



MAPACA

Mid-Atlantic Alpaca Association

Newsletter

Aug, 2005

Volume 5, issue 8

President's Message:

New Bolton Camelid Program

I was very pleasantly surprised when I attended the Camelid meeting at New Bolton Center on Monday July 25th. The meeting was scheduled for 7 – 9pm. I managed to arrive at 7pm on the dot and the room was full. There were about 50 owners, breeders and vets in the room. New Bolton put out an extravagant spread of sandwiches, wraps, cheeses and desserts. It was very nicely done.

The format of the meeting was case study presentations by 4 resident vets on 4 different subjects. Dr. Fec-teau was the organizer and personable moderator of the event. Dr. Brett Dolente presented a case study of an anorexic llama treated at the center. Turns out the llama had lost her companion, was pregnant, lost her appetite and developed "fatty liver disease". There was an in-depth analysis of the diagnosis and resulting successful treatment. As soon as another llama was introduced into her environment she immediately started doing much better.

Dr. Beth Kraus reviewed 3 case studies of long bone fractures in the legs. We learned that the majority of these fractures occur in alpacas under one year old. Penicillin or Naxcel is administered during the time in a caste to avoid infection since you cannot see what is going on under the caste. As an "FYI", we, Big Sky Alpacas, recently had a 2 month old cria fracture the 1 & 2 metacarpal bones in the right rear leg. She was x-rayed, diagnosed and then put in a caste for 2 weeks while giving 2 cc's of Procaine twice a day during the whole time. The caste was removed, x-rays taken, and a new caste applied. Due to her youth this allowed for the 8% body weight gain that occurred in the 2 week period. Since no

infection was apparent we were able to discontinue the Procaine penicillin at that point.

Dr. Jen Smith discussed the case study of a "splenic torsion" that manifested in conjunction with a uterine torsion at 280 days into the pregnancy. The uterine torsion was 180 degrees, the splenic torsion was 720 degrees (twice around) – this resulted in the loss of the spleen. The alpaca's prognosis is good, however she must be kept on a strict worming regime for the rest of her life since the spleen is vital to isolating and controlling infections. The alpaca must also be restricted from contact with visiting alpacas for the rest of her life. Dr Regina Turner had an entertaining and very educational overview of infertility problems and New Bolton's protocols that have proven very successful. Dr. Turner pointed out that they have found 50% of all infertility problems can usually be traced to faulty management practices and male fertility issues. She outlined diagnosis procedures in detail as well as the more common problems that they encounter and how they diagnose and treat these issues. Dr Turner estimated that the cost of the 5 day stay needed to properly research the

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**2006 MAPACA
Art Contest**

\$500 for Winning Design!

**October 1, 2005
Entry Deadline**

See your artwork up in lights!!
Actually, it will be on the Jubilee show catalog, auction catalog, the website, T-shirts and maybe a few other places.

MAPACA members and their children are eligible to enter.

Go to www.mapaca.org for entry form and rules.

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problem would be about \$750 plus the cost of fluids or other treatments dictated by the specific alpaca's case.

In conclusion, I was very impressed with the enthusiasm and interest level displayed by these energetic, young, knowledgeable Doctors of Veterinarian Medicine assembled at New Bolton Center, with a sincere desire to work with the alpaca community. Dr. Wendy Freeman, who was unable to attend, was acknowledged and thanked often in the course of the evening by all participants for her selfless sharing of information and experience gained in over a decade of dedicated Camelid care, ready availability at any time to be of assistance to other Vets or clients, and ongoing encouragement to Vet students to work with alpacas and llamas.

It has been my wife Ann's and my privilege to have Dr. Freeman as our primary Vet for the last 9 years and to be able to help her instruct up coming Vet students by bringing them to Big Sky Alpacas for hands-on experience over the first 7 years of our establishment.

I applaud New Bolton Center for assembling this fine group of professionals and encourage the MAPACA membership to recommend the MAPACA Board of Directors consider ongoing financial support for the New Bolton Center Camelid program whenever appropriate, as well as funding of specific research projects beneficial to the Camelid community.

