



MAPACA

Mid-Atlantic Alpaca Association

Newsletter

December 2006

Volume 6, issue 12

NEXT MAPACA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING—January 27, 2007

- 2007 New Year's Resolution #1:
Polish Your Show Ring Performance!**
- 2007 New Year's Resolution #2:
Prepare Award Winning Fleeces!**

Do you need to lose a few pounds? Have you been avoiding an exercise routine? Well ... sorry, we can't help you with that. But if your goals are to perform better in the show ring with your alpacas and to win ribbons in the fleece shows, then we've got the help you need! MAPACA is pleased to announce that AOBA Judge Wade Gease will be our speaker at the General Membership meeting Saturday, January 27, 2007 at the Baltimore Tremont Suite Hotels, 222 St. Paul Place, Baltimore, MD 21202. (Phone: 443-524-6018). The **schedule** is as follows:

11AM-12:30AM—Fleece Preparation for Showing
12:30PM-1:30PM—Lunch and Meeting
1:30PM-3:30PM-Polishing Your Show Ring Skills

One of the best ways to market your alpacas and your farm is by showing your fleeces and your alpacas. Whether you're an "old hand" or a "newbie"

this seminar is meant for YOU! Wade is enthusiastic about calming the nerves of anxious new owners as they prepare for their first show season. And he's filled with informative tips on how to make the most of your fleece and your alpaca through your show performance.

To the New Alpaca Breeder:

Join in the Baltimore fun! You'll meet your fellow breeders who will give you pointers on what to expect during show season. Wade will walk you through the basics of showing your fleeces and your alpacas. This will be your opportunity to work with a seasoned AOBA judge and learn how to do it correctly from your very first show.

To the Veteran Alpaca Breeder:

So, you think you've got it all figured out, huh? Well, whether you'll admit it or not, we all need a good refresher course every now and then. And this will be an ideal opportunity to spend a day with an industry expert in a wonderful city learning the skills that will improve your performance in 2007. You'll have fun AND you'll learn.

RSVP to Kathy Schwartz at (540) 908-7420 or simplyalpaca@aol.com .

TIME TO RENEW!

It's time to renew your MAPACA membership.

Please fill out the enclosed renewal form and send to:

**MAPACA
c/o Alice Brown
458 Main Road
Vineland, NJ 08360**

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Jubilee 2007 Update!

*By Anne Hallinan,
Jubilee Show Manager*

ART CONTEST

Submissions have been received and the Art Contest Judges are making their decision. Look forward to the winner to be announced in the next MAPACA Newsletter!

SHOW JUDGES

The 2007 judges are official.

Huacaya Halter:

Kevin O'Leary, and Jane Tellier

Suri Halter:

Amanda VandenBosch

Performance:

Shannon McConnell

Fleece Show:

Cheryl Gehley, and Wade Gease

Fiber Arts:

Wini Labrecque

SOD IS BACK FOR 2007

Once again, the MAPACA Jubilee will be providing sod for bedding! We received numerous suggestions to go back using sod for the exhibitor stalls at the show and we listened.

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, COMPLAINTS

In an effort to provide exceptional customer service, we ask that you email any questions you may have about the 2007 Jubilee to **Anne Hallinan at mapaca@mhevent.com**. Comments and complaints should be emailed to **Monica Kline, Board Liaison to the Jubilee at info@asurifarm.com**

Camelid Working Group-PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release—Nov. 7, 2006

Contact: Sheila Fugina—715-246-5837

USDA Says NAIS to Remain Voluntary Until at Least 2009

USAHA Committee on Livestock Identification—

Report from the 2006 USAHA Meeting

(The US Animal Health Association held its annual meeting Oct. 14-18, 2006, in Minneapolis. The following report covers the highlights from the Livestock Identification Committee.)

