

# MAPACA



Mid-Atlantic Alpaca Association

March 2003

Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 3

**MaPaca**

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**M a P a c a**

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## Board of Directors

### Message

**Tragedy in Ohio-** Alpaca owners everywhere join in expressing their deepest sympathy to Libby, Jerry, Tripp and Ty Forstner, as well as to Miriam and Jack Donaldson and all their families and staff, as well as any other farms that lost alpacas due to the mishap that occurred involving Land-O-Lake feed packaged in the plant in Massillon, Ohio. The feed tag code was: FEB28MAS.

We truly hope their ordeal passes quickly and their pain begins to ease. Dr. David Anderson at Ohio State University and his staff and students have worked heroically to try to save as many as possible. They deserve all of our thanks for their dedication and contributions to the entire alpaca community. Suggestions have been made regarding donations to the International Camelid Institute on behalf of the alpacas lost in this tragedy. When the time is appropriate we will let you know what suggestions have been made. In the mean time we hope the hurt heals quickly for these families and that valuable lessons are learned so that this can never happen again.

**Jubilee 2003-** If you haven't already done so, get your reservations in today. Pen sales have already exceeded 600 with 5 weeks to go! Over 225 farms and 22 vendors have registered so far. The "meet and greet" Thursday should be better than ever with great food and great friends. The AFCNA "Art Auction and Dinner" on Friday evening, and the Saturday night Banquet and surprise speaker should round out an unforgettable weekend. Don't miss out!

**AOBA and ARI Elections** – Please take ten minutes and vote if you haven't already. These are very crucial times. Decisions these Boards influence over the next few years may very well affect the entire future of the alpaca industry. Please take the time to vote.

Paul Connor

### **From the Event Manager of the MAPACA Eastern Alpaca Jubilee 03**

As I write, I'm watching a special report on the war on Iraq, an uneasy feeling has settled over me making it difficult to stay focused. I have faith in my government and trust this campaign is for the good of man. I know that life will continue and we all will go on with our lives, therefore I pray that God continue to Bless America.

We, the Alpaca community, are about to embark on a trek in attending a remarkable show, the 7th annual MAPACA Eastern Alpaca Jubilee. As in the past you should expect the very best and we are working hard to deliver. The MAPACA Eastern Alpaca Jubilee show committee has simply outdone themselves. I hope you all recognize what they have done so that all of us may attend a fantastic show. Please be sure you acknowledge their efforts.

As you know, the MAPACA Eastern Alpaca Jubilee is in a brand new facility this year. All of our costs this year are up about 10%, however we have kept pen space at last years level. This is done with the help of your sponsorships. The committee will not let you down, we will deliver our promises. You can see the incredible effort being put into the MAPACA Jubilee 03. We are listening. You asked us to

simplify the registration process, we tried. You asked for shorter lines for having your animals shorn and this year we

(Continued on page 2.)

**MaPaca Jubilee Information: pg. 1-2**  
**Calendar of Events: pg. 2**  
**Skirting Fleeces: pg. 3-4**  
**Fleece Preparation Clinics: pg. 4**  
**Welcome New Members!: pg. 5**

**Editor's Ramblings: pg. 6**  
**MaPaca Jubilee Sponsors: pg. 6**  
**Calendar of Events: pg. 7**  
**Update on Alpaca Twins: pg. 7**  
**Camelid Veterinary News: pg. 8**

(Continued from page 1.)

will have 3 - 4 shearers available plus we are preselling tickets, so the lines will be kept to 2-3 animals at a time. These are just a few of the changes and there will be many more. If you have not signed up for a sponsor, reconsider! If you have, we "thank you." The MAPACA Eastern Alpaca Jubilee will be here before you know it. We want you there too!

Nick Melfi

**The Mid-Atlantic Alpaca Association,  
is pleased to present  
The MAPACA Eastern Alpaca Jubilee Alpaca  
Educational Program 2003**

On Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, from 10AM to 4:30 PM each day we will be holding complimentary educational seminars open to all show participants and the general public. The classrooms are conveniently located in the same area as the alpaca pens, exhibitors, vendors and the showing