Special thanks to Dr. Jon Palmer who has been an interested and caring friend to all alpacas and their owners, visiting New Bolton Center for many years.

Comments and thoughts are welcome to:

paul@bigskyalpacas.com or any other MAPACA Board member.

Paul Connor

To contact any of the vets at New Bolton phone 1-601-444-5800.

MAPACA Election 2005

Please take a few minutes to vote for the candidates of your choice and mail in your MAPACA Election Ballot TODAY

Editor's Ramblings:

One of your alpacas is down in the heat of the day and breathing heavily? Call the vet, check vitals, what to do? Should we transport? We would like to go to a veterinary hospital close by. Avoiding an 8 hour ride would be imperative. The only place near by is New Bolton Center. Should we go there?

At the meeting at New Bolton Center on July 25th, the veterinarians there tell us that they are making every effort to rejuvenate their camelid program. At the meeting they discussed a number of camelid case histories. Some were routine cases, such as broken bones, and others were much more rare, such as a splenic torsion (twisting of the spleen resulting in necrotic tissue and abdominal pain). Diagnostic procedures for each case were laid out, stabilizing measures were discussed, and once diagnosis was reached, treatment was outlined, with the final outcome.

The consensus among the New Bolton veterinary staff dealing with camelids is that they want to use their skills to treat our alpacas. One issue that the breeders in attendance want to see addressed is the "Exotic" classification of alpacas and llamas at New Bolton. The veterinarians agreed that they, as well, would like to see this classification changed. Monica Kline, representing PAOBA, explained that recently the classification of alpacas as exotics was changed in Pennsylvania to livestock. She encouraged the New Bolton team to contact the Pennsylvania State Veterinarian about this change. The staff said that this subject will be discussed at an up-and-coming New Bolton Center Board of Directors meeting. A change in status from "Exotic" to livestock will result in lowered rates for camelids, something that would be very much appreciated by the growing alpaca community in the MAPACA region. It would be nice to not have to think, as we stand over our sick or injured alpaca, can I afford to take this animal to New Bolton Center? It is worry enough to have to deal with a very sick or injured alpaca, without having to also worry about "loosing your shirt" to have the animal treated at New Bolton Center. At the conclusion of the meeting, the room FULL of camelid breeders gave a hardy round of applause to the presenting veterinarians.

I just wanted to add that I hope you are all fairing well with all the heat and humidity. I'm including a reprint of Dr. Anderson's Heat Stress article as a reminder of some of the measures we can take to help our animals successfully ride out this heat and humidity.

Also, please fill out your ballots and send them in so you can be counted in the MAPACA election. Thanks!

My best to you all, **Alice Brown**

Combating Heat Stress

With the "Dog Days of Summer" upon us, remember the Heat Stress Index Calculation (HSI). With a temperature of 72 F, and humidity at 65 % the HSI = 137 (HSI = Temp + humidity), and direct sun exposure, some animals show low-grade heat stress when handled. Here are my TOP TEN list of things to do. The list is not all inclusive, but these are some of the most important things we need to do to protect the llamas and alpacas from heat stress before it happens to you!

1. SHEAR - I recommend that all llamas and alpacas be sheared before June 1 every year. Barrel cuts seem to work OK, but not shearing is not an option.
2. SHADE - Lots of shade should be available. Most critical is that there is enough shade for ALL of the animals to be shaded at the same time whenever they want.
3. VENTILATION - A good breeze is worth a thousand words. The most important thing is that the wind can get underneath the animals where the "thermal window" is located. Fans should blow across the barn at floor level (not down from a height). Barns should have cross-ventilation so that stagnation does not occur in any area.
4. WATER - Clean, plain, fresh water should be available at all times. Water should be replaced at least twice a day to keep it cool (not cold). Water should be in the shade and animals should not have to compete for access.
5. BEDDING - Straw is bad in summer. This thick bedding closes off the thermal window and decreases access to ventilation. Sand bedding, especially slightly moist, is very good at absorbing heat from the animals. Concrete is hard, but cool and easy to clean and wet down.
6. WADING - I like pools. Llamas and alpacas will seek out puddles, ponds, etc to get cool. This tends to make hair fall out if they lay around in water too much of the time, but pools are very effective at allowing the animals to self-regulate temperature. Bad for show season, but good for non-showers. The pool should be in the shade and freshened daily.
7. MONITORING - Observation is the key to life. Watch your animals. If they spend a lot of time eating, standing, walking around and being active then they are probably happy and healthy. If they lay around most of the day and are not active, then they may have subclinical heat stress (early stage) and intervention may be warranted. Watch your breeding males very closely. If you see the scrotum getting pendulous, "baggy", or increasing in size, do something immediately or you may