Bruce Knight, newly appointed Undersecretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs (USDA), addressed the committee and emphasized that the NAIS (National Animal Identification System) will follow these four guiding principles: The NAIS must avoid unnecessary burden to livestock producers, avoid growth in government, maintain flexibility and keep data in private hands. He announced that to date approximately 320,000 premises have been registered nationwide and that USDA assumes there are between 1.4 and 2.1 million animal holding premises in the US. Knight also stressed that the NAIS is a “voluntary program with a capital V” and that if any states wish to pursue a mandatory ID program, they would do so on their own.

Dr. John Clifford, Deputy Administrator for Veterinary Services, stated that animal health is the focus of the NAIS. The program will enhance US efforts to respond to intentionally or unintentionally introduced animal disease outbreaks more quickly and effectively. The NAIS only works if the states, industry and producers actively shape and use the program, he said.

Because the NAIS is a completely voluntary program, USDA must continue to consider all issues of concern that may cause producers not to participate. Protecting confidentiality of information has been an issue that USDA has taken very seriously. With regard to NAIS information, USDA has taken the position that information should *only* be used when there is a need to respond to specific disease issues. In keeping with this position, and in response to ongoing concerns about confidentiality, USDA has determined that the distribution records of animal identification devices (tags or microchips) distributed to a premises will be held in private databases or by states, rather than in USDA’s AIN Management System.

Four tags have been approved for use in the NAIS. All are RFID tags and all are ISO 11784/85 compliant. As species working groups finalize their recommendations, other methods will be authorized for use with the NAIS. For example, the equine industry recently recommended the use of ISO 11784/11785 compliant injectable transponders. As of October 17, no injectable microchip manufacturers have applied to have their devices certified for “840” country code 15-digit numbers.

Robert Fourdraine, director of the Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium, provided a report on the actions of the NAIS Advisory Subcommittee (which reports to Sec. Johanns via the Secretary’s Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases). The subcommittee recognizes the importance of the NAIS to protect the US livestock industry and that timely implementation of the NAIS is extremely important. Since implementation of the NAIS seems to be focused on the cattle industry, he said, key recommendations of the Cattle Working Group should be made available as soon as possible.

Other NAIS Advisory Subcommittee recommendations include:

*The subcommittee has reviewed reports of the species working groups. Several reports are still in progress, however, the Cattle, Swine, Sheep and Equine species reports are completed and ready for adoption. They strongly recommended that the USDA adopt the Sheep and Equine Species Working Group recommendations as written. The equine recommendations can be found at: <http://www.equinespeciesworkinggroup.com/>

*All producers should have the opportunity to utilize a government-managed animal tracking database system under NAIS for those species that track animal movement.

*USDA should conduct a complete research of all patents and intellectual properties pertaining to animal identification issues that could be in potential conflict with and/or of relevance to the NAIS and that a summary of such be provided to the subcommittee.

Dr. Sam Holland, State Veterinarian of South Dakota, provided a presentation on *Common Sense Animal Identification*. He suggested addressing the question: “What can we implement, in the near term and practically, that will meet immediate needs for animal health?” A complete copy of his suggestions can be found at: <http://www.animalagriculture.org/proceedings/IDINFOEXPO2006/Wednesday/4GeneralSessionIV/1%20Holland.pdf>

The full text of all USAHA committee reports and resolutions will be posted on the USAHA web site once they have been finalized: <http://www.usaha.org/committees/>

Please submit your comments and questions to any of the following CWG members:

Teri Nilson Baird at teri@brokenwindmill.com

Karen Conyngham at 72040.3361@compuserve.com

Sheila Fugina at bsfugina@pressenter.com

Dr. Julie Ann Jarvinen at jarvinen@iastate.edu

Marsharee Wilcox at mwilcox@travelers.com

www.camelidid.org

PREDATORS! (Part 1)

by *Tamara Taylor*

Too many livestock owners have experienced predation problems first hand. These people have discovered that a "predator" is not always a mountain lion or a hungry coyote. It can be a stray dog or even a family pet. When one of these predators strikes either in fun or with the intent to kill, livestock suffers. Goat and sheep owners are two of the primary groups concerned about predator control; however, they are not alone in their desire to control predators. It is an interest they share with small livestock owners, ranchers, farmers, and even suburbanites from Maine to California.

