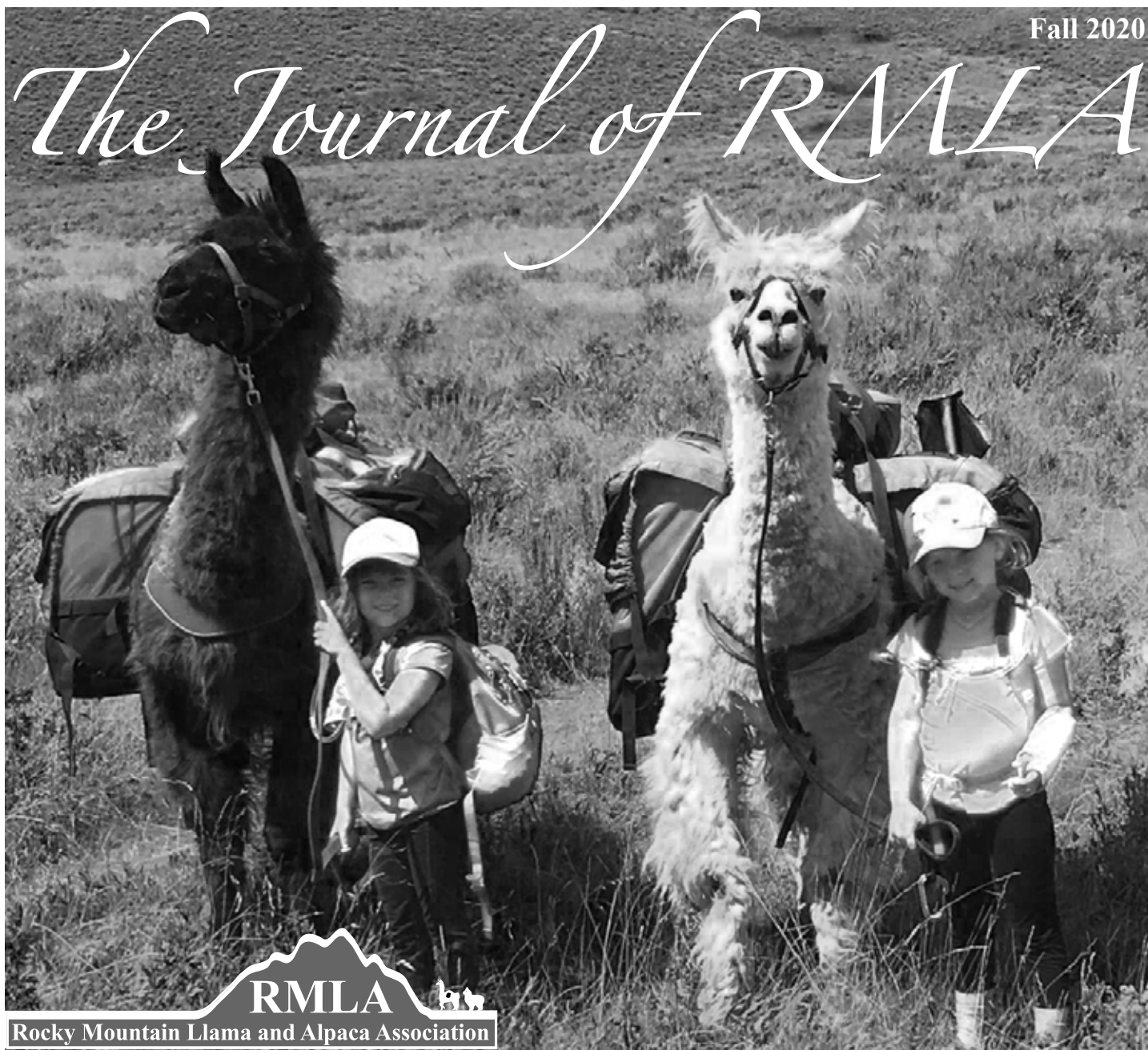


The Journal of RMLA



RMLA 

Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association

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

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EDITORS' CORNER

It was 1968 and a little known group, Four Jacks and a Jill, came out with the song: *It's a strange, strange world we live in, Master Jack*. For some reason, this song just popped into my head the other day. But here we are, in a strange, strange world Master Jack!

But, with our animals, our families and friends we are still going strong and for this we are grateful. This issue has some great educational information including advice from the vets at CSU on how to take care of our animals in a disaster and how to administer injections. Marty McGee has submitted great 'food for thought' in her article on boundaries. Boundaries are important when we are working with animals and humans. What are your boundaries? Good question and may be worth thinking about.

We have two articles from our youth. They have found a way to show off their animals and all of their hard work. Go Youth!

Finally, the article from Charlie Hackbarth about a pack trip with three 'green' llamas is a hoot. If this article can't make you laugh, I am not sure what will.

Enjoy this issue of the Journal. We have had a great adventure putting it together for you. Please take care of yourselves and be grateful for all that you have.

Kathy and Ron



Cover Photo:

Morgan and Clara Stebbins with Teddy and Candido in Yellowstone National Park.

Courtesy of Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay

Letter from Your RMLA Board

We have just passed through a summer that will long be remembered. Fires, smoke, heat, working at home, limited travel and not much socializing. As humans, thank goodness there are animals in the pastures to bring the normalcy, beauty, and peacefulness we need to ponder and enjoy as we end each day.

Thank you to the 57 members who voted in the Directors Election. All ballots were voted unanimously to approve the two RMLA members who chose to serve on your Board of Directors. Board work is demanding and omnipresent. I am genuinely grateful for their courage to step up and serve.

We welcome Geri Rutledge (Nebraska) and Nancy Wilson (Arizona) to the Board of Directors for three-year terms. Geri is a returning Director who has brought strong leadership to RMLA over the past years. Her focus on restructuring the RMLA Youth Program and RMLA Fiber Program has been unsurpassed. The amazing management skills she brought to the last three years Fairplay events made those years three of the largest and most successful ever. While Nancy is one of RMLA's newer members, she eagerly and willingly stepped up to serve as a Director. She has a solid knowledge of non-profit organization management and the experience to go with it. Nancy has been active in fiber since 1988. She holds a Master Spinner Certificate from Olds College in Olds, Alberta, Canada, and teaches a variety of fiber related courses.

With the arrival of these Directors we say a sad goodbye to Ron Hinds as he leaves the Board. Ron has been a dedicated, hard-working Director during his tenure and so many years prior to that. It is Ron who has made RMLA.com what it is, one of the best and most used national llama organizations educational internet locations for information on camelids. He designed the e-blast system to have a 'fast as the speed of light' avenue to communicate with our members. Mid-December 2016 was a cold winter day, when RMLA immediately needed a new manager for the Bookstore: it was Ron and Elizabeth who donned their heavy winter gear and slugged through snow and mud to gather up Bookstore inventory (over 500 books) and records. He agreed to run the Bookstore 'just temporarily' until another volunteer would take it over. This would last until earlier this year when one of our best volunteers just needed a break. Thank you, Ron Hinds, for everything you have done for all of us.

As mentioned before, because of Covid-19 and the restrictions on social distancing, RMLA will not have a face-to-face Annual Meeting this year. A telephone conference is planned. As soon as everything is in place, an eblast will go out to members with pertinent dates.

And on a light side.... if you need a good laugh, gather around the TV, and check out The Emperor's New Groove. It has been around for years but still good for a laugh. Released in December 2000, the Walt Disney animated film tells the story of when Emperor Kuzco is turned into a llama by his ex-administrator Yzma and must regain his throne with the help of Pacha, the gentle llama herder. If you like the film, you can share it with the critters out in the pasture. They probably need a good laugh as well.

Regards and "go take a hike" with you littlest, halter-trained llama, Lougene.





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Difficult Times

By Susan Unser – Unser Alpacas

Some of our lessons in alpaca parenting have come easy; other lessons continue to be difficult. Adding one orphaned alpaca, Don Pizzazz, (Spring 2019) to the original herd of 5 was filed away in my brain as only somewhat difficult for him due to the fact that he was the “top dog” in his previous life. Because the owner was more than a little happy to have us take Donnie, handing that halter over to us was not difficult.

So when the opportunity to include three more alpacas to our herd from a small ranch outside Denver appeared, we hooked up the trailer and headed north. We had not met our new “boys” but had been told that one of them was certified as a therapy alpaca and had been to schools, senior centers and a video even showed him being welcomed into a restaurant. He was going to be a great addition to the Unser Three Ring Circus.

The couple, Bob and Sky, had gotten the alpacas for their children, now grown, and had named the alpacas because of their participation in tennis. Thus, Andre (Agassi), Pete (Sampras) and Johnny Mack (McEnroe) were leaving the comfort of their suburban corral to live on 120 acres in the mountains of New Mexico. Bob had poured much of his retirement energy into caring for their space and had developed a special bond with Johnny Mack.

I was extremely excited to meet these newest additions. What I did not anticipate was how difficult this was for Bob and Sky to see these domestic companions leave their home. Raised as a city girl, not knowing about 4-H except what I saw at the State Fair each year, I was always curious how kids could raise an animal from newborn to the sale barn without some sense of loss. Well, now I was witnessing a sense of loss first hand when these 3 alpacas were loaded into the trailer. Neighbors came to say goodbye with tears in their eyes and Bob and Sky were reluctant to step off the trailer

without giving them one last neck rub and a handful of apple treats. An open invitation was extended to come and check up on their “boys” in Chama anytime.

They have used their “visitation rights” and a wonderful friendship has grown from those trips.

Did I mention that Johnny Mack, the therapy alpaca, came with his own Honda Odyssey? Yes, open the side door and he hops right in, loves to hang his head out the window and he would climb into the front seat if encouraged. So, with 3 alpacas in a 2-horse trailer

Unser Alpacas



driven by my speedy husband and myself in the Honda, we headed to Northern New Mexico. Our plan was to separate them initially and let them introduce themselves “over the fence”, knowing we had made this mistake when Donnie joined the herd. A separate area had been fenced off with hay, water, and grain feeders. What could possibly go wrong?

continued on next page

Difficult Times, continued ...

Curiosity kept everyone calm the first couple days with lots of sniffing and posturing. Then when we thought this was going well, we opened the dividing gate and.....ears went back, tails went up and it appeared it was now time to fully introduce themselves to each other with the kind of screeching only an alpaca can produce, that bravado attitude, and an opportunity to stand up and display a fine chest which resulted in a chase around the pasture, some neck wrestling and then with jaws hanging, a recess to graze and recuperate.

Grain time was comical the way the boys in the old herd protected their feeders while the new boys were left to locate theirs. It took a full month before the two herds were seen together as one and still, I cannot say there is a leader. Johnny Mack is first out in the morning and everyone is willing to follow him wherever he leads. Sidney, the oldest, is still the referee, standing at attention and if the wrestling gets too serious, he will walk into the skirmish as if to say, "enough". Donnie is the eyes and ears, letting out that "donkey" alarm sound if something is threatening the herd. Several times Al has gotten his gun and gone out on the porch in PJ's at night to see what Donnie is seeing. Of course, that sound he makes is quite enough to scare off any intruder.

