey, entitled *A Woman's Journey*, (Appalachian Trail Conference, Harper's Ferry, WV). We've also hiked the Pacific Crest Trail with its accompanying book, *Journey on the Crest—A 2600 Mile Walk From Mexico to Canada* (The Mountaineers). But we had abandoned our beloved sport when the children entered our lives.

We'd seen llamas on the Pacific Crest Trail, carrying gourmet picnics for "clients." We had no desire to hike with them while we were fit and strong enough to get our bodies into the backcountry under our own steam. But times have changed. Llamas are our ticket back in. They make it possible to carry the 20 lbs. of dry diapers (40 lbs. when wet), the diaper rinsing bucket, rain rubbers, golf umbrellas (for keeping the kid's dry when walking in the rain) bibs, books, balloons, Barbies, Tonka trucks, and lots of extra clothing for accidents in the night and sloping in creeks. And one llama carried forty

pound Sierra on the very unique Mt. Sopris Saddle. We rolled foam pads and strapped them to the tops of the panniers and put one across the back so she would be very safe and secure as she rode.

We initially looked at the llamas as mere beasts of burden, but after the first week on the trail, we began to grow extremely fond of them. We even began plotting how to get some of our own so we could continue hiking with our children. (The llamas we used on the Colorado Trail were lent to us by the Buckhorn Llama Co. of Masonville, CO). It would be a long time before the kids could carry their own weight.

Sierra fell in love with her llama, Berrick. He was so cautious while carrying her across scree slopes, slippery trail, plank bridges. She talked to him as they hiked, pointed out interesting things, and consoled him when the grazing cows came too close for his comfort. When she wasn't riding, she led him 2-3 miles a day, making her a strong hiker and teaching her about pacing.

Llamas gentle disposition and children go hand in hand. Bryce was at the age where he was testing and the llamas were not spared. We caught him attempting to drop rocks on their feet and poke them in the sides with tent poles. They did nothing to him but tried to move away. We were hoping he'd get spit on to teach him a lesson, but contrary to popular belief, they rarely spit at people. Llamas are very intelligent and can sense a child's vulnerability and innocence. Our kids could play at their feet and they were perfectly safe.

Both kids fed them grain in the evenings and led them from the site to saddle and unsaddle, which

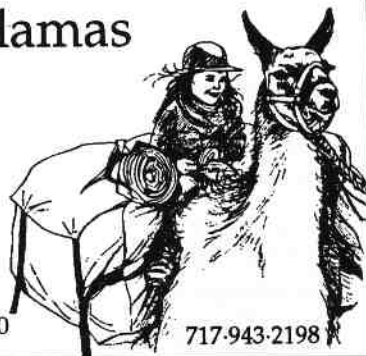
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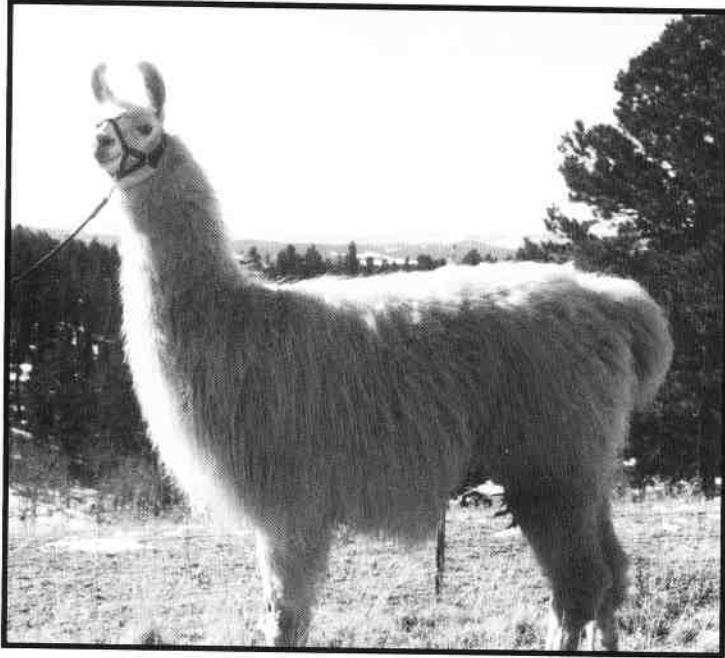


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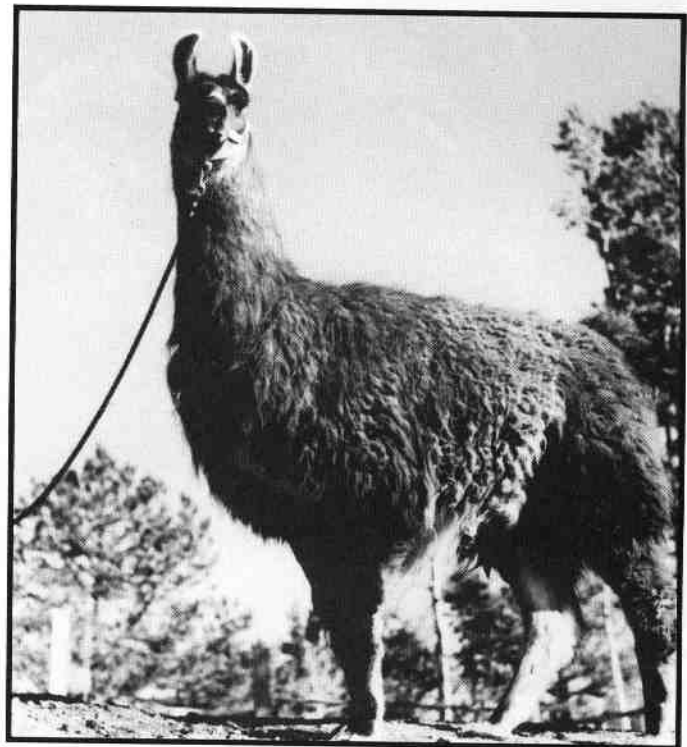
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LLAMAS AND 4-H

by Karla Goodman

Welcome to the wonderful world of llamas! Working, growing, and communicating with llamas through children, and as a child, is a very gratifying experience. A llama follows - almost instinctively knows to stand still or to move softly, slowly around children.

With all this in mind, what naturally occurs next is the llama 4-H project. Please keep in mind that llamas are very new to the 4-H livestock arena, whereas horses, sheep, pigs, and cattle have been in this arena for years. Hopefully, in the near future, llamas will be listed as an independent livestock project, but for now THEY ARE NOT. As well, there are reluctant county extension agents out there that balk at having llamas as a project, while others leap at the opportunity! Just imagine! The llama project encompasses other 4-H projects into one - sheep (fiber production), horses (training, showmanship, packing), and crafts (fiber utilization). Llamas are probably the least intimidating livestock animal as they are such quick learners and easy to handle. Due to the fact that llamas are new to the 4-H extension

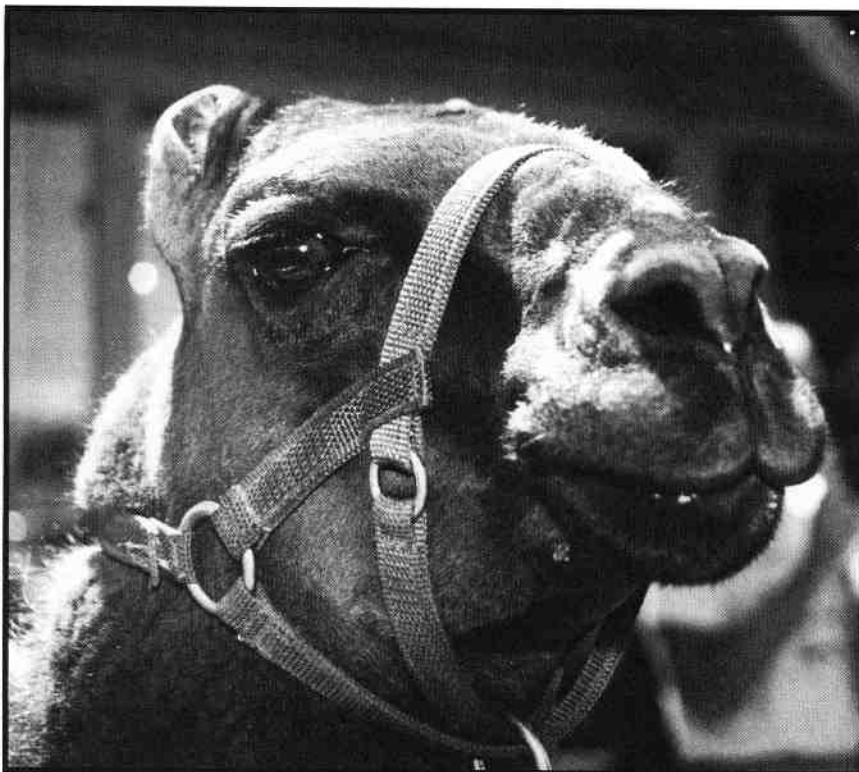
agencies, many people will need to learn about llamas in the 4-H system.