A number of animals have been used as herd or flock guardians, among them llamas and donkeys. However, where there is strong pressure from predators, these animals themselves may become prey. More recently, Dean Anderson of USDA and Dr. Charles Taylor of the Texas A&M University Research Station, Sonora, Texas, in conjunction with New Mexico State University, have worked with mixed herds of cattle and sheep. When these species are run together, they can "bond," with the cattle becoming the herd protectors and readily accepting the sheep as herd members. Goats, however, have not been used in this research. Lacking a strong flocking instinct, goats can present a problem in a guarding situation. However, many goat owners have had great success using livestock guarding dogs.

A NEW INTEREST IN AN OLD METHOD

Predator control has always been a concern, but within the past two decades there has been increasing controversy about both the effects and the efficiency of traditional predator control methods (trapping, poisoning, aerial hunting, and scare tactics). In addition, with the current concerns about live eco-system and endangered predator species, there is now more desire to deter predators rather than exterminate them. Thus, for a modern answer to the age old problem of predation, the New World looked to the Old World, and to the livestock guarding dogs.

In this country, the United States Department of Agriculture and its Animal Damage Control division have long worked with ranchers and farmers facing predation problems. By 1986, the U.S. Experimental Sheep Station was at work gathering objective data in one of several studies of livestock guarding dogs of various breeds. The result has been valuable information for guarding dog owners and continued interest in documenting all of the livestock guardian breeds, including those lesser known breeds. Anyone interested in the results of those studies should contact

their state Animal Damage Control Office and request a copy of USDA bulletin #588, entitled "Livestock Guarding Dogs"(4). A video by the same title is also available.

THE OTHER STOCK DOGS Livestock guarding dogs are very different from the "other" livestock working dogs — the herding dogs. Herding dogs use intimidation and actual physical force to move livestock. These dogs are not usually left on their own with stock; they serve as the herdsman's right-hand and typically remain with him unless sent after stock. When he is sent after the flock, the herding dog uses the "predator eye" to intimidate herd animals and move them away from him. When the "eye" fails, some dogs bark or nip to force stock to move.

Typically these herding dogs are small to intermediate in size and dark in color with prick (upright) or semi-prick ears. They also share a desire to please their owner, which results in breeds like the Border Collie being ranked high on lists of intelligence and trainableness. Those same lists rank the livestock guardians rather low. Most livestock guard dog owners will testify that it is a case of attitude rather than IQ that makes the guard dogs a challenge at times.

LIVESTOCK GUARDING DOGS

No one really knows where the first livestock guardian originated, but there is no doubt that they have been a part of agriculture since the earliest, prehistoric days. Early Greek and Roman writers, such as Varro and Columnella, describe two kinds of massive guard dogs already commonly seen in Greece (Epirus) and Italy, a dark dog and a white dog. The dark colored dogs were used to protect home and property from nighttime intruders, and the white "shepherd's dogs" were used for guarding sheep. The color of the dogs was not happenstance. The dark dogs were better able to surprise nighttime intruders. The white dogs bedded down with the sheep were a surprise to predators but were easily distinguished by the shepherd from the darker colored wolves and bears.

The livestock guardian breeds tend to be large (25" or more at the withers) with drop ears. There are some colored breeds, such as the Tibetan Mastiff, the Caucasian Mountain Dog, the Kangal Dog, the Yugoslavian Sarplaninac, the Anatolian Shepherd, and the Cao de Castro Laboreiro. Most of these are rare breeds with very little data so far concerning their performance in this country as livestock guardians.

The majority of livestock guardians today in the U.S. and Canada are members of the white guarding family. They form a "chain" of guarding dogs stretching from East to West: the Akbash Dog of western

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Turkey, the Maremma of Italy, the Komondor and the Kuvasz of Hungary, the Liptok or Chuvatch of Czechoslovakia, the Tatra or Podhalanski of Poland, and the Great Pyrenees of the French Pyrenees. These dogs have been described as sharing a triad of traits: tall, white, and courageous (2).

