


RMLA
Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association

The Journal

www.rmla.com

Spring 2008



Wild Apple's Sweet Cameo
Courtesy of Dawn Moore

In This Issue

KSU Conference.....	8
Fiber Booth Report	14
IRC Council	15
A Tragic Situation.....	18
Report on US Animal Health.....	20
USDA 2007 Agricultural Census.....	23
Microchip Cancer Report.....	24
Biosecurity For Camelid Owners.....	25
26th Annual RMLA Fairplay Race ...	26
National Animal I.D. System	27
FFA Convention	28
Three Llamas & Goat Ropers.....	30
Blending Fibers For Spinning	31
Calling All Adventurers!.....	32
Felted Easter Eggs	33
Rotary CDT Challenge	34
Synopsis of Microchip-Induced Tumors.....	35
Hobby Farm or Business?	38
A Day At The Spa	39
My Teacher Can Spit	41

In Every Issue

President's Message	3
Officers and Committees	4
Calendar of Events	7
RMLA Board Minutes.....	12
Ad Rates and Deadlines.....	42

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TO YOUR SHOW WARDROBE.

KMJY



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President's Message

It might not look a lot like spring yet where you are, but it won't be long before those big snow banks melt, the grass turns green and we get busy with the outside chores that come with warmer weather. We can also start looking forward to fun stuff like pack trips and socializing with old and new friends at lama shows.

I thought that I had written my last President's Message, but here I am again. The other board members ganged up on me and wouldn't let me quit. But I guess I can handle the job for another year, because we've got a good group on the board. We are all working well together and it should be another productive year. For now we've got a seven member board, but next year we will drop back down to five members in accordance with the Bylaw revisions when a couple of terms expire. Bob Hance was under the weather for a while and had to have surgery, but is at home now and we all wish him a speedy recovery.

Spring is a good time for looking forward, but it's also good to remember how much RMLA accomplished last year. In 2007 RMLA sponsored many events, including shows, pack trials, and educational events. Among the educational highlights were the Youth Clinic that Barb Harris organized, the Kansas State University conferences and the mini-conference held at the Annual Meeting. We supported nation-wide marketing efforts by contributing towards the camelid exhibit at the National FFA Convention and supported camelid health research with donations to the Morris Animal Foundation and Colorado State University.

Of course the Board of Directors can't take credit for RMLA's accomplishments. That credit goes to all the committee chairs and other volunteers who really get the work



done. Thanks to all of you for making RMLA a wonderful association to belong to. I'm looking forward to another year of serving on the Board. As always, don't hesitate to call if there's anything you'd like to talk about.

Paul Schwartz

From the Acting Editor:

First - Thanks to everyone who sent in cria photographs for this issue. They were all wonderful and it really was difficult to choose just one for the cover. (I should have known that asking lama owners for cria photos is like asking new grandparents if they have any pictures of their first grandchild.) The baby awakening from its nap with a big yawn seemed most appropriate for this season as we come out of hibernation and start enjoying another year of outdoor lama activities. We are trying to use as many of the other photos throughout the magazine as space permits.

Second - Thanks to everyone who submitted articles and advertisements

for this issue. Both the quality and the quantity of material submitted by RMLA members are always excellent, and the loyal support of our advertisers is very much appreciated. If you submitted something and don't see it in this issue, please let me know. We are "saving" a couple of articles for the Summer issue, but things do sometimes get lost in the mail or cyberspace (or even on my desk).

Third - A big "Thank You" and "Welcome Aboard" to Kathy Stanko, who has joined the Publication Committee as Event Coordinator. That title means she has volunteered to help with making sure we publish articles about as many RMLA sponsored events as possible. Kathy has

lots of writing and word processing experience, and so will be able to help show superintendents and other event organizers with their articles. There are already more than 20 events on the RMLA Events Calendar for this year, so she will be very busy. There is still an opening on the Publication Committee for an Advertising Coordinator, and I am still laboring under the delusion that I am acting as editor on a temporary basis until someone else volunteers to be Chairperson of the Committee, so please let me know if you are interested in either of those positions.

Cheryl Juntilla

Board of Directors

President Paul Schwartz Post Office Box 363 Big Horn, WY 82833 307-672-5144 chantar@fiberpipe.net	Vice President Jerry Dunn 14550 West 50th Avenue Golden, CO 80403 303-277-1129 fhllamas@aol.com	Treasurer Bob Hance 11818 West 52nd Avenue Wheatridge, CO 80033 303-422-4681 hancelama@att.net	Secretary Gerri Rutledge 2209 Road 9 Waco, NE 68460 402-728-5254 buckshollow@wildblue.net
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Committees

Committee	Chairperson	Telephone	E-mail address	Liaison
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Bylaws	Lougene Baird	303-688-5445	lougenebaird@hawaiiantel.net	Larry Lewellyn
Calendar	Patti Morgan	620-442-4996	pmmorgan@skyerock.net	Gerri Rutledge
Education	Position Open			Jerry Dunn
Elections & Nominations	Maggie Merrill-Brown	303-646-0568	mm@bluelinesite.com	Cheryl Juntilla
Events	Jerry Dunn	303-277-1129	beartrak@gte.net	Jerry Dunn
Fiber	Patti Morgan	620-442-4996	pmmorgan@skyerock.net	Gerri Rutledge
Finance	Barb Hance	303-422-4681	hancelama@att.net	Bob Hance
4-H	Maureen Bergenfeld	719-522-0347	maureen_bergenfeld@yahoo.com	Gerri Rutledge
Government Relations	Position Open			Bob Hance
Library	Dick Williams	307-877-3106	drdrjhw@hotmail.com	Dick Williams
Marketing	Position Open			Paul Schwartz
Membership & Website	Barb Hance	303-422-4681	hancelama@att.net	Bob Hance
Pack	Charlie Hackbarth	719-742-5152	Charlie@soprisllamas.com	Dick Williams
Publication	Position Open			Cheryl Juntilla
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Research	Ron Baird	303-688-5445	ronb@nelha.org	Dick Williams
Youth	Barb Harris	719-275-9457	wildcatllamas@aol.com	Larry Lewellyn

The Journal is a quarterly publication of the **Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association ("RMLA")**. The RMLA Publication Committee and Board of Directors reserve the right to select and edit all articles and advertisements submitted. Reproduction of articles herein is subject to written permission being obtained from individual authors. Lama newsletter exchange editors may reproduce articles as long as such permission from the author is obtained and the author and RMLA are given credit for the original work. The information in **The Journal** is not intended to be a substitute for qualified professional advice. Readers are encouraged to consult with their own veterinarian, accountant or attorney regarding any questions concerning their animals or business operations. RMLA is not responsible for any losses resulting from readers' failure to heed this caution. The views expressed by the authors of articles are not necessarily those of the Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association, Inc., its officers, directors or members.



*It has been a long, hard winter -
You deserve to have a little fun!*

Find it at the

Grand Mesa Llama Classic - Saturday, April 26, 2008

And the

Kokopelli Llama Classic - Sunday, April 27, 2008

Two great shows make one great weekend!



Shorn Fleece, Walking Fiber and Youth Judging classes will be judged during the Grand Mesa Llama Classic on Saturday and the results of those classes announced on Sunday. Complete Halter, Novice, Advanced and Youth Performance Classes on both days.

JACKPOT SHORT STACK COMPETITIONS BOTH DAYS!

Free Youth Pack Class taught by Charlie Hackbarth*

* Free for youth exhibitors. Parents may observe, but adults not accompanied by a child will be charged a small fee.

Spinning Demonstrations
on Sunday by the
Mesa Fiber Arts Guild

Judges:
Maryan Baker,
Wally Baker and
Mary Wickman

For entry forms or more
information, contact:
Cheryl Juntilla at
(970) 640-8028 or
cajwdj@q.com.



New this year - lower youth
entry fees and a more
"kid friendly" schedule.

Prizes for the loudest Hawaii
shirt and best pirate costume
(as determined by exhibitors' votes)
and other special prizes!

Important - Halter classes are limited
to the first 130 entries received.

Entries must be postmarked by
April 7, 2008, to avoid late fees.

THANKS AGAIN TO ALL OF OUR WONDERFUL SPONSORS!

These shows are sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association (RMLA),
Sanctioned by the Alpaca and Llama Show Association (ALSA) and
Hosted by the Grand Mesa Llama and Alpaca Club (GMLAC).



April 1, 2008 through March 31, 2009 RMLA MEMBERSHIP

JOIN RMLA now! Your dues will assure the continuation of all the good RMLA has accomplished.

JOIN as a LIFE MEMBER!

Please consider making a donation to the RMLA Foundation Inc., for RMLA Youth scholarships.

Youth Membership: \$10.00 per year (must be 18 years or under **AND have an adult RMLA member sponsor**). Not entitled to vote, but eligible to receive scholarships from the RMLA Foundation Inc.

Young Adult Membership: \$10.00 per year **Former Youth members only**, who have continued education beyond High School. A parent/guardian must be the adult RMLA member sponsor. 1 vote per membership.

Annual Membership: \$40.00 per year (Up to 2 adults per membership: 1 vote per person.)

Life Membership: \$500.00 one time only! Same as Annual, plus: **Special** recognition in Directory; and a one time free 1/4 page ad in the Journal. If there are future special assessments, "Life Members" would pay the same as annual members.

Life memberships may be paid in 4 equal quarterly installments of \$125.00 each.

If you prefer, you may join or renew on the web page at www.rmla.com — click on Membership



Name _____

Name (2 or Jr. sponsor) _____

Ranch _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-Mail _____ Web _____

of Llamas owned: Females _____ Intact Males _____ Geldings _____

of Alpacas owned: Females _____ Intact Males _____ Geldings _____

- Breeding(B) Training (T) Driving(DR) Sales(S)
- Products(PR) Boarding(BD) Fiber(F) Research(RE)
- Judging(JD) Packing(PK) Leasing(LE) Brokering(BK)
- Commercial Packing(COM PK) Rescue(RS) Other(Specify)



____ Life: \$500.00 _____
 ____ Annual: \$40.00 _____
 ____ Youth: \$10.00 _____
 ____ Young Adult: \$10.00 _____

Donation to
 RMLA Foundation Inc. _____
 Total: \$ _____

Visa/MasterCard
 EXP. Date _____
 Acct. # _____
 Signature _____

This charge will appear on your bill as:
Rocky Mt. Llama

Please check if you are interested in working on any of these committees:

- Finance Marketing Fiber Pack Continuing Education
- Events Membership/Web Rescue Research Nominations/Elections
- Publishing 4-H & Youth By-Laws Library Gov't. Relations

Mail this form with your check (payable to RMLA) or Credit Card information to:
Bob & Barbara Hance • 11818 West 52nd Avenue • Wheat Ridge CO 80033-2032

Don't miss any of the events, sponsored by RMLA.
JOIN NOW!!! ••• Support RMLA Foundation Inc.

Advertiser's Index

Backcountry Llama Journal	29
Cache La Poudre Minerals	10
Caring For Llamas & Alpacas	42
ChanTar Llamas	2
Flightless Farms	44
Foothills Llamas.....	8
Grand Mesa & Kokopell Llama Classic	5
Hance Ranch Alpacas	41
LANA Expo	17
Laughing Llama Studio.....	34
Mazuri Diets.....	13
Mt. Sopris Llamas Unltd.	25
Paco-Vicuñas	41
Pettigrew Property for Sale.....	19
Pheasant Hill Farm	43
Rock-N-M Llamas.....	9
Rocky Mountain Llamas	21
San Juan Jolley Acres	25
Serendipity Farm	30

HUSKER HOBO SHOW

April 18 & 19, 2008

"NO GROOM" Double Point Halter, Single Point Performance show. Includes Youth Judging, Cart Driving and Mini Classes. Friday evening is the "Hobo Dinner and Not-So-Silent Auction." LOTS OF FUN!!! Sponsored by RMLA and the Nebraska Llama Association www.nellama.org. For more information contact: Dee January at 402-462-9976, 402-469-7657, or djanuary@alltel.net.

Proposed Calendar of Events

MARCH

March 15, 2008

St. Patrick's Day Parade, Denver, CO

Contact Jim Haas, 303.670.3373, scellamas@e-central.com

March 22, 2008

Llamas & Kids in the Park, Wheat Ridge, CO

Contact Jerry Dunn, 303.277.1129, beartrak@gte.net

APRIL

April 12-13, 2008

Driving Clinic, Bear Track Farm, Golden, CO

Contact Jerry Dunn, 303.277.1129, beartrak@gte.net

April 19, 2008

Packing Demo, Grizzly Man Adventure Race, Missoula, MT

Contact Dick Williams, 406.826.2201, drdrjw@hotmail.com

April 18-19, 2008

Husker Hobo Show, Hastings, NE

Contact Dee January, 402.462.9976, djanuary@alltel.net

April 25, 2008

Stars & Stripes Performance Show, Waco, NE

Contact Jim Rutledge, 402.728.5254, buckshollow@wildblue.net

April 26, 2008

Grand Mesa Llama Show, Grand Junction, CO

April 27, 2008

Kokopelli Llama Show, Grand Junction, CO

Contact Cheryl Juntilla, 970.640.8028, cjwdj@aol.com

MAY

May 2-4, 2008

Llamas & More Assoc. Double Show, Fallon, NV

Contact Sherri & Les Flynn, 775.424.1217,

smFlynn@spittindistanceacres.com

May 3-4, 2008

LOCC Spring Show, Castle Rock, CO

Contact Barb Harris, 719.275.9452, wildcatllamas@aol.com

May 10, 2008

Jelly Bean Classic, Arvada, CO

Contact Jerry Dunn, 303.277.1129, beartrak@gte.net

May 17, 2008

Spring Sneakers Performance Show, Arvada, CO

Contact Jerry Dunn, 303.277.1129, beartrak@gte.net

May 17, 2008

Pack Llamafest, Plains, MT

Contact Dick Williams, 405.826.2201, drdrjhwh@hotmail.com

JUNE

June 14-15, 2008

Estes Park Wool Market, Estes Park, CO

Contact Gayle Woodsum, 307.721.2919, dbjllamas@aol.com

June 29, 2008

Llama Poker Hike, Kiowa, CO

Contact Sherry Adamcyk or Dani Varela, 303.621.9021,

dvrela55@yahoo.com

JULY

July 12, 2008

Douglas County Summer Youth Show, Franktown, CO

Contact Scott McHenry, 303.688.6642, cr_smch@yahoo.com

July 20, 2008

Out On The Prairie Youth Show, Calhan, CO

Contact Maureen Bergenfeld, 719.575.8692, bergenfeld@earthlink.net

July 26, 2008

Fairplay Llama Pack Race, Fairplay, CO

Contact Gary Carlton, 303.503.1324, gary@jmhfarm.com

July 27, 2008

Fairplay Llama Show, Fairplay, CO

Contact Sandy Lockwood, 303.838.9554, dslockwood@juno.com

July 29, 2008

Kiowa Creek Youth Llama & Alpaca Show, Kiowa, CO

Contact Sherry Adamcyk, 303.621.9021, sadamcyk@d20.co.edu

AUGUST

August, 2008

Boulder County Youth Show, Longmont, CO

Contact Bobra Goldsmith, 303.530.4454 llamas@rockymtllamas.com

August 16, 2008

Hope Pass LT-100, Pack Trip, Leadville, CO

Contact Jim Osmun, 303.457.2787, osmunj@att.net

August 30-31, 2008

LOCC Fall Classic, Castle Rock, CO

Contact Barb Harris, 719.275.9457, WildCatLlamas@aol.com

SEPTEMBER

September 27, 2008

Looking For The Gold, Golden Gate Canyon State Park

Contact Jerry Dunn, 303.277.1129, beartrak@gte.net

Kansas State University Conferences on the Veterinary Care and Management of Llamas and Alpacas

by Larry Lewellyn, Foothills Llamas

I was very fortunate to represent RMLA at three days of educational Conferences held at Kansas State University on August 10 - 12, 2007. RMLA was a sponsor and had a display at the Conference. The event was organized by Dr. David Anderson, Professor and Section Head of Agricultural Practices. You probably remember Doctor Dave from the eleven years he was at Ohio State University as the Head of Food Animal Medicine and Surgery. Other veterinarians teaching during the conferences were Clinical Assistant Professor Meredyth Jones, Clinical Professor Matt Miesner, and Kara Schultz, who is a Resident of Agricultural Practices. Conference

The first day was a Veterinary Conference on the Care of Llamas and Alpacas. It was very exciting because there were 13 veterinarians from seven states (AR,CO, IA,KS, MO,NE,OK), which was a lot of knowledge in one room. The sharing of information from actual experiences across the country was incredible. I was honored to be with them and participate in these sessions.