How does a llama club get started? Several approaches have been used: 1) introduce llamas to an already established 4-H club, 2) start a new club, which may have children wanting to participate in other 4-H projects, or 3) start a new club that is llama specific.

Interested 4-H leaders need to discuss llamas as a 4-H or club project with their local county extension agent. The decision to have llamas as a project will be based greatly on the number of children participating. If there are only a few children (3 or less), it's probably be a good idea to share this project with a neighboring county. Club get-togethers can then be alternated between the counties, if so desired.

After the children have been gathered and the county extension agent talked to, the next step is collecting written materials and other such items to get the club going. Llamas have so far been used in the

Continued on page 21



LISTEN UP

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4-H (con't)

"Independent study" category of the 4-H system. Currently llama associations throughout the United States have gone together to produce a uniform, up-dated youth manual. This will be available April, 1994. The leader's manual, and specialty manuals (packing, fiber use, cart driving, etc.) will follow. Record manuals will not be available as I have encountered many situations in which the children have developed their own record book, or the state already has a uniform livestock record book. It is imperative that the record books be used accurately and timely. Why? This is perhaps the most important aspect of any livestock program, whether a person has 2 animals or 300. Accurate record keeping is important in maintaining any type of herd as well as keeping your sanity during tax season! RMLA also has an extensive library with books and videos available for all stages of llama use, care, and training. Be creative in your llama uses and exposure to the public. Probably the most rewarding aspect of children and llamas is the child's capability to interact with an adult who has little or no knowledge of llamas.

Next comes the fair! This is the greatest oppor-

tunity for children to demonstrate the skills they have learned the past year in 4-H. The county fair board in your area is probably ready, willing, and able to assist in getting "show time" accomplished.

A WORD OF SAFETY DURING PARADES AND FAIR TIME: It is very important that the llamas and horses be kept separate. Many horses do not handle encounters with llamas very well. Therefore, for the safety of all people and all animals, these 2 livestock need to be kept apart.

And finally, here come the ribbons! If I could give each child a blue ribbon, I would. It takes a lot of effort on some children's part to be able to walk out in a large arena in front of many people and to be and do their best.

References? Use, use, use the llama associations, breeders, and owners in your area, or call one of the RMLA board members. Many are more than willing to assist in all aspects of llama care, training and management. Need a vet? RMLA has a "vet network" which is designed to assist vets in many locations throughout the United States in the care of ill or injured animals.

Continued on page 44

WHAT CAN I DO WITH LLAMA AND ALPACA WOOL?

by Chris Switzer

Knitting and weaving with handspun llama or alpaca yarn is wonderful! There are all sorts of possibilities - hats, mittens, scarves, shawls, vests, sweaters, pillows, blankets, rugs, wall hangings and tapestries. It's another way to enjoy animals - using their wool.

Preparation of fibers makes a difference in the handspun yarn you end up with. It's possible to lightly **tease open** the wool and spin from there. **Carding** will yield a rolag of fibers that go in different directions - a **woolen** yarn will result. **Combing** will align fibers so a smoother, **worsted** style yarn is possible.

Plying is twisting two or more yarns together in the opposite direction from the way they were spun. (**Z** is to the right and **S** to the left - hold up a piece of yarn and see which angle the fibers go.) Usually yarn is spun to the right (**Z**) and plied to the left (**S**), but other combinations are possible. After plying, washing the skein of yarn, and then weighting it to set the twist, is done. (Shrinkage is almost nil.) After drying, the skein is ready to use in knitting, crochet or weaving projects.

A two-ply yarn is stronger and has more "give" than a single. Commercial yarns are often very thin with a 3 or 4 **ply**. (Untwist the end of a yarn and you'll see how many pieces have been plied together.) A plied yarn is generally recommended for knitting or crochet - it is also better for the warp in weaving.

Elasticity is not as good with llama and alpaca as with sheep's wool. Most people learn to spin using sheep's wool. Later, it's good to blend 50%-50%. After more practice, then all llama or alpaca can be spun. A finer, softer, slippier fiber, llama or alpaca is more difficult for the beginner - but soon, experience and practice will help.

Another suggestion is **blending** other fibers with llama or alpaca to get a certain "look" for the final project. Adding a second color to the hand carders during preparation, in thin stripes or a checkerboard, will yield a variegated yarn. This gives a tweedy appearance when knitted into an item. Blending mohair (from the Angora goat) will add fuzziness and lighten the shade, since it is white. Experiment with 10%-20% on the hand

carders and then use a drum carder for larger quantities. Silk will add strength, but more importantly, its luster will give spots of contrast to reddish brown, dark brown or black. Apply wisps of silk to the hand carders first, on a diagonal, and then add the llama or alpaca. Card only once, (true blending takes removal and reapplication several times - silk is an exception). For ultimate softness, blend 10%-20% angora rabbit with llama or alpaca. It is a short staple, so combine with short to medium llama or alpaca fiber.

Another possibility is to ply two colors of llama or alpaca together - or ply two different fibers together (ex. - one ply llama and one ply mohair). Knitting a swatch or handweaving a square is also helpful for gauge and color proportions.

Think about what the project will be before spinning. Decide if a tight twist or a soft, lofty yarn is needed. Remember that plying will slightly untwist the yarn you've produced. Spinning styles are an important consideration - will the handspun yarn be for a garment or a more utilitarian item?

For knitting, choose your stitches and pattern wisely. Remember that elasticity can be a problem. Consider blending some sheep's wool with llama or alpaca for the ribbing on a hat, mittens, vest or sweater. Experiment first with a 20%-50% sheep's wool blend.

Weaving projects are enhanced with the use of some handspun yarn. Side stripes or a center interest area in the **warp** of a scarf will be very successful. Color emphasis in the warp of a shawl or blanket will add special interest. As **weft** (the yarn put on a **shuttle** going back and forth), handspun llama or alpaca will give texture - a blend with mohair works well with this in a garment. Some weavers produce fabric using handspun yarns and then cut and sew their garment. Others shape a sweater vest on the loom. It also works well to weave each part of the garment from one warp - ex. fronts, back and sleeves - and then put the pieces together.

So, have fun - use those brushings or shorn fleece - spin it and then knit or weave a project! We'll be looking for you at the next conference.



