



President’s Message:

ju•bi•lee -

Definition: joyful time: a time or season of celebration

I have to admit, in my prior years attending the MAPACA Jubilee, the word “jubilee” did not stir any emotions inside of me. It was like one of many words we all use that have no significance to us personally because over time we lose sight of its meaning.

On the first day of showing, my fellow board member Monica Kline asked if I had stopped to look at one of the monitors broadcasting pictures of our event. For someone who thinks in pictures and graphs I was compelled to sneak away and for a few minutes, ignore the cell phone and two-way radio to see what our photographers had been capturing on film. The slide show started with scenes of an empty building with bare walls, cement floors in the Exhibitor’s Arena and dirt floors in the Show Arena. Next were scenes of sod being delivered, show committee members studying diagrams, sod and stall panels being installed, more people in deep thought. What was once empty and bare was becoming green and a little livelier. Some people had dazed looks on their faces while others had smiles. As more people entered the building the

pictures took on another dimension; there were more groups, more smiles, more photos of people putting their arms on the shoulder’s of others, more talking...getting the picture?

In the mornings that followed, I was drawn to a teleprompter outside of the show arena to gauge how the weekend was unfolding. The number of exhibitors voicing their pleasure with the show was overwhelming yet still that teleprompter kept speaking volumes. I saw children hugging one another, nervous exhibitors on deck, the joy brought about when winning a ribbon or a championship, random pictures of a piece of the alpaca lifestyle – people from across the country and the globe (we had judges from Australia and farms from Washington State and Oregon!) coming together to celebrate these animals we love and the friendships we have made because of them. I do not know if our photographers captured pictures of the show as it was winding down Sunday afternoon. If they did, I probably will not look at them as I prefer to remember what our alpaca community brought to a cold and empty building. We hope to have these memories on the website soon.

suc•cess -

Definition: favorable or desired outcome

This year’s Jubilee brought many new concepts to the forefront. Wine, Cheese and Championships; Tea Time at the Fleece Show; Brown Baggin’ It With Norm Evans; and our slate of educational speakers are only a few examples. As I reiterated during the General Membership Meeting, please continue to tell us your thoughts on our offerings this year. During the meeting I also discussed the Board’s priority in keeping the show affordable for our members. The MAPACA Board and the Jubilee Show Committee have already started plans for

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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:** JoAnn Wood
Fishwood Farm Alpacas
Concord, VA
434-993-9115
woodfam1@earthlink.net
- 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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next year and we need your input so that we can continue to bring you what you want in a show.

I would be less than honest if I did not also acknowledge some negative occurrences during the show, namely theft. We had products stolen from some vendors and items stolen from exhibitors. As our shows attract more public interest this seems to be an unfortunate side effect. We are already at work to eliminate the possibility for this type of activity next year.

Was the show successful? The show committee's desire was to provide an atmosphere where we could relax, learn, and discuss ideas that could impact our industry. We wanted to create a stress-free environment for our animals and exhibitors – at least as stress-free as possible. We endeavored to make sure every exhibitor, volunteer, sponsor, judge, and guest knew that they were welcome and appreciated. We strived to make the Jubilee a show that would make first-time and returning exhibitors feel that the definition of “jubilee” is alive and well. Was the show successful? You tell us, we are listening.

Wayne Robinson
MAPACA President



Billie Bookamer holding Peaches and Cream who is being judged by Peter Kennedy.

Photo by Jillian Ramsay Stern, Ramsay's Alpacas, Butler, PA

Editor's Ramblings:

For all those that have been concerned, I am on the mend after my unexpected illness. The recuperation is slow, but little by little I'm improving each day. Thank you to all those that sent me flowers and cards and phoned to wish me well. A special thanks to Selina Rose, Barb Nuessle and my husband Fred, for their help in getting out last month's Newsletter while I was in the hospital. Alpaca people are great!

When one suddenly comes to face to face with their mortality due to serious illness, it makes one take stock of what things in life are important. While ill, I had plenty of time to reflect on such things. At times like that, family becomes ever so more important, as do friendships. When times are good, that is the time to draw close to our family and friends. It's like a wise King once wrote: "Send out your bread upon the surface of the waters, for in the course of many days you will find it again." Again, thanks to all who supported me through this difficult time!

I'm taking the time now to build up my strength again and enjoy these wonderful spring days. We have two females (actually mother and daughter) that were due with their crias on March 29th. Both were bred on the same day. As I write this, they are both still waiting for just that right time to deliver. Of course, last evening one of them started to "bag up," and she was breathing a little faster than normal. Than at 5 AM this morning, the other started humming and seemed restless. Fred and I thought today might be the day. But, of course, it was a false alarm as both came running at breakfast time and ate their food normally. Well, maybe tomorrow will be the perfect day!