The next two days were the Camelid Care Conference for Owners and Breeders, attended by 25 owners and breeders, also from seven states (CO,IA,KS,NE,MO,TX, VA). The best part of this Conference was

the Wet Lab, which included hands on working with animals in things like drawing of blood and hitting a vein to insert an IV. Then we had the sessions about Camelid Dystocia and a Neonatal lab with a simulated module using a cria fetus for different types of birthing problems. The participant could stand behind the module and watch as a person reached into the animal vagina and tried to assess what problem they had. This module was designed by Dr. LaRue Johnson, who is now Retired Kinda.

RMLA would like to plan a Neo-Neonatal Seminar for the membership with Dr. Anderson and Dr. Johnson. If you interested please contact any RMLA board member.

Remember that if you have a cria that dies, it can be used for research by Colorado State University or Kansas State University. Please contact Dr. Robert Callan at CSU or Dr. David Anderson at KSU if you would like to help them them to further the research.

Doctor Anderson donated several copies of his clinical book to the LOCC Silent Auction, the silent auction to benefit the RMLA Youth Foundation and the RMLA Library. This book and Caring for Llamas and Alpacas are must-haves at your home.

Visit www.vet.k-state.edu for continuing education information.

RMLA Library

Dick Williams, RMLA Librarian

Our association has one of the largest lending libraries that you will find devoted to llamas and alpacas. We currently have 58 videos and DVDs available and almost 200 books and articles, not to mention collections of several publications. (See the entire list on the web site.) Last year we loaned 43 different items to RMLA members. If you know of a good book or tape that is not currently available from the library please recommend it to us. We are always looking for items our members might be interested in.

The most recent addition is a set of trail guides for the Continental Divide Trail which was donated by the Continental Divide Trail Alliance. There are four volumes, each devoted to the CDT by state - New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming and Idaho/Montana. While each guide was written by a different author, the format is the same in all four books. They start with overviews of the trail in each state with sections on topics like Safety Concerns, History, Geography, Leave No Trace Camping, etc., and then describe each segment of the trail from state line to state line. The trail segment sections give detailed information about the particular part of the trail to include such things as beginning and ending access points, total miles, an elevation relief chart, list of relevant maps, difficulty rating and a segment overview. This is followed by a detailed description of the trail with directions, obstacles and points where following the trail might be confusing. All of the guides contain some very nice photography.

While most of us will never hike the entire CD Trail, or even an entire state, this is an excellent set of trail guides that can be used to plan trips over any segment or group of segments you might be interested in. The segments are broken by trail heads (or access to trail heads) so that each may be chosen as a stand alone hike. While not written specifically for llamas, the Wyoming guide was done by a couple of llama packer/photographers from Cache Valley, UT. Thank you to Bruce and Paula Ward, co-directors of the CDTA for donating this set of guides.

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NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to New RMLA Members

WOW! One from GA and another from Canada - someone must be doing some great PR. Could it be the Web site?? Maybe it's the publication of "Caring for Llamas & Alpacas" Whatever the reason, our best wishes to each of you in your Lama venture! If any of you present RMLA members live near any of these new folks, please give them a call and share your Vet info and/or your Lama tales.

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www.alpacanation/horsemountain.
asp

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jtalburt@comcast.net

John Tong
Elizebeth Tong
Honeywine Hollow
394 Strickland Circle
Colbert, GA 30628-1963
404.274.0919
tyme@gtf.org

Welcome Back a former Member

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314.317.5100
www.mazuri.com

Cache La Poudre



MINERALS

Marie & Richard Hoover

Call To Order

or to receive a brochure
800-758-0825
303-646-2665

Supplement #1

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

Supplement #2

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

Supplement #3

Diet consists of: Spring or irrigated pasture; feeding alfalfa or grass hay low in phosphorus. Contains additional phosphorus and recommended basic level of Vitamin E.

On the web at: www.CLPMinerals.com

Zinpro® 100 also available.

Owners of *Serendipity Farm*

The RMLA Service Directory Advertising Offer for the "Lama YELLOW PAGES"

April 1, 2008 through
March 31, 2009

The RMLA Service Directory, our "Yellow Pages," is included in every member packet (both present and new), with every inquiry package and is distributed at RMLA events throughout the year. More than 1500 have been distributed each of the past three years. It is an excellent, affordable, means of getting **Member** advertising into the hands of present and future llama and alpaca owners.

Each *Classification* & each *Business Card* in the Service Directory, costs only \$20.00. This a great way for you to gain attention for your ranch/farm, products & services. Mark the space below and be sure to **send us your Business Card (black & white, please)**.

RMLA will again add your Service Directory Classified Advertisement(s) to www.rmla.com "Yellow Pages" for just an additional \$15.00 for each classification. Sorry no Business Cards on the Web Site at this time. RMLA's web received over 2100 visits per week last year – EXCELLENT exposure for your ads – an INCREDIBLE bargain!

You may also renew your membership and order your Service Directory advertising at: www.rmla.com

Service Directory 2008

Check Classification(s)

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boarding | <input type="checkbox"/> Breeders | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Packing | <input type="checkbox"/> Education & Training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publications | <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment & Supplies | <input type="checkbox"/> Stud Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Leasing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fiber | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Name _____

Name (2) _____

Ranch/Business _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ FAX _____

E-Mail _____ Web _____

Advertisement(s)

1 to 3 lines describing your activities.

For additional Classifications, attach separate sheet.

Classification: _____ Check if this is to be on the Web. Add'l \$15.00

Classification: _____ Check if this is to be on the Web. Add'l \$15.00

Qty.	Type	Price	Subtotal
_____ x	Classifications	\$20	_____
_____ x	Internet	\$15	_____
_____ x	BusinessCards	\$20	_____
_____	Full Page Ad		\$100.00
TOTAL			_____
Please carry total to membership form. You must be a Member to advertise in the RMLA Service Directory.			

Need more space for additional classifications advertising? Copy this form, use the back or use blank paper.

If you want to use the same copy that was printed last year, write "same as last year".

Make check payable to: RMLA, send to: 11818 W 52nd Avenue, Wheat Ridge, CO 80033-2032

You will miss the print-date if not postmarked by 3-31-08

Sorry this is late reaching you, please return it ASAP - Thanks Membership Chair Barb Hance

RMLA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: December 19th, 2007

Roll Call – Paul Schwartz, Robert Hance, Cheryl Juntilla, Geri Rutledge, Dick Williams, Jerry Dunn, Larry Lewellyn.

Paul Schwartz called the meeting to order at 7:02pm. First item on the agenda is elections and placement of Officers. Motion by Cheryl J. for Paul S. to be President of RMLA. Second by Dick W. All in favor, passed. Welcome back Paul. Larry L moves for Jerry D to be Vice President. Cheryl J seconds, All in favor, passed. Welcome to Jerry D. Jerry D moves for Geri R to be Secretary. Larry L seconds, All in favor, Passed. Welcome aboard Geri R. Geri R motions for Bob Hance to be Treasurer. Dick W. seconds, All in Favor, passed. Welcome Bob, thanks for staying with us.

Committee Liason

Group discussion about reinstatement of Government Relations Committee. Board Members agree to vote for this committee to be brought back to RMLA. The BOD Members will work to join with Alpaca owners in the RM area and bring educational information to the group.

Discussion of ways to improve relationships with CSU. Look at ways to serve members of the Camelid community, getting important information out to owners. Example: the recent “snot nose” outbreak that affected herds following Grand Nationals. “It would serve all members purpose to have RMLA messenger for CSU to meet the needs of owners.” Motion by Larry L, Second by Jerry D, All in favor, passes.

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Chairperson</u>	<u>Liason</u>
Book Store	Jan Adamcyk	Bob Hance
Bylaws	Lougene Baird	Larry Lewellyn
Calendar	Patti Morgan	Geri Rutledge
Education	OPEN	Jerry Dunn
Election & Nom	Maggie Merrill-Brown	Cheryl Juntilla
Events	Jerry Dunn	Jerry Dunn
Fiber	Patti Morgan	Geri Rutledge
Finance	Barb Hance	Bob Hance
4-H	Marueen Bergenfield	Geri Rutledge
Library	Dick Williams	Dick Williams
Marketing	OPEN	Paul Schwartz

Member & Web	Barb Hance	Bob Hance
Pack	Charlie Hackbarth	Dick Williams
Publication	OPEN	Cheryl Juntilla
Rescue	L'illette Vasquez	Cheryl Juntilla
Youth	Barb Harris	Jerry Dunn
Gov Relations	OPEN	Bob Hance
Research	Ron Baird	Dick Williams

Discussion that the production of the RMLA Journal has improved. Monica Brown from Llamalink has been very instrumental in helping with this production. There was a \$250 difference in price quoted due to the mailing going first class instead of bulk rate. Larry L motions for RMLA to run an Ad in Llamalink that would cover this price difference, pending any future billing that may arrive. Second by Jerry D. All in favor, passed.

Further discussion about various publications that RMLA used to advertise to gain memberships. RMLA used to advertise with LLII, Out of State Publications, etc.. Cheryl J will get prices to see if it would benefit RMLA to continue to run ads for a one year period with price reduction for continued business. Dick W. also offered to put RMLA advertising in Back County Journal. This will be coordinated with Cheryl J. Thank you Dick for this generous offer.

Marketing

Discussion about responsibilities of this committee. All BOD and RMLA members play a role in this as we all market our animals and wish to have more Camelid owners among us. RMLA needs to take an active role in Education and promoting Llamas and Alpacas at various events throughout the year.

The question was brought up about RMLA supporting LANA and is there a current trade with Newsletters. This would be another avenue for sharing ads and trading space in the publications to gain members. Paul S will be generating a letter to inquire about exchange ads.

Treasurer Report

Cheryl J asked the amount of \$20,000 that went to a CD be listed as transfer not expense. Bob H will add a footnote to Treasurer Report for clarification. There are 75 copies remaining in inventory. \$380 in Ads helped to cover the

printing costs. Able printing did a good job and gave RMLA a break on the price. Patti Morgan gets an “Atta Girl Good Job” for success with this project. Voting to approve treasurer report was tabled until changes are complete.

Fiber

Patti Morgan has sent in a Fiber proposal and year end report. All BOD Members have this on separate email. Bob H will be contacting Patti for clarifications on her financial reports. The Fiber Coop will continue to go to 4 Shows with different Show Managers. The trailer had repairs in 07; a tent was purchased for \$225.20. Patti will continue with Chair for the RMLA Fiber Coop. Geri R. will be Show Manager for NWSS in Denver. Discussion about this being an RMLA Sponsored event and putting up the signs and table with RMLA Education. Jerry D. will work with Dwayne Flinn on coordination of this. Jerry D will take the Fiber Coop from NWSS.

Cheryl J motions to accept the proposal for attending 4 shows with the Fiber Coop. Dick W seconds, All in favor, Motion passed. Cheryl J motions to accept the changes in the proposed guidelines for consignment with RMLA Fiber coop. Jerry D Seconds, Group discusses this brings RMLA into today's Market, gives pricing guidelines and should be available to all members on the website. All in favor, motion passed.

There was continued discussion about the RMLA Coop (trailer) going to other events, craft shows, festivals, etc. If a member finds an Art Fair or event they would need to submit a proposal to the BOD for consideration. Elements that will be considered are attendance, type of crowd, cost of transportation and lodging, etc.. Meals will no longer be covered in the new proposal. RMLA needs to continue to educate the public and develop an interest with our animals.

Events

Work has been completed by Jerry D and Bob H for the “Application Packet of Events” to be on the website. Information was published in the last journal directing members to the web page for this packet of information. Jerry D will compile a list of inventory of Event Material owned by RMLA and update the list with number of banners, etc...

Bookstore

There is a list for Inventory and all members are welcome to check things out.

Library

Video inventory has been updated. Some of the older VCR tapes have seen better days and are being updated. Cart Driving information is needed. Jerry D and Larry L will help to get

Continued on page 14...

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articles to the Library on this subject. Each Journal publication could have a highlight on sections of the library and educational material available for checking out. We need to promote the wonderful library that RMLA has accomplished.

March 1, 2008 is the Deadline for Spring Issue; Publication Date should be March 20th, 2008. This is for the Spring Issue; items to include would be Fairplay, pre-summer events. Publications will look at Advertising price for Centerfold of the RMLA. Cheryl J. will get some price ideas and add to index of journal for future information. Larry L suggests we gather member articles, talk to owners, get information on breeding programs, solicit more ads and go ahead with LOCC and Regional information now.

Spring 2008 Neo-Natal Clinic

This item is from past discussion about producing a 08 Clinic. Discussed current events in March and April, when time is available. Need to gather more information about presenters and possibly joining with Alpaca Breeders of the Rockies for clinics they currently coordinate. Bob H will gain more information and share via email. We can use email blasts to alert members of Neo-Natal Clinic. Larry L will check with Veterinarians for available dates and coordinate with Bob H.

Jerry D motions to adjourn BOD Meeting at 8:45. Cheryl J seconds. All in favor, motion passed.

Membership Report:

As of February 18, 2008, we have 198 adult memberships, 30 Youth, 2 Young Adults, 27 Life Memberships & 14 Honorary Memberships. We have added a few Vets to our Honorary list this year. Membership expires on March 31, 2008 and I am working at getting the renewal notices and Service Directory orders printed and mailed hopefully before the end of February.

Please consider placing an ad in the Service Directory and on the Web each classified is \$20 + \$15 for Web and it reaches thousands of folks who browse the RMLA web site: www.rmla.com

Thanks

Barb Hance, RMLA Membership

RMLA FIBER BOOTH REPORT

by Patti Morgan

Photos courtesy of Geri Rutledge

First, I want to thank all the consignors, volunteers, customers and the RMLA Board of Directors for another year of supporting the RMLA Fiber Booth. 2007 was a great year, both rewarding and challenging. The Booth had 20 active consignors and returned to them \$7,945.31 in sales. It also sold *Caring for Llamas and Alpacas* and the RMLA Calendars. Our fundraiser netted over \$200 to help offset the continuing higher fuel costs and trailer upkeep. A leak in the trailer was fixed and hopefully will be a one-time thing. We purchased a new 10' by 20' tent for outdoor venues and it worked much better at the Taos Wool Market than the old tent did.

For 2008 I will continue to serve as the volunteer Fiber Booth Coordinator. The pricing guidelines have been updated to more accurately reflect current prices in the fiber market. We will continue with consignment fees of 15% for RMLA members and 30% for non-members. Our events for 2008 started with the National Western Stock Show at Denver in January. Geri Rutledge served as Booth Manager and was assisted by Jim and Marshal Rutledge, Kathy Stanko and others. The next event will be the Estes Park Wool Market in June where I will be the Booth Manager. In October the Booth will travel to the Taos Wool Market where Sharon Beacham will be Booth Manager and then to the ALSA Grand Nationals in



Ann Bruhn modeling the scarf and hat donated by Karen Kinyon

Lincoln, Nebraska. We still need a volunteer to serve as Booth Manager in Lincoln.

Many thanks to Karen Kinyon, Sharon Beacham, Larry Lewellyn and Geri Rutledge who donated the prizes for our 2007 fundraiser. The winners were:

- 1st Ann Bruhn who chose the hat and scarf donated by Karen Kinyon
- 2nd Mike Friedel, who chose the yarn donated by Sharon Beacham
- 3rd Karen Schwartz, who chose a tan show cover donated by Larry Lewellyn
- 4th Maryan Baker, who chose a red show cover donated by Larry Lewellyn
- 5th Cheryl Juntilla, who chose the felted purse donated by Geri Rutledge

The RMLA Fiber Booth continues to be an outlet for our wonderful fiber, from raw fleeces to finished products. We also serve a larger area of general public education; if you have a chance to volunteer to work in the Booth, you will experience this personally.



Marshal Rutledge and camera-shy Jim Rutledge manning the Fiber Booth at the National Western Stock Show

National Llama Intervention & Rescue Coordination Council

Educational Plan

Animal Control and Animal Welfare
Authorities

*prepared by the National Llama Intervention &
Rescue Coordination Council (IRC Council)*

Animal control and animal welfare authorities are sometimes called upon to remove llamas and alpacas from situations where their welfare is compromised or to capture loose camelids whose presence has become a traffic hazard. Most of these authorities have little or no experience assessing "at risk" situations involving llamas or alpacas, nor do they have experience catching, handling and transporting camelids. This educational plan, along with the resource materials suggested, is designed to help camelid organizations close that gap by suggesting ways they can provide educational opportunities for the animal control officials in their states.