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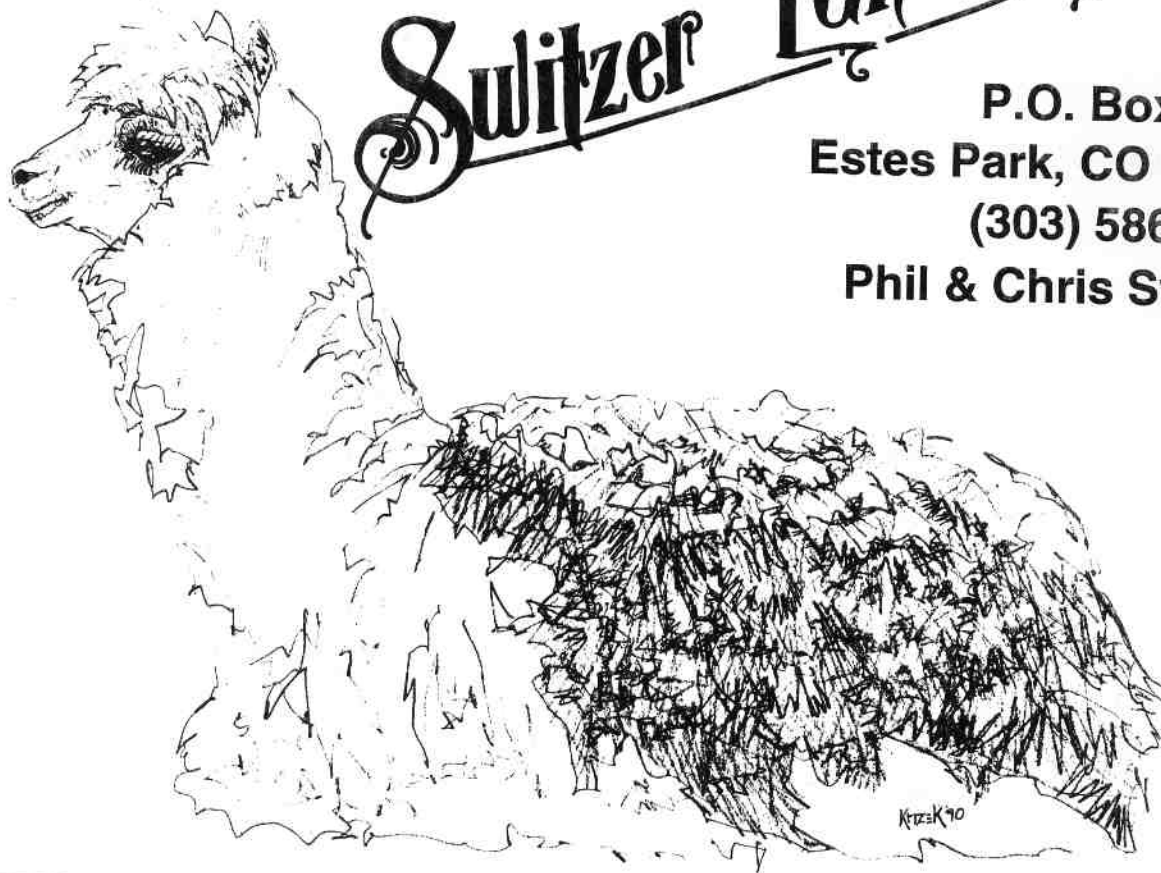
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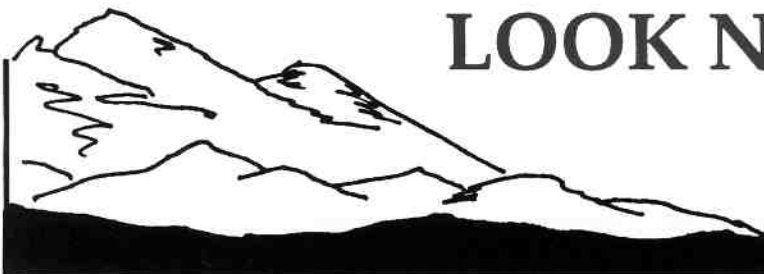
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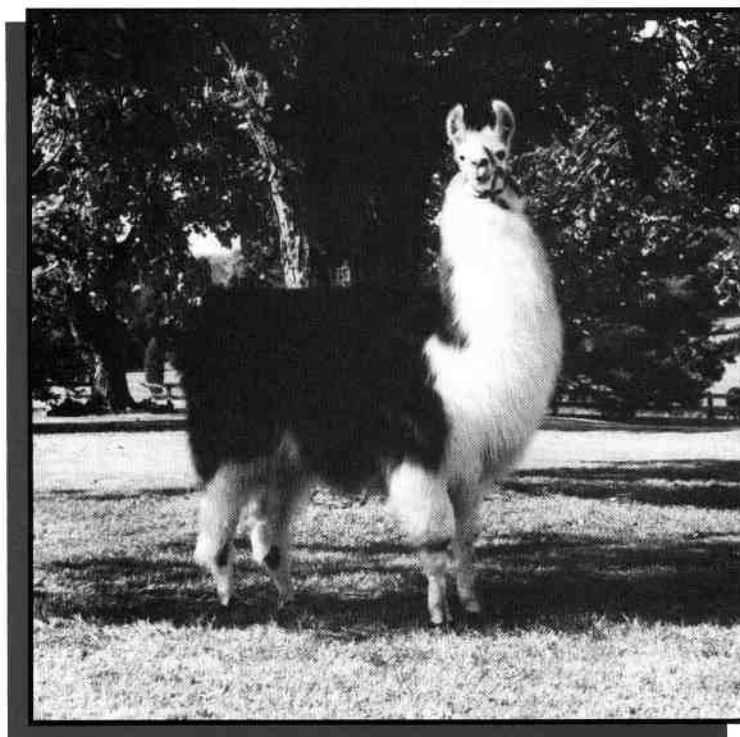
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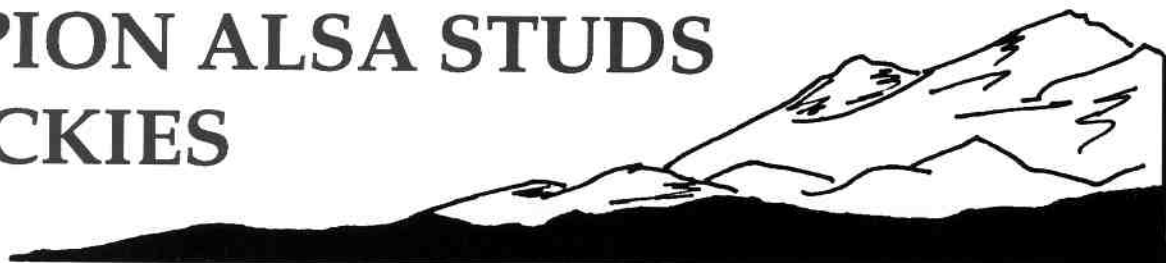
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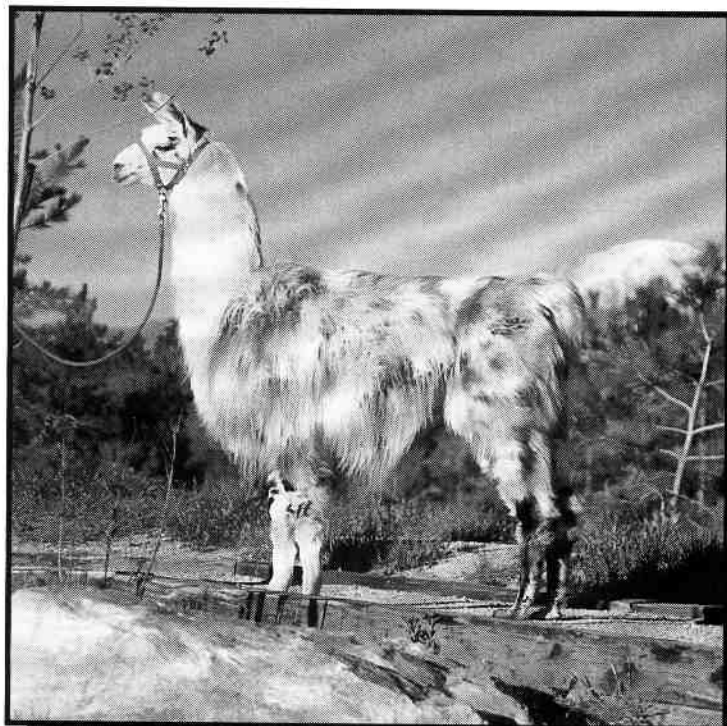
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SPINNING: HOBBY FOR A LIFETIME

by Sally German-Rucker

I used to gaze at my llamas and was fascinated by their rich variety of colors and their beautiful hair blowing in the breeze. I began grooming them to show and couldn't bear to part with any of that soft, wonderful fiber. My barn (like the barns of all llama owners) began to fill with bags of fiber. The rest, as they say, is history (or is it compulsion?). I took spinning lessons and was totally hooked. Next came weaving, knitting, crocheting, felting and finally, a commercial fiber business run out my barn. This hobby so enriched my life that my children and husband couldn't resist learning to spin and neither should you!

I recommend that you learn from an expert so that you don't develop bad habits that will later have to be unlearned. If no one is available, Ashford does have a video and there are many detailed good books. It is certainly possible to learn on your own. Be prepared for initial frustration and don't give up! Spinning feels compli-

cated at first, but once you coordinate your hands and feet with practice, you will find it relaxing. Many spinning and weaving guilds and shops rent wheels and looms. Try out several types before you buy.

While you are learning, you may want to send your wool off to a carding company to be washed and carded. This is not expensive and the fiber is much easier to handle. Beginners often find it easier to spin llama if it is mixed with a little sheep's wool. It won't be long before you are spinning 100% llama.

Llama fiber is hollow and it is lighter and warmer than wool. I suggest that you learn to spin it finely and ply it (twist several strands together) to get the yarn thickness you want. This process adds elasticity and airiness to your finished product. You may want to ply it with various commercial yarns to add texture and interest. Don't worry about thick, nubby first handspun. It is wonderful in weaving, wall hangings and

Continued on page 35

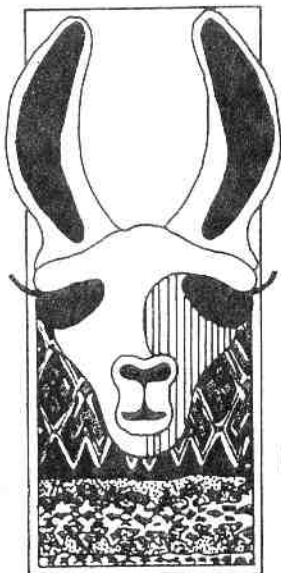
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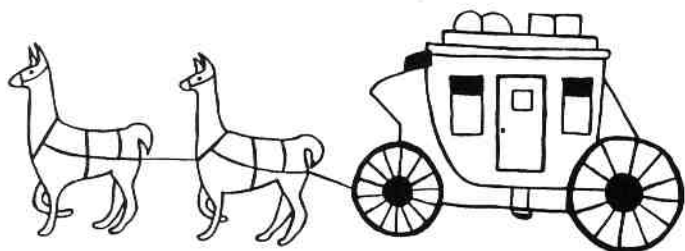
Check if interested in working in these areas/on these committees:

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ALPACAS: JUST THE FACTS!

by Phil Switzer

BACKGROUND BASICS:

Alpacas are members of the camel (camelid) family. Camelids originated on the central plains of North America. Three million years ago, the ancestral camelids migrated to South America. By the end of the last ice age, camelids became extinct in North America. The ancestral camelid developed into the present day wild vicuna and wild guanaco of the Andean highlands (Peru, Bolivia, and Chile) of South America. About 5000 to 6000 years ago the natives began the domestication of the vicuna into the present day alpaca as a fiber producing animal. They developed in the alpaca the following characteristics:

Very fine, soft, dense fiber.