Hope you all enjoyed the Jubilee. It was the first time since 1999 that I have missed a Jubilee. However, I was there in spirit and thought. I'll be looking forward to being there next year for sure!

My Best to You All, Alice Brown

Welcome Our New Members!

Candace & Charles Haley, Altiplano, Delaplane, VA

Christopher & Jennifer Raup, Double Black Alpacas, Boiling Springs, PA

Charlie & Judy Schroeder, Perfect Peace Alpacas, Blue Ridge, VA

John & Jan Kleindl, Double JJ Alpacas, LLC, Midland, VA

Rose Mogerman, Alma Park Alpacas, Jackson, NJ

Laurel Donahue, Harmony Farmette Alpacas, Meadville, PA

Jay & Dori Brown, On a Whim Alpaca Farm, Chambersburg, PA

Deborah Rejent & Jim Motsay, The Meadows—A Suri Ranch, Gettysburg, PA

Mary Jane Spencer & John Mushovic, Newville, PA

Nick Guido, Light Data, LLC, Hillside, NJ

Barbara & Joe Crocco, Copper Star Alpaca Farm, Millerton, NY

Lorie B. Long, Arsty Fartsy Alpacas, Tabernacle, NJ

It's About the Fiber... Right?

*By Jillian Ramsay Stern, Ramsay's Alpacas,
Butler, PA*

An amazing thing happened at the 2008 MAPACA Jubilee. There were alpaca fleeces festooned with prize ribbons as well as Color Champion and Reserve Banners in one of the halter rings. To understand the significance of this event, we have to digress a bit and start at the beginning of the Jubilee and maybe go back a bit more than that.

At a previous MAPACA Jubilee, while helping with the judging of a Fiber Arts and Skein Competition at that Jubilee, I first met Al and Catherine Beatty. Wini Labrecque, a personal friend and a first class fiber mentor for me, was the judge of both parts of the competition. I listened to the talk among the three of them. It was an illuminating dialogue about the whole alpaca fiber scene. I have been privileged to have been part of many discussions since that first one. The main thrust of that discussion and every one of most of the ones I've heard since then was, "How do we bring people to an understanding of the fact that alpaca fiber is the strength and basis of an industry? How do we convince people that raising alpacas is not enough. We have to bring alpaca fiber, and knowledge of it, front and center in people's minds in order to have a real viable livestock industry as well as a fiber industry.

There is beginning to be a growing awareness of these facts within the alpaca breeding community. There is a long way to go, but we've started down that path, thanks to guides like Wini, Al and Catherine. But there are plenty of other people involved in dealing with the same issue in many of its forms.

In a brief chat with Tom Knisely of The Mannings Handweaving School and Supply Center, I found that the fiber hand crafts community has rapidly become aware of the desirability of alpaca fiber. We also discussed where alpaca is going and how far it has to go. One of the important concepts

that Tom brought out was the idea of finding effective and complementary blends of alpaca with other fibers. One of the advantages of handcrafts people is their ability to adventure into areas of research involving much trial and error that are too expensive for commercial fiber. If you look at the artisans of the handcraft community as the Formula One racers that explore and create all sorts of innovations that sprinkle down through the automotive industry and the automobile industry as commercial yarn and textile mills, you can see how much the activities of the one can ultimately affect the other. In point of fact, there are many alpaca growers that do sell their fleece to hand spinners and weavers. If we did that on a broader and more organized scale, who could tell what new innovations would result? As well, the fiber that is roosting in attics, barns, garages and basements would see the light of day and sell itself to the world. An idea that Tom and I discussed was that of an online bulletin board that would connect the small alpaca grower with local hand spinners and weavers. Alpaca owners would possibly have something to sell to the general public to increase awareness and handcrafters would get a fiber that they'd love to handle but for the cost of buying it. It is a win/win situation.

But how to get people aware of it all? How to get the world to see, feel and want this fiber? One of Pam Whiting's war cries is, "Learn the lexicon." Learn the language of the fiber industry. How can you describe what you're growing if you don't know the words that are used for explaining fleece characteristics among the professionals? How can you relate those words to the fleece if you don't get your hands in the fleece? Pam believes that every breeder should be able to skirt their fleeces in preparation for milling. She believes that with a little bit of application, most small herd breeders should be able, without having to spend that much time, to skirt a fleece for spinning; whether for handcrafters or for a mill. Preparing a show fleece is quite a different challenge taking more time and requiring its own technique.

