



MAPACA

Mid-Atlantic Alpaca Association

Newsletter

March 2008

Volume 8, issue 3

President's Message:

Show season is now underway and the Jubilee's first on-line show registration has opened. I am pleased to announce ... MAPACA has joined the 21st century. Don Tomkins of Alpacalachin Farms has worked with us tirelessly to make the on-line registration successful and the Jubilee Show Committee thanks him for his ongoing efforts.

With a budget of almost \$500,000 we fully expect this year's Jubilee to be larger than the national show. A key concern was how to keep the event from selling out within hours and thereby limiting the number of exhibitors able to participate. As a direct result of our new online registration system, we were able to monitor in real-time the progress of our show coming together – while ensuring the needs of our membership were being met. Opening weekend was spent with several of our Board members (and their spouses) fielding phone calls and answering emails in an effort to provide customer service and ensure accurate registration for the show.

Our new sponsor level, Diamond, sold out almost instantly. By stalling these farms in the show ring area we were able to offer over 60 additional stalls this year! I want to thank each of the Diamond sponsors for working with us in finding new ways to allow more members to participate in this year's Jubilee.

Alpacas de la Patagonia –

Hugo Ulloa and Karen Byram

Cas-Cad-Nac Farm, LLC –

Ian & Jennifer Lutz

Crescent Moon Ranch –

Joseph & Diane Nelson

Magical Farms –

Jerry & Libby Forstner

Meadowgate Farm Alpacas LLC –

Diane & Leon Rosenberg

Virginia Alpaca Farm & Breeding Co. –

Sharon Brown and James Webb

Sponsorships allow us to introduce enhancements to the Jubilee AND bring top notch speakers to our membership meetings throughout the year, free of charge to our membership. Heartfelt thanks also goes to our Emerald, Ruby, Gold, Silver, Spin-off, Skein, Fiber Arts, and Fleece sponsors for your support of MAPACA this year.

As I write this message we are 36 hours into registration. I am thrilled to share with you some of the real-time Jubilee statistics we have been able to gather: Of the 646 stalls sold thus far, 443 are MAPACA members;

Our first year holding a spin-off and we are a Level III spin-off with 210 entries!

Our 4 new Fleece sponsorship levels have sold out; Over 175 people have signed-up for Brown Baggin' it with Norm Evans;

Our membership meeting and luncheon is the largest ever – over 200 and counting!

In the haste to sign-up for shows, it is all too easy for people to overlook what it takes to launch a show of this size and still keep it affordable for members and safe for the animals that brought us here in the first place. When you step into the farm show complex in April, bear in mind the efforts that have gone into making this a reality. For example:

Volunteers, Volunteers, Volunteers

This year's Jubilee is being driven by the efforts of volunteers, the Jubilee show committee, and your MAPACA Board of Directors. Let us not forget about the efforts of the spouses who are willingly (or

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MaPaca Board of Directors

- President:** Wayne Robinson
Emelise Alpacas, Hampton, NJ
(908) 537-7935
info@emelisealpacas.com
- Vice-President:** Monica Kline
a Suri Farm, Ltd.,
Myerstown, PA
(717) 933-9922
info@asurifarm.com
- Secretary:** Kathy Schwartz
Blue Earth River Farm Alpacas,
Mount Crawford, VA
(540) 234-0306
simplyalpaca@aol.com
- Treasurer:** Chuck Gulotta
Arcadia Hollow Alpaca Farm,
Manchester, MD
(410) 374-6649
gulotta@kennedykrieger.org
- Members at Large:** David Moran
Crimson Shamrock Alpacas,
Eglen, WV
(304) 735-6128
dddmoran@aol.com
- Rachel Shearer
Chocolate Hollow Alpaca Farm,
Hershey, PA
(717) 805-7388
info@hersheyalpacas.com
- Bill Johnson
Abenaki Acres Farm, LLC,
Stockton, NJ
(908) 782-0025
bill@abenakiacres.com
- Newsletter Editor:** Alice Brown
Forever Precious Alpacas,
Vineland, NJ
(856) 697-8127
fpalpacas@aol.com

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unwillingly) helping to bring about the success of this show!