Rationally, I realize their attachment to me is only for food, water, and shelter. However, in my overactive imagination I just know they also have an emotional attachment to me. It is their dependence and independence that hooks me. When Pete (Sampras) looked like his jaw was swollen, we took him to the vet expecting a problem with a tooth and were stunned when he was diagnosed with a difficult to treat bacterial disease in his jawbone.

With a prognosis of only 2 months to live, ever the optimist, I got the pills and the injectable medicine and set my mind to saving Pete. The first week it became my daily exercise to catch and halter him and give him the pills with a scary looking long blue plastic pill pusher. There had to be a less stressful way to administer the pills. Remembering that my cats and dogs have taken pills when hidden in food, we decided we would crush the pills, mix them with applesauce and give them to him in a small oral syringe. Medical assistant, Al, was charged with crushing the pills so they could pass through the syringe and with 3 loaded 5ml syringes we began again every evening. Still reluctant to be captured it took only a few days before he began to look forward to his treat. I watched Pete to see if he was ever off



his food or not staying up with the others and became convinced, we were saving him. Pete stayed as an active part of the herd for another 6 months. On his final day he was found at rest in the shade, having given us no indication he was at the end of his life.

Pete was our first death in the herd and while I want it to be our last, I realize there may be others. These guys were all adult males when we brought them home. A ceremony was held, he has a Chama marker for his grave and while I miss him, those daily medicine times brought us close. The most difficult thing I had to do was write to Bob and Sky to tell them Pete had passed away. Grieving for an animal may seem self-indulgent. Our animals bring us so much joy and are better entertainment than television.

Thank you for the e-mails. Some of you should also be writing articles about your own experiences. When I get together with my girlfriends and we start talking about our husbands, I would swear they are talking about mine. It is the same with the male alpacas. Yours and mine have the same habits, some hilarious, some annoying - just like my girlfriends' husbands.

In the future I will take you on our adventure to the rodeo, in the Honda with Johnny Mack.



MEMORIES — Llama Sales in the Early Days

by Linda Hayes, Llama Linda Ranch

Back in the 90's llamas were rare and expensive. One of the horse sale companies decided to promote llamas. They held their sales in Oklahoma City. Since llamas were selling for tens of thousands of dollars, they knew ranches would bring animals from all over. And did they ever. Ranches and farms came with groomers, trainers and interior decorators. Llamas were brushed to perfection and stall areas were made to look like someone's living room.

The sale was held at Heritage Park, a facility for selling high dollar horses. It had an elevated sales ring and a preview arena. The place was decorated with flowers and stalls were carpeted with sod. Educational seminars were held the day before. Previewing the animals was done while enjoying wine and cheese. Entertainment the first afternoon was an obstacle course demonstration. Llamas negotiated the course without a lead or with a dog holding the rope in its teeth.

This was before there were any show associations and very few shows. Future ALSA judge, Bill Able, gave a slide presentation on llama conformation. His ground work laid the pattern for training future judges. It also let buyers feel more confident about which animals to purchase. At later sales, buyers were able to 'tour' the stalls with judges who would discreetly point out negative traits in the animals on display.

Overall, the quality of the animals was exceptional. Ranches sent their very best to showcase their breeding programs. Not to say there weren't a few lawsuits when buyers got home with a stud that shot blanks or produced offspring with crooked tails. While sellers were bragging about the superiority of their entries, those who had attended Dr. Able's talk were able to identify the many knocked knees and cow hocks.

Displays were decorated with sofas, tables and anything else the decorators could rent. Food and drink flowed freely in hopes of keeping potential buyers from traipsing down the aisle to the next exhibit.

No one paid attention to fleece. In those days most everyone threw it away after shearing. What was important was just how woolly the llama was, did the fleece go to the floor and were the ears banana shaped.

Most entries arrived to the Oklahoma heat sporting years of fleece. These were shorn just before the sale. A female named Mirabel was arguably the woolliest llama at the sale. After taking the electric clippers to her, the shearer walked around with the fleece draped over his shoulders. It looked like a floor length coat from a runway show.

There was usually at least one birthing at the sale. Sellers tended to get high money for females about to drop. So drop they did, right in front of a crowd of on lookers. Two-in-one packages were a coveted prize.

The host hotel was the Embassy Suites. Their lobby had two 12 ft square planters that were usually filled with greenery. At the first sale they, instead, housed llamas with their crias. It was quite an eye opener at a time when llamas were a rarity.

Each hotel room had a bottle of wine thanks to the sale company. Everyone was made to feel like royalty. One year they forgot to include wine bottle openers with the gift. There was nearly a mutiny when the hotel couldn't come up with enough openers to meet the demand.

The night before the sale, a dinner dance was held. It was free to all. Drinks, steak and a live band got everyone in the spending mood. Attendees included the super-rich as well as several movie stars. Dennis Weaver became a llama owner as well as Iris Christ from the Vanderbilt family and Loyal Nordstrom of department store fame. Cliff Robinson also attended but did not buy.

There was always an open bar before the sale. Animals were brought onto the stage often accompanied by their sire and dam or life-sized pictures of the same. Sometimes you weren't sure just what you were bidding on. Was it just one animal or the 3 that were being paraded around on the small stage? Presentation was at the highest level with llamas groomed to perfection. The ladies wore beautiful clothes, gentlemen had on tuxedos and suits. All the bid takers wore sports coats.

Average llamas brought around \$40,000 with some going as high as \$100,000. If you could sneak in and only pay ten or \$12,000 you felt like you had made the deal of the day. Every time a llama was sold a red rose was given to the buyer. Later in the day it

continued on next page

Memories — Llama Sales in the Early Days continued ...
wasn't unusual to see women walking around with a half dozen roses in their hands. Each rose represented approximately \$40,000 dollars.

When Loyal Nordstrom and Iris Christ wanted the same llama everyone else dropped out of the action. It was fun to watch them bid higher and higher until one finally gave in. Over the years the bid takers got to know the patrons. They knew who had the deepest pockets and it was a show in itself just watching them work the crowd.

As prices went down over the years, so too did the elegance of the event. However, the sale was always well run and the highlight of the year. It was the one place the big money buyers could see a selection of the finest llamas in North America all in one place.


In a smart marketing move, the organizers enhanced the event by holding show classes. Due to time restraints they never included performance classes but they did hold a futurity. Llamas were judged on conformation and prize money was substantial. More than one judge was usually used and the 3-judge system was most popular. This caused several problems related to how the scores were averaged. It took so long to get results that some exhibitors left the ring early. Many exhibitors promised to boycott the sale but with the high dollars involved that never happened.

The show made it an added incentive to buy because you could exhibit your new purchase in the next day's show. It also laid the basis for the futurities now being held under the auspices of the ILR Show Division.

For a while the sales company tried having two sales a year, calling one the Celebration Sale and the other the Celebrity. This led to a bit of confusion as most everyone called them both Celebrity sales.

For years, importation of llamas was not allowed due to hoof and mouth disease being rampant in the Andes Mountains. Once that was under control people with deep pockets arranged for the selection and importation of llamas to North America. The finest llamas in South America were sent to the US. This flooded the market. Prices quickly dropped and the big spenders quit coming to the sales. Eventually holding the sales was not profitable and the end of an era was at hand.

For the wealthy, the fun of llama ownership was gone. One by one they left the business. Some of the biggest ranches had their own close-out sales. These



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events were not to be missed. A sale in Wisconsin had the popular recording group "Asleep at the Wheel" for the pre-sale entertainment. Others had similar entertainment and all the free drinks a person could want. With the big money out of the picture llamas became affordable to the little guy. Sales are still being held but prices are more realistic.

The era of the big money sales was a heady time. Although it was fun going to the Oklahoma events it is just as much fun now, going to the llama shows and seeing what the kids can do with their animals. Llamas are for everybody. The super-rich got llama-mania started. Now it's up to the 4-H kids to keep it going.



Ask The CSU VET Team: Coccidia Issues—Injection Types—In Case of Fire

By Robert Callan, DVM - Catherine Krus, DVM - Ragan Adams, DVM - Colorado State University

Coccidia Issues *On my farm I have 4 Nigerian Dwarf Goats, 1 male Guard Llama and 18 chickens. The chickens are separate from the goats and llama but areas do connect with fence. They all have good shelters and uncrowded clean conditions. We live in a pretty wet area with 8 acres of pasture. I keep getting coccidia in my fecal tests. My vet recommended to feed a daily dose of medicated feed or add to the water to prevent this. Is it a good practice to feed this to my llama and goats on a constant basis? Do you have any recommendations for me?*

**Response by Dr. Robert Callan, Professor,
Livestock Medicine and Surgery**

In general, coccidia are species specific and avian coccidia do not infect mammals. Even within mammals, different species such as cattle, sheep and goats, and llamas and alpacas do not share the same species of coccidia. Some labs will speciate (i.e., identify by species) the coccidia oocysts when doing a fecal float and I would recommend sending fecal samples to such a lab in order to speciate the coccidia that you are seeing in the llama.

The CSU diagnostic lab does speciate *Eimeria* (the most common coccidia for camelids) for llamas when doing a fecal float. This will give you very useful information regarding the presence of coccidia in your llama. The test also provides semiquantitative evaluation of the numbers of coccidia seen. It is common, and most veterinarians would consider it normal, to see some number of coccidia oocysts in the feces of adult ruminants and camelids, particularly when housed in a confined dry lot system. The animals control the parasite load through their immune response to the coccidia and unless there is particularly high exposure in the environment due to crowding or immunosuppression in an individual animal, clinical coccidiosis is rarely observed. In this situation where there is only one guard llama, coccidia is unlikely to be a health problem.

Basic husbandry practices can go a long way in controlling coccidia in llamas and alpacas. The

coccidia oocysts shed in the feces require about 3-5 days to mature in the environment before they can infect another animal. Since camelids frequently use specific locations for dung piles, one way to help control coccidiosis is to clean up dung piles every 2-3 days to limit the overall exposure. Feeding animals from feed bunks rather than from the ground will also decrease exposure. Lastly, minimizing standing water in the pen where animals may drink and get exposed is another way to decrease exposure. Persistent coccidiosis can also be related to immunosuppression. The most common causes of immunosuppression in livestock are nutritional deficiencies and in the Rocky Mountain Area, vitamin E deficiency seems to be common due to forage deficiencies from our arid conditions. Sampling a few animals and running blood vitamin E analysis is a great way to screen for vitamin E deficiency and to help determine if further supplementation is indicated.