Medullated, or hollow fiber, with very warm insulative properties. Fiber that is almost free of guard hair and is "no itch fiber."

A small, very gentle, submissive animal for ease of shearing. Over 20 natural colors that would not have to be dyed.

Today (1994) there are about 4000 alpacas in the United States and Canada. Almost all of these alpacas have been registered and blood typed with the International Lama Registry. The blood typing helps to insure the purity of the breed.

PHYSICAL FACTS:

Life span: About 18-20 years; average height: 3 feet at shoulder and 4.5 feet at the head.

Average weight: Adult, 150-185 lbs. Average gestation: 11 months. Baby, 16-20 lbs.

BIRTH:

A baby is normally delivered without human assistance during morning daylight hours. Twinning is extremely rare. The babies are normally up and nursing within 90 minutes. They are weaned at 5-6 months.

REPRODUCTION:

Females are first bred at 13-18 months of age. Alpacas are induced ovulators and can be bred at any time of the year.

COLOR:

Fiber colors range from a true non fading black to brilliant white with roans, pintos, browns, reds, fawns, rose grays, charcoal grays, and many others.

FIBER PRODUCTION:

The average production is about 4 pounds per year per adult alpaca and sells (in a clean state) for about \$3 to \$6 per ounce. Shearing is recom-

mended every 1-2 years (depending on climate).

HEALTH:

Alpacas are very hardy, healthy, and easy to care for. In most cases you will only have your Vet out twice a year for shots and other maintenance procedures (depends on your area, ask your Vet).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

What are they used for? They are used for breeding stock, fiber producers, pets, light pack animals, therapy, and investments.

Are they intelligent? Alpacas are intelligent and easy to train. In just 1-5 repetitions they will pick up and retain many skills such as accepting a halter, being led, and loading in and out of a vehicle.

Who do you sell their fiber to? Handspinners, yarn shops and weavers are the major market for clean alpaca fiber. They love all the various colors of alpaca.

What and how much do they eat? Alpacas are ruminants with three compartment stomachs. They chew their cud like cattle and sheep. They are very efficient and only eat 2-3 bales of grass hay per month. In most cases, they require mineral supplements (ask your Vet).

Where can they be raised? In almost any climate. In very hot climates, yearly shearing is required along with misting or sprinklers and shade. In very cold climates, closed barns are recommended. In most climates, a three sided shelter is all that is required.

What is their personality like? Alpacas are very gentle and curious. They are social animals and can be pleasantly dependent on humans. With a little training they become great pets. Alpacas will occasionally spit at each other when they are competing for food or trying to establish their pecking order. Alpacas will not spit at people unless they have been abused by people.

What sounds do they make? Alpacas communicate with a series of ear and tail positions and body postures as well as a humming sound and a shrill alarm call when threatened by predators.

How much do they cost? (approximate in early 1994) Pet or fiber males begin at \$1,000 with stud quality males beginning at \$4,000 and many selling for \$10,000 or more. Weanling females begin at \$13,000 and bred females at \$16,000.

How can they be transported? They can be transported in a small station wagon (Subaru has

Continued on page 29

Rocky Mountain Llamas



Since 1978
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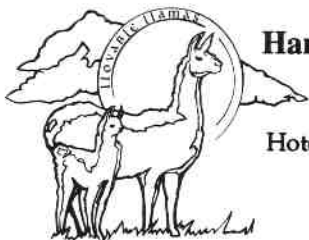
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ALPACA FACTS (con't)

been used) for short trips of an hour or so. They require larger vehicles such as a mini-van, full size van, small trailer, horse trailer, or large truck depending on how many and how far you are transporting them.

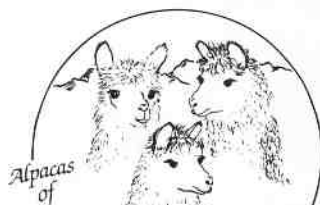
Where can I get more information? The Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association represents owners and users of alpacas. For the names of breeders and additional information about alpacas and services provided by the association, contact the Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association.



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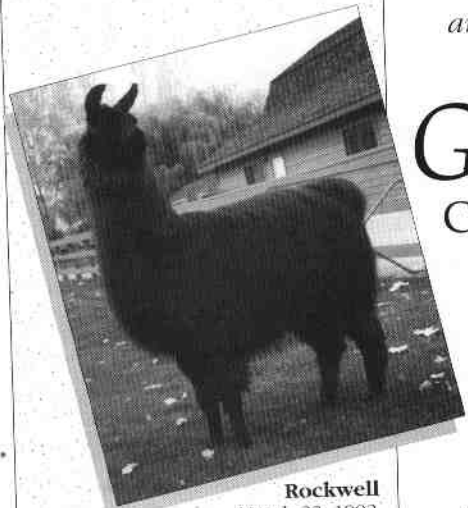
Preview evening of April 29, 1994

& 10:00 a.m., April 30, 1994

Sale at 1:00 p.m.

Sales Day phone: 801-399-8282

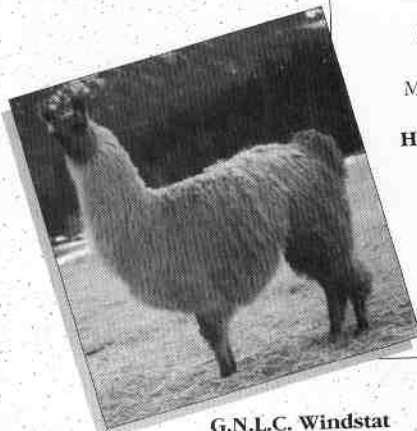
These top breeders are consigned to this sale.



Rockwell
March 22, 1992
The Fiduciary x PS Anisette
Porter Springs Llamas
Jay & Tamra Call, Perry, Utah



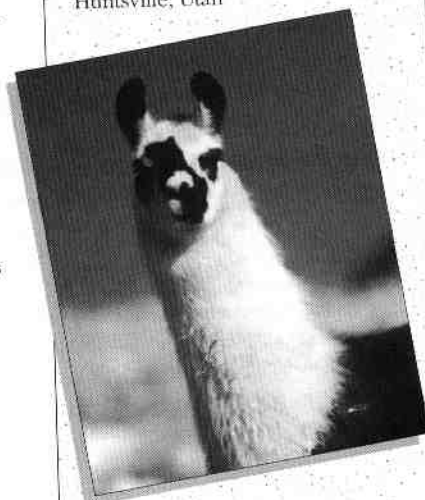
Hidden Valley Draumbuic
August 22, 1989
Hidden Valley Ivanhoe
x Hidden Valley Calico
Eastward Inn Eden Llamas
Gale & Marge Armstrong
Eden, Utah



G.N.L.C. Windstat
May 29, 1992
S.W. Cuvee x G.N.L.C. Vertigo
Great Northern Llama Co.
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B.T.M. ("Better than Most")
August 4, 1989
Andretti x Hans Sara
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Taylor Llamas
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A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN

by Bob Riley

One day I had a call from a 70-year-old lady who lives on a sheep ranch. She said that there are two things she has always wanted . . . a 4-wheel drive pick-up and a llama. Her husband said that was nonsense because they didn't need either. He died 6 months ago and now she has a Ford 4-wheel drive pick-up and was on the phone pricing out a llama.

Meka was not a show llama, nor friendly, nor woolly. In fact, he didn't get along with people or other llamas. The other boys in the field would pick on him and he always lost. He was definitely low man on the totem pole. He needed a new home.

I delivered Meka to the sheep ranch with the elderly lady with the pick-up truck late one evening. She was excited and her daughter and grandchildren were there for the big event. They tried to pet him, but Meka, being Meka, just danced away from them at the end of a firmly held lead. I released him into a corral where the sheep had been herded for the night. Coyotes are an ever present threat to sheep in the high mountains of Colorado.

