



President's Message:

Three weeks ago I attended the AOBA National Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. Actually the conference is held in "Sandy, Utah", an incredible, pristine, modern community with magnificent mountains in every direction and every National franchise, of any kind, known to man.

The conference center was a very modern, well laid-out, well thought-out, facility. The conference went very smoothly, however the attendance was about 40% lower than at the Louisville Conferences which creates a financial burden for AOBA since the Utah facility costs about 3 times as much as Louisville and does not seem to be getting the support from the "West Coast" breeders that one might expect.

I attended the conference to represent MAPACA membership at the affiliates President's AOBA Board meeting the first day. With all the "talk" at the AOBA Board level about "everyone" being open to a "breed standard" I felt we had to find out where "everyone's opinion was coming from" since the MAPACA membership overwhelmingly stated that they :"**did not feel the system** (of show standards and criteria – ((what else would you use a breed standard for?))), **was "broken."**

The "Type Conference" meeting in Chicago, in November, was mentioned at the "AOBA Membership Luncheon" for the first time, that first day. As it came out later at the "Affiliates Presidents – AOBA Board meeting (15 affiliate organizations – 2 Presidents not in total agreement), the same afternoon, of all the affiliate

Presidents, the Board decided that the entire "membership" wanted a "breed standard" based upon the feedback from the "Fiber to Fashion" Conference this winter.

The bottom line was the affiliate Presidents requested that the membership be given the "option" whether they ever wanted to vote on the "possibility of a breed standard."

AOBA Board agreed to put out the idea of "creating a breed standard to vote upon" to a vote to the AOBA membership before they would even have a vote on a "breed standard."

As far as I understand we need to vote on the fact of whether or not we even want to go further into whether or not we want a "breed standard."

To be continued.

Paul Connor

President

PS- Please consider running for the "Board of Directors" or recommend someone you feel would have the interest of fellow Breeders in mind.

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MaPaca General Membership Meeting

The MaPaca meeting will be held at Big Sky Alpacas, 471 Richwood Road, Mullica Hill, NJ, on July 17th.

10AM—BOD meeting

12 Noon—lunch

1PM— General Membership Meeting

PLEASE RSVP

By July 10th

paul@bigskyalpacas.com

MaPaca Board of Directors

- President:** Paul Connor
Big Sky Alpacas, NJ
856-223-0570
paul@bigskyalpacas.com
- Vice-President:** Jovi Larson, PhD MBA
FiberGenix Suris, NJ
908-806-6255
info@fibergenixsuris.com
- Treasurer:** Frieda Goodrich
Angel Wood Alpaca Farm, LLC,
NJ
908-852-7204
info@angelwoodalpacas.com
- Secretary:** Fred Brown
Forever Precious Alpacas, NJ
856-697-8127
AandFBrown@aol.com
- Jubilee Coordinator:** Andy Schneider
Middle Eight Farm, MD
410-549-3224
middle8farm@aol.com
- Members at Large:** Nancy Johanson
Alpacas of Brookhollow Farm, NJ
973-335-3393
alpacas@brookhollowfarm.com
- Nick Melfi
Melfi Farm Alpacas, NJ
908-369-3276
melfifarm@aol.com
- Newsletter Editor:** Alice Brown
Forever Precious Alpacas, NJ
856-697-8127
fpalpacas@aol.com



Jubilee Coordinator's Message:

Hello To Everyone,

Summer has arrived with a vengeance. It's pretty darned hot outside. Most of us have our spring births and breedings behind us and are just trying to keep ourselves and the alpacas cool. Things with the Jubilee are quiet right now but that will change soon enough.

Industry growth has been phenomenal and the Jubilee is absolutely maxed out. We could use twice the space but there isn't a larger facility in the mid-atlantic region, and we can't properly judge more animals if there were. We're looking for ways to meet increasing demands from a growing industry. We can't do everything within the scope of one event and do it all right anymore without making some major changes. Last month I mentioned the possibility of starting a second event with emphasis on fleece, education, and vendors, leaving the Jubilee emphasis primarily on the showing. Not quite a fleece to fashion conference, but similar.