REASONS FOR OWNING A LIVESTOCK GUARDIAN

There are a number of reasons for getting a livestock guardian. The first is active intruder or predation problems, including those with domestic canines or human intruders. Another is potential problems. According to the U. S. Sheep Experimental Station in Idaho, livestock guardians have an 80% success rate; the Farm Center in Massachusetts reports a 79% success rate. When unsuccessful dogs are moved to a new situation, that rate jumps to over 90%. The explanation for this high success rate is probably the result of changes in herd-guard dog management and physical environment, such as size of pasture or range, age or type of livestock to be guarded, and the presence of other guard dogs.

GUARDIAN TRAITS -BONDING

The livestock guardian's success is due to several unique characteristics, namely, the ability to bond combined with an "independent" disposition. Any goat owner who has bottle fed kids understands the principle of "bonding." Bonding results in the kid regarding humans as "mother." Likewise, the livestock guarding dog accepts the herd animals as his "pack" and accepts a subordinate rather than dominant place in the herd.

Many livestock guard dog experts today say that pups should be introduced to stock by 8 to 12 weeks. Many of those experts are working with pups that will be expected to "range" with sheep, goats, and cattle over thousands of acres with minimal human contact. However, numerous small land holders running stock on fenced acreage report excellent results with older guard dogs that were not introduced to stock until they were over a year, perhaps even several years old. Once puppies are bonded to a species of livestock, USDA studies show that removal for up to six months does not affect the bonding. Once bonded to stock rather than people, many dogs can be placed successfully with a different species. For example, livestock guardians raised with sheep and/or goats have successfully made the switch to the other species or even to camelids (llamas and alpacas) and ratites (ostriches and emus). Many guarding dogs are in situations where they learn to accept several species as part of their social group. Thus, even the most dog aggressive guardians learn to accept the herder's dogs or the family's pets as a part of the "herd." They also become protective of the people they

are associated with.

The bonding process results in the dog not only accepting the animals he guards as equal but even as dominant to himself. While the herding dog "eyes" stock and relies on dominating the herd, the livestock guardian will go out of its way to avoid confrontation with the animals it guards. For example, when an irate doe stamps her feet and charges, the guard dog will usually just move away or lie down and avert its eyes. In this way, the guard dog avoids making threatening eye contact. He seems to realize that his own success relies on being accepted by the herd.

Most guard dog owners feed their dogs in the pens or pastures with the stock. One danger here is that a young dog will let the goats or sheep eat his feed or even drive him away from it. However, most livestock guardians will learn to defend their food from their charges. Some dogs growl and snarl in order to fend off hungry (or curious) goats and sheep at feeding time. Others have different tactics. One guard dog owner reports that her dog reaches over and gently grasps the thieving ruminant's muzzle in her mouth. The kibble-thief will then be disgusted at having had dog lips on her nose. As always, the herd owner must be aware of any potential problem, taking care to protect both the young dog and the herd.

INDEPENDENCE

Along with their size and strength, the livestock guardians share an independent attitude which can be frustrating to a first time guard dog owner. This attitude leads to the most common complaint, which is about their "independent" behavior. For centuries, these dogs have been bred to take care of themselves and their herd with little interference from humans. Visitors to a herd where there are guarding dogs often observe that the dogs do not seem to do anything. A good guardian should not have to do much. He will typically make his "rounds" at some time during the day, checking out the pasture or pen. He will spend much of his day lying where he can see both the herd and the surrounding area. Once a guard dog has decided what he should — or should not — do, it can be difficult to change his mind. This is when it is important that the owner has taken some time with his dog in order to establish himself as the "alpha" (dominant) member of the group.

TRAINING

Most livestock guardian breeds are not known for their desire to "perform" for their owners. However, because of the potential need to catch the dog and transport him (from pasture to pasture or to the vet), some leash training and commands are needed. Adrienne Foote, who runs Maremma and Great Pyrenees on

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range with sheep and angora goats, reports that leash training a dog allows it to be tied. There are also other benefits. When one of her guardians was caught in a fence snare designed to catch coyotes, the dog did not panic. Instead it stood quietly until it was found and released. A little training averted a tragic ending.