Coccidiostats are rarely used to control coccidiosis in camelids and have been associated with toxicity when inappropriate levels are fed. Amprolium (Corid) and sulfadimethoxine (Albon) are two of the more common drugs used to treat coccidia for animals in the U.S. While there are some anecdotal reports of resistance to these drugs, it is my opinion that many of these treatment failures are more related to the duration of treatment rather than the drug. For example, sulfadimethoxine is only effective in the latter half of the parasite life cycle. If using sulfadimethoxine for treatment, then it is critical to maintain treatment for 14 days in llamas and alpacas rather than the label duration of 7 days. Delivery of the drug is also important and can result in treatment failure when using products that are provided free choice in water since not all animals will consume an effective treatment dose. When an animal is diagnosed with clinical coccidiosis, work with your veterinarian to come up with a treatment plan that is most appropriate for your situation.

continued on the next page

Injection Types: *What are the different types of injections, what are they used for and how do you do them?*

Response by Dr. Catherine Krus, Resident, Livestock Service

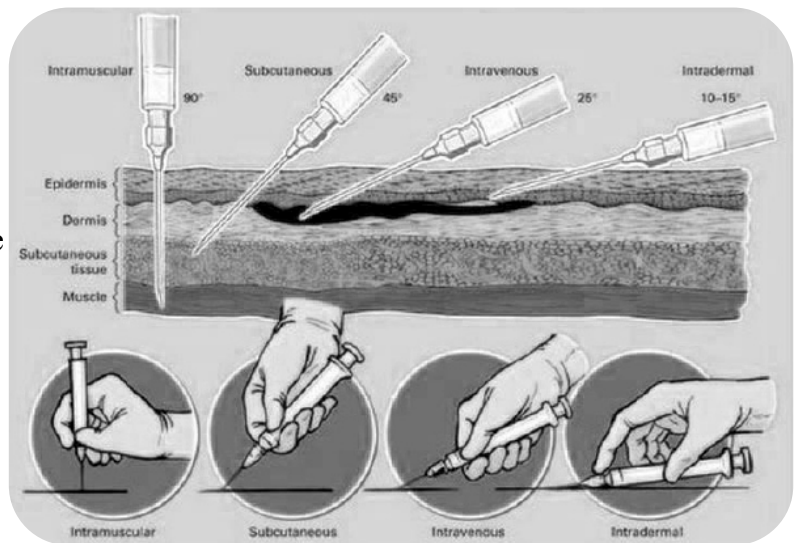
The two main types of injections a producer will give are subcutaneous and intramuscular injections.

Subcutaneous (SQ) Injection are administered in the soft tissues just below the skin (Sub – Cutaneous). Many vaccinations, antibiotics, and vitamin supplements can be given in this manner. Subcutaneous injections are absorbed by the animal more slowly than intramuscular injections. They also tend to cause less tissue reaction and soreness at the injection site than intramuscular injections.

Subcutaneous injections are administered in areas of the body where there is loose skin overlying other soft tissue, but not directly over bones. From a practical standpoint, this tends to be in the front half of the body for llamas and alpacas. Two main sites include just at the base of the neck, right in front of the shoulder blade, and in the hairless axillary, or armpit (axillary region, just behind the front limbs. The first site is beneficial because there are no big blood vessels or bones nearby. It can also be easily checked later for an injection reaction and allows you to better move with the animal when they react to the injection. The axillary site is beneficial because it is hairless, so you can better visualize your injection and clean the injection site with alcohol, especially in a full fiber animal.

Once a location has been determined, the skin needs to be elevated. This can be done by applying light traction on the fiber or skin, forming a “tent”. Once the skin is elevated, the needle can be inserted under the skin and its content injected. It is sometimes easiest if the handler gives the injection on the opposite side of the animal from where they stand. That way, when the animal moves away from the needle, the handler maintains good control of their movement. You should use a 5/8 or 1 inch, 18 to 20-gauge needle for SQ injections and that will decrease the risk of inserting into the deeper muscle

tissue. You can also angle the insertion of the needle at about 45 to 60 degrees to keep the needle superficial but still through the skin. Once the needle is inserted, you should draw back on the syringe plunger to make sure that you are not in a blood vessel and if no blood comes back into the syringe, you can administer the vaccine or medication. The volume of SQ injections should be less than 10 ml per site. If you need to administer more than 10 ml, then these should be administered over multiple sites, at least one hand breadth between each injection site.



Intramuscular (IM) Injections are administered directly into muscle tissue. They are sometimes used for vaccines, antibiotics, or sedation. Because of the higher blood supply to the muscles, IM injections are absorbed more rapidly than SQ injections. This is particularly helpful when administering sedation drugs. However, they also tend to cause more local tissue reaction and can be more painful.

Because the muscle lies beneath the subcutaneous tissues, a depth of one inch or more is typically required. The most common site for IM injections in llamas and alpacas is the triceps muscle on the back of the front leg between the shoulder and the elbow. A 1 or 1½ inch, 18- or 20-gauge needle should be used depending on the size of the animal. The needle is inserted straight into the muscle belly in a smooth, quick motion. The plunger of the syringe can then be pulled back slightly to make sure the needle has not gone into a blood vessel, and then injected. Should blood come back into the syringe, the needle should be removed, and a new location chosen.

continued on the next page

IM injections can also be administered at the base of the neck in front of the shoulder. This area is a little more difficult and you may want to get some direction from your veterinarian to show exactly where to give IM injections in this site since there are underlying deeper structures including nerves, blood vessels and the neck vertebrae that can be damaged. Another location for intramuscular injections is the semimembranosus/semitendinosus muscles located on the upper caudal aspect of the back leg. These are equivalent to our hamstrings. This site should be reserved for animals needing multiple intramuscular injections as many animals tend to move more or kick with this injection site. If this site is chosen, leaning your body into the animal right in front of the back leg will give you more control of the animal's movement. An important nerve called the sciatic nerve runs in between these two muscle bellies; therefore, a single muscle belly should be chosen for injection.

Intravenous (IV) Injections are administered directly into a vein. The benefits of this type of injection include less tissue reaction and a higher and faster bioavailability of the drug to the animal. However, they are more technically challenging. Intravenous injections are typically done by your veterinarian, although some producers may learn how to give them under the instruction of their veterinarian.

Intradermal Injections are administered directly into the skin layer itself. It is rare that a producer will have to give intradermal injections. These are typically only performed by your veterinarian for regulatory tuberculosis (TB) testing.

Animals will tend to move in response to these injections and handlers must be aware of this. If a large number of animals going through injections, such as for routine vaccinations, it is best that they all be placed into a catch pen together with just enough space that they can stay comfortable (~20% empty). This will allow for the animals to have a sense of being with the herd while also giving the handler the ability to catch the animals and get the injections done. Producers can definitely learn how to give injections and should work with their veterinarian to get proper training. With a little bit of practice, you can become comfortable with this medical procedure.

In case of fire. What recommendations are there for evacuating animals in case of a wildfire? Do you turn camelids loose if a fire encroaches?

Response by Dr. Ragan Adams, CSU Veterinary Extension Specialist and CSU Delegate to EDEN, Extension Disaster Education Network

Planning is necessary to have an optimal outcome to any sort of natural disaster (fire, floods, hurricanes). Because your animals depend on you, it is important to plan for them as part of your family. See Saving pets, saving people <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOZ-AJPo2YA>



When planning large animal evacuation, there are three kinds of response (1) evacuation (2) shelter in place and (3) release.

continued on the next page

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- (1) Evacuate with your animals. This will require gathering supplies like feed, water, medication, animal identification, tack, etc. and having a functional trailer in which the animals will load. It is best to take your animals to friends or family out of the incident area, but you may have to rely on a public emergency animal shelter. If done with forethought, this choice is optimal.
- (2) Shelter in Place: If the threat is far from your home, this option is reasonable. Humans may be asked to evacuate even though the danger is not imminent. Emergency managers may allow you to return daily to take care of your herd. Do not keep the animals in a barn but rather leave them in a large paddock with lots of hay and water. Have each animal well identified with a microchip, an attached luggage tag or a phone number on their rump. Leave a note for first responders to check the animals daily and release if the threat is pending. Call the emergency operation center and tell them that there are animals at your address. You may be allowed to pick them up if the threat closes in or first responders are legally allowed to release them.
- (3) Cut fences and open gates is the third option. This response can only be done by the animal owner or a first responder. It is reasonable in an immediate impending danger but can turn out badly. The animals may survive the immediate threat but often are difficult to find, become confused by the changed landscape, may become wounded or hurt while fleeing or in a heavily trafficked area may cause damage for which the owner is liable.

For more information,
<https://source.colostate.edu/pet-health-emergency-preparedness-helps-animals-during-wildfires/>



Fiber Interest Grows

By Kathy Stanko
Chair, RMLA Fiber Committee

More than 50 RMLA members have indicated an interest in Fiber! The RMLA fiber community connects through e-mails to rmlafiber@gmail.com. Recently a relatively new member reached out to the community about 'what to do with her fiber now that the animals were sheared'.

A group e-mail was sent out to those on the fiber list. Several suggestions and ideas were presented and several in the group offered to mentor. Karen Kinyon got into the conversation about how she was teaching her classes during this time of Covid. This information was also passed out to the fiber community.

During March and April there were nice spontaneous communications among the fiber group: where to get shears sharpened and woven pack bags for sale. It is nice to have the group communicating among themselves.

I have received 'thank you' notes from participants saying they are receiving great information from other members. This is exactly the direction that the RMLA Fiber Committee was intended to go: bring fiber folks together to help each other. If you would like to be added (or deleted) from the list, please contact me at rmlafiber@gmail.com.

NEW RMLA Members

RMLA IS ALWAYS GROWING

Nedra Overbey - Excelsior Sprigs, MO

Jasmyn Mimiko & Liza Reid

(Mazuri Exotic Animal Nutrition)

Gray Summit, MO

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

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

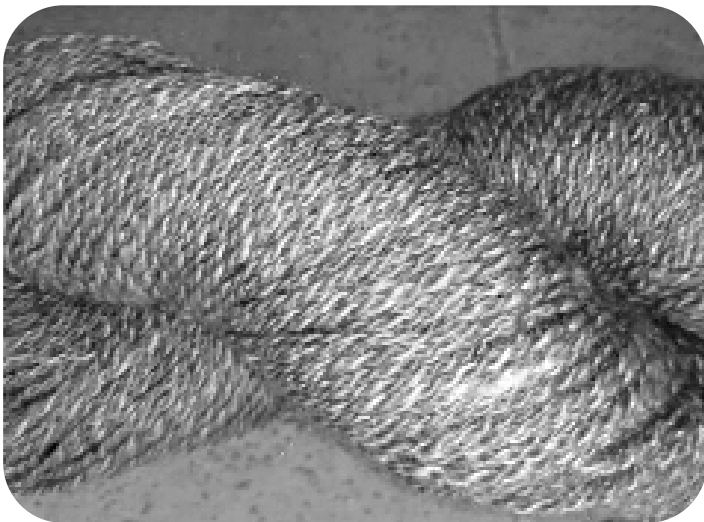
Stash Busting

By Nancy Wilson
Camp Verde AZ

So what to do if you're stuck inside during the pandemic? Those of us who are interested in camelid fiber are never lacking for things to do. Guilds are meeting via Zoom or in person with precautions in place. Fortunately for me our local guild's spinning group is again meeting at the Sharlot Hall Museum in Prescott. I've spun through a lot of my stash.

One of my recent accomplishments was finishing some fabric on my rigid heddle loom that will become a vest. I used a striped multi-color commercial yarn warp and handspun yarn for the weft. I'm lucky to have an expert weaver in our guild with whom I am going to meet to discuss design options for the vest.

Also, I'm putting the finishing touches on a random warp project where guild members contributed yarns for a warp that then got split among the participants to make into a scarf of their own design. I can see that this will be a great project for the bins of miscellaneous handspun yarn I have.