**Friday, April 25th**

Time	Location	Topic/Speaker
10AM – 12:00 PM	Room A	Getting Started with Alpacas Kelly Zanella
	Room B	Marketing Your Farm & Your Alpacas Jerry Forstner
12:30PM-2:30 PM	Room A	Alpacas Health Management/ Reproduction Dr. Toni Cotton
	Room B	Fiber Processing –What, Where, How, When, & Why Walter & Doris Van Buskirk
2:30PM-4:30PM	Room A	Alpaca Health Management/ Nutrition Dr. David Pugh
	Room B	Fiber Products – What Do You Have To Gain? Kim DeVos

**Saturday, April 26th**

Time	Location	Topic/Speaker
10AM – 12:00 PM	Room A	Alpacas Health Manage- ment/Reproduction Dr. Toni Cotton
	Room B	Fiber Processing –What, Where, How, When, & Why Walter & Doris Van Buskirk
12:30PM-2:30 PM	Room A	Fiber Products – What Do You Have To Gain? Kim DeVos
	Room B	Getting Started with Alpacas Kelly Zanella
2:30PM-4:30PM	Room A	Alpaca Health Manage- ment/Nutrition Dr. David Pugh
	Room B	Marketing Your Farm & Your Alpacas Jerry Forstner

**Alpaca Health Management and  
Reproduction**

**Dr. Toni Cotton of Camelid Veterinary Services,  
Ohio**

Dr. Cotton will present and discuss alpaca herd health management with specific focus on reproduction. Her presentation will center on issues related to breeding, pre-natal care, birth and post natal care.

**Getting Started with Alpacas**

**Kelly Zanella of Spa Alpacas, New York.**

Kelly will present alpaca industry overview, investment start-up costs, advice on alpaca selection; fiber & conformation, avoid common & costly errors, useful management tools/information.

**Marketing Your Alpacas and Your Farm**

**Jerry Forstner of Magical Farms, Inc., Ohio**

Jerry will impart his knowledge, experiences and expertise in the various methods breeders can and should use to introduce, promote and advertise their alpacas and alpaca farm.

**Fiber Products – What Do You Have To  
Gain?**

**Kim DeVos of Creekside Breeders, Ltd.,  
Pennsylvania**

Kim will present alpaca fiber/product marketing, retail operations and how to increase the number of visits to your farm and the potential to make every visit profitable.

**Fiber Processing – How, What, Where, and  
When?**

**Walter and Doris Van Buskirk of Lightfoot Farms,  
Maine**

Walter and Doris will discuss the many aspects involved in processing fiber from shearing to spinning. They will present helpful tips that will be beneficial to any breeders who are planning to ultimately have their fleeces processed into rovings and quality yarn.

**Alpaca Health Management and Nutrition  
Dr. David Pugh of Auburn University**

Dr. Pugh will present and discuss alpaca herd health management with specific focus on nutrition. His presentation will center on proper nutrition programs for your herd (avoid overfeeding), neo-natal feeding, weaning, balanced nutrition & feeding programs, vitamin supplements, hay selection & pasture programs.

**SEMINAR SUMMARIES -**

**Feature Article:**

# Skirting Fleeces

By *Andrea MacDonald*  
*of Leaping Lagomorph Rare Breeds*  
*Pottstown, PA.*

## 1 Introduction

Fiber—glorious crimp fiber, slick cold to the touch fiber, locks, staples, long and short—fiber is key for alpaca breeders. Yet few breeders, both old and new, participate in fleece shows, or understand the fleece show scorecard. I too fell into this category once upon a time, but my approach has been to try and learn everything I can about showing fleeces by actively volunteering at the fleece shows as a clerk, general helper, and judge's aide.

This is the first in a series of occasional articles on Alpaca fiber. This month I'm going to concentrate on the importance of skirting and how good skirting improves your scores in a fleece show. Future topics will include: fleece storage and management; shearing for show; washing fleeces and then of course what to do with all of your fleeces once they've been cleaned!

## 2 Why Skirting?

The purpose of skirting a fleece is to produce the most consistent quality fleece, while maintaining the maximum possible weight of high grade fiber. Other articles elsewhere have described the steps of skirting in detail (notably the AOBA 2002 Show Registration Book). If you are having trouble visualizing how to skirt a fleece I recommend taking a skirting seminar that includes hands on instruction. My goal for this article is to explain the relationship between good skirting and good scores when showing your fleeces.

There are only a few things you have control over when it comes to fleeces. You can try to breed for key aspects (luster, brightness, crimp, density, etc.) but there is no set formula, like Crimp Male + Bright Female = Fantastic Fleece. You will always be looking at your breeding program and trying to improve your fleece characteristics because nature and heredity play a big role in determining what kind of fleece your cria will have. All you have true control over is what you do with the fleece once you're 'paca has created it.