Resource Materials

Catching and Handling Llamas and Alpacas. Prepared by the IRC Council, this fact sheet provides basic tips on the safe catching and handling of camelids, emphasizing how they are different from other livestock.

IRC Council: National Camelid Welfare Group Stresses Education. This fact sheet spells out the IRC Council's purpose and goals and provides contact information for the council's regional coordinators.

Minimum Standards of Care for Llamas and Alpacas. Designed for animal control officers investigating camelid care situations, this fact sheet defines elements necessary for camelid survival and humane treatment.

Recommended Practices in Caring for Llamas & Alpacas. The purpose of this brochure is to provide basic and important information on how to create a healthy and safe living environment for llamas and alpacas.

PowerPoint Presentation on Minimum Standards and Recommended Practices. This presentation is a good way to visually present camelid care information at workshops, conferences or other educational gatherings.

Local Llama and Alpaca Owner Contacts. Camelid organizations should provide animal control officials in their state or region with several key camelid contacts who can provide advice or coordinate help from willing members or other llama and alpaca owners when needed.

All of these materials (except the local contact lists) will be available at www.icinfo.org (the web site for the International Camelid Institute). Just click on Resources, then Animal Rescue, then Educational Plan for Animal Control. You will then be able to click on individual documents as well as the Camelid Standards of Care title that will take you to the three pieces involving camelid care and practices (the "recommended practices" piece is set up for either single-page or duplex printing). All of the material was produced with the intent of being copied and distributed wherever needed. It is suggested that camelid organizations include a copy of each of the fact sheets and brochures in a simple three-ring binder or folder to present to each animal control or animal welfare office in their area. Use the PowerPoint presentation when designing a workshop or clinic for these same groups.

Identify Your Audience

Animal control authorities operate differently in various parts of the country. They have different titles and different responsibilities. Each camelid organization needs to identify what these officials are called in their own particular state or region, as well as how to reach them. Sometimes their titles even differ from county to county within the same state. Some of the possibilities include animal control, animal welfare, humane societies, animal health, county sheriffs and

town constables. Some are public officials (city, township, county, state) while others are private contractors.

Determine How to Reach Them

Many animal control personnel have regularly scheduled conferences or workshops that may provide llama and alpaca organizations with an opportunity to present a session on camelid care and handling. Even a one-hour class using the above PowerPoint presentation and supplemental handouts would go a long way in introducing officials to specific care problems and handling techniques involved with llamas and alpacas. Camelids usually make up little, if any, of the animals most authorities deal with on a regular basis. Though we don't want to overwhelm them with more information than they will read or assimilate, we have an obligation to try and help them understand how camelids are different from other livestock they deal with and why they usually require a different approach.

A camelid organization could also offer a special half-day or daylong training clinic for animal control personnel in various locations throughout the state. Besides the PowerPoint presentation and handouts, it would be ideal to offer some hands-on training opportunities so that animal control authorities have the opportunity to practice catching and handling techniques as well as learn how to do basic body scoring and make other "at risk" assessments. If your camelid organization holds a conference or other educational event on a regular basis, you might consider inviting animal control officials to attend at no charge.

Other Suggestions and Considerations

Some animal control authorities will be more receptive than others to your attempts to provide training opportunities. In some cases it may be more effective to work on a county by county basis where relationships already have been established between key camelid

Continued on page 16...

...Continued from page 15

owners and their local animal control. Take advantage of those good working relationships to promote further education regarding llamas and alpacas. Enlist the help of supportive animal control and animal welfare officials in making contacts with those in other counties or areas of the state. A big first step is simply letting animal control authorities know who they can contact for help or advice when they are faced with a rescue or intervention situation involving llamas or alpacas.

In other areas it may be advantageous to contact an office or department at the state or regional level for help with animal control contacts and opportunities to provide them with education on llamas and alpacas. State officials may be willing to have you provide camelid information or articles for their newsletters or other communication vehicles or list upcoming llama and alpaca training sessions in the calendars of events for their employees. Again, provide these officials with a folder of camelid resource materials, as well as someone to contact if they need additional information or help.

To get an educational program for animal control and welfare officials started in your area, it would be good to have a subgroup of several interested members of your organization work together to determine: the need for such a program in your state (are some counties or areas in more need than others), what opportunities already exist for tapping into with camelid information (animal control conferences or workshops) and what other educational opportunities could be created (a series of hands-on training clinics or classes).

It's easy to become overwhelmed with the prospect of trying to reach every animal control and animal welfare agent in the country with information on camelids, but just as we break training sessions for our llamas and alpacas into smaller more manageable chunks, that's what we need to do with our educational efforts. We all need to do what we can where we are. If we in the camelid community work together and are consistent in the information we provide and the helpful attitude we display to animal control authorities at every level, they will see us as part of the same team. And, indeed, we are—we all simply want to ensure the safety and well-being of these animals.

IRC Council:

National Camelid Welfare Group
Stresses Education

Submitted by Sheila Fugina

The National Lama Intervention & Rescue Coordination Council (IRC Council) was formed as a result of discussions at a Camelid Community gathering in Kansas City. The group's purpose is to provide an efficient system of coordinating llama and alpaca rescue efforts nationwide, help promote camelid welfare through education and open up a larger dialog on camelid welfare within the llama and alpaca community.

Coordinating Camelid Rescue and Re-homing

Most llamas and alpacas are not in need of help and re-homing because of abuse or abandonment (though those kinds of cases certainly do occur). Most cases involve life-altering circumstances that have placed both owners and their animals in precarious situations. Illness, death, divorce or job loss can lead to an inability to properly care for livestock and pets, and camelids in need include llamas and alpacas, registered and unregistered animals, those with show ring credentials and animals of every fiber type and country of origin.

To be able to respond quickly to situations of camelids in need, the IRC Council maintains a contact list that currently has more than 100 names of groups and individuals nationwide who have indicated willingness to support camelid welfare efforts in some way. This may include fostering or adopting llamas and alpacas, providing help with loading and transporting animals, spending time on the telephone coordinating volunteers or providing contact information for others who may be in a position to help. Updating and adding to the list is an ongoing effort.

The council has named regional coordinators for rescue contact. They include: Northwest, Charlene Schmidt (charlene@prosperitypal.com); West, Dianna Jordan

(dljordan@wildblue.net); Rocky Mountain Area, L'illette Vasquez (lillette@veevee.com); Midwest, Sheila Fugina (bsfugina@presenter.com); South Central, Sandra Reynolds (lonestarranchoktx@wildblue.net); Southeast, Susan Ravan (sravan@ellijay.com); and Northeast, Marc Page (sputtermill@hughes.net). Though intervention and rescue efforts will of necessity remain primarily local or regional, there are many areas where networking and sharing can eliminate duplication of efforts and provide valuable information and ideas.

Promoting Camelid Education for Specific Audiences

Education is a critical component of a nationwide camelid welfare program and an example of where the IRC Council can play an important role. Because there are a variety of audiences in need of different kinds and levels of education regarding llama and alpaca welfare, the council is developing an overall education plan to identify these audiences and their needs. This includes surveying the materials and resources that already exist, determining additional materials that need to be developed and recommending effective methods of dissemination and distribution.

Though much excellent camelid educational material exists, it isn't getting into the hands of those who need it. The IRC Council is working to change that. The group wants to tailor camelid welfare information to each specific audience, determine the most effective distribution method for each one and enlist the help of camelid organizations nationwide to make that distribution happen. Designed for animal control authorities, the first educational module will help establish the pattern for a working relationship between the IRC Council and individual camelid organizations.

Encouraging Welfare Discussion within Larger Camelid Community

The IRC Council has encouraged llama and alpaca organizations to designate a

contact person between their organization and the council so that a larger dialog within the camelid community might be opened up. The intent is to facilitate discussion of camelid welfare topics on a nationwide basis with sensitivity to particular regional and local needs.

To provide a starting point for welfare discussions, the IRC Council sent a short camelid welfare needs survey in September 2007 to local and regional camelid organizations, as well as a number of rescue groups. A basic assessment of camelid welfare needs across the country to determine needs specific to certain regions and those that may be in common nationwide is forming the basis for rescue and re-homing discussions within the llama and alpaca community at large.

Llama and alpaca owners across the country are now contributing to camelid welfare efforts through the Halter Donation Station program, which was established as the result of a suggestion at the August 2007 Camelid Community gathering. Halter Donation Stations are being set up at various llama and alpaca shows,

conferences and other events to give owners the opportunity to donate new and gently used halters and leads for use in camelid welfare and re-homing situations. Almost 300 halters and leads were collected in the fall of 2007 alone. Results from the welfare needs survey are helping the IRC Council's regional coordinators determine the areas most in need of these halters.

Communicating with Organizations and Individuals

Though the IRC Council tries to maintain regular communication with the camelid community at large through contact with llama and alpaca organizations and publications, information on the council and its activities can always be found on the web site for the International Camelid Institute (ICI) at www.icinfo.org. Results of the camelid welfare needs survey mentioned above, as well as current contact information for the council's regional coordinators, can be found under the site's rescue section. Other IRC Council reports are available under the Camelid Community section on ICI's site.

THOSE CRAZY KIDS!



Members of the CAMELIDKIDS 4-H Club from Nebraska show their bright, smiling faces. They had a New Year's Eve Party and stayed up all night, eating pizza and ice cream. The kids were able to just have fun, talk about the "old" shows and plan for what shows to attend in the New Year.

4-H Club Leaders are Robert and Catherine Steel of Osceola, Nebraska.

come join us for
LLAMA FIESTA

JUNE 18 - 22, 2008

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Chris Cebra, DVM
Oregon State University

LANA EXPO

2 Day Adult Educational Program
2 Day Youth Educational Program

PLTA Sanctioned Pack Trial
ALSA Double Point Show
Walking Fleece & Shorn Fleece Classes

Churchill County Fairgrounds
Fallon, Nevada



Phone: 541-830-LANA
web: www.llamainfo.org
Email: Llamainfo@aol.com

A Tragic Situation

by Sandy Lockwood

At the end of February the call went out for L'illette of the Colorado Llama Rescue. A woman in Conifer had called her for help with a male llama that was aggressive. L'illette traveled to the woman's home and was shown the llama. It wasn't just aggressive, but had aberrant behavior syndrome and very dangerous. It attacked L'illette and knocked her down. The owner distracted the llama, but it knocked her down and then proceeded to attack her. Somehow L'illette was able to rope the llama, drag it to a stall and lock it in. The owner had a concussion and various cuts and bruises. She had to spend two days in the hospital and got eight staples in her scalp. With little money and now medical bills, the woman asked L'illette if there was an inexpensive way to euthanize this llama.

L'illette contacted me and asked if I knew anyone who would euthanize the llama and then deliver the body to her for disposal. I called my vet, who agreed to euthanize the llama for just the cost of the drugs if I would bring it to the clinic. Sandy Nolan, Warren and I took Sandy's small trailer over to the woman's house. The driveway was snowpacked and icy. After walking up to the house and assessing the situation, I determined that the only way to load the llama in the trailer was to lead it down the driveway. Since the llama was in a stall, we were able to halter it from over the top of a wall. We also put a catch rope around its neck. While Warren and I held onto the llama from over the wall, Sandy went around into the stall and took hold of the lead rope. Then, with Sandy and I both holding the llama, Warren went around and took hold of the catch rope. Then Sandy

and Warren tried to lead the llama out of the stall, but it pushed Warren into a wall. Warren stumbled and lost his hold on the rope.

Thinking quickly, Sandy threw herself around the llama's neck so that it could not attack her. It tried to run her into a fence, but she dodged that and quickly snubbed the lead rope to the fence. We decided to use a second lead rope and hooked a lead onto each of the cheek rings of the halter. Now there were three of us leading the llama. Each time it would try to attack one of us, the other two would pull it in the other direction. We carefully made our way down the hill to the trailer. Loading the llama wasn't easy, but we got him in by pulling a rope through the slats of the trailer on either side and pulling him forward while shutting the door from behind. All three of us were shaking from exertion by the time we got in the truck.

I had heard stories about beserk llamas, but this was the first time I got up close and personal with such a dangerous animal. I do not know this llama's story, but it did not get this way overnight. The woman who had called for help had only owned this llama for a month and whoever sold it to her must have known it was dangerous. The llama looked to be about six or seven years old and its wool showed extreme neglect. Whoever owned this llama previously should be ashamed for passing it on to an unsuspecting purchaser this way. I hope this article will serve as a reminder to those of us who own and breed llamas that we all have a responsibility to our animals and community to not let this type of tragic situation happen.

University of Arizona Anthropologist Dr. Nathan Craig Seeks Help From Camelid Industry

Camelids are the only large animal to have been domesticated in the Western Hemisphere. Through the meat, fiber, and perhaps most importantly the transportation capacity of these magnificent animals, camelids formed the economic backbone of the Inca Empire - the largest and most powerful of the Americas. By the time of European contact, large caravans of sometimes up to thousands of llamas were carrying goods from valley to valley across the vast expanse of the Inca Empire.

Yet, despite well over a hundred years of archaeological research in the Andean highlands of South America, precious little is known about when, where, or how llamas and alpacas were domesticated.

In an attempt to improve knowledge regarding camelid domestication at Jiskairumoko, Peru, and other sites soon to be excavated in the region, help from camelid owners across the U. S. is being sought. A comparative collection of camelid teeth from animals for which the age at death, the season of death, and a rough estimate of forage are all known is under development. Analysis of this reference collection will permit the application of crown height wear and cementum annuli age estimation methods to archaeological collections.

Those who have access to specimens meeting these criteria are strongly encouraged to contact Dr. Nathan Craig at the address provided below. The results of this study will be published in a peer reviewed academic journal, and digital copies of the analysis results will be provided for free on the internet.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Nathan Craig, Ph.D.
Department of Anthropology
The University of Arizona
1009 E. South Campus Drive
Tucson, AZ 85721-0030
Email: n8craig@gmail.com

Classified Ad

SJJA proudly offers our young fawn/white, show prospect Llama male. Sire: GVL Black Fox (Black Suri-Son of GVL Newevo). Dam: Stage Stop Posey (Chairman). Also offering one Suri Alpaca Female. Come for a visit! Please call for an appointment. Ray & Cherise Jolley, Farm: 970-226-4470. Ray's cell: 970-449-3779 Fort Collins, CO. jolleyllamas@q.com

Ranch for Sale

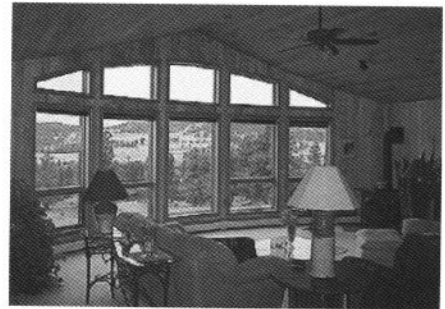
Exceptional Mountain Home for your llamas or alpacas and you!

16.46 Acres plus optional 10.6 Acres, Livermore, Colorado



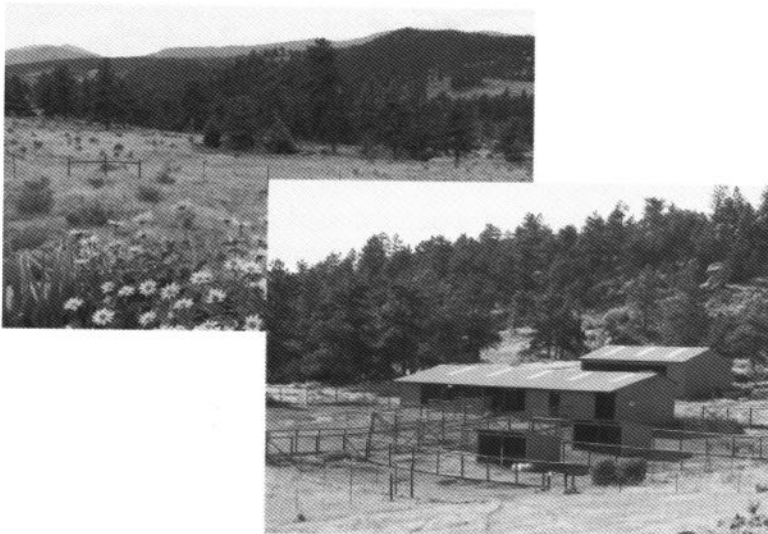
The Home

Energy efficient, low maintenance home with many upgrades. 3,507 sq. ft, 3 levels. Three bedrooms plus office; 3 1/2 baths, Large attached 2-car garage. Great decks & awesome views. Built in 2000.