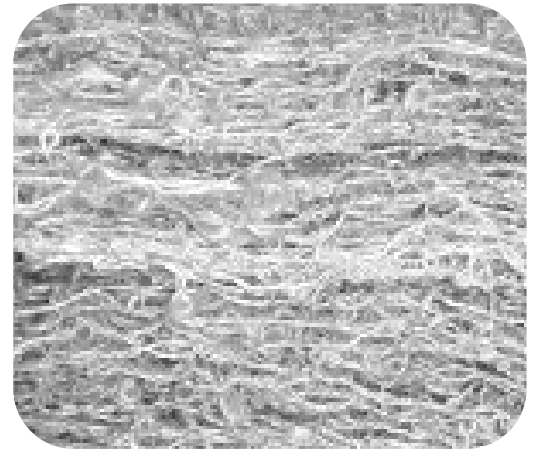
Combo Ply Red Rock Colors

For spinners, if you have lots of odd bits of fibers, a chunk yarn (Jilliano Moreno's term) is a great way to use them up. Place bits of the fiber in two bags and then grab a piece randomly and spin it. One bag for each ply. This creates a one-of-a-kind yarn. You can use both natural color and dyed fibers for this. I completed this type of yarn with dyed fibers that you wouldn't necessarily have thought to combine, but the process really makes a beautiful yarn.

Another good way to extend yarn or batts is to do a combo ply. I had two, four ounce batts in Red Rock Colors. Then I remembered I had some dyed Polwarth (an Australian wool) and silk. The two fibers plied

together are a perfect match. So do some stash diving! You never know what combinations you'll come up with.

Also remember there's nothing that says your handspun yarn can't be combine with a commercial yarn. Bouclé is a great way to make some



Bouclé Yarn

fun yarn if you have some thread available. Traditionally spun using mohair, I had a mohair and bamboo blend for the loopy ply and some silk thread for the other two plies. You could certainly use camelid fiber for the loopy ply. It might be a great use for suri fiber with its long, lustrous locks. My bouclé yarn is going to become weft for a scarf that will use a fine wool/silk yarn for the warp.

Sadly, the pandemic has led to many fiber events being canceled or postponed. As a member of the board for the Arizona Fiber Arts Retreat, we had been planning our event for January 2021 and have decided to postpone the event for a number of reasons. The new dates are January 19-22, 2022. The event's host is a health care provider and sees firsthand the effect of COVID-19. Since the main focus of our event is on gathering, we do not feel that a virtual event is an appropriate substitute.

It would be unacceptable for even one person attending the event to come down with the virus. So instead we are focusing our efforts on January 2022. Some of the classes that are planned are spindle spinning (both suspended and support varieties), several felting classes (especially nuno felting), beginning crochet, several knitting classes, locker hooking (great for those of you who have roving but are not interested in spinning-yet!), knitting, weaving, dyeing, rug hooking, kumihimo (Japanese braiding technique, great for coarse wool), and even pine needle weaving.

I'd like to encourage everyone with interest in any fiber art to check out You Tube and other on-line options that are becoming available. We can improve our skills so that when in-person events become safely available, we are ready to do so.



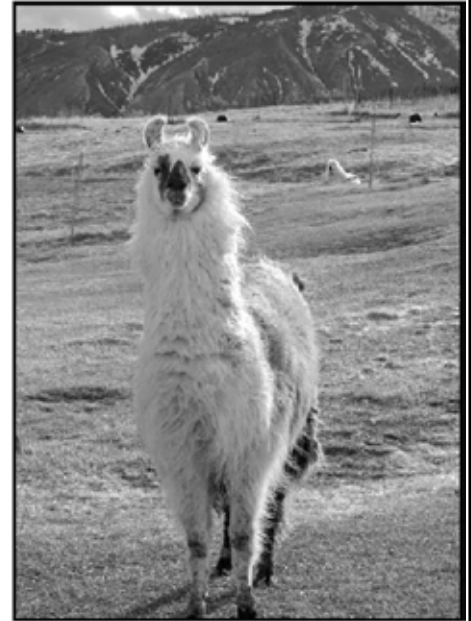
TWO Beautiful Female Llamas for Sale — Reasonably Priced —

We are looking at selling our ranch within the next year or so, and need to find a good home for our remaining two breeding age females. We stopped breeding about 7 years ago when we began reducing the herd size due to our age. Both girls are over 44" tall at the withers.



Maria (left) is 15 now, has had one very healthy cria. Viva (right) is 9 years old and has never been bred. They are best of friends and we would like to keep them together. Please contact us for registration, health information, or for more photos

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Designed for people who know absolutely nothing about llamas and alpacas.



Ear Ticks, Again

By Kathy Stanko
Co-Editor, RMLA Journal

Ear ticks are persistent creatures. We had an 'outbreak' last year about this time, got them down to nothing (we are persistent also) and now they are back. We are spraying our barns again, inside and out, with the prescribed permethrin rate. We are also treating our animals, per our vet's instructions, with a 2-cc dose of 90% mineral oil/10% Ivermectin in each ear. The llamas are getting used to this treatment so it is getting easier and less time consuming.

I wanted to remind all of you to check out the Ask the CSU Vet Team article about ear ticks in the Spring 2019 issue of the Journal. The article is also posted on www.rmla.com - Resources - Health and find Ear Tick(PDF) in the left column.



Showing at County Fairs Gives Sense of Normalcy to Youth

By Morgan Barba, Youth Committee Chair

For many 4-H and FFA members, county fairs are the culmination of a year's worth of sweat, tears and hard work. It is a time to showcase their animals, bond with friends and spend time with family and loved ones. It is also a time to ride rides, listen to concerts, shop for things you don't really need and eat a variety of unhealthy (but oh so delicious) food.

This year, things looked vastly different for a lot of county fairs. Activities were postponed, cancelled, or moved to a virtual experience. And for those of us in



Adams County (Henderson, CO), a decision about Fair was made in the eleventh hour due to decisions outside our Extension Office's control. But our Extension Agents fought for us, our Fair Superintendent worked hard to put together a show and for one sunny day in early August, we got a little bit of "normal" with our llamas and alpacas.

The llama/alpaca show at the Adams County Fair was held on Saturday, August 1. As in years past, the show featured costume and showmanship contests as well as public relations and obstacle courses. Everything we worked for with our animals moved ahead as normal and spirits were high for the six of us who participated. This year there were five intermediate members and one senior member (myself). Jens Rudibaugh traveled from Poolville, Texas to be our judge and did a fabulous job putting us all through our paces.

Things were a little different but nothing we couldn't handle. We all had to wear face masks and make sure to

social distance. The events were not open to the public so friends and family had to watch via a Livestream video.

"We were so happy to have the opportunity to show," said Claire Rowan. "Even though family and friends couldn't come to the show, they were able to watch it which meant my family out of state could see us. I liked going back and watching the recorded video to see what I need to work on."

Claire's sister, Brooke Rowan, couldn't agree more. "It felt like a regular show. We are used to wearing masks now and my mask went with my costume, so it wasn't a big deal at all."

Even our petter, Davie Rowan, was wearing the proper personal protective equipment during the public relations course.

"Even though it has been a crazy year, I believe it meant a lot to the 4-H members to show at Fair this year," said Julia Henrich, Adams County Llama/Alpaca Superintendent. "Our numbers were down but for the ones who decided to show, they were very appreciative regardless of the restrictions."

For those who don't show, this may seem like a very small thing to have happen. But for those of us who



train our llamas and alpacas for performance all year long, showing is how we get better at what we do. It's not just about running your animal through the course

continued on the next page

2020: A Different Kind of County Fair Experience

by Allie Howell

This year has been quite an experience for all of us. I am thankful I live in a county that allowed us to have our 4H shows while practicing all the safety precautions. A lot of work goes into getting my animals and myself ready to show. All spring not knowing if the show would go on put a frustrating twist to the season.

My fair week started off with the horse show where I competed in several classes with the two of my horses. Next day was rabbits and poultry. Friday was my day off, followed on Saturday by the cattle show and llama show. This year I showed a Simmental/Angus cross bred heifer in the morning and ended the day by showing my llama, Dashed.

All the shows were “show and go” which does take a lot of the fun out of the week! No getting to stay at the fairgrounds and hang out with friends, all the other fair events were cancelled...junior rodeo, demolition derby, bull riding....so, of course, that made lots of kids sad but I am still thankful that we got to have the 4H shows. I think kids learn so much from participating in 4H.



Showing at County Fairs... continued ...

for points or a ribbon. It's about trying new obstacles and introducing your animal to new experiences. It's about listening to the judge's comments, hearing from your peers how they train their animal and picking up tidbits here and there that might help you improve just a little bit for the next time. And yes, it's about being with your friends and “hanging out.”

“Moving on to next season, we can only be hopeful this pandemic will end soon,” said Henrich. “If not, I would like to think we could use these kids as an example of how we can make some minor adjustments and still show within the season.”

I'd like to say thank you to all of the Adams County Extension Agents and the volunteers who helped make

the llama/alpaca show at the Adams County Fair a reality. I'd like to recognize my fellow 4-H members Claire Rowan, Brooke Rowan, Ashley Clement, Avery Lawrence and Eleanor Carvis for all of their hard work and dedication. And I want to thank them for participating; they are wonderful at showing their animals and clearly have a love for the llama/alpaca project. It was an honor to share this day with them and I know I'll be working extra hard preparing for next year. Why? Several of the talented ladies will be seniors next year and will most likely give me a run for my money. I can't wait to see what the next year brings for us all!

To learn more about the RMLA Youth Program, visit www.rmla.com/youth



Is Your Ad Doing Its Job?

By Linda Hayes – Llama Linda Ranch– Prescott Valley, AZ

People are funny when it comes to buying llamas. They often lead with their heart. They see one that catches their eye and the sale pretty much takes care of itself. But, how do you get a buyer to visit your ranch to begin with? If they don't see your llama, they can't fall in love with it. To drive buyers to your ranch, you must advertise.

People want to buy from well-known breeders and individuals who have a good reputation. They may read show results and notice that one particular farm seems to do most of the winning. They may see ads in the Journal that become familiar because it is in every issue. They may hear about a ranch from word of mouth. If you want that recognition factor then you need to advertise



A memorable logo also helps. It should not be too cutesy or hard to decipher. Who will ever forget the llama hatching out of an egg in Charlie Hackbarth's pack systems logo?

Does your ad tell where you are located? If there is no town listed, people may overlook your ad because they think you are too far away to bother with.

Your name on the ad is a must. This is one of the biggest mistakes people make. They assume that because you may recognize the ranch name that you will know who owns it. This assumption is not correct. People like to know the person they are dealing with.

Each ad you put out should look similar to the others. It needs to be recognizable. Years ago, Dr. Art and Lois Kennel used ads that had a cartoon with llamas doing or saying something humorous. The ads were a hit. When people first got their magazine, they would try to find those ads before reading anything else. You want to strive for this kind of advertising.