When showing your fleeces, skirting gives you control over what the judge sees when he or she looks

at your fleece. When preparing your fleeces for commercial (or home) use, skirting increases the value of the blanket (the prime area of a fleece located along the back and the sides of the animal) by removing non-prime fiber which may diminish the value of the fleece.

Skirting is a balancing act between competing criteria. One of the most important qualities for a show fleece is weight. More fleece gets a higher score, all else being equal. But most of the other aspects of the fleece you can control are improved by the judicious removal of fiber that is less than the best.

## 2.1 How the judge works

When judging a fleece, the judge will pull 3-5 samples (plugs) from different parts of the fleece and will look at them against each other. He or she will see if the samples are uniform, estimate the micron, and search for medullation. I don't know if there is a Murphy's Law for fleece judging but somehow, the judge will always find the second cut that didn't get removed, the wiry fiber from the belly that somehow drifted into your prime blanket, uneven staple lengths, or whatever other undesirable "features" that would best have been left out of the blanket. Call this Judging Rule Number 1— The judge *will* find the inconsistent fiber.

Your task is to try and minimize the number of variations and undesirable features from the fleece.

## 3 The Scorecard

I skirted several fleeces for a friend that she entered into the National. Because she trusted me to do a meticulous job, I took a hard look at the blanket and I was brutal. I took a high quality sample from the middle of the blanket and compared that sample across the blanket. Anything that didn't match was thrown to one side to be placed in with the seconds or thirds from the fleece. As I was skirting I kept thinking that the poor blanket was shrinking more and more. Yet that fleece ended up getting a blue ribbon. Why? Because the fleece got high marks in all the characteristics beyond fleece weight.

Depending upon what type of fleece you are showing (Suri or Huacaya) your fleece will be judged on the following major characteristics:

- Fineness & Handle      20 points
- Uniformity              20 points
- Style or Character      15 points

*(Continued on page 4)*

### Skirting Fleeces (continued from page 3)

- Luster or Brightness 15 points for Suri  
Luster/10 points  
for Huacaya  
Brightness
- Lack of Medullation 5 points for Suris/  
10 points for Huacayas
- Impurities/Stain/Fleece Damage 5 points
- Clean Fleece Annualized Weight 20 points

Breeders see skirting as only affecting two characteristics: *Impurities/Stain/Fleece Damage* and *Clean Fleece Annualized Weight*. Exhibitors see impurities vs. weight as an equation; good skirting increases your score in *Impurities/Stain/Fleece Damage* while too much skirting decreases your *Clean Fleece Annualized Weight*. Several breeders will then compare the value of points between the two characteristics and decide that weight is more important. To date, every show I've clerked at least one breeder will comment that their fleece is sure to do well because of the high weight. When looking at the score card and seeing that 20 points many people jump to the conclusion that high weight = good fleece. With the best of intentions breeders include neck and belly fiber thinking that this will help them. The rationale is that I will only lose 5 points if I have impurities but I can gain so much more with a high fleece weight!

This equation is wrong! Thinking of skirting as a balance between fleece weight and impurities with more to be gained by leaning toward the weight ignores the rest of the fleece scorecard. Good skirting affects all of the major characteristics. If I include neck and belly fiber to increase the weight of the fleece, I also increase the likelihood of including fiber that has strong medullation, (lack of medullation) inconsistent color (uniformity), dullness (brightness or luster), differing lengths of staple or lock (uniformity of length), or a coarser feel (fineness and handle). In other words, even keeping in that little handful of fleece to put your blanket up an ounce or two can impact your score significantly. Remember Judging Rule Number 1 — The judge will find the inconsistent fiber. So leaving that extra handful in will reduce your score in all the other judging criteria, while giving you only a minimal (if at all) increase in your annualized weight score.

The moral of this article is to skirt well, and concentrate on obtaining a consistent blanket for show, or for that matter a consistent fleece for commercial or personal use. Don't obsess on points on the scorecard and focus on the characteristics. Do you have uniformity? What about medullation? How is the character? Take what you learn from showing your fleeces and evaluate where your fleeces are doing well and where they are doing poorly. Take this information as hints on how to better prepare your fleece for show, and also apply what you learn to your breeding program. Remember, the goal is a consistent fleece with high marks in all of the possible characteristics.