The Land

Varied landscape with ponderosa pines, rock outcroppings, and flower-filled meadows, end of cul-de-sac privacy, expansive views of the Mummy Range in Rocky Mountain National Park and the Bald Mountains near Red Feather Lakes; nearby private access to National Forest and Fish & Game land; easy accessibility to Fort Collins, Colorado.



The Facilities

Main barn: 80' x 24'; electricity, water

Loafing sheds (2): 10' x 16'

Pens: chain link and field fence, treated rails

Equipment garage/hay storage: 48' x 24'; electricity & hose bib

Chicken house: 8' x 16'; concrete floor, electricity & hose bib

Fencing around property: 4-strand smooth wire, metal posts, cross fenced

Main property: \$565,000

Additional 10.6 Acres: \$135,000

Mike & Dale Pettigrew
168 Emerald Mountain Court, Livermore, CO 80536
970.493.2335
mikepett@msn.com or dale.pettigrew@gmail.com

Come see for yourself!

Report on the US Animal Health Association 2007 Annual Meeting

Compiled by Karen Conyngham, ILR representative to the USAHA Board of Directors

The 111th annual meeting of the US Animal Health Association was held in Reno, NV October 20-24, 2007. Camelid owners who attended this year included Teri Nilson Baird, Karen Conyngham and Shauna Brummet. Karen represents the Intl. Lama Registry on the USAHA Board of Directors and Shauna represented the Alpaca Owners & Breeders Assoc. this year.

USAHA is comprised of 33 species- and subject-oriented committees, all of which hold sessions during the annual meeting. This year, committee meetings attended by camelid representatives included: Animal Welfare, Import/Export, Infectious Diseases of Cattle, Bison and Camelids, International Standards, Livestock Identification, Committee on Foreign and Emerging Diseases, Committee on Tuberculosis and the Committee on Diagnostic Laboratory & Veterinary Workforce Development. The following report covers committees in which camelids or diseases of interest to camelid owners were mentioned.

General Session

The Scientific Session focused on the role of USAHA and AAVLD (American Assoc. of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians) concerning major animal diseases. These are primarily diseases affecting food animals but Bovine Viral Diarrhea Virus (BVDV) was discussed and this disease has been diagnosed in a small number of U.S. alpacas. The cattle industry is focusing more seriously on controlling BVDV with a goal of eventual eradication. At present, it is estimated that there is a BVDV prevalence rate of .3% in US cattle herds (approximate US cattle population is 100,000,000). Biosecurity and biocontainment must be enhanced on all cattle operations. New animals being

added to a herd must be tested for the virus; cattle vaccination does not prevent a state of persistent infection (PI) in all animals. There is a need for practical and cost-effective screening and control measures in all susceptible species. Industries should stress the moral and ethical obligation of all owners regarding the movement of PI animals. Overall, the education of stakeholders is the most important control strategy to be practiced.

Infectious Diseases of Cattle, Bison and Camelids Committee

Reports presented to the bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVDV) Control Subcommittee of the Infectious Diseases of Cattle, Bison and Camelids focused on testing methodology and surveillance for BVDV in cattle and genetic variation observed in BVDV isolated from alpacas. BVDV causes both persistent and acute infections in ruminants. As persistently infected animals are the main means of introduction of BVDV to naive populations, elimination of PI animals is a basic tenet of BVDV control/reduction efforts. The standard for positive determination of persistent infection (PI) status is two positive tests from samples collected at least three weeks apart.

Dr. Sabrina Swenson, National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL), presented information on a voluntary nationwide BVDV check test. The NVSL, in collaboration with the National Animal Disease Center (NADC), developed a proficiency panel for detection of BVDV. Animals positive for BVDV were identified for inclusion in the panel by two positive tests by either Antigen Capture ELISA (ACE), Immunohistochemistry (IHC) or Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR). At least 2 weeks after the initial identification, virus isolation (VI) from buffy coat was performed at NADC and all isolated viruses

were genotyped based on comparison of 5' UTR data. Animals (9 cattle) were selected from across the United States included genotypes 1 a (1 animal), 1 b (2 animals), 1 a & 1 b (2 animals), 2a (2 animals), and negative (2 animals). Panel samples consisted of serum or buffy coat. Thirty-two laboratory participants used the panel for BVDV detection by ACE, VI, and/or PCR. Overall 10 of 27 laboratories identified all samples correctly by ACE with 8 of the 16 samples identified correctly by all laboratories. Three of 19 labs identified all samples correctly by VI with 8 of the 16 samples identified correctly by all laboratories. Fourteen of 26 labs identified all samples correctly by PCR with 8 of the 16 samples identified correctly by all labs. Laboratories consistently identified negative samples, with 1 false positive by ACE, 2 false positives (from 1 lab) by virus isolation, and no false positives by PCR.

Dr. Edward Dubovi (Cornell University) reported the results of testing 12,000 alpaca samples for the presence of BVDV. This testing occurred between January 2006 and the present. His laboratory confirmed PI in 18 alpacas (0.15% prevalence rate). In addition they detected serum neutralizing antibodies in 14% of 268 alpaca serology samples. Phylogenetic analysis of 43 BVDV strains isolated from alpacas in a wide geographic region reveal that 42 of these strains could be grouped into two different genetic groups. Strains within these two groups were highly similar suggesting that the majority of BVDV outbreaks examined in this study could be traced to one or two point sources. The one exception was a strain isolated from an alpaca residing in Canada. The results suggest that eradication of BVDV from alpacas is achievable via testing and elimination of infected animals and that vaccination is counter-indicated as it would preclude surveillance for reintroduction of BVDV by serology. Dr. Dubovi reiterated the need for tight biosecurity on all camelid premises.

Dr. James Evermann (The Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory) has been tracking the causes of coronaviral associated diarrhea in alpaca crias since 2005. There has been increased recognition

Continued on page 22...



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...Continued from page 20

of neonatal cria diarrhea on Northwestern farms. The predominant age range is 4 days to 4 weeks of age. The seasonal prevalence appears to be higher in March - April and August - September. In addition to neonatal diarrhea, coronavirus has been associated with alpacas after shows (coronaviral-associated show diarrhea). Other risk factors include failure of passive transfer (insufficient colostrum), poor mothering, hypothermia, overcrowding of animals and generally stressful living conditions. A minimum 30-day quarantine period should be imposed on ALL animals coming onto a property, even those who have been off the farm to attend a show and then return home. The predominant mode of diagnosis is electron microscopy (EM) on fecal samples. There is a lack of coronaviral diagnostic assays, which severely limits the detection of coronavirus in many laboratories. The industry needs more rapid and accurate diagnostic assays for coronaviral induced disease, such as antigen capture ELISA. Coronaviral infections of zoo animals and captive wildlife have also been highly dependant upon EM. Some research laboratories have isolation capabilities which allows for detection of unique coronaviruses. More recent detection of unique coronaviruses has included ferrets, mink, pygmy rabbits bats and giraffes.

Dr. Konstantin Lyashchenko (Chembio Diagnostic Systems, Inc.) presented information on serologic detection of tuberculosis (TB - *M. bovis*) in bison and camelids. The intradermal tuberculin test has serious limitations in non-bovid species. Chembio has developed a novel serological assay, ElephantTB STAT-PAK kit, using lateral-flow technology to detect specific antibody in elephants and other captive wildlife within 20 minutes. This animal-side test was approved by USDA Centers for Veterinary Biologics in 2007. In addition, the Multi-Antigen Print ImmunoAssay (MAPIA) was proposed for elephants particularly, as a confirmatory test and treatment monitoring tool. Extended studies with ElephantTB STAT-PAK (100% sensitivity and 97% specificity in elephants) confirmed its potential to

be a valuable animal-side diagnostic test in multiple zoo animals as well as in a number of free-ranging wildlife species involved in maintaining bovine TB reservoirs worldwide. Several serological studies on animals naturally infected with *Mycobacterium bovis* (bison, camel, and llama) or *M. microti* (llama, alpaca) were shown to be detectable by the Chembio rapid test and MAPIA for early detection of TB in these species in which the skin test has failed. The need for a valid TB test in camelids has been evidenced over the past several years in the UK where a small number of llama and alpaca farms have had animals die from *M. bovis*. The prevalence rate of TB in the UK is very high due to the disease being endemic in the native badger population which then infect cattle and, potentially, camelids - especially in the "hot spots" of SW England.

Committee on Livestock Identification

An overview of the newly written draft NAIS Business Plan was presented by Dr. John Clifford. This plan will be distributed to all ID working groups with responses requested by November 20, 2007.

The main purpose of the Business Plan is to prioritize species and sectors. Tier 1 is the priority for now. Tier priority was determined based on risk to the food supply and human health impact. Animals included under Tier 1 are cattle, poultry, swine, sheep, goats and competition horses. Tier 2 includes camelids and all others. Tier 2 will have traceability strategies defined at a later date. USDA believes they need to have 70% of Tier 1 species identified and traceable to their premises of origin in order to have a workable food animal ID system.

On October 11, 2007, USDA announced that two more animal ID devices have been approved for use under the NAIS. This includes the first approved injectable transponder (microchip) from Digital Angel. The chip carries an official animal identification number (AIN), which is used to identify individual animals as part of the NAIS. Digital Angel is already an approved manufacturer of visual RFID tags and now adds the first approved injectable transponder as a NAIS compliant

identification device. The transponder is approved for use in horses, alpacas and llamas.

The GAO issued a report in late July 2007 entitled "USDA Needs to Resolve Several Key Implementation Issues to Achieve Rapid and Effective Disease Traceback". GAO-07-592. This report is worth reading even though there is scant mention of camelids. A copy of this report and an executive summary are available at:

Highlights:

<http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d07592high.pdf>

Full report:

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d07592.pdf>

Kansas State Univ. has been given the task of conducting a cost/benefit analysis of the NAIS. The results of this study are not expected until fall of 2008.

Although the NAIS is still strictly voluntary at the federal level, individual states can move ahead with their own more detailed programs. Currently most states are still focused on premises identification and registration, but a few states are moving ahead with individual identification in areas of the cattle sector (WI and MI for example).

The following update on premises registration has been posted on the NAIS web site:

(http://animalid.aphis.usda.gov/nais/naislibrary/documents/plans_reports/NAIS_Prem_Stat_Report.pdf)

States with more than 50% of premises registered as of October 15, 2007:

Wisconsin, Idaho, Indiana, Utah, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Nevada, New York, North Dakota.

States with less than 10% of premises registered as of October 15, 2007:

Maine, Oregon, New Mexico, Vermont, Washington, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut.

Committee on Diagnostic Laboratory and Veterinary Workforce Development

Mr. Brian Smith, legislative assistant for the American Assoc. of Veterinary Medical Colleges, provided the committee with background information on H.R. 1232 (companion: S. 746) which is the Veterinary Public Health Workforce Expansion Act of 2007. This bill is very important for all livestock producers as it will help enhance the ability of our accredited veterinary schools to expand their facilities via a competitive grants system and thus be able to accept a larger number of students. There is a serious and growing shortage of large animal veterinarians in the U.S. The subset of large animal veterinarians with knowledge of camelids is even smaller. H.R. 1232 is getting good support in the House of Representatives with 82 cosponsors as of Oct. 29, 2007, but more cosponsors are needed. Please make your representatives and senators aware of the importance of this issue to you as a llama/alpaca owner and ask your representatives to sign on to this bill as cosponsors. Check the cosponsor list before writing to your representative or senator, to be determine if he/she is already a sponsor. The easiest way to track the status of bills is to use the Library of Congress legislative information web site:

<http://thomas.loc.gov>

In the upper center of the page, you will find a search box; just type in H.R. 1232 and click on "bill number" right below the search box. Then click on "Search". You will get all the information you need about the bill including full text, list of cosponsors, list of all legislative action, etc.

For excellent background information on the large animal veterinarian shortage issue, visit the American Assoc. of Veterinary Medicine (AVMA) web site:

<http://www.avma.org/fsvm/default.asp>

This site has information on the numbers of veterinarians in all 50 states, the ratio of large animals per veterinarian, the population of large animals, and the population of veterinarians. There are many documents and sources listed on this web site to help you inform your members of Congress about the importance of this bill and why it should be passed.

USDA 2007 Agricultural Census Forms

To fill out or not to fill out. . . that is the question

Reprinted from the Winter 2007-2008 issue of *The INLA Ongle*.

The Editor's note is from Cyndi Smith, Editor of that newsletter.

(The editor of this newsletter wishes she had seen this article sooner.)

Editor's note: Some of you may have received a USDA Agricultural Census packet and are wondering what it really means (is it NAIS in disguise?) and whether your response is really required by law. I asked Bruno Schmidt what he thought and the following is his reply.

Cyndi,

Obviously, anybody who REALLY wants to complete the forms and return them to the USDA, is free to do so. On the other hand, anybody who is concerned about the census' intrusiveness has plenty to be worried about:

The instructions, explanations and disclaimers on the form itself are NOT the law – they have no legal effect.

The actual law (Title 7 United States Code Sec. 2204g) is rather vague about the kind of questions the USDA is actually allowed to ask and does not specify who has a duty to respond.

Clause (g) of Sec. 7 USC 2204g requires the publication of regulations in the Federal Register, but none have been published – ever!

Upon following the trail of references, clause (f)(3) "Confidentiality" opens up a veritable "back door" opportunity for any other Federal agency to get its hands on census information.

Every mailing label on a census form contains a preprinted "survey code" . . . which could be used at any time, by any agency, to perform an automated database-match of census info with an agency's other database(s). (Note: The USDA has announced that it will be performing massive data-mining for and data-conversion to the "NAIS Data Standard" beginning this year!)

It is a known fact, and was conveyed to me personally by a census worker, that the USDA has a reciprocal data sharing arrangement with the IRS – that is how the USDA finds out about farms in the first place (IRS Form 1040 and 1120S/ Schedule F returns.)

Aside from the foregoing, there are many more problems with the census form's details (i.e. its definition of "Operation" lacks any legal authority) that could be styled into a rebuttal letter if one would want to, since

- (a) the census form clearly exceeds what the law authorizes,
- (b) the law itself is way too vague to have any effect and does not identify those who have a duty to participate, and
- (c) none of the required implementation rules have ever been published.

A good faith response might be to make your participation conditional: demand that they provide you with a copy of the census rules as they had to be published in the Federal Register . . . Of course, that's just an idea.

Please note that I am not giving you legal advice – you'll have to decide for yourself what to do.

Kindly,

Bruno

Microchip Cancer Report

Reprinted from the November/December 2007 issue of *The Llama Letter*, Newsletter of the Willamette Valley Llama Association

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 19, 2007

CASPIAN RELEASES MICROCHIP CANCER REPORT

Sets record straight after misleading claims by HomeAgain and VeriChip implant manufacturers

A new paper titled "Microchip-Induced Tumors in Laboratory Rodents and Dogs: A Review of the Literature 1990-2006" has been released today by CASPIAN. The full, 48-page paper provides a definitive review of the academic literature showing a causal link between implanted radio-frequency (RFID) microchip transponders and cancer in laboratory rodents and dogs. In addition, a brief, four-page synopsis of the full report is being made available.

Eleven articles previously published in toxicology and pathology journals are evaluated in the report. In six of the articles, between 0.8% and 10.2% of laboratory mice and rats developed malignant tumors around or adjacent to the microchips, and several researchers suggested the actual tumor rate may have been higher. Two additional articles reported microchip-related cancer in dogs.

In almost all cases, the malignant tumors, typically sarcomas, arose at the site of the implants and grew to surround and fully encase the devices. In several cases the tumors also metastasized or spread to other parts of the animals.

Public revelation of a casual link between microchipping and cancer in animals has prompted widespread public concern over the safety of implantable

microchips. The story was first broken to the public in September through an article written by Associated Press Reporter Todd Lewan. Prior to the AP story, the journal articles were completely unknown outside of small academic circles.