Health

The well being of our animals is always a major concern. The last time straw was used the ventilation filters quickly became clogged affecting the health of many alpacas and exhibitors. We are spending approximately \$90,000 in costs for sod to ensure the exposure to air contaminants is minimal for humans and animals alike. Let us not forget about the fire hazards associated with the use of straw in combination with electrical cords and stall fans running 24/7.

This year we will again have the show rings in the Equine Arena allowing for wider walkways and additional space to move around in the Exhibitor's Hall.

Value Added

I know some members are still asking, "What's in it for me?" Quite a bit, actually.

Last year we moved away from the \$15 per animal electricity charge and built this cost in to the per pen cost. We have continued in this manner as it makes the electrical costs fair and equitable for everyone.

Where else can you "Brown Bag It" with Dr. Norm Evans for ten dollars? Or attend free seminars with Marty McGee Bennett?

There is a famous saying that states there is no such thing as a free lunch. Well, there IS such a thing, and it is our MAPACA membership luncheon.

For those bringing children and grandchildren to the show, we have MAPACA members and volunteers Lisa & Rick German of Whispering Meadows Alpaca Breeders providing Children's Activities in the Exhibitor's Hall for the younger crowd to have fun while you are in the show ring.

By purchasing at least two show stalls, two Brown Baggin' it with Norm Evans tickets, attending our membership lunch, and two tickets for dinner, you've saved over \$99 by being a MAPACA member. And don't forget that last \$1 for membership entitles you to multiple MAPACA membership meetings during the year that feature world class speakers and lunch is free. For an organization that does not have bake sales, car washes, or sell Entertainment books, the Jubilee serves the MAPACA membership well.

Again, thanks to all of the sponsors and volunteers who are helping to make this year's Jubilee a success. We could not even dream of putting on a show of this magnitude without you.

Regards,

Wayne Robinson
MAPACA President

Editor's Ramblings:

Here in southern New Jersey, we haven't had much snow this winter. Just tonight we had about 1 inch of fluffy snow. Just enough to put a good coat down on the ground. As I walked out to the barn for bed check, glimmers of crystal light bounced back to my eyes from the newly fallen snow. It seemed quite still and beautiful. I figured the alpacas were all cushed quietly in the barn chewing their cud, but as I opened the door, there were just a few in there. The majority of the herd were out side. Some of the crias were playing on the hill in front of the barn. The mama's were watching quietly. Seems the alpacas enjoy the snow and find it just as magical as we do.

Thinking ahead to when the snow is but a vague memory tucked away for another year, spring is not too far away. As a matter of fact, in the way I count things, it is just about 10 short days away. After all, once we get past January and February, it is all up hill from there on. In March we don't get those bitter cold days and often we have some warmer days that cause the snow drops and then crocuses to bloom. Yes, Jubilee time is just about upon us.

The last few years I haven't had anyone to show at the Jubilee, but this year I have a promising young yearling that I'm looking forward to showing. When you have a small herd, you often only have one or two animals that you can possibly show. So, if a small farm like ours takes a ribbon at the Jubilee, it really means something.

I hope you all enjoyed the February 10th meeting at New Bolton as much as I did. Don't forget to come to the next MAPACA meeting on Friday at the Jubilee for lunch.

Next month's issue of the Newsletter will be the Jubilee Edition. We not only will send out our regular mailing, but we will be handing out copies of that issue of the Newsletter to interested people that come in to the Farm Show Complex to see the alpaca show.

I'd personally like to welcome all the new breeders that just joined MAPACA in the last two months. It's good to see that there are many new ones joining with us in stewardship of the wonderful alpacas that we raise.

My Best to You All, Alice Brown

Vet Students Learn from Dr. Walter Bravo.