One idea is to hold the event in a resort area with events scheduled so attendees could have a mini vacation. Many professional associations hold their conferences in this manner and I'm told they're quite successful. Since we're not showing animals, more facilities would be available and we could move it around each year. No matter where we had it, it would be a quick easy trip for anyone in the mid-atlantic region.

If we scheduled the event between the two summer holidays, people might be ready for a 3 day getaway. Spring crias are on the ground, breeding is done, and everyone's trying to stay cool, so they may be able to attend. The event could consist of a fleece show, with spin offs and a hand-made derby, spinning and weaving demonstrations, and room for lots of vendors and seminars. We could have a wide range of seminars appealing to many interests and levels of experience, from beginners and more experienced breeders.

No one has new fleeces to show during the Jubilee because it's too early to shear but by midsummer, everyone has newly skirted fleeces. This event would be a place to show those fleeces. If the membership decides this is something we want for next year, we have to start planning NOW. Thoughts and comments are welcome and solicited. Please e-mail them to me at middle8farm@aol.com.

Stay cool and have a safe, happy summer.
Andy Schneider

Editor's Ramblings:

I know for a fact, that my alpacas recognize different people and each other. I have one male that my daughter taught to give "butterfly kisses" to people. The thing is that he only likes to kiss strangers. I can ask until the cows come home and he will not give me a kiss. However, let a stranger walk into the pasture with me and he is all nose. He edges closer until I explain to the unsuspecting visitor that Benji wants to give him/her a kiss. I demonstrate the "non-threatening hands behind the back nose extended greeting position." Most visitors readily comply and receive their "butterfly kiss" from Benji.

This scenario came to mind while I was reading an article about a 2001 study that shows that sheep have a keen memory for faces. I thought, well, if sheep have a good memory for faces, I would be willing to venture that our very intelligent alpacas possess the same ability. The sheep study took place at Babraham Institute, in Cambridge, England. Keith Kendrick and colleagues investigated the sheep's ability to distinguish and remember faces of both other sheep and humans. Presenting 20 sheep with pictures of 25 pairs of sheep faces, the researchers trained the animals to associate one of the pair with a food reward. They determined that the sheep could recognize the individuals associated with a reward even in profile and for up to two years. By measuring activity in the right temporal and medial frontal cortices of the sheep's brain (the regions of the sheep's brain associated with visual recognition), the team further discovered that sheep can remember as many as 50 sheep faces in addition to familiar human faces. The researchers reported that the sightings of familiar faces do not go unacknowledged. They reported that "clear behavioral signs of recognizing both absent individuals by vocalizing in response to their face pictures in the same way as they did to faces of other members of their current social circle."

The study showed that the recollection of fellow sheep weakened slowly but progressively over time. The conclusion was with the memory of a specific individual fading first into a generalized category of familiar individuals before it is forgotten completely. It seems that the face-processing system of

the sheep's brain is similar to that found in humans allowing us to remember and recognize individuals over long periods of time. The authors write, "This suggests that sheep may be capable of using the same system to remember and respond emotionally to individuals in their absence." The researchers found that "the faces of humans who look after sheep can end up being categorized in the same way as a highly familiar member of the flock." Kendrick also stated, "Friendly humans effectively become honorary sheep. This implies that sheep feel an affiliation with their shepherds."

I found this thought very encouraging. After all, I spend lots of time outside daily ministering to the needs of my alpacas. Do they appreciate it? I'd like to think so and this sheep study seems to back up my thought.

A breeder I know once told me of a female alpaca that had been separated from her daughter that was sold. Two years later that daughter returned to the farm for breeding. The response of recognition was immediate from both animals as they ran to greet each other across the pasture even after a two year separation.

Yes, alpacas are livestock, but they are not unintelligent creatures. I am happy to have them in my life on a daily basis!