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MAPACA General Membership Meeting

July 17, 2005—Notes—

Submitted by Alice Brown

Jovi Larson called the meeting order. At the BOD meeting 5 of the 7 board members were present in person and Frieda Goodrich was present via phone.. Andy Schneider had to leave before the General Membership Meeting, so four board members were present for the General Membership Meeting.

Financials: MAPACA made about \$70,000 on the Jubilee. MAPACA donated over \$20,000 to the Wilkins Memorial Fund. Proceeds from the donated auction alpacas amounted to \$57,000. MAPACA is adding \$3,000 to that and sending \$30,000 to ARF and \$30,000 to ICI.

Next year we will have to use straw at the Jubilee instead of sod. We will be using the AOBA registration process if it is up and running since all AOBA-Certified . Using the AOBA system, once you put an animal in the database, it will be there to use the next time. Your will just have to click on that animals information. Hopefully the new AOBA system will ease things for MAPACA. MAPACA has not received the results of the Jubilee from Peg Stevens as yet. Jovi Larson will follow up with Peg.

Scott Gove has agreed to be the MAPACA Education Committee Chairperson and oversee the Alpacas 101 program. Alpacas 101 has been well attended and has resulted in several new alpaca breeders. It is a stand alone, one day hands on seminar. The curriculum is already designed. The host farm needs to supply animals, a vet and a CPA to talk for about 45 minutes each. The plan is to hold 4-7 sessions per year throughout the MAPACA region. Please contact Scott Gove if you wish to host an Alpacas 101 event.

The New Veterinarian Grant Program is a program to recruit first- and second-year vet graduates to camelid practices. We all know we need help with our alpacas. We have 7 member states in the MAPACA region and we have a limited amount of funds to work with. We may be working with as

much as \$35,000 or \$5,000 per state. If we can get these new vets interested in alpacas we will have succeeded in reaching our objective. If these vets see that it is easy to work with alpacas, they may stay. These are preliminary parameters. Veterinary candidates for the grants must be nominated by a veterinarian and an alpaca breeder. The BOD will choose the final recipients of the grant money. Fred Brown is going to work on drawing up a formal proposal for the New Veterinarian Grant Program for BOD approval.

Jovi Larson is working on a program for continuing education for existing camelid veterinarians.

New Bolton is working to reinvigorate its camelid program. The BOD encouraged as many as possible to attend the July 25th meeting. We welcome anyone who has attended the meeting to report on it at the next general membership meeting.

The BVDV issue was brought up by Carol Pfister. BVDV is not fatal, but does affect pregnant females resulting in abortions. The virus is present not just in fecal matter, but every where, in the urine and saliva as well. Carol is going to write something on this subject for the MAPACA Newsletter.

MAPACA needs a Chairperson to Head a Public Relations Committee. The person doesn't need to have to know how to do advertisements or photos. We will place this request in the next Newsletter.