It was a brisk weekend in February at the University of New Bolton Center, in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, where Dr. Walter Bravo gave a vet to vet presentation to 38 vet students and 5 out-side vets from the region on Alpaca Reproduction and Neonatology. The event was hosted by the UPENN Vet Reproduction Club at New Bolton Center and was sponsored by MAPACA. The veterinarians and students were treated to a 4 hour seminar in the morning by Dr. Bravo. The seminar was a great hit with the vet students. Following the seminar in the morning the attendees attended wet labs in the afternoon. "The wet labs were fantastic and the students had nothing but positive responses about them," according to Gina Tranquillo, President of the Penn Vet Repro Club. The wet labs consisted of basic handling and restraint with alpacas, examination of external reproductive structures on the animals, uterine torsion rolling and ultrasounding. "The day really seemed to energize the students and give them the empowerment to get through all of the [instructive] and academic type classes that we all encounter so much of as first and second year students, said Tranquillo."

We owe many thanks to Patti Anderson from Wild Rose Suri Ranch for lending female alpacas for the event. With Patti's assistance, we were able to provide the students with several ultrasound situations for the students to learn from.

Our goal is to continue providing educational opportunities for the vet students to encourage their interest in camelids in their future.



Dr. Walter Bravo instructing students at New Bolton Center in ultrasound techniques during the program provided to the vet students by MAPACA.

MAPACA Meeting

(Feb. 10, 2008)

Synopsis:

By Alice Brown

Having been to many MAPACA meetings over the last nine years, I have to say that the meeting at New Bolton Center on February 10th was one of the most informative and well put together meetings that I have ever attended. Over 100 members attended!

The meeting was opened by Wayne Robinson, MAPACA President, who introduced all the Board members, presented a slide of some the Initiatives that the Board and the Committees are working on and shared his perspective on the MAPACA organization as a whole. Robinson brought out that in the past the organization was largely paper based and now everything is fully electronically archived.

Of course, with the Jubilee looming in the not too distant future, everyone was all ears when Monica Kline stepped up to share the latest about the Jubilee with the membership. Kline stated that the Board of Director's want the Jubilee to be "YOUR" Show. And their goal is that the Jubilee be "top notch." With Nationals in Utah this year, we are expecting a large show.

Al and Catherine Beatty are doing a tremendous work for the fleece show. Since we are raising fleece animals, the fleece show should be as important as the halter show. As Monica pointed out, this year the Jubilee is offering a new sponsorship level to elevate the fleece show. Friday afternoon will see "Tea Time" at the fleece show. By then all the spin-off entries will have been judged and set up for display. On Saturday the show will shut down for the fleece championships. There will be wine and cheese in celebration.

Again this year, Thursday will be check in day. Lots of volunteers will be needed. So, if you haven't done so already, volunteer to help out. As you check in, there will be a place to submit your questions for Dr. Norm Evans. On Thursday evening, Dr. Evans will answer as many submitted questions as time allows. "Brown Baggin It with Norm Evans" should be a fun and productive way to spend the evening.

The Jubilee this year will have the production classes first. Over the years the production classes were always last. However, so much can be learned about the breeding programs of other farms by observing these classes, which most missed in the past. This is a change that will allow more people to benefit from these classes.

And just so you know, the next MAPACA meeting will be on Friday at the Jubilee at lunch time and lunch

is being provided for all members that attend. Think about any comments or questions that you may have for your Board of Directors and bring them with you.

This year the Jubilee will be judged 60/40 fleece/conformation. The Jubilee is the first large alpaca show to do this and this really underscores the fact that alpacas are fleece producing animals.

And yes, there will be sod at the Jubilee again this year! Also, electric will be provided for every pen, but make sure you bring your own extension cord. An area that was a problem in the past was where the water faucets are there was some flooding. This year there will be hose connectors and buckets so that this will not be a problem.

Following this presentation, Bill Johnson spoke about the Continuing Vet Education Grant Program for 2008. Please see his article in this newsletter on page 8 about the program for this year.

For those that were new members, there were gifts handed out at the meeting. Also, members that referred these new members also received a nice gift. So, if you know someone who would benefit by joining MAPACA, encourage them to do so. JoAnn Wood will be sending out gifts in the future to all new members and to those that refer them.

