

The NMAB Quarterly

The Official Newsletter of the
New Mexico Alpaca Breeder

Winter Edition January 2007

NMAB News and Reminders

NMAB Connects

The New Mexico Alpaca Breeders Newsletter is launched! Thanks to Cynthia Daly of Milagro Moon Ranch, who volunteered to collect and coordinate articles, we now have a conduit through which to connect all NMAB members. The strength of any organization depends on communication among and support from the members.

As I look forward to 2007-2008, I see clearly that our once small New Mexico alpaca community is growing by leaps and bounds--an appropriate alpaca-esque description! Our organization, therefore, must strive to keep up with the demands of its members. Each member needs to support this organization through volunteering, submitting articles to the newsletter, and developing connections that help and support each other.

Your Board of Directors is committed to serving NMAB. Please contact any of the BOD members if you have comments or suggestions.

Mickey Wright, NMAB President
Aspen Ridge Alpacas of Northern New Mexico

Newsletter Announcements

Thanks to everyone for their January submissions! This is your newsletter; if you ever have comments or suggestions for improvement, please feel free to let me know.

The NMAB Quarterly will be published on the following dates for 2007: January 10th, April 11th, July 11th and October 10th. Of course I will send reminders prior to each, but submission due dates are as follows for each issue: January 3rd, April 4th, July 4th, October 3rd.

HERDSIRE EDITION: Get ready to promote those males! Our April newsletter will be dedicated to promoting our herdsires (in addition to regular submissions). Sometime in the next month I will be emailing a structured request for information so that it will be easier to compare all of those fabulous males.

Cynthia Daly, Editor, Milagro Moon Ranch

FLEECE NAVIDAD! NMAB's Annual Holiday Gathering

A gala event was hosted at the lovely home of Anne Stallcup, Que Sera Alpacas. Many thanks to Anne for taking the time to create such a festive atmosphere and for hosting the event. New and long-standing members came together to shared good cheer and sampled the wide range of delectable dainties from the potluck offerings. The highlight of the evening, other than the scintillating conversation, was this year's version of "Dirty Christmas." This could be compared to the "White Elephant" tradition with the exception that the gifts were a whole lot better! The event caused me to reflect on the great friendships I have developed through the course of the year. As members, we may not see each other every day, but through the sharing of the trials, tribulation, joys, and sorrows that come out of this common experience of raising alpacas, enduring bonds are born.

Ubiquitous Dues

Don't forget that NMAB membership dues (\$100 for farm membership) should be sent to Anne Stallcup. The deadline has been extended to February 24th to coincide with the next meeting date, but if you won't be attending that meeting, please send your renewals to Anne at Que Sera Alpacas, 3 General Sage, Santa Fe, NM 87505.

Renew your ARI membership for 2007 online at <https://members.alpacaregistry.net/>

Renew your AOBA membership for 2007 online at <http://www.alpacaowners.com/login>

To join or renew with TXOLAN, go to <http://www.txolan.org/join-txolan.asp> (check out their home page to link to information about the upcoming TXOLAN show).

NEXT NMAB MEETING: Saturday, February 25, at Lynne and Al Fatkin's in Sandia Park. Check the Events section at www.newmexicoalpacobreeders.org for directions.

Alpaca Industry News, Opinion and Comment

Fiber to Fashion

NMAB members Lynne Fatkin, Mary Curik, Susan Sasser, Anne Stallcup and ARI Board President Bruce Beatty and wife Jeri attended the annual Fiber to Fashion Conference in early November in Reno, Nevada. As the name implies, the conference focus was on alpaca fiber and what we as alpaca breeders can do to help build that aspect of our industry. The industry is seeing a need to make use of all of our fiber – prime fleece as well as second and third cuts.

Deb Hill and her education committee did a great job of providing a wide and interesting selection of educational seminars and hands-on craft classes. Instruction in weaving, spinning, crocheting, felting, fiber prep and processing, and product development was offered.

Informational seminars concerning current areas of fiber research as well as medical, technical and business information were offered as well. Attendees were also invited to open forums with AOBA and ARI Board members.