Scott Gove, MAPACA liaison to the Affiliate Committee, reported that the Type Conference was canceled. Future plans are for 10-15 regional meetings to be held nationwide at which a discussion of the breed standards issue will be led by a professional facilitator who is not connected to any other livestock industry. At the affiliates president's meeting with AOBA 10 of the 12 present were against having a Breed Standard. We, as MAPACA members, need to show up at the regional meetings and speak up. Scott Gove will let the MAPACA membership know when these meetings are scheduled so we can attend. MAPACA should support the President or Vice President to attend and pay for them to go. One thing we can do to be heard is to make sure

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that we vote in any elections and surveys. Sue Robinson asked if we could do our own survey. A one page survey with no more than 6 questions was suggested and it should be sent out in a separate mailing with identification on the envelope as to what it is. A lively discussion about the issue of Breed Standards followed. It was suggested that MA-PACA put links on our web site to articles that may help people understand the pros and cons of Breed Standards. Carol Pfister is going to contact Ingrid Wood in this regard. Nancy Johanson agreed to be Chairman of the Genetic Diversity Committee.

Monica Kline announced that PAOBA has received a letter of agreement between the PA Department of Agriculture and the PA Game Commission in regard to the status of Alpacas in the state of Pennsylvania. Alpacas are now classed as livestock, instead of exotic animals, in PA and we no longer need to buy a permit from the Game Commission to bring alpacas into PA. A hardy round of applause followed.

Monica Kline will be the Volunteer Coordinator for the 2006 Jubilee. Monica is collecting information about each volunteer position.

Jovi Larson mentioned that this year the Jubilee will again hold an art contest for the Jubilee. The winner will receive \$500 and the art work will be displayed on T-shirts and in all the Jubilee literature.

Jovi Larson adjourned the meeting.

Alert Cria

(Forever Precious Obsidian—"Obie Wan")

Photo by Alice Brown



West Nile Virus Revisited

By Bob Ciszewski, Almost Heaven Alpacas, Augusta, WV

While attending the 2005 AOBA/ARI *Fiber to Fashion* Conference, I participated in a very interesting seminar conducted by Robert J. Callan, DVM, MS, PhD, DACVIM, Associate Professor at Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado. His topic was **West Nile Virus**.

Dr. Callan's premise was that **West Nile Virus is here to stay**. The question is what do we know about WNV and what, if anything, do we do about it?

West Nile Virus (WNV) was first reported in the United States in 1999 following the identification of fatal infection of birds in New York. WNV is now considered prevalent in the United States. To date, WNV has been reported in all of the lower 48 states plus provinces in Canada and in Mexico.

Transmission to mammals occurs primarily through the bite of infected mosquitoes. Most mammals do not develop sufficient presence of viral particles in the blood to amplify and transmit the virus to uninfected mosquitoes; therefore, mammals are generally considered to be dead-end hosts for WNV.

Infection of domestic livestock in prevalent areas of Europe and Africa indicates that WNV exposure in ruminant and camelid species is common. Based on studies, ruminants and camelids are considered to be susceptible but dead-end hosts for WNV.

For those alpacas that have been infected with WNV, approximately 90% of the disease stops in the lymph system and spleen. The remaining 10% (approximately) suffer more serious effects including death. For example, in Colorado during 2003, there were 20 alpaca deaths attributable to WNV and 30 plus survivors. Keeping in mind the stoic nature of the alpaca, there is good reason to believe that some significant number of alpacas contracted the virus, got through it, and were mostly asymptomatic.

Prevention of WNV infection takes two forms:

1. Controlling mosquitoes and their contact with your alpacas. Excellent information on mosquito control can be found at www.fightthebitecolorado.com and <http://westnilevirus.nbii.gov/mosquitoes.html>. If you are thinking that the onset of winter will kill off the mosquitoes and WNV, think again. The National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII), provides the following information: Female mosquitoes (they are the ones that bite) that survive into the onset of winter can go into hibernation; if they mated in the fall, they can emerge ready to find the first available blood meal, and then lay

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MAPACA Meeting Schedule for 2005

October 16, 2005*
This is the Annual Meeting

***Please mark your calendars for this date and plan to attend. Watch the Newsletter and the web site for announcement of the meeting location.**