Is the ad so full of information that it looks cluttered? If it does, people will overlook it and go on to something else. Lots of white space is important. People are always in a rush and won't take time to wade through a lot of verbiage. If you have seen ads from the 1800's you probably noticed that they read like a short story. Those days are over. Make it short and to the point.

Advertise often and with clarity and you will see more visitors to your ranch and those llamas will start to sell themselves.



repeatedly. One ad in a magazine once a year won't do the job. It is better to use several small ads than one big one.

Start with designing a business card. One you can pass out at shows, attach to your emails and use as an ad in the journal. You could even pay to have it reproduced in an email blast to other llama owners. Unfortunately, good business cards don't have room for much. They need to tell who you are, where you are located and what you sell. Be specific about what you have to for sale. For example are your llamas Suris, Argentinians, pack, etc. Include contact info: email, phone and web address. Your name is important. Find a way to include it.

In a larger ad you have room for an advertising slogan. I borrowed mine "Llamas for the Fun of it!" from Kay Patterson. She made the very first llama sales in this country with a simple ad in national magazines. It said "Llamas are fun". Just that and her phone number.

Llamas, A Growing Favorite of Local Hobby Farmers

June 21 is National Llama Appreciation Day

Originally published June 20, 2020, in the Daily Courier, Prescott, AZ

Submitted by Linda Hayes

Llama-mania has been growing ever faster since the publication of the 2005 children's book "Llama Llama Red Pajama" by Anna Dewdney.

In 2018, the Greater Appalachian Llama and Alpaca Association named June 21 as National Llama Appreciation Day. With this increased awareness, more local residents have been adding these intelligent animals to their farms.

Linda Hayes, vice president of the Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association, recently moved to Prescott Valley. "I raised llamas in Colorado for 30 years. When I sold the ranch and retired to Arizona, I brought a few with me," Hayes said. "They become part of the family and are hard to give up."

She takes her llamas to local parades and to the Las Fuentes Retirement Home in Prescott.

Once an exotic animal mostly found only in zoos, llamas have become the darling of people who want an animal that is easy to own.

Originally from the Andes Mountains of South America, they are now found throughout North America. Used for their fiber, as pack animals and to protect smaller livestock from coyotes, they are also fun companion animals. There is a large show circuit and many owners use them for public relations and therapy.

Weighing in at around 250 pounds, they can produce several pounds of "wool" a year. Since it doesn't contain lanolin, llama wool or fiber is popular with those who are allergic to sheep's wool.

Llamas have the unique characteristic of using one area for their dung pile. This keeps the barnyard clean and removal easy. Their manure is sought after for fertilizer since it doesn't burn plants or draw flies.

As pets, they are safe with children and easy to train. Hikers use them to carry their tents and other equipment into the back country. Once conditioned they can carry 65 to 70 pounds. They can be taught to pull a cart and are dressed up to go in parades, visit schools and nursing homes. There is an extensive show circuit where llamas are judged on conformation and agility in performance classes. For years, the State Fair in Phoenix included llama shows. Most 4-H programs include llama husbandry as well.

A natural trait is the llama's protective nature. They bond with sheep, goats and other small livestock. Since their use as guards became popular the number of deaths from coyotes on ranches with llamas have dropped to near zero.

While owners in the Quad Cities consider llamas as companions, in South America they are used much as



the buffalo were used by Native Americans. Clothing is made from their wool. They use the hide for leather, the meat for food and the dung is burned for heat. Llamas were domesticated over 6,000 years ago and were the only means of transportation in a mountainous area with no roads. They have padded feet with two toes. This makes them sure footed on rocks and able to travel without doing damage to delicate fauna.

For more information on llamas go to www.galaonline.org or www.rmla.com.

Information provided by Linda Hayes.

hw

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Learning to Set Limits—The Business of Boundaries

By Marty McGee Bennett – CAMELIDynamics.com

Because llamas and alpacas live with humans they must learn the rules that apply to living with humans. People who love llamas and alpacas have a hard time denying them anything, but being a good steward is not about letting the animal do whatever they want. Being gentle, kind and reasonable does not mean that you set no boundaries or that you let the animal lead the lesson. An additional complicating factor in the camelid world is the high percentage of new owners that elect to deal with an intact male.

Raising and training intact male livestock of any type is much trickier than females or geldings of the same species. Intact males are subject to intense feelings around territoriality that females and geldings don't have. Raising and owning male camelids in particular, means learning to set boundaries.



In the midst of a training or herd management session where do you draw the line for inappropriate behavior? When do you insist on cooperation, when do you

take a break, when do you back off altogether? When is it appropriate to use food and when are you creating a cookie monster that won't do anything without a bowl of grain in front of him? I am sometimes dismayed to see new camelid owners allow their woolly buddies to run rough shod over them in the name of kindness. These new owners have the best of intentions; however, it is no kindness to let a domestic animal of any kind push the bounds of appropriate behavior. Llamas and alpacas raised without boundaries are in danger of running so far afield of human rules that they must be euthanized.

A good trainer is able to create an atmosphere of cooperation because they are clear in their expectations; that is, they don't ask more than is appropriate and they set boundaries. What follows is a list of my boundaries—***both those I set for the camelid student and those I place on myself! It is like a contract between us.***

- I expect my llama or alpaca student to pay attention to me. I don't make lessons last too long. I don't ask for constant state of attention when there are 'hard to ignore' distractions nearby. I don't ask baby or adolescent camelids to pay attention when I don't have a clear lesson or agenda. I don't ask my animal student to pay closer attention to what is going on than I do. If you are not paying attention to what you are doing, don't expect your animal to be hanging on to your every word.

- I expect that my llama or alpaca will be respectful of my space and that he will not push me around physically. That means I am likewise respectful of my animal's space and I don't push him around or use my muscles to try to control him. I refuse to get into a physical contest of wills. I do not put the animal in a position in which he has no choice but to defend himself physically. I am very clear about my space and I don't confuse my camelid students by bending the lines and rules when it suits me to be the buddy instead of the teacher.

- I expect my animal student to be cooperative. That means I don't ask him to do things that are unsafe or to perform tasks that are beyond his ability at that moment. If I feel that I have miscalculated my estimation of what the animal could do, I back off and ask for something easier.

- I expect a llama or an alpaca that I am working with to try new things and to trust me to lead the lesson. Therefore I explain new tasks very clearly; that is I chunk them down. To chunk something down is to divide the task into the smallest pieces necessary to achieve cooperation without fear (more on chunking down later). I don't ask the animal to do things that I don't have time to chunk down.

- I give an animal time to **think**—time to think without a constant barrage of signals and verbal commands. Time spent waiting in silence is much more productive than verbal encouragement that only distracts the animal student from the task at hand.

- I understand that I may sometimes have to ask a llama or an alpaca to do something that is unpleasant, frightening or both. When a procedure is too scary or too painful for an animal to tolerate without a great deal of physical restraint, I will ask my veterinarian to help me by administering a sedative.

continued on next page

• I do my best to be as kind to my fellow humans as I am to the animals. I understand that veterinarians, spouses or farm hands are doing the very best they can to help. Llamas and alpacas don't wake up in the morning and decide to drive their owners crazy and humans don't have llamas and alpacas so they can make them miserable. One of my students sent me a card a few months ago with a wonderful sentiment.

Everyone is doing the very best they can at a given moment and when they can do better, they will.

Chunking Down a Task

The following examples should help to illustrate what I mean about chunking a task down and setting boundaries. After reading these examples and trying them out, you should be in good shape to chunk down any task.

Loading animals in a van or vehicle is a common task. When dealing with groups of untrained animals it is much easier to herd them in as a group, however, teaching an individual animal to load in a vehicle is most easily accomplished by chunking down the trailer into its component parts. A trailer is nothing more than something unusual to walk on combined with sides and a top. Confronting the animal with all of this at the same time can be overwhelming. Chunk it down and no individual step is very hard.

The Camelid Cavern of Confidence is a wonderful tool for teaching an animal to load in a trailer as well as



to trust the handler. The cavern begins as nothing more frightening than a series of poles on the ground, as each layer of difficulty is added the animal realizes that he can leave his comfort zone with the leadership of the

handler. Graduation is a trip through a pretty frightening tunnel. Once the animal has completed the Camelid Cavern of Confidence, loading in a trailer looks like a piece of cake. Please see the article on Page 25 of this issue for instructions on creating your own Camelid Cavern of Confidence.

Another common boundary line that seems to be fuzzy when people first begin training a young llama or alpaca is bumping/slamming and kicking. These behaviors

are all defensive or at least they begin that way. When humans use a corner to trap an animal, grab him and wrestle him as a way of gaining control, they leave the animal only two choices: submit to human control or fight to get away. For the animal this is two bad choices. We are lucky that most animals choose the former at least to begin with. But often as animals grow up and begin to realize that they are larger and more agile than their attacker they may change their mind and decide to fight. The way out of this is not to trap the animal to begin with and if you have been using the corner-grab-hold method, change your approach.

I don't tie an animal up when I work with him but instead work in a confined area—a catch pen (approximately 9 x 9 feet)—and give the animal the option to move away. Most animals when given a choice to move away will take it and in a very short time the problem behaviors fall away because they are no longer being provoked by being trapped and held. On the other hand, if you are holding or cornering an animal and his only defensive choice is to fight you which includes bumping you, then all bets are off.

When tied you are preventing the animal from getting away to protect himself and you get what you get. It would be inappropriate to correct this animal for slamming you or kicking you. You have given the animal no choice.

Tying an animal for grooming often leads to body slamming. The llama or alpaca that fish tails on the end of a line and body slams the handler is behaving defensively. Punishing this animal is not fair. The way many camelid owners groom their animals is often uncomfortable. It is not reasonable to expect a llama or an alpaca to accept discomfort without attempting to get away. We humans need to examine both the need and manner of our grooming. I use a catch pen and if I can't do something in a catch pen I will try working in a trailer or smaller catch pen, but in the years I have worked with llamas and alpacas I have not found that a chute is required and if I can't get what I need accomplished in a trailer or small pen with the animal left untied, then I use a sedative. Llamas and alpacas are fleece animals that should be shorn rather than groomed. I understand the necessity for some show preparation but tempering the grooming process with ample amounts of kindness is the most reasonable approach.

The practice of using food for training or handling is an interesting issue and one that could take an entire article if not a book to address it. Just a few simple

continued on next page

boundary rules can help to keep novice handlers out of trouble when it comes to using food as a training tool. If you are going to use food you must control it. I like to use a pouch with a hinge that allows me to close the food away rather than a plate that I put behind my back. This only encourages the animal to try to get it by moving around you. Food can be used as a way of improving an animal's attitude about being in a catch pen and working with me by simply offering food at the beginning of a lesson.

I will also use food to help an animal breathe and relax or to distract them during herd management tasks, such as toenail trimming.

Event marker training also known as clicker training is another great way to use food. The desired behavior is marked with a sound, usually a clicker, but it can be a verbal mark and the animal receives food when he performs the desired behavior. There are many advantages to using event marker training; it is fast, the animals enjoy it, you can teach off-lead behaviors; it is a way of team building with your animal and I could list many more advantages. The secret is to use food strategically and that means you must be able to give it promptly when you want to and prevent the animal from getting the food without performing the behavior. In order to prevent frustration as the trainer, you must be clear and begin with very easy behaviors that lead to more challenging ones as well as going back to the easy behaviors if the animal begins to show signs of frustration.