Commands such as "no," "up" (into a trailer or truck), and "sheep" or "out" (to the herd) are easily learned and usually obeyed because they pertain to what the guarding dog does — go with his sheep or goats. "It's okay" can be an important cue to let a guardian dog know that the situation is under control and that he can relax. Even "come" and "sit" will often get a response from the guarding dog if the commands are not overused. When it comes to "Fetch," "Heel," or "Catch the frisbee!," get a Border Collie!

These breeds are undeniably intelligent, but they are "work-oriented." Much of what they learn is learned by "on-the-job" observation. Livestock guardians can learn that only certain people are to open the gates or that no strangers can enter pastures or barns unescorted by family members. Some of the breeds are markedly canine aggressive. Their instinct is to react in a hostile fashion toward any intruding canine — domestic dog or wild coyote. However, these dogs can learn to accept herding dogs or family pets.

When he perceives a threat, the livestock guardian typically tries to position himself between the threat

MaPaca Meeting Schedule—2007

January 27, 2007 (Saturday)

**April 27, 2007 (at the Jubilee,
on Friday)**

July 15, 2007 (Sunday)

**Annual Meeting October 21,
2007 (Sunday)**

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

Editor's Ramblings:

BACKLOG, BACKLOG, BACKLOG! Yes, that is what I like to see in regard to articles that MAPACA members have submitted to the Newsletter. HOWEVER, I CURRENTLY HAVE NO BACKLOG! HELP! I need you all to think about this: If you submit an article to me for publication in the Newsletter, you receive free publicity. I will put your name, farm name and location in the "by line." Your name will get out there. So, dig into your farm experiences and share them with the other members of MAPACA. If it's something funny, send it to me. If it's something informative, send it to me. You have a happy story, I love them, send it to me. If you're not the greatest writer in the world, send me the facts about your story and I will write it up for you and then you can edit it and send it back to me. My email address is fpalpacas@aol.com. I'm looking forward to hearing from you all.

OK, I'm really making you work this time. There is something else that needs your immediate attention! PLEASE FILL OUT THE ENCLOSED MAPACA MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM (if you haven't already done so) and send it, along with your check to me at: Alice Brown, MAPACA Recording Secretary, 458 Main Road, Vineland, NJ 08360.

I would also like to thank Nancy Johanson for her three years of service on the MAPACA Board of Director's. Nancy resigned from the Board recently. However, Kathy Schwartz, from Blue Earth River Farm Alpacas in Mount Crawford, VA will be serving the last year of Nancy's term. Welcome Kathy! By the way, Kathy is the wonderful person that got together the General Membership Meeting in VA last January. So we all know that Kathy will be an asset to the Board.

As we hold our breaths in anticipation of whatever this winter decides to throw at us, perhaps it will do our spirits good to just take some time to enjoy the last few days of fall. Our alpacas are certainly enjoying these cooler days! My crias just love running through the leaves and to later settle down in a pile of leaves and drink up some afternoon sun! Sometimes they get lost in the leaves! I have to go look for them! They then look up at me and say with that particular look in their eyes: "What's the matter with you lady, haven't you ever laid down in the crinkly leaves for a nap?" I think I may try that the next nice sunny crisp day that we have. I may even bring my sleeping bag!

Enjoy! And don't forget, send me an article. I'll be sitting here in the leaves waiting for your submission.

BEST, Alice Brown

C lassified Ads:

Any member may post an ad for alpaca and/or alpaca farm related equipment and items.

The ad may include a short description and contact information. This will be a free service to current MAPACA members ONLY. Please send your ads to Alice Brown, fpalpacas@aol.com or call 856-697-8127.