## MaPaca Fleece

### Preparation Clinics

MAPACA is sponsoring two Fleece Preparation Clinics to encourage breeders to show their fleeces. The Clinics will be held at two different alpaca farms for geographical convenience. These Clinics are free and it is hoped that many will take advantage of these educational clinics, and then enter fleeces in the MaPaca Eastern Alpaca Jubilee Fleece Show

#### Lunch and beverages included.

One Fleece Preparation Clinic will be held at **Wild Rose Suri Ranch** on Saturday, April 5th from 11am to 3pm. Bring your fleeces **shorn anytime after April 28, 2002, last year's MaPaca Jubilee**, and get help on skirting, prep, filling out the entries, and gain valuable general knowledge of how to prepare fleeces for show and processing. Teaching will be provided by experienced breeders and judges who have successfully prepped and shown fleeces. Learn how the judges score the fleeces and how you can improve year after year. When finished, enter your fleeces in the show, on the spot! Please contact Patti at Wild Rose Suri Ranch at 410-734-7084 or email: [anderson@WildRoseAlpacas.com](mailto:anderson@WildRoseAlpacas.com) to sign up. Walk-ins cannot be accepted due to space limitations.

The second Fleece Preparation Clinic sponsored by MAPACA will be held at **The Double E Alpaca Farm** on Sunday, April 6th from 12pm to 4pm. Please contact Brandon at The Double E at (212) 866-1956 (weekdays), (845) 583-7543 (weekends) or email: [eealpaca@aol.com](mailto:eealpaca@aol.com) to sign up.

**Don't Miss This Great**

**Opportunity!**

**Sign Up Today!**

## Welcome 33 New Members!

This is a reprint of new members, as it was suggested the phone numbers be included for members to contact each other. \*

**Jess & Christine Armstrong**, Calico Moon Alpacas, 2121 Wilson Road, Whitehall, MD, 410-343-0426;

**Phil & Shelley Aron**, Brooklyn Alpacas, 514 7th Street, Brooklyn, NY, 718-369-1066;

**Barry and Barbara Bales**, Glory B Farm Alpacas, HC 77 Box 409 Red Sulphur Marie Road, Ballard, WV, 304-466-0575;

**Don Hines & Catherine Bente**, Alpacas of Sunshine Farm, RR 2 Box 130, New Milford, PA;

**Mitchell Rales & Rebecca Black**, Glenstone Farm, 12002 Glen Road, Potomac, MD, 301-983-8390;

**Janet & Jeffery Boas**, Lilac Lane Alpacas, 16 South Chester Pike, #1, Glenolden, PA;

**Marshall E. & Deborah R. Bratton**, Maple View Farm Alpacas, 185 Adams Road, Brandon, VT;

**Marie Brown**, New Horizon Suri Alpacas, 3623 Harmony Church Road, Havre de Grace, MD, 410-734-0588;

**Joe & Robin Cardosa**, Pine Loc Alpacas, 112 Polkville Road, Columbia, NJ, 908-459-5164;

**Herman Torres and Alan Clark**, Finca Alta Vista, PO Box 241, Honesdale, PA, 570-493-2791;

**Bob & Carolyn Wolfe and Jim and Michele Cocking**, Kentucky Criations, 949 Moody Pike, Shellbyville, KY, 502-235-4617;

**Bert & Angela De Luigi**, Susquehanna Farms, 158 North Post Road, Princeton Jct., NJ, 410-688-9660;

**Patricia & Olivier Gillotin**, Shalimar Alpacas of Warwick, 164 East Ridge Road, Warwick, NY, 845-986-5052;

**Christina Black & Nicole Glatfelter**, Great Escape Alpaca Ranch, 15180 Sixes Bridge Road, Emmitsburg, MD, 301-606-2361;

**Dedrea & William Greer**, Rivanna River Farm, LLC, 5754 Advance Mills Road, Ruckersville, VA, 434-973-8312;

**Richard & Ellen Guido**, El-Rich Farms, PO Box 92, Old Wick, NJ, 908-439-2578;

**Chris Dubecky & Christine Hammond**,

Watch Hill Alpacas, 189 Northfield Road, Hauppauge, NY;