Would he spook the sheep or would the sheep spook him? Maybe Meka would jump the fence and if so, this trip would be a waste. Meka was mildly curious and the sheep were mildly cautious. So far it looked promising. The plan was for Meka to spend the night in the corral, then be released the next morning with the sheep into an 80-acre pasture. I left with my fingers crossed.

That was two years ago. The lady with her 4-wheel drive pick-up and a guard llama are doing well. She has not lost any of her flock to coyotes now that Meka is on the job. The pasture fence is along a major highway and he keeps his flock safely away from the fence. If a perceived threat approaches (stray dog, coyote, etc.), he will position himself between the intruder and his herd.

Every night, when the lady comes out at 7:00 p.m. to open the gate to the corral, Meka will herd the sheep in. He's become her only ranch hand, a friend, and a guard llama with a purpose.

Llamas have a strong herd instinct, they like being with others of their own species. After being taken from their llama herd and placed with the sheep, they will adopt the sheep as their new herd. Being the largest of that new herd, they become dominant and protective. This protective instinct really kicks in at lambing. The llamas will eat the same forage as the sheep do. If the sheep are wormed or vaccinated, be sure to include the llama.

Research has shown us that llamas are effective at guarding sheep 95% of the time. Losses due to coyote or dogs dropped to zero on half of the sheep ranches with llamas. I feel that the llamas should be a castrated male at least 2-1/2 years old. Younger males will work as well but it may take them longer to become fully effective. Llamas suitable for guarding may be purchased for \$700 to \$1,200.

RMLA helped fund a study by Iowa State University entitled "Guard Llamas". Subjects that were covered include: Do Guard Llamas really work?; Introduction of Llamas to Sheep; What Works Best; Daily Care; Owner Satisfaction, Cost and Savings. Copies of this report are available from Iowa State University, phone 515-294-5247.



LLAMAS ARE THERAPEUTIC

by Sally German-Rucker

Most people who get involved with llamas seem to be what I call "warm-fuzzy" people. They often drag their more business-like spouses and friends into their web and before you know it these same people are spending hours talking to and simply gazing at these elegant and intelligent animals. The calming and relaxing effect they produce is often miraculous. I would love to have someone do research on the health benefits to type-A personalities when they own llamas.

The natural progression for all of this warm-fuzziness is the overwhelming urge to share the wealth. This has led llama owners to visit nursing homes, hospitals, and schools. Youth groups such as 4-H and FAA are springing up all over the country. Llamas are giving rides to handicapped children and pulling carts for the pleasure of everyone.

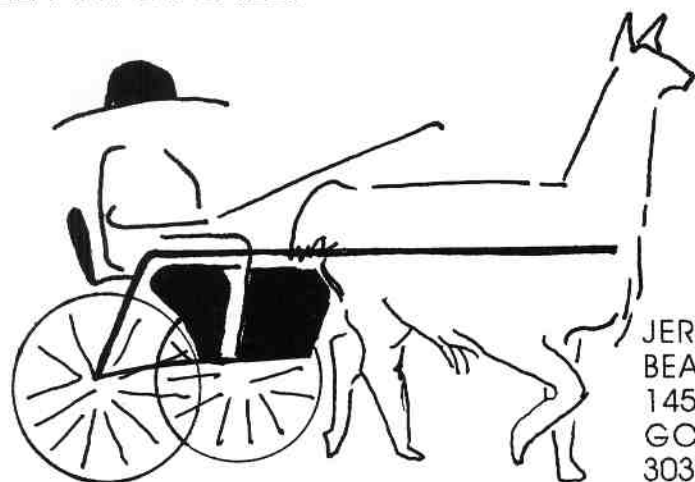
Llamas are ideally suited for "do-gooding." They are generally avoidance rather than aggressive animals. They do not exhibit push behavior unless they or their herd are threatened. They tend to move away from irritation rather than bite or kick. Spitting is very rarely directed at people and is usually

preceded by repeated warnings. I have never had a child, patient, or guest injured by a llama.

Llamas attract attention wherever you take them. They are large yet gentle, exotic yet approachable, aloof yet curious and finally they are aesthetically beautiful. Because of these qualities, they often reach people who don't normally respond to more common animals. Once contact has been made with the llama, people tend to want it to continue, because they find them so tacitly stimulating. Their wool is crucial to their success in bringing pleasure to those we are trying to reach. They also make eye contact and are genuinely curious about their surroundings. This makes people feel special and creates a bond which is very powerful. Llamas tend to remain calm in crowds, around unexpected noises and unfamiliar surroundings. This is especially true if they have been exposed to many situations and have come to trust their handlers. They have wide set eyes and see almost 360 degrees, so they are very kinetically aware. There are very attuned to their relationship to the space around them and they very rarely knock anything or anybody over in small areas.

Continued on page 40

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WANT A LLAMA? (con't)

and Richard Gere in no time! Not!! (Well, it's still good for you.) Or, if you really would rather ride, there's nothing more fun than a tour through the neighborhood in a Llama cart. You'll be more popular than the Energizer Bunny!

Llamas of late have been making headlines as participants in animal assisted therapy, working with handicapped and elderly patients. Shoot! Llama owners have known all along that these unruffled beasts are soothing to be around. Most of us llama owners have, at one time or another, headed out to the pasture after a round of lively discussion with our 'significant other' to spend some quiet time reflecting on what we wished we had said (but couldn't think of it at the time); the Llamas don't comment on our I.Q. or make suggestions on what we've been using for brains. As you sit there in the grass and, one by one, they quietly come over to sniff the top of your head or your nose with that velvet muzzle, you gradually forget what sent you there -- you're just glad you are there.

Did I mention that their wool is heavenly and sought after by hand spinners and weavers? And did I tell you about golfers using them as caddies on

the course? And that kid's can ride them? And that they're fast becoming a most popular show animal? And that my kids take them to school as a visual aid when they're learning about South America? And they probably make better pets than a dog because they don't bark or leave messes all over to step in, and they mow the lawn and make the flowers grow besides?

Whew! This list is really getting long! Why don't you just ask "Why wouldn't you want a llama?"



HIGH HOPES LLAMAS

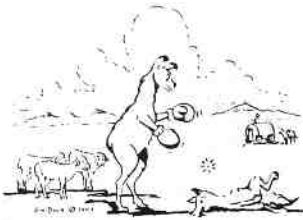
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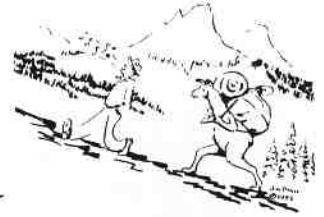
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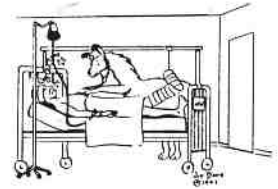
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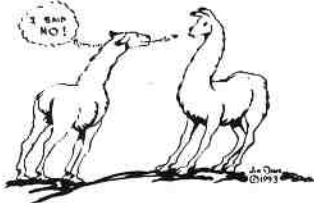
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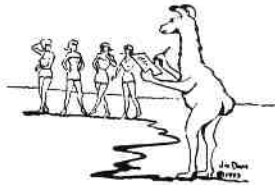
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#13



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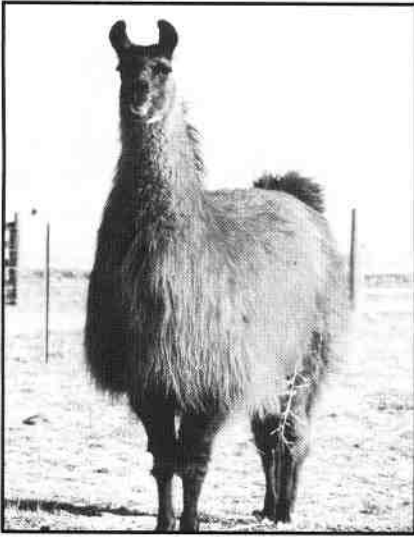
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_____	Mugs (#1 through #12)	\$7.00 each or Set of 12 for \$72.00	_____
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Llamarage

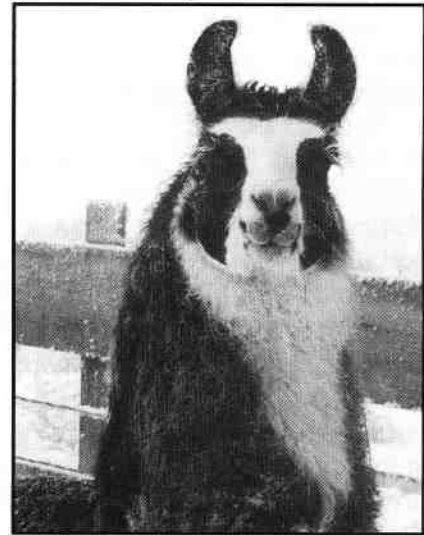
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SPINNING (Con't)

as ribbon for gift wrapping. I had to go back to class to learn how to spin like I did as a beginner.