"The AP did a superb job informing the public of the existence of these journal articles," said Dr. Katherine Albrecht, a leading privacy expert and long-time VeriChip opponent who authored the new paper. "Unfortunately," Dr. Albrecht added, "a lot of misinformation about the cancer research has circulated since Mr. Lewan's article was published. I wrote the report to set the record straight."

The animal-microchip study findings were so compelling that one of Mr. Lewan's sources, Dr. Robert Benezra, head of the Cancer Biology Genetics Program at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, was quoted as saying, "There's no way in the world, having read this information, that I would have one of those chips implanted in my skin, or in one of my family members."

Nevertheless, representatives of the chipping industry have made inaccurate public statements about the research findings in an effort to confuse the public.

Scott Silverman, CEO of the VeriChip Corporation which makes the controversial VeriChip human implant, recently provided inaccurate information to Time Magazine. Mr. Silverman is quoted as saying that none of the tumors found in mice in a 2006 French study were malignant. In fact, not only were the tumors malignant sarcomas, but most of the afflicted animals died prematurely as a result of the microchip-associated tumors.

In addition, Destron Fearing, makers of the HomeAgain pet implant, dismissed

a finding of fibrosarcoma--a highly lethal cancer--as 'benign' in a recent report.

A fibrosarcoma is a type of sarcoma, a malignant tumor of soft tissue that connects, supports or surrounds other structures and organs of the body. Dr. Timothy Jennings, an expert on implant-induced cancers in humans, said he was "not aware of any nosology incorporating an entity of 'benign fibrosarcoma'" and agreed that "any tumor classified as sarcoma should be viewed as malignant."

"Either VeriChip and the makers of HomeAgain actually don't understand the difference between a benign fibroma and a malignant fibrosarcoma," noted Dr. Albrecht, "or they're deliberately lying to the public. Either way, it's clear they can't be trusted. We hope our new report will set the record straight."

The report includes a one- to three-page writeup on each of the original studies. In addition to a detailed review of the academic literature, the report contains recommendations for patients, pet owners, veterinarians, and policy makers, including the following: (1) Further microchipping of humans should be immediately discontinued; (2) Implanted patients should be informed in writing of the research findings and offered a procedure for microchip removal; and (3) Policy makers should reverse all animal microchipping mandates.

As part of its public awareness campaign, CASPIAN will be issuing copies of the new report to leading policy and decision makers.

The full 48-page report and four-page synopsis are also immediately available for public download at <http://www.antichips.com/cancer/>

Biosecurity for Camelid Owners

Reprinted from the Winter 2007 issue of the South Central Llama Association's *Humming Herald*

In response to a request from the chair of the U.S. Animal Health Association's Committee on Infectious Diseases of Cattle, Bison and Camelids, Karen Conyngham (ILR representative to USAHA) compiled a short overview of biosecurity practices that should be followed by all camelid owners. The PowerPoint presentation draws heavily on the excellent articles written by Dr. Kristy Brown of Wisconsin on this topic, and also incorporates some points from articles in the peer-reviewed literature plus several suggestions by veterinarian members of the USAHA Committee. These are general guidelines. Farms with considerable outside activity – showing, boarding or participating in outside breeding – should tighten their biosecurity protocol to meet their level of increased risk.

Biosecurity for Camelids, PowerPoint slide review.

The purpose of biosecurity is to prevent introduction and spread of disease into or within a herd or population. Within the US alpaca population there has been increased owner awareness of the importance of biosecurity due to BVD concerns. The alpaca industry now requires negative BVD test for entry into AOBA sanctioned shows; commercial transporters require negative BVD test before loading animals and owners are encouraged to have suspect animals tested and to cull any that are confirmed PI.

Biosecurity is an integral part of total farm management.

- New arrivals/additions to the herd or visitors for outside breeding must be quarantined – 30 days is the recommended quarantine period.
- Bacterial/viral prepatent (length of time it takes for infection to become apparent) period is 14-21 days on average
- Parasites/coccidia prepatent period is 3-6 weeks
 - Deworm females 10-14 days prior to breeding
 - Do a follow-up fecal 14 days after breeding
- Never commingle visiting animals with farm's own pregnant females

A farm's quarantine area should have:

Shelter; a fenced pasture that does NOT share a common fence line with the main herd; its own water source; separate tack and feeders and waterers that can be disinfected. Pure bleach is a readily used disinfectant; dilute at a ratio of ½ cup of bleach per gallon of water.

The quarantine area should be located away from the main herd with NO shared fence lines and If possible, it should be located so that prevailing winds and any rainfall runoff will NOT impact the main facility.

Keep pair of boots or shoes for use at the quarantine area only.

Prompt removal (daily) of dung is important to control flies/mosquitoes and any runoff that could enter the main pastures.

Quarantine facility chores should be done LAST to avoid any contact with the main herd.

Biosecurity for farm visitors:

- Keep a log of visitors – what other farms have they visited and when?
- Provide shoes/boots for them to wear in animal areas.
- Require hand washing before and after seeing the animals.
- Do not allow general public access to the herd; provide photos of animals for advance review, then bring specific animals into a separate viewing area for visitors.
- Make appointments for future visits for serious buyers.
- Keep outside gates locked.

Biosecurity at shows/sales:

- Do not use communal dung piles.
- Stall area should be under observation at all times.
- Do not walk camelids in areas used by other species.
- Do not encourage spectators to feed animals.
- Quarantine show animals for 14-21 days upon returning home.



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The 26th Annual R.M.L.A Fairplay Llama Race

Saturday July 26th 2008

by Gary Carlton

After several months of what seemed like endless snow fall, winter has finally loosened its icy grip and given way to warmer temperatures. And with the change in seasons comes Camping, Hiking, Pack Trips and a new year of R.M.L.A events.

As the flowers start to bud out and bloom and the grass begins to grow it is also a sign that I need to get busy planning the 26th annual Fairplay Llama Race. Much like other years, 2008 will bring a new set of challenges to put this event into the history books.

My largest supplier of llamas, Sally Rucker, who is also our announcer, will be out of the state this year. The heavy snow pack is forcing me to think of an alternate course if needed, in the event that the river is running too high and fast.

After a few safety issues that I encountered last year I must also look at what is best for the future of this event and some ways to make it a safer race for everyone involved.



No one will be allowed on the course without good walking shoes or hiking boots and I will have spotters pulling any animals that seem stressed or tired, along with participants with inadequate clothing for this type of race. While Presbyterians St. Luke's Lama Rama is meant to be a fun-hearted race to generate awareness for the need for organ donation, safety must remain a key factor.

If you have never been to the Fairplay Llama Race, it is an event like no other. Participants include those who have never touched a llama before as well as the



seasoned veterans who have returned year after year to try their luck on this three mile course one more time. The top three runners in 2007 were:

1. Time 32:30:16 Craig Kemp, Llama - Tony from Comanche Creek Llamas.
2. Time 32:30:30 Jason Hudson, Llama - Sunrise from Comanche Creek Llamas.
3. Time 35:20:13 Michael Orser, Llama - Lester from Kaltenbaugh Llamas.

In addition to the serious runners, there are many people who enter as walkers. The course features a wide range of obstacles from blacktop, rocks, willows, river crossings, bridges, jumps and steep hills in a wide variety of weather possibilities from sunshine to rain and snow.

The entry fee of eighteen dollars includes a T-shirt. Entry is open to the public and we try our best to provide llamas for those who need them. However, this Race has kind of outgrown the number of available llamas, so get there early if you need an animal because they go really fast. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. on Front Street in Fairplay. Pre-registration forms will be available on the RMLA website under the Fairplay Llama Race.

One of the best parts of the Fairplay event is Llama Camp, where we get to spend the night under the stars with a field full of llamas in a natural setting. We have a pot luck dinner on Friday evening so bring along your favorite side dish and catch up on what everyone has been up to. And the Llama Camp Performance show at camp on Sunday is always a great time.

Of course it is important to acknowledge the contributions of everyone who helps to make the Fairplay Llama Race such a special event including:

Merchants who donated prizes in 2007:

Marcy's Feed and Seed, South Park Historical Foundation, Calamity's Cabin, Brown Burro Café, The Hair Cut Shop, Red Barn Antiques, Colorado Mountain Hat Co, South Park Pottery, Natures Gift Candle works, Hand Hotel, Silver Scoop Creamery, Even In The End Liquor, and Patti's Pizzeria.

Llama ranches who supplied llamas for the 2007 race:

Rock-n-M Llamas, Comanche Creek Llamas, Stage Stop Llamas, Kevin Kaltenbaugh, Llama Time, Escarpment Llamas, Laughing Llamas, C&M Llamas, Clearwater, Steve & Angie Jenkins, Mike Friedel, Split Rock Ranch, Cedar Cliff Ranch, Mary Wickman and Gaylene Burdick.

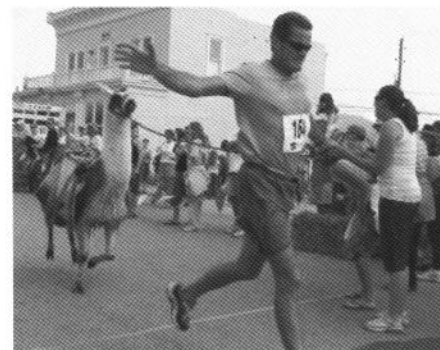
Our Volunteers who keep it all together:

Gary & Vivian Carlton, Steve & Leslie Schubert, Jim Osmun, Ann Bruhn, Mary Wickman, Marc & Kathy Wittrup, Mark & Arthur Smith, Niles Waylan, Roger Miller, Steve Jenkins, Mike Friedel, Gaylene Burdick and Jeff & Sally Rucker.

Special thanks to Lauren and Vicky for all the great photos.

I hope to see you all in July for the 26th annual R.M.L.A. Fairplay Llama Race.

For Information, Suggestions or to Volunteer contact me at gary@jmhfarm.com or call me at 303-622-6306 or 303-503-1324. Gary Carlton Event Coordinator



National Animal I.D. System... an Opinion

by Elaine Parlow

By now, most of you have heard of the National Animal Identification System, the federal government's plan to tag and track every farm animal in America from birth to death. I have been rather ambivalent about the plan, until I read the September issue of *The Hightower Lowdown*, an investigative newsletter by Jim Hightower, that exposed the true origins and goals of the program.

As currently planned, the NAIS would compel the owners of animals, from chickens to llamas to cows, to register their premises and personal information in a federal data base, to microchip every single animal, to log and report every "event" in the life of each animal (such as visits to the vet, a show, or a parade), to pay fees for the privilege of having their locations and animals registered, and to sit still for fines of up to \$1000 a day for non-compliance. Each animal would be given a 15 digit federal ID number and a GPS locale where it must be accounted for.

The supposed purpose of this multi-million dollar program (the USDA has spent \$117 million so far to launch it) is to protect public health from the dangers of animal borne diseases. However, the huge agribusiness meat producers, such as Cargill and Tyson, which account for the vast numbers of disease outbreaks, are given a pass from the onerous requirements that small farmers, homesteaders and hobbyists must perform. Instead, if an entity owns a vertically integrated birth-to-death factory system with thousands of animals, they are allowed to assign a single lot number to cover an entire herd or flock.

So, who is driving this program, and why? To find out we must ask the old Latin question, "Cui bono?"--who benefits? This takes us to another obscure acronym, the NIAA which stands for the National Institute of Animal Agriculture. Despite its official sounding name, this is a private consortium largely made up of two groups: proponents of corporate agriculture, and hawkers of surveillance technologies. They are the ones who conceived the plan for the program, wrote the USDA proposal and are pushing hard to impose it on us.

So how do these groups benefit from NAIS? First, the corporate meat-producers designed the system to fit their thoroughly computerized industry, so tracking their herd lots is no additional trouble. Second, it's no accident that NAIS will be burdensome and costly (fees, microchips, computer equipment, time) to small farmers and ranchers. The giant operators are happy to see those pesky competitors saddled with another reason to go out of business, thus leaving even more of the market to the big guys. Third, the Cargills and Tysons are eager to assure Japan, Europe and other export customers that the U.S. meat industry is finally doing something to clean up the widespread contamination of its product. A national animal tracking system would give the appearance of doing this without making the corporations incur the cost of a real clean-up. The health claims of NAIS are basically a sham because the program does not touch the source of E. Coli, salmonella, listeria, mad cow, and other meat-borne diseases. Such contamination comes from the inherently unhealthy practices (intense overcrowding, growth stimulants, feeding regimens, poor sanitation, etc.) of industrial scale meat operations and NAIS will do nothing to stop this. Moreover, tracking stops at the time of slaughter, and it's from slaughter onward that spoilage occurs.

Let's not forget the chip companies and sellers of computer tracking systems. Companies such as Microsoft, Viatrace, AginfoLink, and Digital Angel are drooling over the profits promised by the compulsory tagging of all the farm animals in the U.S. They know there are millions of sheep, horses, hogs, cows, turkeys and chickens, along with untold thousands of bison, llamas, alpacas, goats, and other animals, all needing to be microchipped and monitored, as would all their offspring.

In essence, the NIAA, this small, private group of profit seekers developed a self-serving plan that will affect millions of people and got the USDA to adopt it whole, with practically no public participation.

But not without public notice and reaction. Following the 2005 unveiling by the USDA of their strategic plan, the NAIS instantaneously

became the most hated initiative in rural America. Stunned, the establishment took a step back. The 2005 plan said NAIS was mandatory, but in November 2006 the USDA rushed out a revision declaring NAIS would be voluntary on the federal level, and that the government would let the states take the lead in implementing the system.

Consequently, the ag industry lobbyists started going all out to push the states to make the program mandatory. Indiana, Kentucky and Wisconsin have already made registration compulsory, and efforts are underway to do so in Maine, North Carolina, Texas and Washington. Tactics include tying popular government programs or even participation on livestock shows or 4-H to premises registration. The USDA is also using cash grants. The FFA was given \$600,000 to entice its 7,200 local chapters into promoting NAIS registration in classrooms and at FFA events-with awards offered to chapters that do the best.

In spite of all this the NAIS has not yet been hung around our necks. In at least eleven states, legislation has been introduced to reject the program, and this past summer the House appropriations Committee refused to approve any new funds for the program, demanding a strategic plan showing tangible outcomes, without which it "has no justification to continue funding the program." This is a huge change, but lobbyists with money to spread around will not be giving up easily. If you feel the NAIS would be detrimental to your farm, here are some web sites for more information and ideas for fighting back. By the way, I recently read an unrelated article claiming a suspected relationship between microchips and cancer! So check out these web sites and get involved if you are concerned.

Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance
www.farmandranchfreedom.org

No NAIS
www.NoNais.org

Stop Animal ID
www.stopanimalid.org

Reprinted from the Fall 2007 issue of *LANA News*.

FFA Convention Reaps Benefits for Llama Community

by Sheila Fugina and Barb Baker
Photos courtesy of Barb Baker

Reprinted from *Topline*, the quarterly newsletter of the Ohio River Valley Llama Association

Indianapolis – Oct. 24-26, 2007 – Building on the success of the past two years, the llama display at the 42nd annual FFA National Agricultural Career Show at the Indianapolis Convention Center was even more attractive and attention-getting than previous ones due to a more cohesive look and increased activities. Part of the National FFA Convention, this year's show was "the largest career show held by the FFA," according to Jack Pitzer, show manager, who said there were 419 exhibitors.

The llama exhibit was 30' by 10', including a pen for the llamas, and this year also featured a spinner on all three days and a weaver on the second day. Both the spinner and weaver, along with an expanded fiber display, attracted almost as much attention as the llamas themselves. Advisors and students alike were drawn in to the display as they stopped to watch and ask questions. It provided a great opportunity to be able to talk one on one with advisors and give them a "Discover Llamas" advisor packet, 450 of which were handed out this year.



Texas Group

The career show highlights career opportunities for agricultural students and their instructors by showcasing the diversity

of agriculture and its related fields. Bringing together current industry leaders with those of the future, the show presents information students can use in planning their own future endeavors. That was emphasized with this year's theme, "Blue Jackets, Bright Futures."



North Carolina Group

States from one end of the country to the other were represented, including Alaska and Hawaii, and we even saw a large contingency from Puerto Rico in the aisle near our display. There were 53,674 registered FFA members attending this year's event, and the addition of advisors and chaperones put total attendance at more than 55,000.