**Jim & Judy Hendricks**, Dream Come True Alpacas, 834 Davis Road, Stewartstown, PA, 717-382-9612;

**Cynthia Henry**, CoolCreek Alpacas, 1136 Marticville Road, Pequea, PA, 717-284-3955;

**Sandy Ezersky & Vanessa Koolhof**, VanSan, 10118 Westwood Road, Catlett, VA, 540-788-1922;

**Leslie Watson Leak**, AlpacaNaca Farms, 512 Meridian, Chesapeake, VA, 757-436-3600;

**Virginia R. Lenz**, AIA Alpacas, 7912 State Route 305, Garrettsville, OH, 330-537-4545;

**Chris Lewis**, Alpaca Advantage, Oxbow Farm, 9198 Maidstone Road, Delaplane, VA, 540-364-9987;

**Kate & Scott, McKelvie**, Alpacas of Sunset Fields, 4287 Shaffers Church Road, Glen Rock, PA, 717-235-5661;

**Janet & David Monasterski**, StanPete's Alpacas, 606 Smithville Road, Vincentown, NJ, 609-516-6574;

**Sam & Loretta Perez**, Fork Bridge Alpacas, 96 Harris Road, Pittsgrove, NJ;

**Carol Pfister**, Whirlybird Alpacas, 71 Forge Hill Road, Glen Gardner, NJ, 908-537-9034;

**Frank & Kimberly Pinello**, Mornings Myst Alpacas, 7280 Burke Lane, Warrenton, VA, 540-349-5897;

**Diane K. & Brian S. Riffle**, Blue Chip Stock Alpacas, PO Box 959, 522 Union Campground Road, New Haven, WV, 304-882-2017;

**Barry & Sandy Shelly**, Tender Heart Farm, 2234 Hilltop Road, Manheim, PA, 717-665-3000;

**Ken & Cindy Soldal**, Sun Valley Alpacas, PO Box 374, South Mills, NC, 252-771-8334;

**Tom & Rose Sutkins**, Deerwood Alpacas, 778 Deerwood Lane, Quakertown, PA, 215-536-1777;

**Susan F. Watts**, Calidad Alpacas, 110 Riverside Drive, 7E, New York, NY, 212-877-1598

\*Note: This list includes 5 more new members and there are two name corrections.

# Editor's Ramblings:

It's melting! The snow that is. There are just a few piles around where the sun never hits, such as behind my barn, to remind me daily of all the snow we had dumped on us this winter. However, now spring is in the air, the birds are singing and although spring is having a slow start, the signs are unmistakable. The alpacas share in my joy and I hope you all are enjoying the welcome change as well!

As always, I am looking for stories to include in the Newsletter. If you have something to share, please do so. It is a real joy to be able to be the editor of the MaPaca Newsletter. My only concern is that I would really like to see more articles from the membership included. Feel free to call me anytime and share something with me. You can relate your story over the phone and I will write it down. Remember, this is your newsletter, a medium for members to communicate with one another. Just a story, a little tidbit of helpful information, a photo, whatever you have, I would be happy to include it in an up and coming issue. Thanks to those who sent articles for this issue.

If you look on page 5 of this issue, you will see that MaPaca has recently added 33 new members. I'm sure you new members have stories to tell about how you got interested in alpacas and what they mean for you in your life. Please let me know. I would love to hear from you.

Many of us have been emotionally involved in the happenings in Ohio with the loss of so many precious alpacas. The loss of these alpacas has affected many farms directly and the rest of us indirectly. I want to extend my heartfelt condolences to all who lost animals. I also want to thank all the staff at OSU, Dr. Anderson and all the students, and staff, who worked around the clock to save as many animals as possible. I admire the courage of Jerry and Libby Forstner, as they kept all of us updated on their ordeal, even as they were suffering through it. It is times like this that draws friends and families together to support each other. In reality, those in the alpaca community are like a very large family and the support and help that was extended through this tragedy demonstrates that. When I was feeling so sad that it was hard to bare, I walked out to the barn to be with my wide eyed alpacas. I told them how much I love having them share life with me and somehow talking to them, it was as if they understood. Maybe they did.

I hope to see many of you at the Jubilee.