The feature speaker at the meeting, as you all know, was Dr. Walter Bravo. Dr. Bravo discussed various things about camelid reproduction. An interesting point that he brought out is that sexual receptivity is a learned behavior and an overly aggressive male may make a female go down even if she is pregnant. Refusal is sometimes hard to read as some females don't know how to act. In this regard, Dr. Bravo showed pictures of the trauma that a uterus undergoes in the process of breeding. That is why he said that repeated breedings are not good to do. He doesn't recommend doing more than one breeding then he recommends not rebreeding again for at least 7 days if they don't ovulate. He said that after ovulation the female produces progesterone. So you should not behavior test until 7 days after breeding. If the female is non-receptive, then wait two weeks to retest her.

At what age should we be breeding our females? Dr. Bravo points out that 18 months of age is a good age to start with most females, however some do not grow follicles until they are two years old.

Ultrasounds for detecting pregnancy are usually successful by 21 days after breeding. By 45 days after breeding the embryo has formed all its organs and is now called a fetus.

Since the male also enters into the reproductive success of our farms, Dr. Bravo discussed male issues as

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well. In the male, the testicles produce the testosterone. After about 20 months of age the testosterone starts to increase and at about 30 months it really increases.

In regard to sperm, Dr. Bravo pointed out that even in a healthy young male, not all sperm are normal. There are always some abnormal sperm with about 70% of sperm being normal.

Some other interesting facts that Dr. Bravo brought out:

Females ovulate 24-36 hours after breeding.

About 80% of females ovulate after breeding.

In ovulated females about 70% become pregnant.

Young males from 18-20 months are rarely fertile, it's better to wait about 6 months until the males are about 24 to 26 months old to try breeding them.

How many times could a male breed without reducing fertility?—2-4 times/day at most. 6 times/day resulted in reduced fertility.

Live sperm numbers go down drastically in the summer. When a female is ready to breed and has a ripe follicle, the cervix is open. The rest of the time the cervix is closed.

The size of a females udder correlates with milk production. The udder should fill your hand.

Dr. Bravo recommends that females be vaccinated at about 2 months out from their due date. He also feels that crias do not mount immune responses to vaccinations before they are about 3 months old.

In new born crias, Dr. Bravo has found that about 20% stand within 30 minutes, about 50% take about 1 hour to stand, 90% are standing within 2 hours and 100% will be standing within 3 hours, as long as they are healthy. In the first 24 hours most crias nurse about every 1/2 hour. After that they nurse about every hour or about 10 times per day. If a cria is nursing less than 5 times per day, the cria has a problem. He recommends crias be weaned at 7—8 months old. When breeding back after birthing, Dr. Bravo pointed out that the uterus is not ready until about day 19-20 and he feels that day 21 is the best day to breed after birth. He also said that he has not observed less of a conception rate if one has to wait several months to rebreed a female.

After Dr. Bravo's presentation, Dr. Regina Turner, from New Bolton, a reproduction veterinarian, spoke about the Hoffman Reproduction Center at New Bolton which is a separate well animal location about a mile from Widener. When evaluating a female for reproductive issues a Breeding Soundness Evaluation is conducted that includes:

1. The animal's history.
2. Exam of external genitalia.
3. Transrectal ultrasound of uterus and ovaries.

4. Visual exam of vagina with a speculum and/or an endoscope.
5. Uterine culture for bacteria.
6. Small biopsy.

Treatment depends on what they find. If a uterine infection is found an indwelling uterine catheter is inserted and daily flushing with sterile saline solution and introduction of antibiotics is used based on what the bacteria is sensitive to. They recommend breeding two days after treatment, however, Dr. Bravo recommends waiting 2 weeks.

New Bolton can also address male infertility issues.

Treasurer's Report

For the first time this year at the Jubilee we will be accepting credit cards as well as checks. Our new virtual merchant account and check recorder are set up and working well. The Hobert's can now record checks and accept credit cards, which deposit directly into our Wachovia account. This cuts down on human error and bank transfers.

As of 1/31/08 we have \$219,965.57 cash on hand.

Main Income from Oct 07' to Jan 08'
Membership Dues = \$14,300
News Letter Advertising = \$900.00
Interest= \$19995.19

Main Expenses from Oct 07' to Jan 08'
Contributions Vet Grant = \$2000
Membership Meeting Expenses =
\$5,192.15
Newsletter Expenses = \$5,534.30
Website Makeover and Jubilee Logo =
\$6,500.84
Pre-Jubilee Expense = \$1,300
Professional Fees = \$1,288.75



Welcome Our New Members!