Now that you have created this precious yarn, the real fun begins. Weaving uses 1/3 of the amount of yarn that knitting does and it is easy to mix your handspun with other yarns to make it go farther. Knitting uses less yarn than crochet, but crochet works up faster. I take my knitting and crochet with me everywhere and am amazed by the number of projects I can finish in the odd moments that used to be wasted. Remember to weave and knit loosely because llama wool is so warm. It takes only two to four ounces of llama to make a hat, so don't wait. Make something as soon as you have enough yarn. You'll be hooked!

If spinning turns out to be something you don't enjoy, don't despair. Felting is a very easy and tacitly wonderful way to play with your wool. If all else fails scatter your wool in ground squirrel holes (some say it scares them off) or let the birds

use it for their nests.

Be sure to attend the Rocky Mountain Llama Association Conference the end of September and take some of the many workshops which will be offered. A wool room will be set-up where you can network with all of us who are indulging in our fiber habits. We love talking about llama wool, teaching about llama wool, and most of all, playing with llama wool.



Pfour Pfrangles Llama Pfarm

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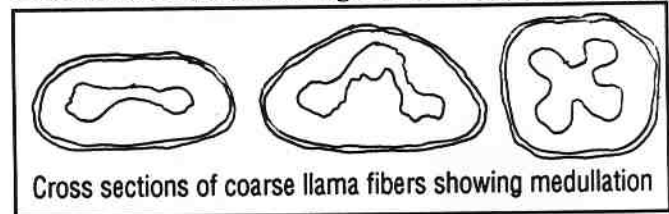
LLAMAS "CLOUDS", MEDULLAE AND MICRONS

By Sharon Beacham

"Would you like to hold a llama cloud?" Visitors to the llama barn at the Boulder County Fair were stopping to watch a spinning demonstration. It was fun to give them a "cloud" of drum carded llama wool and hear their reactions: "This is incredible, my hands are warmer already; feel how soft and silky it is; it doesn't weight anything", were typical comments as the "cloud" was passed around the group. Children lined up to turn the handle of the drum carder to make another "cloud" to be spun into yarn. The hands-on display of equipment, wool samples and knitted clothing caused people to stay and ask questions. Many left with a new word added to their vocabulary: Med'-ul-lat-ed: having a hollow core. This is one of the phenomena that causes llama wool to produce so much warmth with so little weight.


At the '93 Estes Park Wool Market, Patricia Wilson, Associate Professor, Textiles, from CSU, presented other interesting facts. Wool is a common, but inaccurate, term for the coat of a llama. Technically, it is a hair fiber, made of protein and having a cellular structure. If you were to examine a cross section of these hair fibers under a microscope,

you'd see that many are oval in shape with an elongated 1 or 2 section medulla. Others have 3 or 4 rounded sides containing a 3 or 4 section medulla.



The longitudinal view, under a high powered microscope, shows the medullation to be strongest, most continuous, in the heavier guard hairs, but interrupted, fragmented or even non-existent in the finer undercoat. When present, it forms 1/4 to 1/2 of the fiber's diameter. The exterior surface of each fiber is covered with serrated edge scales that overlap like shingles on a roof. Llama fiber has fewer scales than sheep wool which makes it more comfortable against the skin. Larger scales and absence of crimp causes guard hairs to be shinier than the undercoat fibers. Crimp is a natural wave pattern in the fiber. Its presence contributes to the elasticity of yarn and

Continued on page 41



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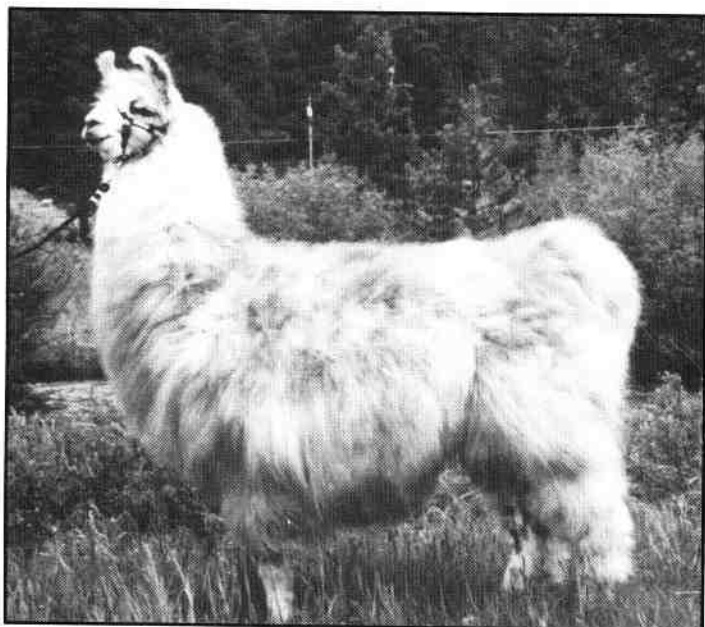
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1993 Grand Champion Heavy Wool: *Nebraska Llama Show; Burwell*

1994 1st Place Heavy Wool: *National Western Stock Show*

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ALSA: IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE FUTURE OF YOUR INVESTMENT

By Ron Baird

All of us who own, breed, raise, sell, and enjoy llamas have a vested interest in being members of the Alpaca and Llama Show Association (ALSA). You, me and every other llama owner relies on ALSA for the quality of the future herd - ours and the Herd. The Herd, especially in North America, is small relative to other breeds of animals and needs to be cared for, protected and guarded as to its quality. Buyers need to feel there is a quality standard that they can feel confident in and we as an industry need to promote our wares. ALSA shows are an easy and (take it from a novice) fun way to do it, exhibiting for breeding quality as well as performance capabilities.

ALSA is the North American association that sanctions llama shows, open to any exhibitor. A llama does not have to be registered with ALSA to be shown, nor does its owner have to be an ALSA member to be a participant in a llama show sanctioned by ALSA. This, in brief, means any-

one's llama can be a Champion of an ALSA show. Of course, there are non-ALSA shows and there can be champions of these shows as well. Every llama owner is constantly evaluating and looking for studs to breed to his or her llamas in order to improve herd quality. So as a result, we all tend to put faith in what are represented as quality animals based on their evaluation in shows. Therefore, it is important that the show system be strengthened and its quality improved.

Its very smallness (some 65,000 llamas in North America) makes the Herd susceptible to deterioration through breeding to inferior animals. Conformation, structure, and soundness of breeding animals are important criteria when making future decisions about the direction we are taking our herds. We would all like straight legs and backs, good balance, and the other attributes that improve the next generation of our animals. These are the principal standards by which judges in ALSA shows rank halter classes that are supposed to be the examples of that breed. We need the honest knowledge, therefore, that the sire we are looking to use is the best we can get. "Champion" or high point totals accumulated in many halter classes implies that.

We need to be able with confidence to say - or think - we have bred our animals to quality animals to improve our herd and our future. By having a wide variety of recognized quality animals to select from, we as an industry will be able to do that with more confidence. To have that wide variety of recognized quality animals we need a strong ALSA.

At this point, it is easy to think - if all this is being done already by ALSA, why should I be concerned about being an ALSA member? The answer is simple; \$\$\$\$. It takes money to keep any organization functioning and improve its performance for the benefit of the industry. We all, as llama owners, should want more shows to exhibit and judge animals in an effort to improve industry recognition, our sales, and the Herd. We all, as llama owners, need more recognized shows to demonstrate our animals' abilities and qualities. More shows mean more trained judges,