Although the attendance at the conference was lower than at previous meetings, those who did attend were able to take advantage of some great learning and networking opportunities. The New Mexico entries in the spin-off, product and fleece competitions placed well and we brought home our share of those pretty ribbons (as usual).

The Fashion Extravaganza featured the nationally known Eco-fashion model, Summer Rayne Oakes. Summer spoke on several occasions during the conference attesting to her love for alpaca fiber and her support of our growing industry. During the Extravaganza, the models walked the runway in a variety of alpaca garments and accessories. A few hand-knit items were also featured. The Fiber industry is indeed the future of Alpacas!

Submitted by Anne Stallcup, with additions from Mary Curik and Lynne Fatkin

ALPACAS FOR ME – fact v fiction

Submitted and Written by Ian Watt*

Alpacas are not for everyone – fact. Welcome to the wonderful world of alpacas – a world that will give you hours, days and years of absolute pleasure and joy... and moments of frustration, sadness and worry.

While there is much to enjoy and appreciate about these wonderful animals, they are an animal that can totally consume you and your life or they can give you measured happiness and satisfaction that only animals seem to be able to give human beings. Once we accept ownership of any animal we accept custodianship of a life and the responsibility that comes with that custodianship – a responsibility that most of us accept with alacrity and purpose. However, we can only do that when we have sufficient knowledge and understanding to make a considered decision. Hopefully this paper will give some reassurance where needed and identify potential pitfalls in alpaca ownership whilst also filling in some gaps that may appear through conflicting information.

Firstly, let it be quite clear that this discussion comes from the perspective that alpacas are animals and not extensions of human families and/or values. Secondly, the information comes from a personal perspective based on years of ownership as well as industry development and private consultancy in commercial aspects of fibre and animal production. And, lastly, it is one person's opinion!

Huacaya and Suri are two different breeds. Fiction – they are both alpacas with differing fleece qualities. For as many times that temperament, bone density, head profile, etc. are promoted as breed differences, as many examples of compatibility in those same traits can be found. Crossing these fleece types will always produce either an huacaya or a suri fleece type and the animal will always be an alpaca.

Alpacas are environmentally friendly. True – and this is a BIG feature of owning these animals! The browsing nature of alpacas together with their padded feet, poo pile practices, ability to do well under harsh environments and lack of need of high quality pastures are all features that should endear these animals to conservationists and

environmentalists alike. Most domesticated farm animals damage the environment in one way or another – these animals do not unless they are unsympathetically managed to disadvantage. Browsers by nature, they rarely decimate areas of paddocks, their padded feet do not tear at the soil structure creating potential erosion problems, their poo piles limit pollution of the pasture on a large scale and limit the spread of internal parasites, and their ability to process poor quality grasses limits the need for provision of improved pastures through the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and weedicides.

Alpacas need specialist fencing. True - and false. Fencing is usually associated with keeping animals within specified boundaries for either legal, social or management purposes. In America there is an added complication in keeping alpacas and that is to deter predators from entering the property and creating untold havoc and pain. Bears, cats, deer, coyotes and cats are examples of environments where standard four foot fencing would be inadequate and where higher, closer spaced wire and reinforced posts will be necessary. For those areas that do not have these predator risks, standard seven wire fencing with a barb along the ground and the top wire four feet above the ground level will suffice.

Alpacas produce a cria once a year. False – and probably one of the most quoted and inaccurate myths about these animals. Alpacas have a pregnancy gestation of 11.5 months on average with periods ranging from 11 to 12 months not uncommon. Depending on personal preference and environmental considerations (snow, cold, heat, humidity for example), birthed females may be mated as early as 10 to 12 days after delivery or as long as three months. On average, a hundred females will produce and wean about 70 cria a year up to 80 with good management practices.

Females should not be mated under 18 months to two years. False – ideally a female alpaca should weigh a hundred pounds and be well grown and fertile before mating. Under-developed and underweight animals should never be mated regardless of age. There are some breeders who believe that other considerations such as social maturity should be considered.

The remainder of Ian Watt's article will appear in the April issue.