So what about kicking? I consider it reasonable for a camelid to kick to defend his legs or body and it is possible for me to stay out of range. Until I feel safe, it is my job to stay out of range—to use some sort of extension of my arm to make initial contact and to chunk the process of leg handling down into less frightening bits. Most llamas or alpacas that thoughtfully aim to connect with humans have learned to do that because they have been tied or restrained and groomed or otherwise forcibly handled. Give these animals an escape route and the reason for kicking goes away. It is also very difficult for an animal to kick as they are walking so letting the animal move instead of tying the animal is a great way to decrease instances of kicking.

Punishing an animal that kicks only reinforces his position that defending himself is necessary and in fact there is no alternative. There are also llamas or alpacas who kick reflexively and are not thinking about what

they are doing; the nerve impulse never makes it to the brain. Kicking of this nature is similar to a human knee jerk reflex. It would be unfair and inappropriate to punish an animal for kicking in this way. Animals that are afraid of people because they are cornered to be caught are more reactive in general and kick more readily. Changing the way you approach and catch an animal has a positive impact here too!

I often hear stories about “difficult” animals that begin this way... “Larry Llama was trying to be dominant. He was just trying to get away with ___”; you fill in the blank. Inexperienced handlers almost always move too slowly thinking that this is less frightening when in fact the ‘waiting to see’ what is going to happen is what makes the animal anxious. Llamas and alpacas hate a vacuum. If you don't have an agenda they will rush to create their own. An animal dealing with a human that doesn't seem to know what he or she is doing, will feel very vulnerable.

Imagine you were preparing to pull out into heavy traffic in a car with a person who didn't know how to drive. If I was in a car with an inexperienced tentative driver who really didn't seem to know how to drive, I would either want to get behind the wheel and drive myself or get out of the car. Almost anyone would feel the same way. My behavior in this case would have nothing to do with being dominant, being the boss or trying to get away with anything; it is that the lack of leadership and competence that feels scary

Dancing is another good analogy. Women are often accused of having some feminist agenda when we slip into leading the dance. It has a lot more to do with the discomfort one feels when there is a lack of dancing leadership. I imagine it must be the same for an animal. If the human doesn't lead, the animal feels that he must. It has nothing to do with wanting to get away with anything and everything to do with the fear that comes with uncertainty.

One final note about handling intact males; if you are inexperienced with camelids it may be better to get a bit of handling experience before you work with an adult intact male or take on the task of raising one. If you have an intact male that is difficult, consider gelding him. Gelding older adult males, even males that have been used for breeding can have a remarkable settling effect. Be prepared to wait several months to a year for the behavioral benefits to fully become evident. Set reasonable boundaries and be respectful of your animal's boundaries and your animals will behave respectfully toward you.

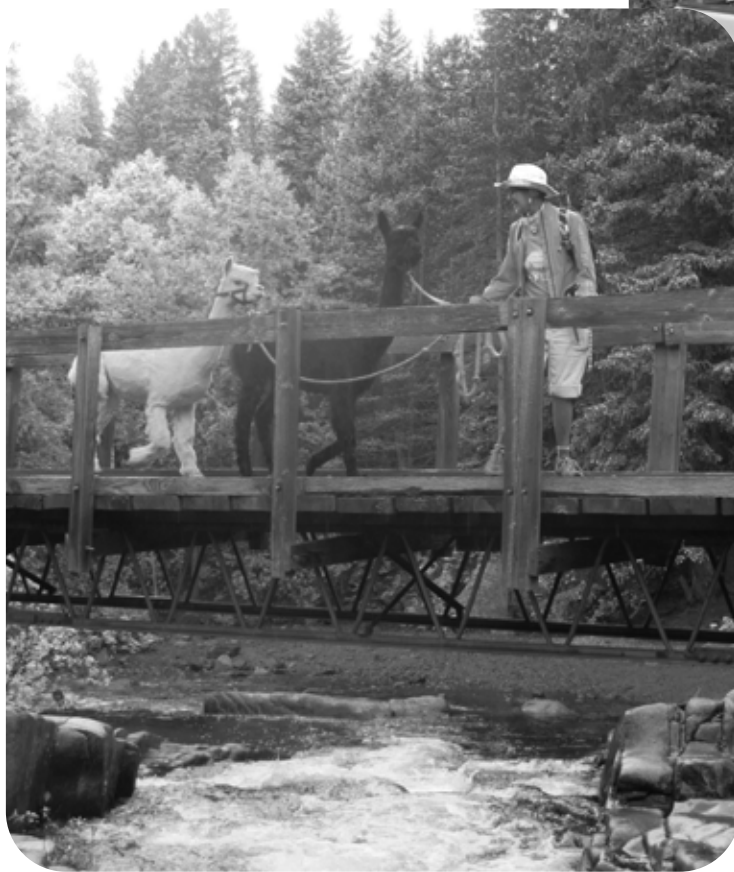


June 21, 2020 – National Llama Day: *A Hike!!*

By Marie Bernard
Berthoud, CO

Alpacas are part of the Llama family. We llama folks all know that. So, on Sunday, I set out with my 2 alpacas, Prince Remington and Princess Lily, into the foothills near Jamestown on the Ceran St. Vrain Trail. Periodic thunder and lightning didn't faze these two at all -- just me!! (Well, in honesty, I only heard the thunder and I assumed there was lightning somewhere).

I've learned it's best to get Prince Remington and Princess Lily into and out of the Jeep near a mound. Once in, off we went to the Ceran St. Vrain Trail. At the parking lot, always, immediately, you can bet all heads turn in the direction of my Jeep. It's not the Jeep Gladiator that gets everyone's attention, but the 2 alpacas in its "bed" that are the instant catch, particularly for the little kids.



The kids smile; they point; they say, "look llamas" and I kindly inform them that these are alpacas, but they are part of the llama family. "Can I pet them?" Yes, but Lily does kick; be careful where you stand. And, don't even try to pet the top of their cute, furry, bushy heads! Remmy is very calm; Lily, on the other hand, is very skittish.

Common questions – What's the difference between the llama and the alpaca? Can I take pictures? When did they get their hair cut? Will they be warm enough when winter comes? How old are they? What do you call the hair on them? How long do they live? Only one asked about the spitting habit, which is more common in the llama family.

Jackson, a young boy, was my prize visitor. His face lit up. He petted them. He fed them grass. It made his day.

It makes my day when I see all the smiles. One comment was special when a parent was talking with her children and she said something like "See, if we didn't go hiking today, we would have missed seeing the alpacas!" This hike was my way to celebrate National Llama Day on June 21, 2020.



Camelid Shearing Days

By Karen Kinyon – Wellington, CO



“Camelid Shearing Days” has been an event sponsored by Colorado State University’s Veterinary Teaching Hospital for a number of years. It provides an opportunity for ranches with a small number of llamas and alpacas to bring them to a centralized location to be shorn, have toenails trimmed, and have annual vaccinations. Usually scheduled for 3 days in May, this year the event was moved to June 24-26. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, CSU decided that they could not host this event so a new location was needed.

While at another alpaca shearing day we were notified that the CSU event was cancelled. Tom Iomonico, who was shearing, and I were very concerned about all the people that counted on that event for the health of their llamas and alpacas. I contacted Marci Stille, the CSU staff person (and a very dear friend) who has been in charge of the event to let her know that my barn was available if we wanted to have the event there. Tom was already scheduled to do the shearing so he met with me, looked over my space, made some modifications and the new location was set. Marci already had all the contacts for the participants and sent out the information for the new location and the schedule was developed.

I contacted Kathy Stanko, Fiber Committee Chair for RMLA, and the event became an RMLA sponsored event with insurance liability coverage and some money to feed the shearers and volunteers for 3 days. A huge thank you goes out to the Board of Directors for their support of this important event and to the members who volunteered to hold animals, gather fleece, clean between each animal and generally help with anything they could.

So, in 3 days we had 70 alpacas and 28 llamas from 33 farms shorn with toenails trimmed. Tom had one helper, Dillon, to help him and we had a number of wonderful volunteers that made the event run smoothly. No veterinarian was present so we did not do any vaccinations or vet checks.

I just couldn’t stand the thought of all those alpacas and llamas having to go through a very hot summer in full fleece. I was happy to make my barn available to facilitate their comfort and thank the owners for bringing them for their “spa day”. It was wonderful to watch some of them come out all shorn and just roll and enjoy a good dust bath to celebrate!



The Camelid Cavern of Confidence

By Marty McGee Bennett and Brad Bennett — Camelidynamics.com

Editors' Note: In her article 'Learning to Set Limits—The Business of Boundaries', see Page 20, Marty talks about how the Camelid Cavern of Confidence (CCC) can help build trust between you and your animal. Now, with these instructions, illustrations and photos, you can build your own!

The Camelid Cavern of Confidence (CCC) is an adjustable PVC pipe frame with a tarp over it. All of the parts and supplies can be found at your local home improvement store and/or plumbing supply house. I recommend using 1-1/2" Schedule-40 pipe for strength and durability. And if you want to have a collapsible CCC that is easy to assemble in stages for training purposes or to move and store, think about which connections you want to glue (permanent) and which you want to screw (temporary).

It only takes about an hour and a half to assemble (longer if you drink the beer) and the parts and supplies can be purchased for around \$100.

Parts List:

8 pieces Schedule 40 PVC Pipe in 10' Lengths

PVC compression type fittings:

- 12 - 1-1/2" Tees
- 6 - 1-1/2" Elbows
- 1 1-1/2" Cross
- 6 - 1-1/2" Couplers

Other Supplies Needed:

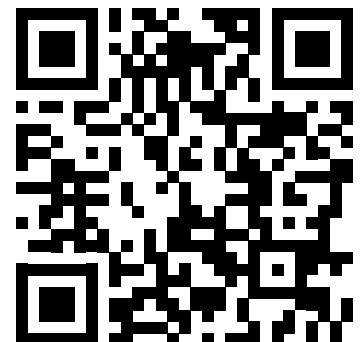
- 8 bungee cords
- 1 8' x 12' plastic tarp
- 1-pound 3/4" self-tapping Phillips head screws
- 1 small can all-purpose PVC cement (glue)
- 1 six-pack beer or wine

Tools Needed:

- Power Drill or power screw driver with a Phillips head
- Hack saw
- Rubber mallet
- Miter box (optional for the anal retentive)
- Indelible pen

BEFORE YOU BEGIN: We suggest that you read through the entire set of instructions.

This text and complete instructions on how to build can be found at www.rmla.com - EDUCATION & OUTREACH menu item, click on ARTICLES — Or use this QR code to download the PDF.