Just a reminder. I need people to run for the MaPaca Board of Directors. If you would like to run or you know someone who would make a good candidate, please let me know. I need 5 candidates.

On another note, the article about BVDV that Pat Craven of ARF sent to me for inclusion in this months Newsletter is sobering information indeed. Health issues such as BVDV bring Biosecurity on our farms to the forefront. Being lackadaisical in our quarantining animals coming onto our farm can result in disaster. If you look in the Events Calendar you will notice there is an up coming seminar on Biosecurity issues run by Alpaca Heritage Events, Inc. Space is limited, but I would like to encourage all that can to sign up as soon as possible. It will be well worth your time to attend. One of the vets, Dr. Pettit, has first hand experience with BVDV. Hope to see you there.

My Best to You All, Alice Brown

ARF and BVDV Research

Submitted by Patricia Craven, ARF President, and MaPaca member, Cherry Ridge Alpacas, Creekside, PA

Recently, isolated clinical cases of infection with bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVDV) in alpacas have been confirmed in North America. In addition to the case reported in the summer '05 issue of alpacas magazine, others have been recognized by veterinary diagnosticians. Previously, BVDV was thought to pose minimal risk to camelids, In light of the accumulating new information, however, we believe the role of BVDV as a cause of disease in alpacas should be re-evaluated.

To this end, ARF will post the regional distribution of confirmed cases of BVDV on it's website as soon as that information is available. In addition, the ARF Board has issued a request for proposals from qualified virologists to determine the prevalence of BVDV in the North American alpaca population. Testing will be done anonymously and sources of samples will not be identified by owner, farm or animal in any report. Results of the study should be the first step in determining how widespread BVDV exposure currently is in North American alpacas and, if warranted, could lead to more extensive investigations.

Questions to be answered by future research might include, but would not be limited to, the following:

What does the prevalence survey mean? Does infection of alpacas with BVDV cause disease in all situations? What quantity of virus and other conditions are needed to produce clinical disease in an alpaca? Have certain BVDV strains adapted to the alpaca enabling them to produce more harmful infections? How prevalent are they?

How prevalent is persistent infection (PI) in alpacas? What conditions lead to PI in alpacas? How much virus is shed by alpacas with acute or persistent BVDV infection?

What risk do cattle pose to alpacas? What risk do infected alpacas pose to other alpacas? Will currently available vaccines be safe and effective to use in alpacas? What biosecurity measures will prevent BVDV infection in alpacas?

The list of questions could go on and on. The answers will often require careful, costly and time consuming research.

The ARF Board appreciates not only the monetary contributions received from our industry but also the confidence alpaca owners have shown in ARF's efforts. We continually strive to earn that support for there is much more work to be done! To contact members of the ARF board or to learn how you can contribute to this or other ARF-sponsored research projects, please visit our website (www.alpacaresearchfoundation.org).

HOW CONCERNED SHOULD I BE ABOUT BVDV?

The bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVD virus) has caused varied disease in cattle. We are continuing to learn about the disease process as well as diagnostic testing. There have been presumptive reports in the past of BVDV infection in camelids, which eventually were proven to be false positive test results. The recent report supports the diagnosis of a confirmed infection in an alpaca with BVDV. The question is: What is the significance of this infection?

At this point in time there are more questions than answers to BVDV infection in camelids. We need to determine the significance of test results in alpacas in order to have an idea of the relevance and prevalence of this disease. Although we do not want to blame every symptom on BVDV infection, we do want to delineate the possible role this virus could have in illness in alpacas.

Alpacas are unique compared to cattle or sheep or many of the other domestic species. Some diseases cross species lines. Others do not. Some viruses, such as rabies, can affect most species. Others, such as feline leukemia virus, limit the species affected. Many animals, including humans, are infected with different viruses and bacteria with no untoward effects. Sometimes the infection is only a problem if the patient is stressed or debilitated.