Steve & Debra Lamberto, Alpacas of Menges Mills, Spring Grove, PA

Keith & Barbara Moore, Meadow's Edge Alpaca Ranch, Port Norris, NJ

Robert Brink, Flint Stone Farm, Coopersburg, PA

Cynthia & Bob Moore, Caliope Creek Alpaca Ranch, Douglasville, PA

Carol & Chris Howard, Cinco C's Alpacas, Port Allegany, PA

Juanita & Dennis Miller, River Head Farm, LLC, Estell Manor, NJ

Fred Rosenmiller & Wendy Jones, Rosenmiller Farm/Alpacas of York, York, PA

William Ritchie, Gibson Creek Alpacas, Mays Landing, NJ

David & Elaine Lawson, Kismet Acres Farm, Capon Bridge, WV

Donna & Marc Sanderson, Shawnee Alpacas, Wharton, NJ

***Correction—Tom & Nancy Imphong, Shadowberry Farm Alpacas, Carlisle, PA**



Welcome More New Members!

Lisa & Mo Morawek, The MoLi Ranch, Inc., Powhatan, VA

Jeff & Tonia Fromback, Stehman Run Alpacas, Lancaster, PA

Dolores & Jeff Atkins, Fox Bank Alpacas, Nazareth, PA

Jerry Tibbott, Ultimate Alpaca's, LLC, Northern Cambria, PA

Kevin & Libby Stover, The Wood Farm, Franklin, PA

Carl G. Troop, VMD, Spring Grove Alpaca Ranch, Quarryville, PA

Tanya & Dwight Good, Florence, NJ

Andrea S. & Louis A. Phyrillas, Summerwind Farm Alpacas, Inc., Womelsdorf, PA

Daniel & Hendrika Paci, Silverdale, PA

Karin & Jerome Young, Spiritwind Farm & Fiber Studio, Marion, NY

Terri & Andy Kinka, Golden Glen Alpacas, Lititz, PA

Calendar of Events

March 8-9, 2008—Alpaca Farm Days 08-The Fleece is ON! 10AM-4PM at Annapaca Farm Hagerstown, MD. Nine breeders will display their alpacas and products. Seminar “Alpaca Care for Beginners” Spinning and felting demonstrations. Free entrance and raffle. **Contact Bert or Ann Kramer, 301-824-2840 or www.annapaca.com or bertkram@aol.com.**

March 15, 2008—Alpaca Heritage Sampler for Success: Pasture Management Seminar and Introduction to Raising Alpacas— Eco Complex Bordentown, NJ—10AM-3PM—\$50 per person (includes lunch) - **Call 609-261-0696 for details and visit www.AlpacaHeritage.com to download a registration form.**

March 29, 2008—Royal River’s 2nd Annual Farm Event and Pen Sale—9AM-6PM. 12 consigning breeders, over 30 award winning huacaya and suri alpacas. Presentations on fiber sorting, evaluation of alpacas for show, & pasture management. Pre-register by March 20th at info@royalriveralpaca.com. Details, www.royalriveralpaca.com

March 29, 2008—SAFONA NeoNatal Clinic—At the Montgomery County Farm Home & 4H Foundation in Colledgeville, PA—10AM.—2PM. Speaker Missi Cooper, VMD. Cost \$40 for members and \$50 for non-members. Info and registration forms: www.safona.org or call **Naomi at 610-273-0220.**

May 4, 2008—Alpaca Heritage Budget Caper Halter Show (AOBA certified) - Ringoes, NJ. Info and entry form: www.AlpacaHeritage.com. Halter Show Superintendent: **Ingrid Wood (609-261-0696 or stormwindalpacas@comcast.net),** free seminars, free admission to public.

May 2, 3, & 4, 2008—New Dates for the Eighth Annual Spring Fling Auction and Golden Fleece Futurity at WoodsEdge Wools Farm, Stockton, NJ. New Dates, New Auctioneer. Mark your calendar. For consignment consideration, send photos to **Star Events, LLC, Post Office Box 275, Stockton, New Jersey 08559.**

May 17-18, 2008—Two alpaca training and handling clinics. Conducted by Marty McGee’s Camelidynamics. Info and registration: www.glenaryfarmalpacas.com, then events.