Trail Experience

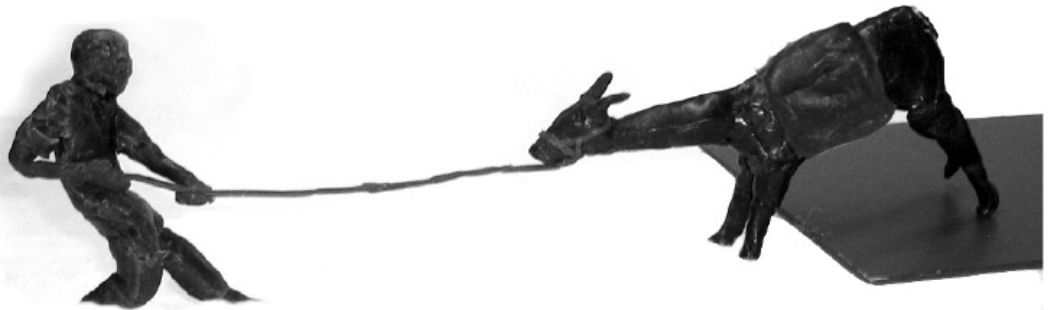
By Charlie Hackbarth, Sopris Unlimited

An excerpt from Tales of the Trail: An Entertaining and Education Guide to Using Llamas in the Backcountry. Reprinted with permission from the author.

“Three out of four ain’t bad,” I said as I looked over the nameless llamas that had just arrived from California. I had purchased these llamas sight unseen, intending to train and resell them as packers. At a glance, it was obvious that the first llama off the bus was not going to cut it as a packer. I have since come to name all llamas that look like this one “Brother Raymond,” in honor of a friend of mine. This dubious distinction is in no way a reflection on Brother Raymond himself—the good-looking, intelligent, gentle, athletic monk in charge of the ranch land and animals at Saint Benedict’s Monastery in Snowmass, Colorado. No, Brother Raymond was not broken down in the pasterns, as was this llama. As a matter of fact, at six-foot-five, Brother Raymond was a physical specimen who could, if he chose, prove that the phrase “throw the cow over the fence some hay” is not necessarily a dangling participle. The original Brother Raymond saw something in my llama that I had missed, and took him off my hands in exchange for several loads of hay. At the time I thought I’d gotten the better end of the deal, but as I think back on it... My hay was wiped out in a matter of months, while the monastery, as far as I know, hasn’t lost a lamb to coyotes since the llama’s arrival.

The other three llamas looked pretty good as far as conformation was concerned. One, a tall, rangy guy, brandished a weak ear that flopped forward, prompting me to name him “Lop.” In the confusing process of differentiating between the four new llamas, I found myself saying “No, no, not Lop. I’m talking about the short, well-muscled, high-spirited, independent one with two erect ears.” Hence, this llama that was not Lop became NotLop. And because my creative energy was pretty much spent by the time I got around to the last llama, I named him NoName.

The previous owner of these llamas had told me that they were “trained to pack,” and now it was time to see exactly what that meant. I shook the grain pan to bring the llamas into the catch pen. They stood and looked at me like I was crazy. After a couple of hours, I managed to herd them into the pen, where I haltered them with



some difficulty. Then I brought out the saddles. Within a week I had them saddled, and I announced to the family that they were ready to take us fishing and camping for the weekend.

Some basic training, such as introductions to water crossings, bridge crossings (or some facsimile thereof), log jumps, and deadfall, can be accomplished within the confines of the farm. This makes things easier, less intimidating, safer, and faster when you get on the trail. Basic training can also be done on the trail using natural obstacles if you have a nice spot to go for a part-day training session. However, if you are a person like myself who thrives on stress, you will probably try to combine your training session with a weekend family fishing/camping trip. Basic training then encompasses racing to beat the evening hatch, a storm, or darkness. I have never made the evening hatch on the first day, but I’ve been really lucky about consistently catching a storm, darkness, or both while setting camp. More often than not, the act of setting camp occurs on a timbered cliff with cold, tired, hungry kids hanging on me and screaming in my ear. My family has known no other way, and they actually think that this is what packing with llamas is all about. Now that my children have grown up and are bigger than I am, I’m afraid to tell them any differently. I know that Sandy, although she continues to kid about “never ever going with me again,” recognizes even the small benefits that these trips have to offer. For example, she has admitted that after returning from one of these action-packed weekends, she much more readily accepts, and indeed actually looks forward to, a week at her boring nine-to-five job. As a matter of fact, over the years she has developed such a passion for boring work that she can hardly tear herself away from it for a weekend pack trip.

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My fishing gear was packed in its designated panniers, and the llamas were loaded in the trailer and ready to go, so I laid on the horn to move Sandy and the kids along. “Come on guys, get those panniers filled and weighed. We’ve got to get on the road. I’d like to get to the lake in time for the evening rise!” Sandy’s field is accounting; consequently, when it comes to getting the equipment and food ready for a family camping trip... well, let’s just say she’s not too speedy. In her defense, I must admit that, at least in those days, it was not entirely her fault. Andy was five, Alexa eight, and I’ll tell you—kids at that age are just about worthless when it comes to helping out. I wanted to be off by 8:00 a.m., but by the time Sandy had finished putting together the food, the day was half gone. Not only that, but it would be a miracle if we were able to recognize anything we would be eating that weekend after the kids had gotten through dragging the panniers down the stairs and rolling them out to the end of the driveway.

“Be patient,” I said to myself as I waited. “They’re doing the best that they can.”

We arrived at the trailhead at three o’clock that afternoon and started up the trail. Our destination was the Frying Pan Lakes, almost a five-mile hike. Our first obstacle was a three-foot-wide plank bridge (with no railing) crossing a twenty-foot-wide stream that was still swollen with spring runoff. We brought the llamas up to the edge and quickly realized there was no way they were going to cross that bridge with those rapids leaping up at them. The only choice then was for me to take them directly across the stream. I waded into the stream with NoName following me all the way to the water’s edge. He then let me reel off the full eight feet of the lead as I headed farther into the icy stream. As I reached the end of his line, NoName set the hook and backed up, yanking me out of the water and onto the bank where I lay flopping like some kind of beached fish. Determined not to be suckered again, I coaxed NoName back to the water and the tug-of-war began. This time I pulled him off balance and into the water. After his front feet were in, I kept him from backing up, then relaxed the lead and let him get used to the water. With the hardest part out of the way, I pulled him fully into the water. At this point, his response, a typical one, was to defecate in the stream. Allowing this to happen is a sin. However, getting a llama to move through the water to stop the process is sometimes tricky, especially when one is standing on slick rocks, knee-deep in the

current. Expecting a balk, I pulled with everything I had. NoName panicked and began to lunge across the stream, which threw me off balance and over backward into the deeper, swifter water. It didn’t take long for me to react to the ice water dunking. When my head bobbed up to the surface, I could see that I had pulled NoName in with me and that the lead rope between us was our only lifeline. Using each other for leverage, we managed to pull ourselves to our feet and flounder across to the other side, greeted by the roar of the small but enthusiastic crowd.

Before changing into dry clothes, I went back for Lop and NotLop. While they weren’t particularly anxious to get into the water after watching NoName’s demonstration, they apparently realized that once in, slow and easy was the way to attack the stream, and we all arrived safely on the other side.

ASIDE: Motivated by this experience, I have since found a nice spot about five miles from the house where I take my young llamas for stream-crossing lessons. The creek is about twenty feet wide and ten inches deep, with small riffles about a half-inch high. A gradual bank leads from the water to a beautiful grassy area where butterflies flutter about collecting nectar from the columbines. I pack a picnic lunch and when I’m finished with the water training, I eat lunch, then saddle and load full panniers on the llamas and follow a cattle trail through an oak brush tunnel to the top of a hill. The oak brush snags the panniers, making lots of noise. However, since the llamas have no place to go to get away from the noise, they quickly get used to it. By the time I get back from the hike, my llamas have no fear of water or noise from the panniers. I eat lunch again and take a little nap in the cool shade while the llamas graze on their picket lines. When I get home, I trim their nails (which have been softened from the stream water) and release my happy llamas to their pasture. After eating dinner, I read for a while in bed and drift off to sleep, convinced that life really is a Norman Rockwell painting.

But back to reality. After the near-drowning, we continued on up the trail. Things went well for about a hundred yards—until we encountered our first swamp, coupled with a long bridge about three feet wide and a hundred feet long. The bridge, which lay directly on the swamp, was made of logs tied together and lying perpendicular to the trail. This was an ingenious and labor-intensive project constructed by the U.S. Forest Service, and I was impressed. But as I looked at NotLop,

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Trail Experience continued ...

who was studying the situation as we approached, I wondered what we were in for next.

An intelligent animal like a llama isn't going to blindly walk into an unfamiliar obstacle that he feels could put him in danger—he will offer some kind of resistance. Until you gain his trust, your green llama needs to see for himself that the situation you are about to put him in isn't going to do him any harm. Each llama will react to each obstacle differently, and repetition is the key to raising your llama's level of comfort with a particular obstacle.

Not having any experience crossing bridges, NotLop advanced with suspicion. He wasn't impressed with the construction of the Forest Service bridge, and he liked the swamp even less. Unlike children, llamas seem to have an inherent prejudice against swamps. Their natures don't allow them to appreciate the feeling and fragrance of ice-cold, centuries-old humus squishing up between their toes. Children, with their ability to reason (limited as it may be), have an idea of what a swamp is all about. The exciting part for children is trying to figure out the details, like what's hitting their bare legs as they are being sucked deeper into the black slimy muck: Is it swamp grass or a leech, a tadpole or water bug, a frog, waterdog, or snake? A llama doesn't know what might be hidden in the grass and muck that is sucking at his feet; he doesn't view the swamp as being an exciting challenge, only as something to be completely avoided. Yet NotLop didn't understand that by walking on the precarious-looking bridge he could avoid wading in the swamp. He would have to be shown.

As we neared the bridge, NotLop locked all four legs and came to a firm standstill, refusing to budge. I tried to pull him off balance, but because the bridge was so narrow, I couldn't get over to either side far enough to gain any leverage. I handed the lead to Sandy and asked her to pull while I lifted one of NotLop's front feet and placed it on the bridge. As I grabbed his leg, NotLop reared up, went off the side of the bridge into the swamp, and quickly jumped back out again. We began once more, and when both of NotLop's front feet were on the bridge we praised him and let him rest for a minute as he got used to the idea. Then, as Sandy pulled hard on the lead, I pushed him from the rear. Before you could say "watch your step," Sandy was standing in the swamp screaming with excitement at NotLop's accomplishment. NotLop stood on the bridge like a newborn—weak-legged and afraid to move. After praising him some more, we coaxed him along until he felt relatively comfortable walking on the logs.

Taking the other two llamas through the same process was hard work, and it kept me on the move. Of course, Sandy was completely swamped on her end, and although it's hard to gauge someone else's true emotions



in a situation like this, Sandy's level of excitement and intensity seemed to rise with each llama's success. I tried to show the same kind of enthusiasm, but it's not as easy when you are on the end that I was on. Just between you and me, I was darn glad we didn't have a string of seven. It wasn't long before all the llamas realized that the bridges were much better than the swamp, and eventually they stepped right up and crossed the series of bridges that wove through the bogs.

We were finally on dry ground again, with the exception of the swamp-water puddles Sandy left at each step and the numerous other trickles of water crossing the trail. Normally these puddles and trickles wouldn't be worth mentioning, but they became a real problem for NoName. Llamas, like people, all have their own little psychological hang-ups. NoName's happened to be puddles and trickling water. Every time we came to one of these minuscule obstacles, he would fly over it with an effort equal to a Carl Lewis long jump. When landing on the other side, his eighty-pound load would end up on his shoulders and would need to be repositioned.