***Ian Watt** is the principal of **Alpaca Consulting USA** and **Elite Alpaca Breeding Systems**, an independent specialist consulting company based in Morro Bay, California. He is also Editor and Publisher of "The International Alpaca Handbook" and conducts education and training seminars/workshops on fibre appreciation and breeding programs.

www.elitealpacabreedingsystems.com

www.alpacaconsultingusa.com

www.alpaca handbook.com

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Farm News and Events

What's New at Albuquerque Alpacas?

It has been an entertaining and enjoyable year at our ranch. We were thrilled to have two female crias this season, the first to be born on our ranch. Lucinda and Esperanza continue to entertain ranch visitors with their antics. Our December Open Ranch Days were a huge success due to a feature story complete with photos that ran in the Albuquerque Journal the morning of the event (December 9th). Over the course of the two day event approximately 400 people were introduced to our alpacas and visited the ranch store which did a tremendous business. Our PR boys Leo and Nero did quite well considering the amount of hugging they had to endure! Needless to say, we are restocking the store these days, proving once again the old adage from the real estate world... "Location, Location, Location!"

Albuquerque Alpacas is pleased to welcome two new females to our herd of twelve, Lady's Memorial (AKA "Wookie") is bred to Cloud Dancer Alpacas stud, Macho Colorado for an April 2007 cria. Lady's Surprise is bred to Admiral Grey for a fall 2007 cria. We anticipate two Shockwave cria in August and September. If our maiden, Flashdancer, would just get with the program and get pregnant, we should see five cria on the ground by next fall.

Our ranch is also pleased to announce the addition of a proven, dark fawn herdsire ABA Cocomotion. A Peruvian Serono son, Coco is one of those hidden gems of the alpaca world. Serono was well known on the west coast as one of the first Peruvian imports; most of his cria have fiber with an average diameter of under 20 microns. Come by the ranch and check him out next time you are in Albuquerque. More about him in the Herdsire Edition of the NMAB Quarterly in April!

From Regina Dart, Llano Soleado Alpacas

My son Nathan, age 9, recently won first place in his school's Science Fair, and the Overall Prize for 4th grade over 65 other entries with his project entitled "Can I make a Cria Weight Gain Monitor?" He developed an Excel Spreadsheet and accompanying set of graphs to determine if our crias were growing within the suggested guidelines of Dr. Long and Dr. Evans. It was certainly the first science project at his school to feature alpacas!

Abby and Nathan participated in the ABR Fall Festival where they won 2 Firsts, 3 Thirds, and a Seventh place ribbon in the Performance, PR and Showmanship classes. It was their second show! (We have a great picture with their alpaca decked out with all their ribbons!)

Llano Soleado Alpacas recently purchased two full Peruvian herdsires. Snowmass Andean Night and Sagebrush Atticus can be seen on our Alpaca Nation web site, and are available for limited outside breedings. Both of these fine males will help us

develop a strong breeding program for many years to come. Many thanks to Amanda Evans and Julie Skinner for these two awesome males.

The Latest from Milagro Moon Ranch

Snow. Wind. More Snow. **Lots** more wind. Big snow drifts.

But we've kept the water buckets thawed, haven't been without electricity and have only been stuck in the snow out on the roads a couple of brief times.

We are happy to have two new alpaca additions in the past month – a dark brown yearling female, Sweet Louise, and a lovely bay black yearling male, Antero – purchased from Pat Benson at So Fine Alpacas. Look for more information about Antero in the April newsletter. Cria are due in late April, with a few dairy goats due in April as well.

Our most exciting news, however, is that we finally launched our AlpacaNation page. Check us out!

From Jim and Cynthia Daly, Edgewood

Alpaca Business Considerations, Herd Management, and What about the Fiber?

March 3, 2007

This seminar will have an overview of the alpaca industry, discuss business concerns, herd management practices, ranch set-up & layout, and what about the fleece - what do you do with it? You'll find answers at this seminar! The class is from 9:00 am to around 3:00 pm - continental breakfast, lunch, and all materials are included. Cost is \$50.00 per person or \$90 per couple. Sign up before February 10th and **SAVE** - \$40.00 per person or \$75.00 per couple. Hosted by Enchanted Sky Alpacas of New Mexico and Four Pines Alpacas. Held at Enchanted Sky Alpacas in Sandia Park. Contact Lynne Fatkin at 505-235-0305 or enchantedskyalpacas@yahoo.com for details.