Major sponsors for this year's llama display were the International Llama Registry, the International Camelid Institute and the Alpaca and Llama Show Association. Added support from state and regional llama organizations made a great difference in the quality and quantity of display materials we were able to offer. Understanding the potential for our industry as a whole, a number of organizations provided dollars and in-kind donations (see adjacent list). In addition, Karen Conyngham of Austin, Texas, provided copies of "Minimum Standards of Care for Llamas and Alpacas" and "Recommended Practices in Caring for Llamas & Alpacas" for inclusion in the informational packets handed out to advisors. Contributing llama organizations

also had their web site addresses included on the front of the packet.

Three Indiana farms provided different llamas on each day of the career show, and with the only live animals at the convention, we certainly drew a constant crowd. Those providing llamas, and manning the llama pen for long days and lots of questions, included Lisa Alayza and her daughter Lauren, Eran McCarty, and Mike Hoopengardner and his daughter Jessica.

The crew who stood on a concrete floor for hours on end answering questions, stuffing packets and handing out bookmarks to FFA members included ORVLA's Cindy Ruckman (our spinner) and her son David, Alicia Rode, ORVLA members Wendy Gerken (our weaver) and her daughter Mandy, Hannah Leak, Ricky Zachow, Barb Baker and Sheila Fugina. In addition, Mark Smith helped set up the display the day before the career show, bringing freshly painted panels and sod for the llama pen. We had more student members in this year's work crew, which helped in opening conversations with other students as well as their advisors. Everyone involved deserves special thanks not only for helping, but also for doing so



Georgia Group

"on their own nickel" because they believe in what the llama community can do through events like the FFA National Convention.

It's obvious, too, that FFA considers the llamas a real bonus. A large photo from a previous year's llama display was included on the huge entrance tower standing just outside the doors to the career show, and with more than 400 exhibitors to choose from, being selected for inclusion on the tower is no small thing. Many students and advisors that visited our display last year stopped by to check in, share stories and see this year's group of llamas. Several said they were working to start llama projects within their chapters or were considering doing it on an individual basis with an SAE (supervised agricultural experience).

Agricultural science teacher Lou Ann Teague of Ellijoy, Georgia, came by to tell us about the llama project she started at their school as a result of talking with us last year and taking home an advisor's packet and additional contact information. They now have three llamas that were shown by 15 to 20 youth during the past year, and they also used the llamas to work with special needs children at their school. Some of the Downs Syndrome youngsters at the school don't like any of the other animals they have in the livestock projects, she said, but they just love the llamas. After seeing the fiber display and asking questions about the spinning weaving being demonstrated, Lou Ann plans to add a fiber component to the project this coming year. She also volunteered to help with any rescue situations in Georgia.

"My children and I are moving out of cattle and hogs and into llamas after seeing and talking to you for the last two years," said a North Carolina FFA advisor. "We went to a few shows and loved the performance classes." A California ag teacher and advisor stopped by with his wife and asked, "Can I have a couple more of those bookmarks? I wore mine out from last year."

A group of FFA students from Pasadenda, Texas, were absolutely smitten with the llamas and came back to our display a number of times each day. They asked all sorts of questions and picked up an advisor's packet for their teacher, promising to bring her back to talk with us about starting a llama project at their school. "I had to come and see you," said Peggy Georg. "The kids practically dragged me over here, and when the kids are that excited about something, I know I need to check it out." We talked with them at length about starting a llama project and deciding what to focus on for their first year. By the time they finally said their good-byes to us on the last day, the students were leaning towards fiber and packing projects.

National FFA student membership surpassed the half-million mark this fall for the first time in 29 years. There are 500,823 members in 7,358 chapters in the U.S, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Almost 30 percent of FFA members live in rural farm areas, 40 percent in suburban areas (even in New York City!). The FFA's goal is to have 10,000 quality ag education programs with FFA chapters nationwide by 2015. The llama community needs to be a bigger part of those programs, and our presence at the National FFA Convention provides us with a great opportunity to do just that. Plans are underway to make next year's llama display larger and even more interactive, and increased support from the llama community

will be necessary to help make that possible. We have a great start – let's keep this ball rolling!

Organizations Contributing to FFA Llama Display:

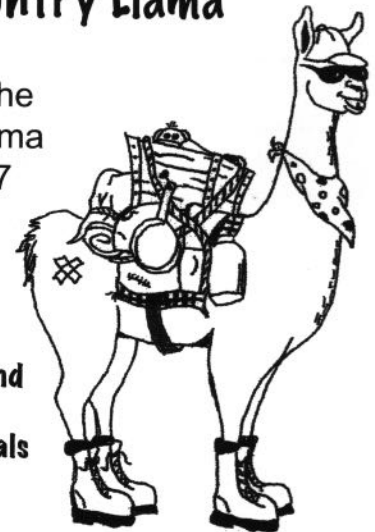
Southern States Llama Association
 Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association
 Greater Appalachian Llama & Alpaca Association
 Ohio River Valley Llama Association
 South Central Llama Association
 Wisconsin Organization of Lama Enthusiasts
 Lamas of Minnesota
 Lamas of the Mid-Atlantic States
 Missouri Llama Association
 Llama Association of North America
 LlamaQuest

In addition to the above groups that provided cash contributions, Southern States Llama Association also donated 600 copies of their very well-done "Discover Llamas" magazine for the advisor packets, and Able Publishing, Inc., printed 5,000 bookmarks for distribution to FFA members. This cooperative effort is much appreciated.

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Three Llamas And A Room Full Of Goat Ropers

by Jerry Dunn
Photos by Kristie Wamsley



“Goat Roper” is a slang term which commonly refers to city people who dress like cowboys. “Goat ropers” are frequently seen in Denver during January at National Western Stock Show time.

The Goat Ropers Fund Raiser Dinner is held during the NWSS as a fund raising event for the National Western Stock Show Scholarships. Ten company teams from the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce who have donated \$2000 each get all

As soon as the teams arrive in the stadium arena they begin warming up and practicing their skills. Lariats start spinning, cow chips are flying and the mechanical horse springs into action with a loud bang. At the far end of the room a round pen full of harnessed goats are bleating impatiently. The llamas stand next to the rail and survey all of the activities as the people

roam around the arena floor. Bocelli checks out the blonds and finds something interesting in a lady’s purse surprising her by sticking his whole

face inside the opening. John and Jurni focus intently on the goats.

Three llamas from Bear Track Farm, Bocelli, John Smith and Jurni, along with Lloyd Wamsley and I have been invited to take part in the National Western Stock show Goat Ropers Fund Raiser dinner for the last four years. We set up a small obstacle course with 5 obstacles for the participants to

lead the llamas through. Lloyd instructs participants off to one side of the course how to lead the llamas and the best way to get points from the judge.....lots of smiles really worked. I serve as the judge and award execution points as the participants lead the llamas through the course. Once all of the teams have completed the llama obstacle course, the children of the participant’s and spectators from the stands get to practice leading and having their pictures taken with the llamas.

This fun and interesting event produces over \$20,000 yearly toward the NWSS scholarship fund. Heather Grimm an RMLA youth was a recipient of this scholarship.



wear to enter this event. Teams participate in fun western events accumulating points toward winning a special trophy and prizes. Some of the events are steer head roping, cow chip toss, calf roping from a mechanical horse, horseshoe toss, llama obstacle course, sunflower seed spit, and goat roping.



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Llamas in Church

by Sarah Mulholland



On a recent trip to St. Louis, Missouri, I was amazed and delighted to discover a llama in the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis. The Cathedral, begun in 1907, is decorated with the largest collection of mosaics of any one building in the entire world. Installation of the mosaics began in 1912 but was not completed until 1988. The mosaics were created by hand with over 41 million pieces of glass in more than 8,000 shades!

This picture is found on the west wall of the south bay. On the right side, a diocesan priest and a sister from St. Louis are represented working among the people, or should I say, inhabitants of Bolivia.

Article and photos were originally published in the January – March 2008 issue of *News & Views from COLA*. Thanks to Sarah Mulholland for sharing them with us.



BLENDING FIBERS FOR SPINNING

by Chris Switzer

Many spinners who **knit** like to combine llama or alpaca with some sheep's wool when preparing it on hand carders (20% - 50%). Especially for ribbing – cuffs, lower edge, and neck – it is helpful to have more elasticity from the sheep's wool addition. A two ply yarn is also suggested.

Blending **colors** on hand carders or a drum carder will give shades: by adding white or grey or black. For example, reddish brown (A) plus white (B) will yield tan, or black (C) plus white (D) will yield grey. For true blending: apply color A and card back and forth, then apply color B on top of A, card back and forth, then remove and lightly tease with your hands. Reapply the mixture and card, then remove. Tease again and repeat a third time until you have a blended color. The same process can be done with (C) plus (D).

Another possibility: Two or more colors can be applied to hand carders in thin stripes or checkerboard placement (see drawings), card only once. The rolag will automatically give a **variegated** effect to your handspun yarn. My headband project has this yarn in the project section (of *Spinning Llama and Alpaca*).

Blending other fibers will yield a unique appearance. Remember to keep staple lengths similar. 10% - 30% mohair will add loft and gives a fuzzy look by doing true blending on the carders. Wisps of silk applied to carder first, on a diagonal, and then a contrasting color of alpaca wool applied on top, carded only once, will give a sparkle in places to your handspun yarn. Angora rabbit blended with llama or alpaca is the ultimate luxury

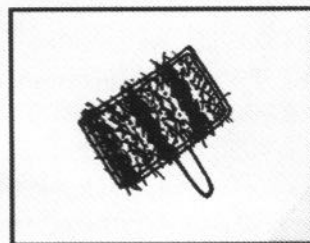
yarn! It is very soft and warm, so choose your project wisely. This is a good way to have the angora go further and add strength to the handspun yarn.

Another idea is plying a ball of llama or alpaca with a ball of another fiber. A color of a lighter shade or white/natural will offer a "tweed looking yarn." One spinner friend of mine does very fine handspun. She has six llamas of different colors – she spins a bobbin of each color and then plies them all to get a medium weight yarn. This handspun is very "tweedy" and knits well into hats or mittens.

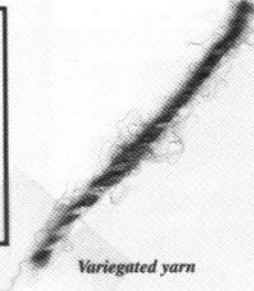
I encourage you to experiment! Using hand carders will give you more control than using a drum carder – at least until you figure percentages. Knit a sample swatch of two inches per square or weave a sample by wrapping the warp around a three inch square of cardboard and then use a tapestry needle to weave over/under the weft.

Note from the author – Switzer Land Farm in Estes Park, Colorado began in 1980 with a llama from the Denver Zoo. Thanks to Bobra Goldsmith we had our "first" and named her Chica. (She had wonderful fiber!) By 1985 we added four alpacas and have increased our herd over the years. In 1999 a couple of paco-vicunas with incredible fiber started us on another adventure! My husband Phil and I have always been members of RMLA.

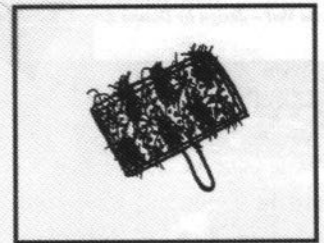
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Thin stripes applied



Variegated yarn



Checkerboard applied

CALLING ALL ADVENTURERS!

2008 Falkland Research Expedition & Christmas in Patagonia with William L. Franklin, PhD.

You awake and peer out from the flap of your bedroom door to see penguins dotting the landscape around you. Then a ruckus down below at the ocean's edge catches your attention... where you see a mammoth sea lion lunging ashore attempting to capture his breakfast. You smile with relief as a pair of Steamer Ducks and seven fuzzy ducklings safely scurry ashore to the white sandy beach that defines the arching blue-green bay before you. In the background a pair of gray dolphins play in a glistening bed of kelp. The bay itself looks more like a field of diamonds from the reflections of the rising sun. You rub your eyes and ask yourself...

⇒ "Is this real?"

Yes, this is the real deal and you are there: the Falkland Islands, the 750-island archipelago in the South Atlantic Ocean 370 miles off the southern coast of South America. You are on Staats Island overlooking Hamilton Bay, and you are part of a pioneering study on one of the premiere large mammals of the Americas: the guanaco... wild progenitor of the domestic llama.

Yes, this is the Falklands, where we are conducting ecological and genetic studies on a highly unique island population of guanacos. It is a world-class research project that is anticipated to make important contributions to our understanding of camelid genetics, inbreeding, and inheritance of birth defects. It is an exciting project in a beautiful and pristine corner of the world... and **you are invited to be a part of it.** We first went to Staats Island in 1999 and have since returned a number of times to document the unique events unfolding there. Your participation and support are invaluable components of

this joint endeavor. You will be directly assisting in the collection of scientific data involving population surveys, the hand capture of newborn guanacos (chulengos), and mapping the distribution of animals. The specific methodologies we use are straightforward and will be taught to you by the staff once we arrive to the island. Daily hikes of 3-5 miles over the island are an important component of what we do...collecting data, carrying our sack lunches, and being mesmerized by our surroundings.

Past participants have ranged in age from 18 to 74. Prerequisites for acceptance to the expedition are good health, enjoy the out-of-doors and hiking, and have a spirit of learning and adventure. We are the first and only to conduct in-depth research on Staats Island. The reason: its remoteness and isolation make the island a logistical challenge that others have not been able to address or sustain. Our funding for the project has come from foundations, universities, government agencies, and private individuals. Ultimately, the research expeditions are the bread and butter for the project, both for monetary support and the field participation contributed by expedition members.

Our next trip is in late 2008 starting on Thursday 4 December and ending Monday 22 December, including from the time you leave home to returning. While this is nearly a year away, we have already had a number of inquiries and serious expressions of plans to join us. Because we have to make arrangements far in advance for boat and airplane transportation within the Falklands, **we are now taking reservations for the expedition.** The cost of the expedition (\$3950) includes all lodging, food, meals, transfers, land transportation, charter airplane, and charter boats in the Falklands. Expedition members also purchase their individual airfares from home to the Falkland Islands, which varies

depending upon their point of origin in the U.S. (\$1400 to \$1600).

Falkland Research Expeditions is a registered non-profit corporation in the state of Iowa. We have applied to IRS for 301(c)(3) status, and anticipate the process to be finalized over the coming months. This will make your expedition costs a tax-deductible contribution as so determined by your accountant.

In addition to 2-3 staff, 5-7 participants will make up our research-expedition group to Staats Island. We would be delighted to have you join us as a part of our team. Some past participants have called the trip a once-in-a-lifetime experience, others an inspiring and life-changing sojourn. We call it the Falkland Islands.

At times in past years we have offered post-expedition trips to unique and special places, such as the fjords of southern Chile, Lakes Region in south-central Chile, altiplano of northern Chile, and the Cuzco-Machu Picchu scene in southern Peru. These optional, add-ons are definitely not traditional tours, but small-group travels to amazing and beautiful places frequented by few tourists. We are considering doing a "Christmas In Patagonia" trip after the 2008 expedition that would include: boating in the Austral fjords; marveling at mammoth glaciers and thundering waterfalls; walking among herds of llamas, alpacas and guanacos; fishing for jumbo trout; riding horseback; feasting on gaucho-style barbeques; kicking back at Patagonia-ranch estates; taking in picturesque vistas from cozy hotels; and misbelieving the awe-inspiring and spectacular Torres del Paine National Park with its spell-bounding mountains and cathedral-peaks.

Our experience will include charming B&Bs to posh overnights, and tailgate lunches to five-course-candlelight dining. Our theme is experiencing, relaxing, and learning. You will love the Patagonia. It has been my home away from home for

30 years. **Christmas In Patagonia** would be an additional 7-8 days after the **expedition** and cost \$1600-1900 including transportation, lodging, and meals. We will celebrate a fun and unforgettable Christmas in a most enchanting land. Among our recommended reading will be a book whose title tells us how special the Patagonia is... "No Where Is There A Place". It is a mystical land that causes my heart to swell each time I return, and a place that brings tears each time I depart.

Let me know if you might be interested in tasting the Patagonia or helping with research in the Falklands.

Sincerely, Dr. Bill

Contact me for more information:

William L. Franklin, PhD.