Classified 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. FOR SALE: Male weanling llama,** alert personality, potential guard, silky brown fiber, DOB 5/25/07. Price—\$800.00. Contact: **Aurora Farm—Cindi Hassrick, Ottsville, PA 215-795-2584.**
- 2. Anatolian Shepherd Pups for sale:** DOB Nov. 5, 2007. Being started with alpacas. Both parents are great working dogs. These pups have great personalities and are showing that they are going to be good working dogs even at this young age. This Turkish breed is bred solely for livestock guardianship. 2 males available. Rough coated, not smooth coated. **Pictures available at www.forestglenalpacas.com.** Asking price \$1200.00 each now, but as they get older and are trained, the price will change. Discounts on purchases of 2 or more. **Contact Tina Weston, Forest Glen Alpacas, 814-827-2352.**
- 3. FARM & Alpacas For Sale:** Timberscombe Farm Alpacas is located in beautiful northeastern PA. The farm consists of 51 acres, home, 2 huge multi-purpose barns and several other outbuildings, and is for sale with or without our herd of 18 alpacas. This is a great opportunity to have a ready-made alpaca business. Farm equipment is also for sale. **Contact Joe or Jackie at 570-549-3030.** You can also visit out AlpacaNation webpage to view our alpacas and dispersal package: www.alpacanation.com/timberscombefarm.asp.
- 4. Herd Dispersal Sale—**Quality true black and medium brown Huacayas. Two bred females, one maiden female and one junior herdsire. All 6 for \$40,000. Price is negotiable. Pictures at www.alpacanation.com/alpacasforsale/03_view_package.asp?name=27810. **Contact Pat Craven, Cherry Ridge Alpacas alpacone@hughes.net.**
- 5. Custom Fiber Processing—**The Fiber Factory, 493 Clark Rd. Ext., Alfred Station, NY 14803. Contact Wendy Dailey at 607-382-7811, east-valley-alpacas@eznet.net, or www.east-valley-alpacas.com.

Camelid Veterinarian Continuing Education Grant Program

By Bill Johnson, Abenaki Acres

Why does MAPACA have a vet grant program?

In the past year I have heard the following from alpaca farmers or read in periodicals; "I have to wait four hours for my vet to get to my farm," "our state had a dire shortage of large animal vets" "In the 1970s, 50 percent of vet school graduates were large-animal vets. By the mid-1980s, 30 percent of the graduates were interested in large-animal practices. This year, [2007] only 10 to 15 percent will be mixed practice or large animal vets"

This is an issue that affects all of us in the quality of care we want to provide to our alpacas. While all of us (vets included) continue to learn more about the alpaca's needs, the number of people available to learn is declining.

MAPACA has chosen to address this by allocating funds to provide assistance to vets in attending camelid focused programs. \$10,000 has been budgeted for vets who would like to attend programs that focus on camelid care.

The MAPACA website has a link to the application for the vet to obtain the funding. <http://www.mapaca.org/pages/alpacahealth/camelidvetgrant.html>

How can MAPACA members support the program? Talk to your vets, let them know that the funds are there and that the application process is an easy one. The more we encourage our vets to attend camelid focused programs, the more our alpacas will benefit.

There are other programs throughout the USA that are attempting to encourage vets to address the needs of camelid farmers. One state has an "adopt a vet program", a northeastern university has an Undergraduate Camelid Studies Program, and vet schools are participating in camelid symposiums. All of these and the MAPACA Vet Grant Program will increase the level of care our alpacas receive.

Please talk to your vets and encourage them to make use of this program!

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.

Any AOBa affiliate may advertise their event for \$200. Any business that sells products or services relating to alpacas or farming in general that would benefit alpaca farmers may place an insert AD in the MAPACA Newsletter at a cost of **\$200.00**.

Please send copies of your ad, 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. 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.**



"Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, life is a broken winged bird that cannot fly."

-- Langston Hughes

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