Make a Needle-Felted Purse

Saturday, January 27

9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Refreshments and lunch provided.

Presented by:

Fiber and Friends at Four Pines Alpacas and Enchanted Sky Alpacas

Cost: \$50.00

Email mary@fourpinesalpacas, or call 505-379-4534

Class will be at Four Pines Alpacas in Los Lunas, NM

Here's a great fiber arts project!!

In this class you'll complete a needle-felted purse while learning the basics of needle-felting.

All supplies are included – alpaca fiber, felting needles, foam form, yarns and trims. Get creative with colors and designs!

In needle-felting, the barbed needles are pushed through the fibers, catching and entangling them to make the felted fabric.

You'll be able to use needle-felting for all kinds of hand-crafted felt items – hats, eyeglass cases, wine totes, wall hangings, and more.

Needle-felting is also great for embellishing other fiber and fabric crafts as well – beads, jewelry, embellishing jeans, jackets, and sweaters!

Events Far and Wide

Warm A Head, Warm A Heart!

Inviting all alpaca owners, breeders and enthusiasts to be part of the 2007 Hats for Cancer event sponsored by the ABR Fiber Committee.

When: Saturday, January 27, 2007 time - 9:00 am to 3:30 pm

Where: Parker Senior Resource Center

Who: Anyone interested in learning to create hats from fine alpaca fiber or anyone who wants to have a day full of great fun with great people!

What: Experienced fiber artists teaching and/or leading participants in numerous techniques used to create luxurious alpaca hats.

- Water felting lead by Alicia Marshall and Pat Alger
- Needle Felting lead by Christin Jones
- Crochet lead by Carl McGill
- Rake Loom lead by Malcolm and Joyce Babb
- Fine knitting lead by Barb DeDecker
- Felting of crocheted or knitted hats lead by (To Be Determined)

Why: The hats created at this event will be donated to the Rocky Mountain Cancer Centers to be offered to people combating cancer.

[\\$25 Sponsorships](#) available by contacting Chris Fitzgerald (719) 488-0046; email cfitz9000@aol.com.

[Donations, Questions & Rsvp](#) contact Christin Jones (303) 697-8337 or email russtin1@msn.com. Rsvp necessary so that we have supplies & lunch for all.

Those wishing to be a sponsor for Hat Day, please make out your check to ABR, write on it someplace "Hat Day Sponsor" and mail it to:

Chris Fitzgerald
Birdsong Ranch Alpacas
PO Box 487
Palmer Lake, CO 80133.

Each sponsorship is \$25 and you're welcome to donate more than one.

Thank you for your support of this wonderful project.
Cancer has probably touched, directly or indirectly, each person's life who is receiving this letter. Supporting Hat Day is a positive, tangible effort to Warm a Head and Warm a Heart of a person with cancer.

..... MORE REGARDING THIS EVENT:

We have our First Hat!!!

Thanks to Cass Galloway we have the 1st hat for the 2007 ABR Fiber Committee Hats for Cancer event. Cass gave the hat to us because she has a conflict with the 1/27/07 event date. It was an unexpected gift – thanks again, Cass!!

The purpose of this communication is to cover additional items related to the 2007 Hats for Cancer event.

1. I truly appreciate receiving our first hat but it was not expected. Anyone interested in contributing to the Hats for Cancer can simply plan to attend the event on 1/27/07. If you are unable to attend on that date, you are invited to come to our Finishing Day.
2. Finishing Day will be Saturday 2/10/07 at the Parker Senior Center from approximately 10:00 to 2:00. Finishing Day is when the real magic happens. The embellishments and finishing touches are what make these hats one-of-a kind treasures. Learning how to add trimmings to hats is an important element of making beautiful hats.
3. We now have an instructor to lead felting knitted or crocheted hats. Sue Lindh has graciously agreed to supervise this currently in demand and exciting craft.
4. To answer questions I have received, we are asking anyone interested in participating in the Hats for Cancer event send an RSVP – this is only to be certain that we have the supplies and food for all that attend the event.
5. Supplies ...Supplies ... Calling for Supplies.
One of the reasons that the Hats for Cancer event is such a wonderful success each time is through the generous assistance of ABR members!! I am looking to update our 2007 event inventory spreadsheet. We are blessed to have, what appears to be, plenty of fiber for felting hats. Thank You! I believe we need alpaca yarn – various styles and colors welcomed.