Continued on page 43

Squaw Creek Llamas

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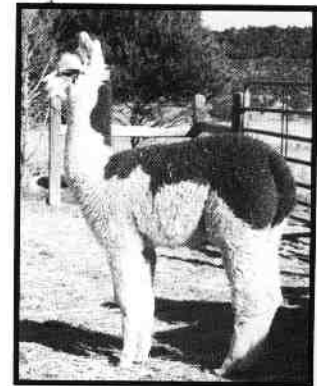
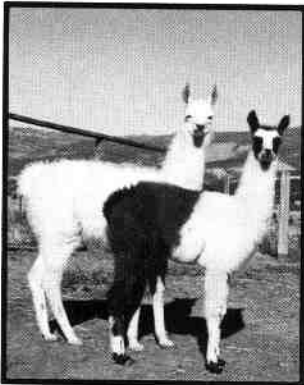
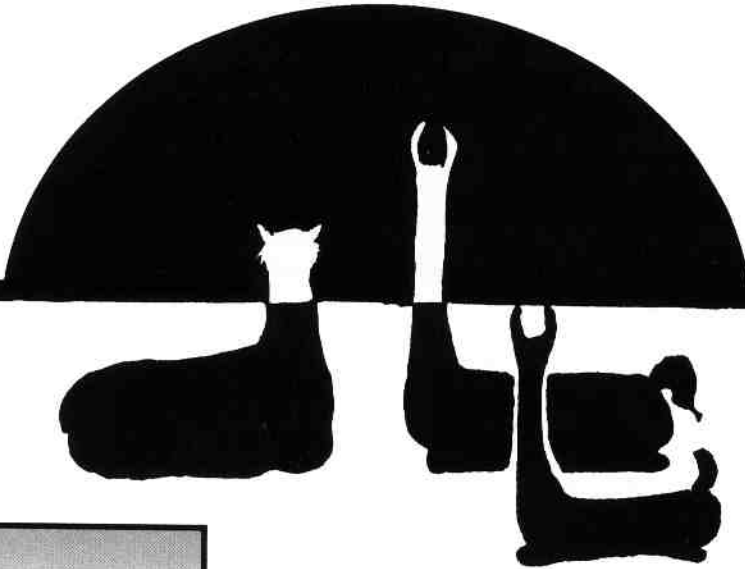


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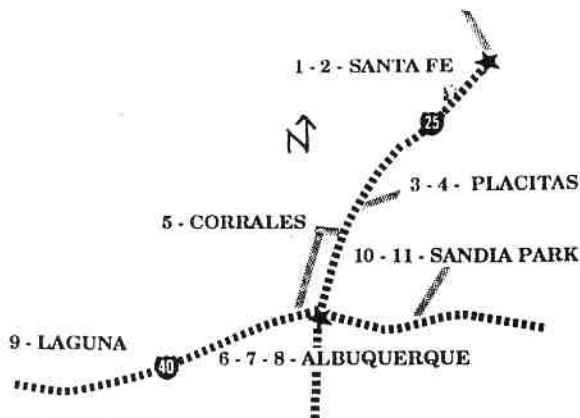
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"CLOUDS" (con't)

also creates tiny air pockets which add to the insulating value. There appears to be a correlation between guard hair diameter and crimp. Some llamas with distinct guard hairs will have a crimped undercoat, while some with intermediate to fine guard hairs have visibly less or no crimp.

The finer a fiber is, the softer it feels. The diameter is measured in microns --one millionth of a meter or 1/25,000 of an inch. The range of llama undercoats is 20 to 40 microns, with 27 to 30 being average. Guard hairs can be as thick as 90 to 150 microns. For comparison, alpaca fiber ranges from 20 to 40 microns, but 22 to 28 is average. By selective breeding, guard hairs have been eliminated from the majority of alpacas. Due to the similarity in micron count, clothing from South America labeled "Alpaca" will occasionally be blended with llama. It is definitely a luxury fiber. In this country, clean llama wool sells for \$2 to \$3 an ounce (\$32 to \$48 a pound) and is in demand by hand spinners. A medium or standard woolled llama can produce 3 to 5 pounds of usable fiber each year when shorn.

Depending on the breed, sheep wool can range from 17 to 45 microns. There are other variables in the quality of raw sheep fleece that make the price anywhere from \$4 to \$8 a pound. Up to half that weight may be lanolin and dirt.

Llama and alpaca fiber is generally stronger than sheep wool of the same diameter because of its internal structure. Some research studies have shown that increased pigment decreases strength. When comparing fibers of the same diameter, white fibers may appear to be thicker and stronger than black because they reflect light, but the difference in strength is actually due to less pigment.

Technical information this article is from the publication, *A Closer Look at Llama and Alpaca*, by Patricia A. Wilson, Associate Professor, Textiles, 1993 Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado. It is used with her permission.

If you would like to pursue this subject in more detail, the following are available to members from the RMLA library.

Fibre Facts, By Bette Hochberg, 1981, 333 Wilkes Circle, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

"Llama Wool, ILA Educational Brochure #9", by Beula Williams, 1993, P. O. Box 370505, Denver, CO 80207

"Spinning Llamas and Alpaca Wool", by Chris Switzer (class hand-out), 1990, Post Office Box 3800, Estes Park, CO 80517





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DRIVING (CON'T)

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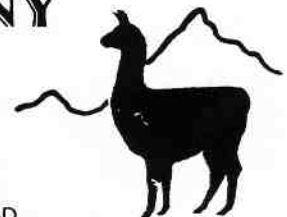
1. Keep your animal under control.
2. Anticipate the road ahead - traffic, dogs bicycles.
3. Treat your animal with gentleness and confidence.
4. Keep your outings within your experience and the llama's training level.
5. Encourage your llama to display good manners around other llamas.
6. Make sure your harness and vehicle fit properly and are in good repair.
7. Select fun, interesting places to drive.
8. Always display a slow moving vehicle sign on the back of your cart.
9. Drive down the right hand side of the road (North America).
10. Drive with a friend when ever possible.

Have a good time driving! Hope to see you at shows, fairs, and in the neighborhood.



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ALSA: (Con't)

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Membership in ALSA is a very small percentage of people who own llamas. The latest data available shows ALSA members number less than 500 llama owners compared to 5,591 members of the International Llama Registry. This means a very small number of people are financially supporting the organization that bestows recognized quality standard status on llamas in recognized show events.

Each of us has a significant financial investment in our llamas. That is true for the owner of one or two animals as well as the person owning a vast herd. When we stop and consider our initial investment and the annual investment we all make in our animals, the small investment to strengthen and improve ALSA is nothing.

It is important.

It costs just \$35.00 per year.

Registration of a llama with ALSA is just \$10.00 for a lifetime.

That \$35.00 per year may be the best investment in your herd and the Herd you ever could make. It could go a long way; multiplied by other owners thinking the same way, toward producing better llamas, better sales, and betterment of the breed.

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4-H (Con't)

A short message concerning "llama shows" at the county or state levels. It is not necessary to have an ALSA (Alpaca and Llama Show Association) judge nor follow ALSA rules unless the show is ALSA sanctioned. The halter and obstacle course classes can be judged by someone capable of judging horses. The showmanship class should be judged by a person having full knowledge of llamas.

More and more 4-H clubs have started just because of llamas. It does take time and effort on the leader's part, as this individual is now in a teaching position. Try not to forget nor to lessen the fact that the child develops a stronger self and can utilize skills for later in life - discipline, self-esteem, self-determination - and a gathered knowledge of respect to others, other beings, and oneself.



COLORADO TRAIL (Con't)

taught them responsibility.

As the weeks and the miles passed by, the exquisite beauty of Colorado Rockies became part of all of us. We absorbed their magic, and the lessons that the wilderness has to offer. The children grew in confidence, bonded as siblings, and really had the time of their lives.

Before coming back to Pennsylvania, we purchased a few llamas (Sierra's Berrick, of course), a horse trailer, (to bring them home!), for we will be starting a commercial pack llama business in the spring of 1995. With our previous experience in hiking and outdoor skills, coupled with our Colorado Trail Llama experiences, we feel we have a lot to offer. We will be specializing in custom trips for families, seniors, or anyone who yearns to go packing with these wonderful animals. And for those who are members of organizations who regularly seek speakers, we are available for workshops and have a very inspiring, multi-media slide presentation on our Colorado Trail experience. See you on the trail!

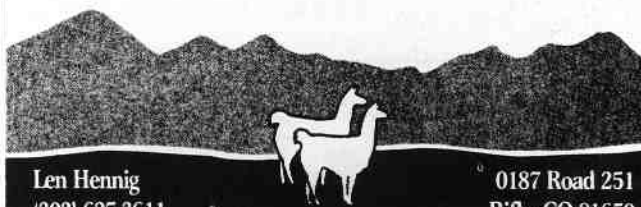




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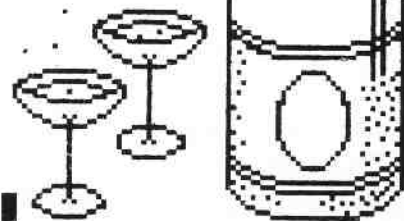
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A FINE AND PLEASANT MYSTERY (Con't)

perform well. The criteria used for choosing a llama suitable to pack for a 70-year-old day hiker in the cornfields of Iowa, for instance, will be different than the criteria Peter Illyn used to select the llamas he took on his 110 day, 1,000 mile Pacific Crest Trail trek.

Before you buy a llama for packing, read, take a class, lease a llama or take a weekend pack trip with a commercial outfitter to familiarize yourself with llamas. When choosing a pack llama, put such characteristics as color, banana shaped ears, long eyelashes, etc. at the bottom of your priority list. Don't underestimate the value of a well trained, trail experienced pack llama. If at all possible, before buying them, take a trip with the llamas you have selected.