One of the challenges in dealing with a new species is finding accurate diagnostic tests. Some tests are species specific. What works well in one species may be invalid in another species. With a

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cooperative effort among virologists, researchers, practitioners, clinicians, and owners much progress can be made to answer these questions. It will take time, and money, to get some solid answers. It will take patience to make sure the results are valid.

As with any disease, the spread of BVDV can be reduced by using precautions. Biosecurity can encompass many things. Quarantine of animals arriving to the farm for two to three weeks can reduce contamination of resident animals and allow time for any testing recommended by your veterinarian. This should ideally include animals in for breeding, ones coming back from shows, events or other farms.

Any sick animal should be handled, fed, watered, cleaned and treated after the healthy ones have been taken care of. Any animal to die should be necropsied, to find the cause of death, including testing for BVDV. Cleaning hands and feet between sick animals or groups can slow the spread of disease. Appropriate foot baths strategically placed can be useful. Visitors can be required to wear protective clothing if they have been in contact with livestock recently. Your veterinarian can help you develop a plan appropriate for your farm or ranch.

Alpaca Research Foundation (ARF) to Post Regional Distribution of Confirmed Cases of Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVDV) on its Website

- Farm and owner's name will be kept strictly confidential.
- Information may be transmitted through your veterinarian or a designated contact person.
- A census of confirmed cases, identified by geographic region only (Northeast, Southeast, Great Lakes, Central, Rocky Mountains, West Coast and Canada) will be posted on the ARF website (www.alpacaresearchfoundation.org) as soon as information is available.
- Contact Alan (Abe) Rosenbloom, MD for further information and to report a confirmed case of BVDV.
aar@pinehurst.net (919)-663-1528.

Questions Answered on Current and Future Microchipping of Camelids

(Camelid Working Group News Release)

Comments from several llama and alpaca owners concerning how microchips currently in use in camelids will fit into the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) provided additional impetus to a previously scheduled teleconference between several members of the Camelid Working Group (CWG) and Dr. John Wiemers, USDA's liaison to the CWG. A summary of the June 1 discussion with Dr. Wiemers follows each question.

Can the microchips currently in common use in camelids, i.e. the 9, 10 or 12-character, 125- and 128-kHz microchips, be grandfathered in as a means of official identification in the NAIS for the lifetime of the animal?

Yes, if these microchips are **currently** implanted in a **registered** camelid, they can be grandfathered in for the remaining lifetime of the animal, and implantation with a second 134.2- kHz microchip will not be necessary. Several conditions, however, will apply to grandfathering in these microchips. For example, the owner will be responsible for ensuring that the microchip is functional and for providing a scanner capable of reading the microchip if the animal is transported interstate. Whether or not these microchips could be grandfathered in for unregistered camelids has yet to be determined.

Neither the 125- or 128-kHz microchips have the requisite 15-digits with the USA country code, so how could they be used for official identification?

A breed registration number is currently one of several forms of official identification approved for participation in government programs and interstate movement of livestock. For the NAIS, the grandfathered microchips would be considered a supplemental form of identification secondary to the breed registration number. (It is important to note that permanent identification of animals will eventually be required by each state for intrastate transport of livestock as well.)

Here is how the 125- or 128-kHz microchips would be used as official identification in the NAIS: the animal must be registered, the microchip number must be on the registration certificate, a copy of the certificate listing the microchip number must

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MaPaca Meeting Schedule for 2005

July 17, 2005
October 16, 2005*

***Please mark your calendars for these dates and plan to attend. Watch the Newsletter and the web site for announcement of the meeting locations, as the locations will vary.**

Do You Want to Advertise in the MaPaca Newsletter?

No ads will be accepted that include the PRICE of animals for sale. Stud Service prices are acceptable.

We will insert one-page ads for members in MaPaca Newsletters. Ads cost **\$40.00** for one 8 1/2" by 11" ad, on 24 pound paper or less, if you supply ALL the copies (they can be in color and two sided if you like). If your ad is on heavier paper than 24 pound, the cost will be **\$60.00**. 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.