Itinerant Mammalian Wildlife Ecologist

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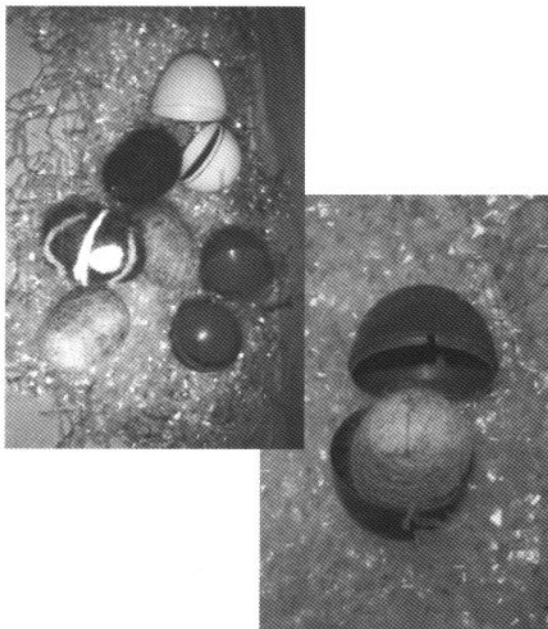


This is Houdini, a 1-day-old cria, taking a short cut to join his mom. He didn't yet know about the gate further along the fence. When he saw mom on the other side, he reared up on his hind legs, dove through, and got high centered just long enough for this photo. We never could keep him where we thought he should be, which is the reason for his name.

— Submitted by Sharon Beacham.

FELTED EASTER EGGS

by Geri Rutledge



the wool felt. Take your felted eggs out of the socks and plastic eggs and let them dry. Then you can needle felt designs, add crafty items or some bling bling to make them really stand out.

If you get a round ball, it means you need to put more wool in the egg next time. You can use the round ball for a cat toy.

This is a great 4-H project – just mark the kids' socks with a permanent marker before putting them in the dryer.

Just in time for the Spring Season, a simple craft project that takes very little time and can be done with raw wool or dyed and carded wool. I have tried both ways, and the end product is very similar. You can use solid colors or mix the wool and get a swirl pattern in your eggs.

Supplies: Raw or carded and dyed wool, plastic Easter egg, yarn and a sock. (And use of a clothes dryer.)

Start this project at the kitchen sink. Take a handful of llama or alpaca wool, enough to fill the plastic egg. Then wet the wool using the faucet, adding dish soap to make a round ball. Squish the soap all the way through the wool ball. Compress the wool and place it in the plastic egg. Don't leave any hanging out the side. Snap the egg closed. Then put the egg in the end of a sock and tie a piece of yarn around the end of the egg on the outside of the sock. I can get four or five eggs in one sock, just keep filling the sock until you reach the end.

Then take your socks and place them in the clothes dryer. Let them dry on the warm/high heat setting for at least 30 minutes. Adding a pair of shoes to the dryer isn't a bad idea. It is the heat and agitation that makes

The author Geri Rutledge is a Fiber Artist from Waco, Nebraska. She raises alpacas and llamas and is an ALSA Certified Fleece Judge. Geri likes to create projects that are easy and fun for kids. If you have questions about this project, contact her at buckshollow@wildblue.net.



Rotary Continental Divide Trail Challenge

DOES ANYONE WANT TO HIKE THE CDT THIS SUMMER?

by Dick Williams

Starting on June 25, 2008, Mat Matson will be starting the second year of the Rotary Continental Divide Trail Challenge at the Wyoming/Colorado border. The Colorado resident, who will turn 70 later this year, hiked the CDT in New Mexico last year and plans to hike Colorado this summer, Wyoming in 2009 and Idaho/Montana in 2010. Mat is looking for people with llamas to volunteer to hike all or part of the way and provide some pack space for food. While the first portion of the trip will be done in 1 and 2 day trips he says that after the July 19th celebration of Trailfest in Buena Vista, they will have to take longer hikes and would be grateful for llama packing assistance.

The Rotary Club of Conifer, Colorado, of which Mat is a member, has taken a special interest in the Continental Divide Trail with members volunteering their time, making donations, and even adopting a section of the Trail. Matson will participate in numerous community celebrations to encourage local involvement in building, maintaining and protecting this national treasure. He hopes to encourage other civic organizations along the Trail to become similarly involved.

Matson's Rotary CDT Challenge is more than just about one trail he says. He believes we are losing our connection to the land – a connection that has been a major part of who we are as a country for the last two

centuries. A large part of his outreach efforts include getting young people interested in the outdoors. He will make presentations to Boy and Girl Scouting organizations, schools and youth groups, as well as Rotary Clubs and other service organizations. Matson has already made a big difference in the life of his four-year-old grandson who now wants to go hiking all the time.

In cooperation with the Continental Divide Trail Alliance (CDTA), Matson's Rotary CDT Challenge will continue to build momentum for completing the Trail and to ensure that it remains protected in the future. Encouraging local community involvement up and down the Trail is vital, says Bruce Ward, Co-Executive Director of the CDTA. Caring for the sections of trail that have already been completed is just as important as building new tread. Local organizations who take ownership of the Trail in their areas by participating in the Adopt-a-Trail program are a key component to our continued success.

Matson hopes to raise enough funds as part of the Challenge to support the endowment of a Rotary-sponsored Youth Corps that would spend 10 weeks each summer working on the CDT. To complete this goal, Matson will be asking for donations that will eventually be evenly split between the Rotary Foundation and the CDTA. He hopes to eventually raise \$3.1 million, or \$1000 for

every mile of the Trail. While a few outdoor recreation companies are donating gear and food, Matson and his team are almost entirely self-supporting. No part of the contributions will be used for any Challenge expense.

Hiking with Matson will be Pem Sherpa of the Rotaract Club of Kathmandu, Nepal who also hiked the New Mexico portion of the Trail with Matson last year. Pem Sherpa has climbed Mount Everest several times. In 2005, he carried the Rotary Centennial Banner to the summit and later presented it at the Rotary International Centennial Convention. The Rotary CDT Challenge will also involve guest hikers who trek sections of the Trail with Matson.

This is a wonderful opportunity to contribute to a worthy cause and pack through some beautiful areas. We have already offered to pack for Mat for 190 miles of his trip through the Bob Marshall Wilderness System in Montana in 2010. Anyone wishing to help out is encouraged to contact Suzanne Barkley at InDesign2@wispertel.net, Mat at matmatson@wispertel.net or us at bcllama@blackfoot.net and we will put you in touch with Mat. More information on the Rotary CDT Challenge is available, and you can keep track of Mat's progress, at www.matquest.blogspot.com.

Dick Williams, Lothlorien Llamas
The Backcountry Llama, Plains, MT



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Synopsis of “Microchip-Induced Tumors” in Laboratory Rodents and Dogs:

A Review of the Literature 1990–2006”

by Katherine Albrecht, Ed.D.

Overview

This document summarizes a paper titled “Microchip-Induced Tumors in Laboratory Rodents and Dogs: A Review of the Literature 1990–2006.” The full, 48-page paper provides a detailed review of literature published in toxicology and pathology journals showing a causal link between implanted radio-frequency (RFID) microchip transponders and cancer in laboratory rodents and dogs.

This work was first inspired by Leon, the French bulldog who developed cancer from a microchip implant. Leon’s owner made heroic efforts to publicize his story and help other dogs avoid his fate. Her work was carried forward by Associated Press reporter Todd Lewan, who brought the research to the attention of the public in September 2007 in a feature-length AP article.

Revelations of a causal link between microchipping and cancer in animals have since prompted widespread public concern over the safety of implantable microchips for use in pets and human beings. The current report aims to inform the debate with an in-depth analysis of the relevant animal studies.

Cancer in Animals

Eleven journal articles published between 1990 and 2006 addressed tissue reactions to microchip implants in laboratory animals and dogs. In six of the articles, it was reported that between 0.8% and 10.2% of laboratory mice and rats developed malignant tumors around or adjacent to implanted microchips. Two additional articles reported microchip-related cancer in dogs. A summary of these findings is presented below in Table 1.

In almost all cases, the malignant tumors, typically sarcomas, arose at the site of the implants and grew to surround and

fully encase the devices. In several cases the tumors also metastasized or spread to other parts of the animals. The tumors generally occurred in the second year of the studies, during middle age or older for the animals. The exception to this was a single study in which 10.2% of genetically modified mice developed fast-growing cancers before six months of age.

Studies that did not Find Cancer

Three additional microchip implant studies were reviewed in which researchers did not find cancer. These include two early studies conducted in 1990 and 1991 when implants were first being introduced, and a 2003 study involving nine dogs. These

studies are deeply flawed. Unlike the other articles which typically looked at thousands of animals over a two-year period, these studies involved very small samples and/or short exposure times to the microchips.

Studies with small sample sizes lack valid predictive ability as they are unlikely to detect outcomes that occur only a small percentage of the time. Small effects require large samples to achieve statistical power. In other words, concluding that the microchip does not cause cancer would require a sample of many hundreds or even thousands of animals in which no cancers were found. As statisticians put it, “Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.”

Continued on page 36...

Table 1. Studies in which microchip-induced cancer was found (in reverse chronological order)

Author(s)	Species	# of animals	Length of Implant Exposure	Developed Cancer
Le Calvez 2006	mice	1,260	2 years	4.1%
Vascellari 2006	dog	N/A	7 months (at age 9)	1 dog
Vascellari 2004	dog	N/A	18 months (at age 11)	1 dog
Elcock 2001	rats	1,040	2 years	0.8%
Blanchard 1999	mice	177	6 months	10.2%
Palmer 1998	mice	800	2 years	2.0%
Tillmann 1997	mice	4,279	lifespan	0.8%
Johnson 1996	mice	2,000	2 years	~1.0%

Animals and Microchips Used in the Research

Length of exposure time and the age of the animal also appear to be important considerations in the development of microchip-induced tumors. In mouse and rat studies, the onset of malignancies typically occurred during the second year after implantation, when the animals were middle-aged and older. Younger animals with short exposure times such as the ones used in these studies would not be expected to develop cancer under this model.

A summary of the studies appears in Table 2 below. Concerns over the validity of these studies are discussed in greater depth in the full report.

Details of the Studies

A one- to three-page detailed write-up on each of the 11 studies is provided in the full report.

Common breeds of laboratory mice and rats were used in the rodent studies, and are identified in the full paper. Only one study used a genetically-modified mouse, the p53+/- mouse, which has an increased susceptibility to cancer caused by genotoxins, or substances that damage genetic material. The high rate of cancer development in these mice (10.2%) suggests that implanted microchips may have genotoxic attributes or give rise to the production of genotoxins in the host.

The microchips used in at least 10 of the 11 studies¹ were industry-standard, passive implantable RFID transponders, encapsulated in medical-grade glass and partially coated in an anti-migration polymer sheath. The implanted devices are designed to respond with an identification code when stimulated by radio-frequency energy emitted from a reader. The microchips used

in these studies were obtained from BioMedic Data Systems, Inc., Destron Fearing², and Merial.³

Explanations for the Tumors

The following proposed explanations for microchip-induced tumors are discussed at length in the full report:

- (1) Foreign-Body Tumorigenesis: The presence of the microchip, a subcutaneous foreign body, may cause cellular changes that can lead to cancer.
- (2) Post-Injection Sarcoma: Inflammation from the chip-injection procedure may cause cellular changes that can lead to cancer.
- (3) Possible Genotoxic Properties of the Implant: The glass capsule or polypropylene sheath surrounding it may have carcinogenic or genotoxic properties, or its presence within the host may give rise to genotoxic byproducts.
- (4) Radio-Frequency Energy Emissions from the Transponder or Reader: The radio-frequency energy involved with the transponder may somehow contribute to tumor formation.

Additional Adverse Events

In addition to malignant tumors, researchers described other adverse events associated with implanted microchips, including migration, incorrect insertion, loss from the body, and failure to function.

These adverse events occurred in studies that found cancer and those that did not. The migration issue was particularly acute, as even with the anti-migration sheath, many of the implants migrated from the original implantation site on the backs of the mice to cause cancer at other locations in the body. In one study, nineteen percent of the cancers found encased microchips that had migrated to the limbs, abdomens, or heads of the mice.

Table 2. Studies in which microchip-induced cancer was not found (In reverse chronological order)

Author(s)	Species	# of animals	Length of Implant Exposure	Developed Cancer
Murasugi 2003	dogs	2	3 days	none observed
		2	3 months	
		2	1 year	
		2	3 years	
		1	6 years	
Ball 1991	rats	10	2 weeks	none observed
		10	3 months	
		10	6 months	
		10	1 year	
Rao & Edmondson 1990	mice	10	3 months	none observed
		10	15 months	
		74	2 years	
		39	< 2 years	

1 In one study (Palmer et al, 1998), the microchips were identified only as "passive integrated transponder implants used for identification." It is likely they were the same, industry-standard chips as those used in other studies.

2 Destron Fearing is a subsidiary of Digital Angel, part of the family of companies that markets the VeriChip human implant. It is the exclusive manufacturer of RFID microchips for Schering Plough's Home Again pet recovery program.

3 Merial is a European distributor for Digital Angel's implantable microchip products.

Relevance for Humans

The fact that rodents and dogs have developed cancer in response to implants does not necessarily mean that humans will do the same. However, prior research indicates that humans are subject to malignant tumors in response to foreign-body implants. In a small number of cases, highly aggressive sarcomas and carcinomas have developed in humans around pacemakers and other implants.

Most of the malignant, microchip-induced tumors in rodents were classified as sarcomas – soft tissue cancers. Although soft tissue sarcomas are rare in humans, they are responsible for more deaths than testicular cancer, Hodgkin's disease, and thyroid cancer combined. They are also notorious for recurring and metastasizing—often with devastating results.

Since the microchip implant procedure has only been performed since 2001 on a small number of individuals—and there is no formal follow-up procedure in most cases—very little is known about the long-term response to the implant in human beings.

Relevance for Pets

Foreign-body-induced tumors can pose serious threats to animal health. Researchers report that most tumors arising from foreign bodies are malignant mesenchymal neoplasms with a rapid growth rate, killing the animal in a matter of weeks. Many of the study animals with microchip—associated tumors died prematurely due to the masses. In addition, many of the tumors metastasized, spreading cancer to the lungs, liver, stomach, pancreas, and other organs. Further research is needed to determine whether and to what extent the microchip implants give rise to cancer in pets.

Recommendations for Humans

The following recommendations are made for policy makers, physicians, and patients in light of the research findings:

- Further microchipping of humans should be discontinued.
- Implanted patients should be informed in writing of the research findings and

offered a procedure for microchip removal.

- Patients choosing to retain the microchips should be routinely checked for abnormalities.

Recommendations for Pets

The following recommendations are made for policy-makers, pet owners, and veterinary researchers:

- In light of research linking the microchip to cancer in animals, policy makers should reverse all mandatory animal microchipping statutes and policies.
- Veterinarians should familiarize themselves with the research findings and carefully consider the potential for adverse reactions before recommending implants for pets.
- Pet owners seeking microchip implants should be advised of the research linking the device to cancer in rodents and dogs.
- Owners of implanted pets should regularly examine the area surrounding the microchip and immediately report abnormalities to a veterinarian.
- No vaccinations or injections should be administered near the site of an implanted microchip.
- Chip-removal is likely to be costly and invasive, therefore pet owners may wish to leave the implanted microchips in place unless specific problems arise.
- Unchipped pets should be fitted with a well-made collar and a clear, legible tag with the owner's contact information.

Recommendations for Researchers

- A national registry should be created to record adverse reactions from implanted microchips.
- Directions for additional research are suggested.

Conclusion

The body of research reviewed in this report indicates a clear causal link between microchip implants and cancer in mice and

rats. It also appears that microchips can cause cancer in dogs, as they have done so in at least one case, and quite likely in two. These findings raise a red flag about the continued use of microchips in both dogs and human beings.

As the Associated Press reported, concern over the safety of microchip implants is shared by some of the nation's most respected cancer researchers.

"There's no way in the world, having read this information, that I would have one of those chips implanted in my skin, or in one of my family members," said Dr. Robert Benezra, head of the Cancer Biology Genetics Program at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York. He added, "Given the preliminary animal data, it looks to me that there's definitely cause for concern."

Dr. George Demetri, director of the Center for Sarcoma and Bone Oncology at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, agreed. Even though the tumor incidences were "reasonably small," in his view, the research underscored "certainly real risks" in RFID implants, adding that the tumors can be "incredibly aggressive and can kill people in three to six months."

Dr. Chand Khanna, a veterinary oncologist at the National Cancer Institute, said that the evidence "does suggest some reason to be concerned about tumor formations." All of the cancer specialists agreed the animal study findings should be disclosed to anyone considering a chip implant.