Sincerely, Alice Brown

## MaPaca Eastern

### Alpaca Jubilee

#### Sponsors

##### Diamond Sponsors:

- ★ Gail S. Campbell Ameripaca, Alpaca Breeding Co. Inc
- ★ Diane & Mike Beaver, Alpaca Ventures
- ★ Rebecca Black/Mitchell Rales, Glenstone Farm, LLC
- ★ Bob & Lee Eustance, French Hollow Alpacas
- ★ Jerry & Libby Forstner, Magical Farms
- ★ Ed & Charlene Friedman, Mountain Edge Alpacas
- ★ Mary Forte Goodman, Mary's Alpaca
- ★ Robert & Louise Hebler, Acorn Alpaca Ranch
- ★ Connie Linn, Linn Alpaca Suri Farm
- ★ Nick & Cristy Melfi, Melfi Farm Alpacas
- ★ Craig & Page Nitterhouse, Shasta Springs Alpaca Farm
- ★ Diane & Leon Rosenberg, Meadowgate Farm Alpacas
- ★ Tim & Gwen Smith, Smith-Haven Farm Alpacas
- ★ Bud & Gail Stewart, Rocky Run Alpacas
- ★ Mike & Robin Tierney, Maple Brook Farm
- ★ Linda Berry Walker, WoodsEdge Wools Farm, LLC
- ★ Kim & Mike Harnett, Heart's Desire Farm

##### Platinum Sponsors:

- ★ Alan & Patti Anderson, Wild Rose Suri Ranch
- ★ Dennis Balbac/Monica Kline, A Suri Farm
- ★ Jim & Gini Barker, Sweet Briar Suri Farm
- ★ Stephanie & Mike Barnhart, The Alpaca Trading Co.
- ★ Sharon Brown/Jim Webb, Virginia Alpaca Breeding Co.
- ★ Marcel & Francie Carbone, Keystone Alpacas
- ★ Bob & Lee Ciszewski, Almost Heaven Alpacas & Guest House
- ★ Alan Clark/Herman Torres, Finca Alta Vista
- ★ Glen & Susan Cook, Blue Ribbon Alpaca Breeding Co. Tilley Dorsey, DAFI Alpacas
- ★ Ben & Lynda Fisco, Humming Hill Suri Farm
- ★ Nancy Johanson, Brookhollow Farm
- ★ Carol Karsten, Hidden Hill Farm Alpacas
- ★ John & Lauren LoVerde, Fleecy Dale Farm
- ★ Tommy & Mendy Royster, Crosswinds Farm, LLC
- ★ The Alpaca Group



## MaPaca Members Calendar of Events

May 3, 2003

### Spa Alpacas' Fourth Annual "Everything's Coming Up Alpacas!"

#### Owners and Breeders Seminar

Thinking about raising alpacas? Have a lot of questions??? Join Kelly and Paul Zanella and their guest speakers for this educational, hands-on seminar featuring presentations, demonstrations and discussions on the alpaca industry, alpaca selection, herd health management, investment opportunities and tax advantages, marketing/sales and facility set-up and layout. The seminar will be held on Saturday, May 3rd from 8:30AM-5:00PM, (rain or shine). Sunday is an open house from 10AM-4PM with private treaty sales, fleece and fleece product sales. For more information see our website at [www.spaalpacas.com](http://www.spaalpacas.com) or e-mail us at [pjzanella@aol.com](mailto:pjzanella@aol.com) (518-885-0585) for an invitation. Seating in this educational program is limited and reservations are necessary, so please register early! Spa Alpacas is located in upstate NY, 30 minutes North of Albany.

May 17 and 18, 2003

#### John Mallon Alpaca Handling and Show Clinic.

Wild Rose Suri Ranch, Havre de Grace, MD.

Pens available for overnight alpaca stays. Lunch and beverages provided with registration, limited classes for hands-on attention! Bring your problem alpacas. Early registration discounts until April 1st. Lever 1 handling Clinic is pre-requisite for the Show Clinic on 5/18. Time: 9:00 AM-5PM each day. Contact: Patti and Alan Anderson, Wild Rose Suri Ranch. 410-734-7084. See our website for details and registration: [www.wildrosealpacas.com/mallon\\_clinic.htm](http://www.wildrosealpacas.com/mallon_clinic.htm)



## Do You Want to Advertise in the MaPaca Newsletter?

Spring is here, get those Herdsire ads in! We will insert one-page ads for members in MaPaca Newsletters. Ads cost **\$40.00** for one 8 ½" by 11" ad if you supply **ALL** the copies (they can be in color and two sided if you like). If you would like us to copy your ad, supply us one copy and we will have it copied in black & white, one sided, for **\$70.00** total. Please send copies, **along with payment**, to Alice Brown, 458 Main Road, Vineland, NJ 08360 by the **20th** of the month you want your ad inserted. Make check **payable to MaPaca**.