I also need to get an estimate of any supplies that participants can bring. It is understood these supplies will be marked with your name and will go home with you.

Supplies would include:

Hat molds Mesh Oil Pans Patterns Looms
 Crochet Hooks Knitting Needles Materials (soap, ladles, scale, towels,
 sponges, sharpie, etc)

There are still a few \$25 Sponsorships available. If interested contact Chris Fitzgerald
 Phone (719) 488-0046; email cfitz9000@aol.com.

Questions & RSVP - contact Christin Jones (303) 697-8337 or email russtin1@msn.com

2007 Show Schedule

(Thank you, Skip Lynch, for compiling this chart)

Date	Where	Show	Deadline	Classes Offered
January 20-21	Shawnee, OK	A-OK Blast Off	Dec. 15	Halter, Fleece, Performance, Fun, Spin-Off
February 15-18	Ft.Worth, TX	TxOLAN	Jan. 15	Halter, Fleece, Performance, Fun, Spin-Off
March 9-11	Houston, TX	Houston Livestock Alpaca Show		Halter, Fleece, Performance
March 10-11	Phoenix, AZ	Southwest Regional Show	Feb. 6th	Halter
March 17-18	Neenah, WI	Spring Fling		Halter, Performance, Fun
March 24-25	Lake St. Louis, MO	MOPACA	Feb. 23	Halter, Fleece, Performance
March 30-April 1	Payallup, WA	AlpacaPalooza		Halter, Fleece, Spin-Off
March 31-April 1	Louisville, KY	Kentucky Classic		Halter, Performance
April 14-15	Clarksville, AR	Alpacas in the Ozarks		Halter, Performance, Spin-Off
April 14-15	Reno, NV	Alpaca Western (AWE)		Halter, Fleece, Spin-Off
April 20-23	Louisville, KY	The Futurity	Mar. 15	Halter
April 28-29	Coeur d'Alene, ID	Northwest Alpaca Showcase		Halter, Fleece
April 28-29	Madison, WI	Great Midwest Alpaca Fest		Halter, Fleece, Performance
May 4-6	Denver, CO	Great Western Alpaca Show	Apr. 4	Halter, Fleece, Performance, Fun
May 16-20	Louisville, KY	AOBA National Conference		Halter, Fleece, Performance, Fun, Spin-Off

ANIMALS IN NEED:

Llama Pairs Need Homes

Llamas have lived side-by-side with alpacas for centuries... Give your alpaca herd an extra layer of protection with a pair of female llamas. Southwest Llama Rescue has a selection of herd matrons now ready for adoption. SWLR, founded in 2003, seeks placement and lifelong care for all llamas entrusted to its care due to neglect or hardship.

To learn more, visit southwestllamarescue.org or contact Baxter at our Silver City Sanctuary at plenaryllama@yahoo.com or 505-538-5761. Consider donating, sponsoring, adopting, supporting, volunteering today.

Classifieds

FOR SALE: Alpaca travel pens. Five panels, 4 ft by 5 ft, and one gate, 4 ft by 2 ft. \$399. Call Craig, 505-980-7174. Other panel products available.

Wanted: Your fleece multiplying in the closet! If you don't use your fiber, we are interested in purchasing it at wholesale prices! Prices vary depending on quality of fleece. Contact Lynne at 505-235-0305 or enchantedskyalpacas@yahoo.com for details.

Barns, buildings, and storage sheds: We have quality Morgan buildings for sale. We offer a variety of choices - from small storage sheds to large barns. We can help you find the right building to fit your needs. Discounts available for NMAB members. Contact Al Fatkin of Enchanted Sky Alpacas at 505-235-8511 or enchantedskyalpacas@yahoo.com for more information.