If you know any business that sells products or services relating to alpacas or farming in general that would benefit alpaca farmers, that would like to place an insert AD in the MaPaca Newsletter, you can recommend them if you are an existing Lifetime MaPaca Member. The costs for businesses would be an additional **\$100.00** added on to the regular member fee for an insert AD. Thus it would be either **\$140.00, \$160.00, or \$170.00**. 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** and include check with inserts.

If you have any questions, email Alice Brown at fpalpacas@aol.com or give me a call at—**856-697-8127**.

Classified Ads:

Any member may post an ad for alpaca and/or alpaca farm related equipment and items. The ad may include a one sentence description and contact information.. We will run your ad for one month, if you do not sell the item and wish to run it again, let me know. This will be a free service to current MaPaca members ONLY. Please send your ads to Alice Brown, 458 Main Road, Vineland, NJ, 08360 or fpalpacas@aol.com or call 856-697-8127.

1. **Oster Shearmaster Clippers** with over 12 sets of blades. Used 1 season, works fine, switched to hand shearing. \$375.00 410-734-7084 Wild Rose Suri Ranch, MD.
2. **Pocono Farms Products Oak Hay-feeder**—holds 1 bale. Used, needs hay grid. See at <http://www.poconoalpacas.com/HusbandryAids/hayfeeders.htm> (new \$135.00) \$50.00 410-734-7084, Wild Rose Suri Ranch, MD.
3. **Leer Model 122 Giver glass 6 foot Truck Bed Cap.** Very good condition except for front window needs replacement. See details at <http://www.leer.com/caps.html>—(New over \$900.00) \$350.00 picked up at farm. 410-734-7084 Wild Rose Suri Ranch, MD.
4. **Team J W Alpaca Handling Equipment**—chutes, lightweight panels, gates, and Haysaver feeders of all sizes. Some discounted used equipment available. See http://www.wildrosealpacas.com/alpaca_equipmentn/alpaca_equipment.htm or call 410-734-7084. Wild Rose Suri Ranch, MD.



Calendar of Events

August 2, 2005—Dr. Norm Evans Seminar—9AM-5PM—Nationally known veterinarian, Norm Evans will present an all day, hands on seminar for experienced breeders as well as novices. Seating is limited, please reserve now. Lunch will be provided. \$125 per person or \$175 per farm for 2 representatives. Contact Leslie Watson Leake, Alpaca-Naca Farm, Moyock, NC. **252-232-0852** or **leslie@alpacanaca.com**

August 20, 2005—Biosecurity in the Alpaca Industry—Speakers: Dr. Shari Silverman VDM and Dr. William H. Pettit, Jr. DVM. Seminar will be from 11 AM—4:30 PM at The Robin's Nest, in Mount Holly, New Jersey and includes catered lunch. Limited to 25 participants. Registration deadline, August 9, 2005. Send check made out to Alpaca Heritage Events, Inc. to Ingrid Wood, 1862 Jacksonville-Jobstown Road, Columbus, NJ 08022. Information and printable registration form: **www.AlpacaHeritage.com** or **alpacas@uscom.com** or **609-261-0696**.

September 10, 2005—The Eastern Extreme, the Eastern USA's premier Alpaca Auction. Please come to bid on some of the finest alpacas offered for sale in the country at Sunset Hills Farm Alpacas, Butler, PA **724-586-2412**. In addition to Saturday afternoon's auction, the following Seminars will be presented: Dr. Norm Evan's—Costly Alpaca Management Errors/Nutrition to Maximize Alpaca Fiber. Jamie and Kim Platt of Heaven Sent Alpacas—Alpaca Showmanship Skills Awareness. Wini Labrecque-Fleece Skirting Workshop. **www.easternextremeauction.com** for on-line catalog and register!