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. **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.
2. **Leer Model #122 Truck Cap for 6ft Truck Bed**. 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.
3. **Team J W Alpaca Handling Equipment**—chutes, lightweight panels, gates, and Hay saver feeders of all sizes. Some discounted used equipment available. See http://www.wildrosealpacas.com/alpaca_equipment/alpaca_equipment.htm or call 410-734-7084. Wild Rose Suri Ranch, MD.
4. **Kubota L3020 4WD tractor**—purchased new in 2000; 30hp, hydrostatic transmission, turf tires, front bucket loader, and 6' heavy duty Woods Brush Hog. Lightly used. \$12,000. Call John for details 609-397-1149.
5. **Polaris Ranger 4x4**—purchased new in Nov 2003. Outstanding farm utility vehicle. Equipped with motorized dump bed to make manure clean-up easy. Bench seat comfortably seats 3 (great for farm visits). Front windshield. Very low hours. \$6,000. Call John for details 609-397-1149.



Calendar of Events

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**.

August 26—28, 2005—East Meets West Alpaca Auction, Boonton Township, NJ, USA. The Fourth Annual East Meets West Alpaca Auction will be held at Brookhollow Farm in Boonton Township, New Jersey. Superb bloodlines from across the country will be represented at this eagerly anticipated event. Don't miss this opportunity to bid on breedings to Snowmass Invincible and Dom Lucillio as well as to other notable males who will be at the event. All proceeds from the herdsire services benefit will be donated. Mark your calendars now for the first alpaca auction of the fall season! To view all the lots and for further information visit the auction website <http://www.eastmeetswestalpacauction.com/>.



Calendar of Events

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!

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.

(West Nile Virus—Continued from page 5.)

their eggs, in the spring. Some mosquito species can lay eggs, which survive extreme weather, such as cold, ice, and drought. Moisture produced by spring rains and melting snow and ice will cause these eggs to hatch, and the mosquitoes will progress through larval, pupal, and adult stages.

2. **Inoculation with WNV vaccine.** Currently there is no vaccine licensed in the United States for the prevention of disease caused by WNV in camelids. The licensed killed equine WNV vaccine (Innovator, Fort Dodge Animal Health) has been used in llamas and alpacas and appears to be safe in adult animals including pregnant females. Limited studies suggest that three intramuscular doses are necessary in alpacas to observe seroconversion (antibodies) in greater than 90% of vaccinated animals.

If you were among those who believed that since WNV had passed through your area that WNV was no longer a problem, then I think that the real situation is – maybe it's still a problem. For small breeders, the cost of inoculating their herd is insignificant as compared to medium and large breeders. It's similar to mortality insurance – when do you self-insure? It is something to look at carefully and perform a cost-benefit analysis to determine if the cost of replacing (an) animal(s) and the loss in production is worth the potential risk.

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loose fertility!

8. **FEEDING** - Eating and digesting hay takes a lot of work and generates a lot of heat. Some have suggested that less hay, more grass and grains cause less heat stress risk because heat production from digestion is minimized. I question the application of this concept, but certainly pasture grazing is the best management style.

9. **ELECTROLYTES** - I am a big believer in the protective effect of electrolytes. I make water available that has salt, potassium, glucose, and bicarbonate in it to help replace losses that occur in sweat and breathing.

I am a big believer in the protective effects of a balanced diet. Of particular interest for heat stress is that adequate Vitamin E, Selenium, Zinc, and Copper are available.

10. **PREGNANCY** - I prefer to see females in this area of the country having crias in the spring. This optimizes easy re-breeding of females; allows optimal lactation because of the nutrition of fresh grass; optimizes cria health because of sunlight, clean pastures, and good nutrition; and prevents females from having to suffer late gestation in the hot summer months.

Successful treatment of heat stress depends upon early recognition (increased respiration, lethargy, increased recumbency, decreased appetite, decreased cooperation with or participation in activity, flared nostrils).

Most of the above mentioned prevention strategies can be applied as treatment. Consult a veterinarian at the earliest time for animals showing abnormalities of behavior during summer months.

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"The phenotype is an ephemeral thing, a character of the individual, more often than not tied to the environment of the moment, a fleeting thing which dies with the animal and is lost for all time.

But the genotype is an accidental combination of units which have their origin in antiquity and their future in eternity."

—Ralph B. Kelley
Principles and Methods of Animal Breeding