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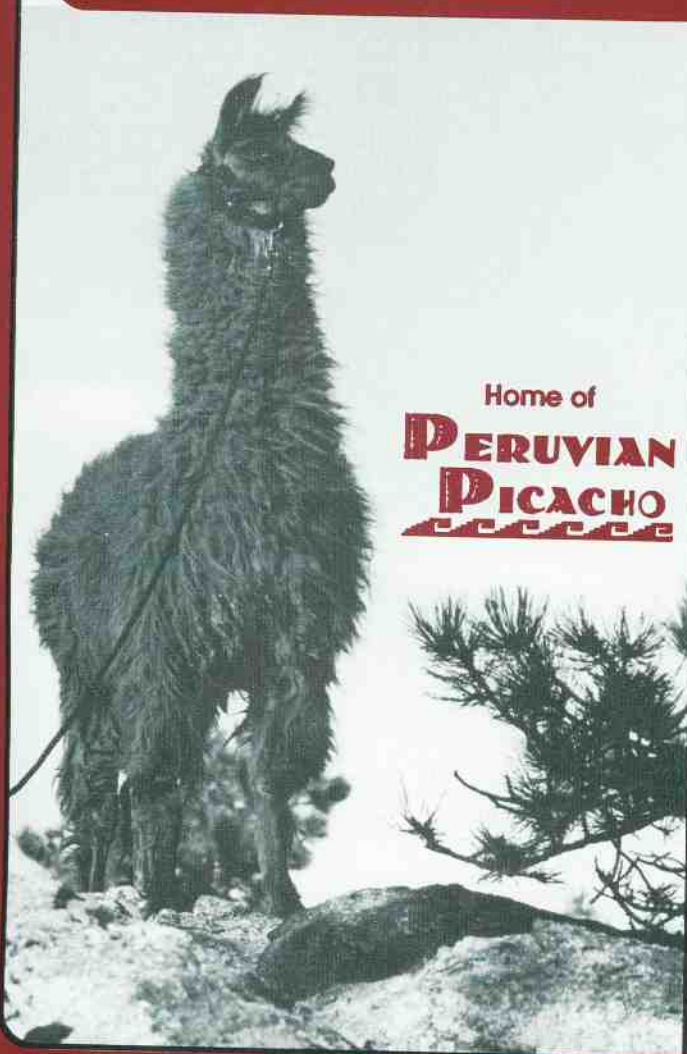
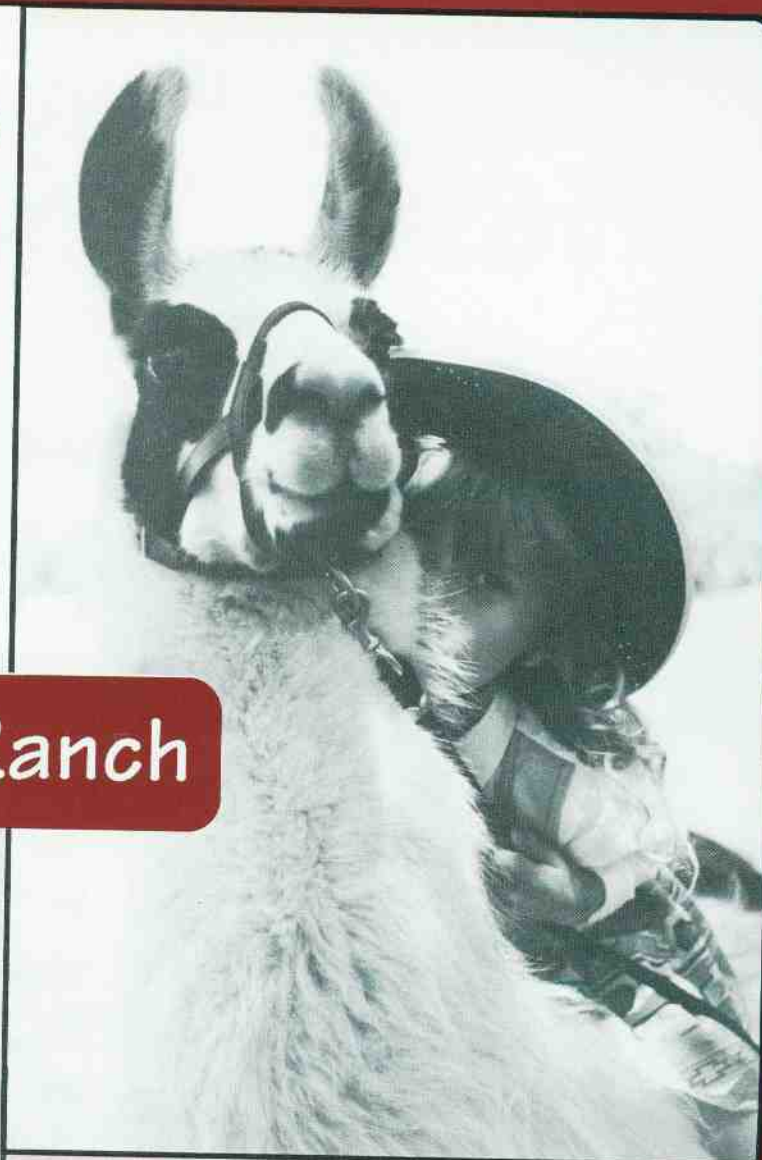
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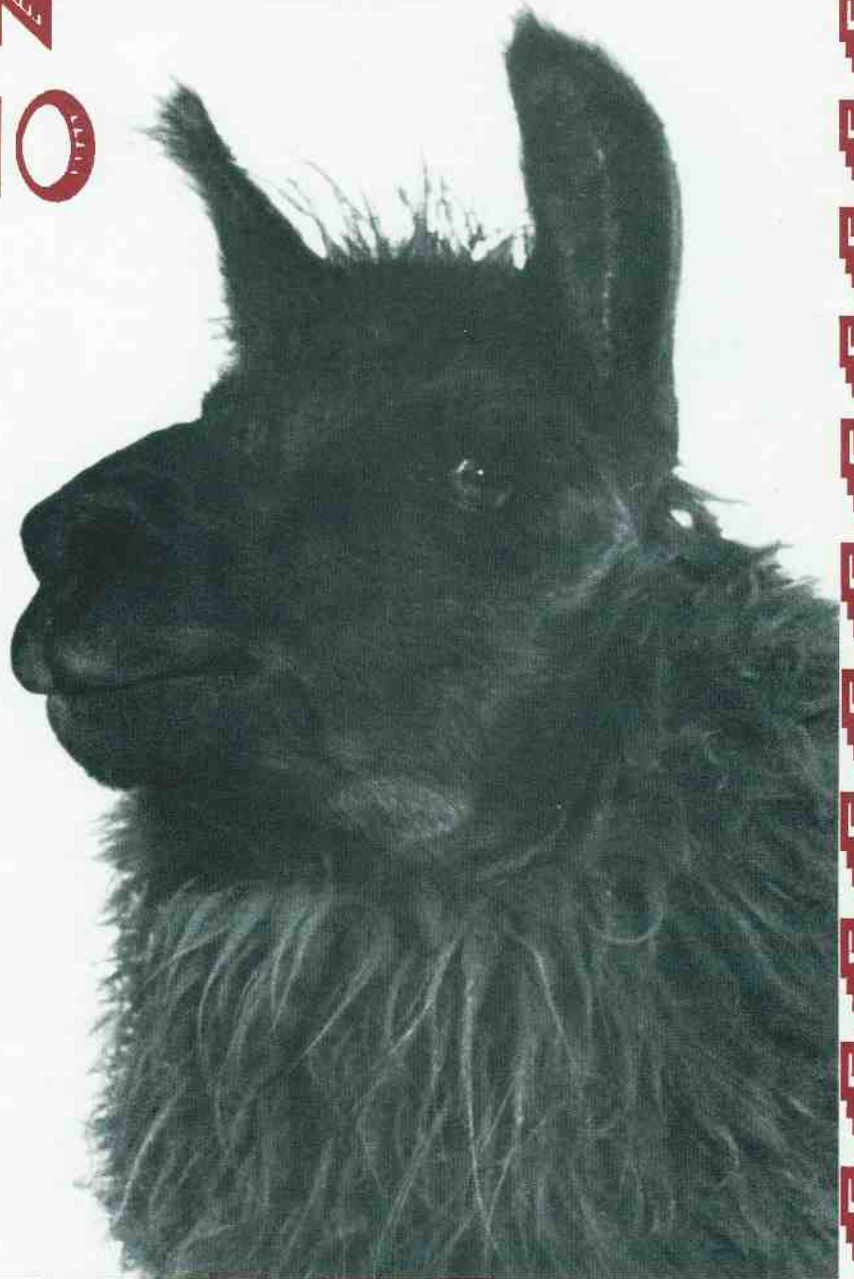
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