On the basis of these findings, physicians, patients, veterinarians, and pet owners may wish to avoid implants due to the potential health risks such devices may pose. It is the opinion of this researcher that further microchipping of pets or human beings should be immediately discontinued.

For additional information, please contact: Katherine Albrecht, Ed.D., CASPIAN Consumer Privacy, <http://www.antichips.com>

For a copy of the full report, "Microchip-Induced Tumors in Laboratory Rodents

Continued on page 38...

and Dogs: A Review of the Literature 1990–2006, please visit CASPIAN'S human chipping website at <http://www.antichips.com/cancer>.

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Hobby Farm or Business?

by Victoria G. Myers

(Reprinted from *The Llama Letter*, May 2007)

Sometimes it's hard to distinguish between work we do because we love it and work we do to keep the bills paid. The line can be especially blurry when it comes to farming or ranching.

Most farmers will tell you they love the lifestyle as much as the job itself. But when the lifestyle becomes more important than a profitable operation, the IRS can question whether you're running a true business at all. Businesses are supposed to generate a profit—at least some of the time.

As a business you are allowed to deduct farm expenses, but if the IRS believes your operation is run for pleasure or recreation—not as a commercial enterprise—it is then considered a hobby, or personal activity. This puts a strict limit on what you can or can't deduct come tax time.

Profit is a key in defining your operation for the IRS. According to the agency, if you are making a profit in three or more of the five years ending with the taxable year, you're most likely in it for the money. If your business is breeding, showing, training or racing horses, you get two out of seven years to show a profit.

Failure to make a profit for this set number of years doesn't mean the IRS automatically regards your operation as a hobby. But it does mean you'll have to look at meeting more stringent criteria—a set of nine factors the IRS uses to help determine whether a business is carried on for profit or for personal pleasure.

1. **MANNER** - Is your farm run in a business-like manner? Do you keep books and records? To be a business it needs to be run like a business.

2. **EXPERTISE** - Are you an expert in what your business does? This indicates you want to make a profit. If you are not an expert, do you hire someone who is to try to make your business profitable?

3. **TIME** - The amount of time and effort you put into your operation counts. Do you, or those you hire, keep hours that show you take this business seriously?

4. **ASSETS** - Does the business have assets that will appreciate in value? A good example is a horse-breeding operation. It may take time for your horses to appreciate in value.

5. **HISTORY** - A history of profits and losses matters. A long, uninterrupted history of losses tends to indicate you are not willing to make changes needed to turn profit.

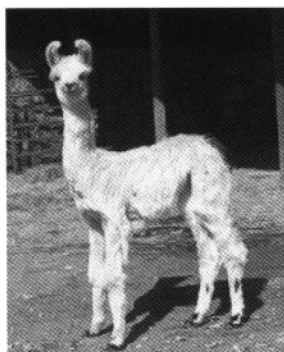
6. **SUCCESS** - If you have a record of success in other businesses it's a plus for you.

7. **PROFITS** - If profits are generated, the IRS will compare them to prior or later losses.

8. **WEALTH** - If you are wealthy enough to suffer losses without this impacting your lifestyle, it could indicate a nonprofit motive. It's a plus if you depend on income from the activity for your livelihood.

9. **MOTIVE** - If you have a personal reason that you are engaging in the business, and that reason seems more recreational than business, your profit motives are suspect.

Source: Progressive Farmer, Inc.
Website: www.progressivefarmer.com



'Day Glow' courtesy of
Alaine Byers-Holzhauser



Mom and baby
Photo courtesy of Geri Rutledge

A Day at the Spa

by Carolann Evans

What girl (and these days, many guys) doesn't love a day at the spa? A new "do," a pedicure, a manicure. Perhaps a facial. Perhaps a massage. AHHHH. Relaxation at it's best, yes? But....the reality of being a llama, is that a "day at the spa" is anything but relaxing. Sadly, it is more akin to torture for some animals.

Put yourself in the llama's place for a moment: "A two-legged being with a rope and a halter chases me around and finally catches me. Walks me (sometimes PULLS or DRAGS me) into a large, scary contraption that sounds funny when I step on it, and squeezes my neck, and hooks my face up to some clips on each side so I really can't move around very much. THEN, I'm supposed to stand on *three* legs, while you dig mud & rocks out of my nails and then chop them off, sometimes too closely. Which hurts.

A new "do" requires brushing. Yikes. After a cold winter and wet spring, the tangles and mats and mud and accumulated STUFF is tough to get out! And the blower – WOW. What is that?!?! And then, I'm supposed to have patience, and tolerance for odd vibrations, funny sounds, sometimes heat where heat is not generally acceptable, and then a blast of cold! And sometimes have you SHARP ITEMS back under my tail? And down my legs? Under my belly. Up my neck? Are you *KIDDING?*!"

Most llamas need to be shorn bi-yearly or yearly for their health and comfort. It is also a great time to check for lice, check for skin problems, abscesses, wire and other debris "collected" while rolling, etc. They also need their toenails trimmed regularly so that they can walk properly and don't have foot/pastern problems. Picking up a llamas foot also allows you to inspect for any problems such as sores or puncture wounds.

So.....*What to do?*

I've been shearing llamas for approximately nine years. For six of those years, I've been shearing at least 50 of my own and 25-50 additional for other folks every year. I've learned a lot, and I'd like to share some of what I have learned in the hopes that we can all make "spa day" a little more pleasant for everyone.

First and foremost: it is your responsibility as a llama owner to train your animals. If you don't feel capable of doing that, buy animals that are already trained. And spend the extra money that it may require to get a trained animal. Someone worked hard on that and it is worth every penny! *Keep up* with that training. Halter them regularly, not just once a year when they need toenails done or shots or vet care. Walk them through tight spaces (through your chute if you have one!), let them stand there and get comfortable with being there – just "being" there with nothing being done "to" them. A chute shouldn't be a scary place, where an animal is just taken for "torture" or things that are scary or hurtful. Pick up their feet regularly. In a chute. Out of a chute. Pat them all over. Brush them.....brush their legs, brush their tail. Pick up their tail and brush down their back legs. Turn a blower on them. It takes 5 minutes for a llama to get used to a blower. Why not get them used to it prior to having them experience *everything* as a *new* thing on "spa day?" .

All of these things make it easier for a shearer to shear your llama. If you are not doing it yourself, and you have multiple llamas, it can become quite costly. Naturally, the first question most folks ask is "how much does it cost?" I used to charge a flat fee. I learned quickly that I usually ended up losing money that way. I now charge by the hour. If someone has an unruly llama, it is going to take a LOT longer to shear it than one that stands quietly. If I have to train them first, the owner will have to pay me for my time to do so. Oftentimes,

the animal ends up "incomplete" and not as "pretty" as expected. Animals "in motion" end up with choppy, uneven shearing. Often they end up with bellies unshorn because they insisted on kicking or lying down when their bellies were touched. The currently popular "cria cut" is often not possible if an animal is too agitated to let me shear its neck.

You are doing your animals a disservice by not preparing them ahead of time. Safety becomes a factor, so by training your animals, you are also avoiding a potentially dangerous situation. An animal that is agitated, scared, or angry is difficult to work on. I've seen llamas that jump and buck and kick. I've seen llamas that spit and scream and even urinate out of fear. I've seen llamas knock over portable chutes while in it. I've seen llamas get their legs caught up and over the sides of chutes and in fence panels. I've seen llamas buck so hard as to break their halters and "bust out" of a chute. I've seen llamas get cut badly by shears, and even scissors, because they wouldn't stand still. All simply because they have either never been trained or were once trained, but have been neglected for far too long. I've been kicked, hard. I've been smashed up against the side of a chute or panel. I've been spit on.

I used to take on ANY llama. I used to travel to customer sites to shear and do toenails with a portable chute. Most people that have untrained animals don't want to do the toenails or shear themselves, but expect someone else to. I struggle to understand that. I now ask people that call me if their llama is trained to stand for shearing and toenails. I no longer travel with a portable chute. If a llama can't come to me, I decline the work. I'm older and wiser, and to be perfectly honest, cannot afford to take the chance of getting hurt because someone has not taken the time to train their animal. Who will pay my bills

Continued on page 40...

if I can't work because I've been injured by someone's untrained animal?

The other factor is how clean the animal is. If I have to blow and brush out all kinds of debris and grit first, that can take a lot of extra time. Often, by the time that part of the procedure is done, the animal needs a break before we actually get down to business. A walk, a snack, a visit with some other llamas for comfort. *Why do we have to brush and blow you ask?* Clipper blades and shear blades cost \$25-\$30 each. All the stuff in a llama's fiber dulls those blades. If I were to have to use one blade per animal, I would need to charge much more than I do for my time and equipment. If I shear relatively clean animals, I can shear several with one blade, making it less expensive for everyone! Do you want to save your fiber? Do you want to have it processed so you can make something with it or sell it? It's a lot easier to clean the fiber ON the animal than OFF the animal, which is a whole 'nother subject in itself. Bottom line here is - if animals arrive here clean enough to be shorn immediately, the time taken is generally at least half! Saves YOU money!

SO...here's the summary for a pleasant, safe, productive "spa day!"

Train your animals *before* spa day!

Clean your animals before arriving at your shearer or before your shearer arrives!

Have your animals caught if the shearer is coming to you.

If going TO your shearer, arrive on time. Keep in mind, a "window" is usually allowed for you and your animals. Someone else may be arriving for the next window of time.

Bring snacks/treats. (Yes, it would be nice to have treats for your shearer, but I'm talking about for your llama. You know his/her favorite snacks!) Spa days should always include treats!!!!

Make sure you have a halter that fits your animal. And NO quick-snaps or clips unless the animal is very well behaved and calm.

Bring something to take your fiber home in or have bags ready/available at your location. It is not the shearer's responsibility to provide these.

If your shearer is coming to you, make sure the area is clean and free of debris and hay/straw, etc. Have a broom/rake handy to clean up between animals. Stay available to help clean up and shuttle animals.

Kids are great. Kids need to learn/observe. But kids get bored quickly. Kids need snacks and bathrooms and entertainment. You know your kids, so if they are not the kind that can sit quietly and entertain themselves when at your shearer's location, make other arrangements for them on that day. It is not your shearer's responsibility to entertain or feed them or keep track of them.

Chat with your shearer prior to arrival and let them know your expectations. Is everyone to get a cria cut or just a barrel cut? It takes a lot longer to do a cria cut and time will need to be allowed for that. Are you showing in halter? Is a show coming up soon? You want your animal to look its absolute best. Many shearers know what type of cut will highlight the animals' strengths, while down playing its weaknesses. Keep this in mind when choosing a shearer if that is your intent. Some shearers simply don't do show-shearing, as it takes much longer than just a "pasture cut." If you need to get a quantity of animals done, careful planning and communication will help make sure enough time is allowed *and* that you are happy with your finished "product."

Depending on what you will be doing with a particular animal, "before" and "after" shots may be appropriate. If you are having a cria cut done, but then want to try to sell the animal as heavy wool, you may want to have the picture to demonstrate wool coverage and production.

Spa day *can* be fun! Bring a lawn chair. Enjoy the process and ensure your llama does, too!

Packers and Hikers New Best Friend

by Larry Lewellyn,
FootHills Llamas

There's a new product just hitting the market that's worth giving a try. A new powdered peanut butter, called PB2. This powder is the right stuff for at home or for the trail cook to toss with warm oil or broth and hot noodles (Can ya spell Ramen?) for a quick peanut butter sauce. Or, you can just reconstitute it with water and have peanut butter without the usual weight in your packs. I am still waiting for instant wine or beer...

PB2 is not in stores here in Denver yet, but is available from bellplantation.com for \$11.96 for four 6 1/2 ounce jars.

Please send your Back Country tips or recipes to the Journal.



Photo courtesy of Geri Rutledge

My Teacher Can Spit!

by Dave Marlow

About a year ago I decided to get into 'the llama business.' This action was accelerated by several factors. For starters, I'm 56 years old and my knees are 112 years old. This is the result of high school football and post-high school Rodeo, along with a motorcycle accident or three.

As an avid archery hunter who has always loved packing into the back country to escape the masses and enjoying prolonged stays, heavy packs were never a consideration. If I could stand up with the pack on, I was good to go! (90 lbs. no problem). However, during a recent Colorado Big Horn Sheep hunt my knees began a slow but effective protest against the steep terrain and heavy loads. Nearly unable to get my camp packed out at the close of season, a new approach was in order. I was no longer interested in horses - I've been there done that, too much work. While perusing the classifieds in the local paper I found an ad for "Free Llamas".

This was good timing, I reasoned, as I was just finishing a fencing project on my mountain property, and had acres of high mountain grass waiting for domestic grazers to share it with my transient mule deer and elk herd. Problem: this area also has a good population of bear and lion. Answer: consult an expert.

The Denver Stock Show was coming up, and llamas are always there. The schedule was checked, and llamas located. Everyone I spoke with was very willing to talk llamas, but my questions were a little different--'How well will these "varmint" do in lion country? Do bears like llama?' All the people I conversed with pointed me toward, "The lady with gray hair--she'll know." (Gray hair usually does).

When I finally met this Sage, all my questions were answered without a single inference to 'Moron' or 'Idiot'. Instead, I was encouraged to rescue these free llamas, provided I could deal with the potential problems that accompany them. Regarding my lion/bear concerns, I was told that a single llama would be a very tasty item for a lion/bear, that two llamas might fend off a predator that wasn't too hungry, and that a herd (3 or more) would probably do just fine. She also informed me that great patience would be required, and that "horse toughness" would not work-- as, "whatever you do to a llama, that llama will remember for at least ten years".

So, I answered the ad for "Free Llamas", and asked more questions--how old are they, male / female why are you getting rid of them, are they healthy, had any training, stud or gelding, etc.? I learned that all three llamas were male, one was gelded, and two intact. The current owners were getting rid of them because, "we just can't take good care of them anymore due to our age". They reassured me that the llamas could take care of any predatory trespassers on the property. I also learned that not only was any llama training completely absent, but they would need to be "mugged" by several guys to be caught, haltered, castrated, and transported. A promise to pay for Veterinarian services was agreed upon, and "The Boys" lost a little pride prior to being delivered to their new homestead. I did want all their bad experiences to be prior to their arrival in their new home.


The previous owners wanted to deliver "The Boys" personally so they could check out the place the llamas would be living. I liked

that. When we met, these wonderful folks were shown where the herd would call home. I gave these people permission to come up to visit anytime, and they liked that. "The Boys" were unloaded into a corral to acclimate, and for observation post-surgery--AND, for my introduction.

During this transition period the herd had a tough time, as they had no barn--and it was a record hard winter, which included two 38 inch snow storms. My respect for their toughness was elevated, as was my guilt for not having a barn ready. Promises were made--"If you boys can hang on until spring, I will build you a barn and fill it with deep straw." The Boys held on, summer came, and green returned in a plush three-foot deep brome and timothy blanket of grass. A new welded steel barn was built, and every detail was closely inspected by the future occupants. At times construction was halted so the inspectors could snoop and snort at the new thing going up in their area. Also, training corrals were built, and a training course made--these, too, were meticulously inspected by The Boys on an ongoing basis.

As MY training commenced, I learned a great deal about these wooly buggers--starting with they don't forget anything, they are smarter than I am, and they are great teachers. They are very willing to learn and try anything, but can be more stubborn than anything on earth. I have also learned that it takes a maximum of four times trying to teach them something new, and then they have it down. It has taken us a year of work, and The Boys now know I won't hurt them--but they still look at me as if I am a lower life form--and I realize this probably will not change.


Next time: I'll tell you about their / my training progress--my mistakes and triumphs.

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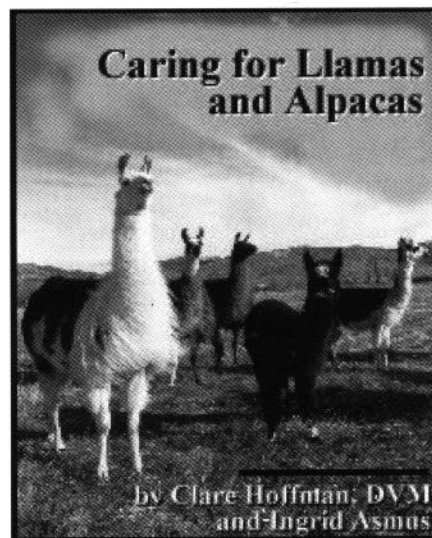
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