1. **Alpaca Cria Sweaters**—Made of 100% alpaca. Warm, durable, lightweight, soft! Small to 25lbs. Large to 35 lbs. Assorted colors. \$50.00 each + tax, S&H. Free shipping with purchase of 3 or more. **Mountain Meadows Alpaca Farm. 540-586-1745.**
2. **Manure Spreader.** Pequea Model 70, ground driven, excellent condition (used 10 hours total), paint faded. 70 bushel capacity. If new \$2,900—asking \$1,400 or reasonable best offer. Pictures available. Contact: **Paul at Big Sky Alpacas—856-223-0570.**
3. **New Alpaca Photos Website—www.alpacaphotosonline.com** 100s, soon to be 1000s of photos of alpacas and products. No charge to submit photos. Contact: **Nancy Lake, info@alpacaphotosonline.com or 301-393-5878.**
4. **Alpaca Equipment:** chutes, scales, hay saver feeders, Tooth-A-Matic, shearing tables, Pro-Tie & mats, panels & gates See our insert in this month's Newsletter or visit us on-line at **www.lightlivestockequipment.com or call Jay Ward of AuSable Valley Alpacas at 518-524-0545.**
5. **Transportation Services** from Origins Alpaca Ranch: Private Transport, Emergency 24/7 Transport and "The Show String" - Will transport your alpacas to shows and show them on your behalf. **If interested contact Mike Kober at 908-239-8676 or mike@originsalpacaranch.com.**
6. **Non-Breeder Boarding**—Fenwick Manor Farm is now offering a discounted boarding option for non-breeder alpacas. In our lush 5 acre pasture, alpacas have plenty of grass and room to roam. One nominal fee covers a year of boarding, basic shots and shearing. Save your pasture space for your ladies! Let us care for your fiber Animals. **Contact Katharine Thompson, Fenwick Manor Farm in New Lisbon, NJ—FMFAlpacas@Fenwick.net.**



Calendar of Events

January 27, 2007—MAPACA General Membership Meeting—to be held in Baltimore, MD. Wade Gease will speak on Show Fleece Preparation and offer tips on improving your Show Ring Skills. Lunch will be served. Watch the Newsletter for further information.

RSVP to Kathy Schwartz at (540) 908-7420 or simplyalpaca@aol.com.

April 15, 2007—ALPACA BUDGET CAPER—ABC SHOW: Come to the first AOBA Certified level 1 show in New Jersey. To be held in Ringoes, New Jersey. Come and join the fun! Register now! For information and entry form, go to **www.alpacaheritage.com or call the show superintendent at 609-261-0696.**

April 27-29, 2007—MAPACA JUBILEE, 2007 -Check-in day is Thursday, April 26th. Come experience one of the largest alpaca shows in the world! Look for registration to open in January 2007. The MAPACA Jubilee will again be held at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg, PA, a premier show event facility. Watch the MAPACA website and the MAPACA Newsletter for further details about the MAPACA Jubilee. **For more information go to www.mapaca.org.**

Camelid Veterinarian Continuing Education Grant Program

PLEASE NOTIFY YOUR VETERINARIAN!

The Board of Directors of MAPACA is delighted to announce the establishment of an annual program to support continuing education for camelid veterinarians serving alpaca owners in the MAPACA region. Grants will be available up to \$1000 per session to attend camelid educational programs. Includes travel expenses, meals, rooming as well as the conference. Grants are limited to one per year for each veterinarian. In the case of veterinary practices, only one grant per practice per program. Feel free to contact Alice Brown, Recording Secretary, with any questions you may have.

Funds will be available retroactively for programs already attended in 2006. The Camelid Veterinarian Continuing Education Grant Application is available on the MAPACA website. Please submit the completed application to Alice Brown. The applications will then be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors. MAPACA requests that all recipients prepare a brief summary of the program, within 2 weeks of attending, to be shared with the MAPACA membership on the MAPACA website. These summaries will be archived and kept on the website for future reference as well.

Print out the application on line from the MAPACA website (www.mapaca.org) and give it to your veterinarian to fill out and send to me:

**Alice Brown
458 Main Road
Vineland, NJ 08360**

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 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. Please, when you send inserts, do not require that I have to sign for them! Any questions, email Alice Brown: fpalpacas@aol.com or call: 856-697-8127.

Please send your comments, articles, or submissions to Alice Brown at: Fpalpacas@aol.com.