## UPDATE on Alpaca Twins!

Linda Youells from Sloping View Alpaca Ranch in Telford, PA wanted to share with everyone that her twin females, Constance and Candy, that were born last fall, are doing great! Linda reports that the dam, named Idol, is holding her own and is still nursing them.

With the snow melting, the twins are finding some little green things in the pasture to munch on and that is making everyone happy.

The story about Linda's twins was in the October, 2002 MaPaca Newsletter, if you want to read about their birth.

## Help For Your Barn Poop Pile

*Sent in by Linda Youells of Sloping View Alpaca Ranch in Telford, PA.*

I found something that is new on the market that I have been using in my barn stalls. The product is called KAO bed. It is a clay base made for horse stalls with rubber mats. KAO bed is not very expensive and it keeps the barn floor more solid, preventing a hole from forming when you scoop the poop.

## Camelid Veterinary News for the East Coast

Extreme winter weather is behind us, we no longer need to devote thought to keeping our alpacas warm, but soon, keeping them cool will become an issue. Dr. David Anderson from Ohio State University (OSU) recently posted information about the effects of shade and hydrotherapy treatment on thermoregulation in llamas and alpacas. I thought I would share and discuss some of the points from Dr. Anderson's post.

As we all know, alpacas are native to the Andes Mountains where they live at an altitude of 4,000-14,000 feet. This region is a more mild environment than the extremes in weather that we experience in the eastern U.S. Since alpacas have adapted to the mild environment in the Andes Mountains over thousands of years, when we bring them here to the U.S. they often suffer from heat stress during the summer.

To prevent heat stress we need to provide our animals with shade at all times during the summer as well as good ventilation in their barn. Most of us, when we purchase our alpacas, are encouraged to hose down their legs and tummies to keep them cool when it is very hot and many of us do just that. Some of us even provide baby wading pools for them to cool off in. A study was conducted at OSU which hypothesized that a single administration of water would have little effect on body temperature and that there would be no difference between application to the whole body and the thermal window (the legs, abdomen, inner thighs). The study sought to determine the interaction of shade and hydrotherapy on body temperature regulation and thermal distribution. The study involved 18 llamas and

alpacas that were divided into 3 groups: no hydrotherapy; hydrotherapy on thermal window only; and hydrotherapy on whole body. The animals were placed in the sun for 2 hours and temperatures were recorded initially and then every 15 minutes for the 2 hours. A second set of readings were done in a fully shaded barn with no fan ventilation using the same three groups 24 hours later.

The results showed a slight decrease in temperature at 30 minutes after hydrotherapy. This decrease was short lived and the temperature of all the treatment groups rose as the study continued. No difference between the whole body versus thermal window hydrotherapy treatment groups or the no hydrotherapy group. It was noted that llamas and alpacas in shade had lower rectal and surface temperatures compared with those in full sunlight.

The point seems to be to make sure your animals have plenty of shade and I would venture to say that cool clean drinking water and access to a good mineral mix and even electrolytes are important summer survival tools. Hydrotherapy is much enjoyed by the alpacas, so even though it may only provide a quick relief, there is no evidence that it is harmful. So, keep those hoses going. Plant some trees! Make sure your fans are in good working order before the warm weather strikes. It will soon be time to keep that thermal window open. Shearing, although not mentioned in Dr. Anderson's study, is an absolute must to help your alpacas survive the coming summer's heat.

Comments  
about the  
Newsletter,  
any  
contribution  
s, send to  
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08360.

**“I think I  
could turn  
and live with  
animals,  
they are so  
placid and  
self-  
contained.”**

*A quote from:  
“Song of  
Myself” by Walt  
Whitman*

### Volunteers Needed !

Volunteering is a great way to learn more about alpacas and meet your fellow breeders. There are positions open for Ring Stewards, Fleece Show assistants, and many more positions that will give you a unique opportunity to learn more about showing your alpacas and their fleeces.

This year's Jubilee will involve volunteers more so than in the recent past, to help keep expenses down for all. Your help is needed and appreciated! Please see your MaPaca Jubilee registration packet to see what volunteer jobs are available, then mail your filled out form to MaPaca Volunteer Committee, Smith-Haven Farm Alpacas, 71 Rainbow Hill Road, Flemington, NJ 08822. If you have any questions call Gwen Smith, Volunteer Chairperson, at 908-371-1632 (afternoons) and 908-359-0506 (mornings).