Calendar of Events

September 17-18, 2005—
"Everything's Coming Up Alpacas," - Ballston Spa, NY. Join Kelly and Paul Zanella of Spa Alpacas and guest speakers as they share their alpaca knowledge and experience. Seminar on Saturday, September 17th from 8:30AM-4PM. Reservations required. \$90 per person or \$160 per couple (includes continental breakfast, lunch and presentation booklet). Open House on Sunday Sept. 18th from 10AM-4PM (rain or shine). Contact: Kelly & Paul Zanella **518-885-0585**, **pjzanella@aol.com** or **www.spaalpacas.com** .

October 1, 2005—Fifth Annual Alpaca Heritage Sale—Gloucester County 4-H Fairgrounds, Route 77, Mullica Hill, NJ.—10AM-4PM.
 Twenty breeders in one convenient location offering alpacas for private treaty sale. Free seminars, free parking, free admission. Demonstrations. Vendors. The Alpaca Heritage Sale animals for sale and directions can be found at: **www.AlpacaHeritage.com** . Contact Alice Brown at **856-697-8127** or **fpalpacas@aol.com** .

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accompany the animal during interstate transportation, the microchip in the animal must be functional and match the microchip number on the registration certificate, and a reader capable of reading the microchip must be available during transportation. For NAIS tracking purposes, the NAIS database would record the breed registry number as the primary form of identification and the microchip number as an alternate method.

Why might grandfathering of the 125- or 128-kHz microchips be limited to registered camelids? The breed registration number is the official means of identification that links the microchip number to a specific animal. A 125- or 128-kHz microchip is not recognized as official identification, so without a registration number, unregistered animals have no form of official identification. The CWG needs to determine if there is a way the microchips in unregistered animals could also be grandfathered in, perhaps, for example, by listing them in the International Lama Registry database.

If an animal doesn't currently have a 125- or 128-kHz microchip and the owner implants one in the future, will they be grandfathered in also? Ongoing use of 125- or 128-kHz microchips is problematic, and there is no clear answer to the

question. If the microchips were implanted recently, or will be in the near future, they will likely be grandfathered in.

Can camelid owners continue to use 125-kHz microchips indefinitely?

As it stands now, it does not appear that owners can continue to implant 125- or 128-kHz microchips in camelids indefinitely and have them grandfathered in for use in the NAIS. When participation in the NAIS becomes mandatory, which is expected to be in 2008 or 2009, it appears that only 15-digit 134.2-kHz microchips will be acceptable. The CWG will need to develop a timeline for phasing out the use of 125- and 128-kHz microchips as new implants while making the transition to 134.2-kHz microchips. The timeline described in the NAIS Strategic Plan draft indicates "840 numbers" (USA country code) will be initiated in August 2005. USDA is on target for release of official animal identification numbers (AIN) in late summer 2005, and 15-digit 134.2 kHz microchips bearing official AIN should be available shortly thereafter.

Note: Only those animals leaving the farm or ranch to enter commerce (e.g. travel to another state, move to another farm for breeding or because they were sold, attend a show, etc.) will need to be microchipped; animals that stay on your farm will not require permanent identification.

The CWG will continue to keep the llama and alpaca community informed on development of the NAIS for camelids. Up-to-date information on the NAIS, including the recently released drafts of the NAIS Strategic Plan and Program Standards, is available at the USDA web site <http://www.usda.gov/nais>. The camelid ID plan is still under development by the CWG. Please submit your comments or questions to the following CWG members. Teri Nilson Baird at teri@brokenwindmill.com Karen Conyngham at 72040.3361@compuserve.com Sheila Fugina at bsfugina@presenter.com Dr. Julie Jarvinen at jarvinen@iastate.edu Marsharee Wilcox at mwilcox@stpaultravelers.com or evllamas@bellatlantic.net

MaPaca Needs You!

If you would like to run for the MaPaca BOD or if you know someone who would make a good Board member, please contact Alice Brown **Immediately!**

856-697-8127 or fpalpacas@aol.com

Comments about the Newsletter, or any contributions, send to Alice Brown at fpalpacas@aol.com.