A pack llama needs to learn to cross water and mud gracefully without endangering the handler, endangering himself, or messing up the load. So I was determined to teach NoName this skill. Usually, by using the lead rope to hold the llama's head down so that he doesn't have the power to lunge, you can teach him to walk through these wet areas. This is not as easy as it sounds. Your llama will either want to fly or will balk, so you have to hold his head down with a short lead and slowly coax him forward while at the same time checking his urge to fly. The tricky part, and the important thing to remember, is to avoid standing on his runway while doing this. Try to picture this position: You are off to the side and slightly in front of your llama. You are bent over, with your arm

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Trail Experience continued ...

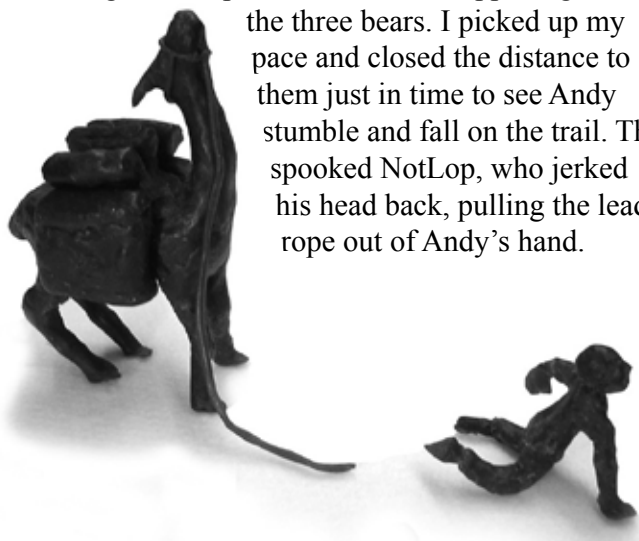
outstretched pulling the lead forward and down at the same time. Once you've pulled him off balance, if that's what it takes to get him to step into the mud puddle or across the trickle, turn him around and go back and forth over the same ground several times.

NoName was a slow learner with this lesson. When my arm got tired and stretched out of shape from working in this awkward position, I would switch the lead to the other hand and try some more. NoName was beating me black and blue, yet he seemed unaffected by my training and the amount of energy he was burning up trying to fly. We continued to abuse ourselves up the timbered canyon toward our destination and NoName showed little sign of improvement.

The stream, bridge, and trickle training sessions had taken their toll physically on the humans in our group. It was almost dark and beginning to rain. The kids were hungry and tired and we were on a steep slope in black timber, so I figured it must be time to call it quits for the day. I'll let you visualize what the next ten hours were like. Suffice it to say, our reward for setting up camp under those conditions was waking up the next morning in a pile at the foot of the tent, feeling like we had just climbed a fourteen-thousand-foot mountain. Sandy was a bear that morning, and I quickly realized that not only do you not want to get between a she-bear and her cubs under those conditions, it's really best just to stay as far away as possible from all of them. We ate some instant cereal, loaded up our wet gear, and hiked up the trail in search of the warm sunlight that was evading us in the timber.

After a while the trail led out of the timber and back to a stream running through a narrow, grassy valley. As the warm sunshine hit my face, I began to feel a mood change and hoped the same was happening with

the three bears. I picked up my pace and closed the distance to them just in time to see Andy stumble and fall on the trail. This spooked NotLop, who jerked his head back, pulling the lead rope out of Andy's hand.



Losing a llama is actually a godsend for an over-tired, grouchy crew; it elevates the adrenaline to a respectable level and allows everyone to forget about personal miseries for a moment while they focus on the big picture. A loose llama is kind of a wake-up call, letting everyone know that, indeed, things can get worse. NotLop was a high-strung, flighty llama that couldn't care less about being with people or other llamas. He had never experienced the taste of grain, which is the simplest method of retrieving loose llamas, so I knew that I might just as well offer him a sack of pumas as the grain bag.

The first thought that passes through your mind when you lose a llama on the trail several miles in is: "Is the llama carrying the food or my sleeping bag?" If you happen to lose him from the picket line when you're in camp, your first thought is: "Who is going to carry that llama's load if we can't catch him?" On this particular occasion, however, no one seemed to be overly worried about NotLop's newly found freedom except me. This was probably because his entire load consisted of my fishing gear—hundreds of dollars' worth of float tube, neoprene waders, fins, reels, and flies that had been laboriously hand-tied for this particular lake.

NotLop immediately recognized his newly found freedom, and when I moved toward him, he quickly moved away. I sensed that if he got past me, this particular weekend's fish harvest was going to make for very thin soup. I asked Sandy and the kids to leave some grain and take the other llamas further up the trail to see if NotLop would follow. They were soon out of sight, yet NotLop was unfazed by their absence—which is not what you like to see in this situation. So there I stood, a solitary fence post in the middle of a wilderness of endless expanse, entertaining thoughts of how to catch a green, independent llama that has never had a taste of grain. Hoping that I could get NotLop to sample the grain, I poured some on the ground and backed away. He cocked his head and looked at the small pile and then back at me as if to say, "Right . . . you want me to eat that little bit of broccoli that you just poured in my boundless bowl of ice cream?" Then he made his move to get past me. I sprang up the steep slope to cut him off. He turned downhill toward the stream, and again I quickly reacted to cut him off. Several times I sprang up the steep slope and down to the stream, and each time I was there in time to cut him off. It's amazing what a fence post can do when all his fishing tackle is riding on the back of a wild llama who has found his freedom in the backcountry.

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Trail Experience continued ...

Impressed with the fact that this was no ordinary fence post with which he was dealing, NotLop turned and wandered a few steps up the trail to regroup. As I stood head down, hands on knees, and gasping for air, I realized that the odds of me catching NotLop this way were far lower than those of me having a heart attack trying.

I rested a bit longer, and was just beginning to recover when it occurred to me that I might have lost NotLop forever. My breathing picked up again, and I was soon in a complete state of delirium. "NotLop!" I hyperventilated, "Come back. Come back!" But it was too late. NotLop was racing through the thick timber, lead rope dangling from his head, snags shredding the pack from his back and leaving pieces of float tube, neoprene waders, fins, and flies scattered behind him.

And then it was quiet. A deep sense of loss came over me. Would I ever see NotLop again? I could only hope that he would return to the trailhead, as escapees sometimes do. If I were lucky enough to have that happen, I would deal with how to catch him then.


As the fog lifted from my head, I found myself thinking about the advice I had once been given: Practice falling down while leading your llama. The lesson is simple, I had been told. While you are in a confined area on your farm, walk along normally and then slowly drop to one knee while holding tightly to the lead rope. Do this several times, gradually speeding up the process until you are doing a complete fall at a normal brisk walk.

"Thank you," I had interrupted, "but I am quite capable of falling down without having to practice."


Hmmm... I get it. This lesson in falling down was not for my benefit at all, but for my llama! Hmmm... yes... If my mentor had just been clearer so that I would have understood! Then NotLop, trained for this eventuality, wouldn't have spooked and I wouldn't be in this position now! Just my luck! Why do these things always happen to me!?!?

I wheeled around, and there before me, frozen in stride not ten yards down the trail, was NotLop. I approached him slowly, took the lead in my hand, and whispered calmly in his ear. "You stepped on your rope, stupid."


The next morning we arrived at the lakes. We unloaded the llamas and rewarded them by putting them out on their picket lines. I gave each some water




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PACK'EM



STACK'EM



DRIVE'EM

and figured they'd be all set. Not so: the llamas seemed nervous for some reason. Wind will sometimes bother inexperienced llamas, but this afternoon was still. I went back to camp thinking that they would settle down, but they continued their restless pacing. Since the llamas were situated in a small clearing between our tents and the edge of the timber, I finally decided that their nervousness was related to what might be lurking in the timber. I moved them to the other side of our camp, and that did the trick. The llamas settled right in and began to graze, apparently thinking that any hungry beast coming out of the timber would be full by the time it reached them.

After a couple of relaxing days of fishing, catching water skippers, and reading books, it was time to go. On the way out the llamas took every obstacle, including the high narrow bridge, without hesitation and with such grace that we hardly knew they were there. We hiked at a record pace and arrived back at the trailhead in two and-a-half hours.

"It's great to have an experienced string of llamas to go packing with," I said to Sandy as we neared the trailhead. "I wonder what a string like that is worth?"

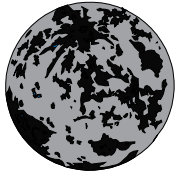
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ALPACA TO THE MOON!!!!

By Ron Hinds via Google Alerts notifications :-)



Leidos' Dynetics was one of the three companies selected by NASA in late April, 2020, to support the HLS (Human Landing Systems) program for a lunar mission in 2024. The company has started developing a spacecraft called "Autonomous Logistics Platform for All-Moon Cargo Access", or ALPACA for short!

Hobby Farm Magazine

RMLA has an article and a half page color advertisement in the September/October issue of the Hobby Farm Magazine. They are featuring llamas in this issue. (See pages 75 & 76) The magazine is generally available at farm and ranch stores such as Big R and Tractor Supply as well as local livestock feed stores and Barnes & Noble. RMLA is, of course, on a mission to educate everyone about the ins and outs of owning llamas.

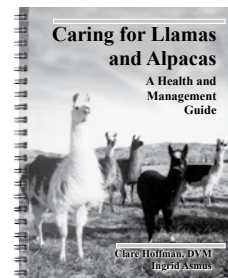
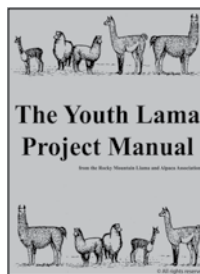
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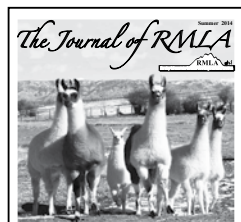
www.rmla.com

--- Mission Statement ---

The mission of the Association shall be to educate the members and the public as to the breeding, raising, care and use of llamas and alpacas.



Available for purchase on rmla.com



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Available with membership

To join go to
rmla.com



Kathy, Ron, Marilyn

Postscript from The Journal Volunteers

We are grateful for each and every one of you!

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EVENTS CALENDAR

MARY WICKMAN, EVENTS CHAIR

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

September 26–27, 2020 National Alpaca Farm Days, sponsored by Alpaca Owners Association (AOA). We can all support this wonderful event in its 14th year. For more information go to www.alpacainfo.com.

October 12, 2020. RMLA Annual Meeting via conference call. Watch your emails for details.

National Llama Appreciation Day, June 21, 2021. Sponsored by Greater Appalachian Llama and Alpaca (GALA) and the International Llama Registry (ILR). GALA chose the summer solstice date of June 21st for llamas because it coincides with festivals in the Andes Mts. Check out www.galaonline.org for more information and watch your RMLA eblasts for promotional information that is being developed.

And finally, let's lift our hats to 2021 and a more eventful year!