Pam feels that skirting a fleece should be the equivalent of a farm chore. People who have

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alpacas are, for the most part, highly educated people that should have no problem learning how to do this. It is practically a responsibility for the breeders who wish to send their fleece to be processed in fiber pools, co-op collections, by handcrafters or simply milled for themselves, to know how to do basic grading and skirting. Using the automobile as an analogy once again, you wouldn't sell a car without knowing how to describe it and its components. Why should we not expect the same thing from people who are trying to promote this wonderful fleece. Pam's long distance dream is that we grow, process and sell our wonderful fiber in the U.S. She believes that knowing how to speak of it is the first step in that direction.

Yolanda Lightfoot is a newcomer to the alpaca industry and was participating in MAPACA for the first time. She entered the field for the same reason as most of us. She fell in love with the animals and was intrigued with the possibility of a profitable financial return as well. She likes the lifestyle involved with living and dealing with them. For Yolanda they are a pleasant counter to the hurriedness of life in the fast lane of business and the speed of present day society. But she does look to them as an investment, and that investment is ultimately represented by their fleece. She is "intrigued" by their fiber. Why? As she so candidly put it, "If a farmer grows a crop and doesn't sell it, what's the point of growing it?" What is the point of looking for and buying the best seed to grow a crop that isn't going to be used by anyone? Sweet and to the point. Yolanda and her husband have obviously done their homework in the year or so before they bought their first animal.

Yolanda feels that there must be support for responsible studies of uses of fibers; for improvement of fiber and finally for the marketing of fiber. She agrees that breeders (herself included) should consider donating a percentage of an animal's upkeep to this end. One of her thoughts was a possible contribution of 50% per animal's upkeep per year. I guessed that at roughly \$600 dollars a year per animal. She agreed and still thought well of the idea. When explained about

Tom Knisely's idea of an interchange between handcrafters and breeders, Yolanda went for it. Marketing was extremely important to Yolanda. She feels that the marketing of alpacas to the general public could use some "refining;" possibly some refocusing or reallocation of money in different areas. In simple language, some new thinking in how to go about marketing and new ways of spending money to that effect. Yolanda loved the show. She was impressed with the organization and availability of information for "newbies." Outside of concern for stress for the animals, she would absolutely come back to the Jubilee.

There were other conversations; a small one with Brett Kaysen about EPDs and how they can be useful in improving the fleece of our animals. Not to mention, of course, about the general improvement of alpacas in conformation, birthing, health, reproduction. That conversation will be continued and talked about for quite a while into the future.

There was another too brief conversation. This time with Shannon McConnell, about judging fleece and how EPDs are affecting it and what it means for the small farmer. That is another conversation that will be continued and reported on in the near future.

And finally, a conversation with MAPACA's own Catherine Beatty. Catherine is a bundle of energy that proves the old saw about good things come in small packages. She is a dynamo around the Fleece Show as well as running the Fiber Arts and Spin-off competitions. Al, her husband, is the other half of the team. He shuns publicity, as does Catherine (I had to throw a half-nelson and a scissors lock on her that even Hulk Hogan would have been proud of, just to get her to sit down for a few minutes and relate the dynamic couple's dream and goals for the fleece industry). They both work well together and have done much for MAPACA's fleece show as well as other fleece shows in the nation. Al and Catherine live, breathe and, I shouldn't be surprised if they eat fleece. They believe in the fleece of the animal as the foundation

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of the industry. It reaches the point that they almost spend all their time at the shows behind the walls of cartons used for the storing and displaying of the fleece entries for the show.

Catherine is sold on the beauty and usefulness of the fiber. She feels that we should push fiber so that the world knows of the incredible fiber, of its “greenness.” She echoed Pam’s and Yolanda’s observation that people have to learn about the fiber. This means marketing and education. The idea of getting a process up for people that want to have alpaca herds, as fleece herds; not necessarily as breeding herds was discussed. The possibility of having a fleece-based marketing organization much as AOBA is the marketing organization for the breeding industry.

Catherine feels that “we are on the ground floor, the pioneers, so to speak, of being the test site ...to get the fiber side off and running to great things. It’s going to take time. It’s going to take energy. It’s going to take a lot of commitment. But that, in my opinion, is the whole point of owning these incredible creatures, is their fiber.” “...I would like to see, one day, [them being] the number one fiber in the world.”

There was much echoing and cross referencing between all the interviewees (without their knowledge of each other’s words) of thoughts and dreams shared by them all. It was quite humbling to see how much thought and energy all of these people put into their own dreams and the direction of their relationships with their alpacas and their peers in the industry. These are practical people that have a vision that sees as far as the greatest telescope and yet have their feet firmly planted in their pastures with their “elegant creatures that God surely put on Earth for their temperament and beauty.”

And so we come to the presence of fleeces that won First and Second Placings as well as Color Champions and Reserve Champions in a halter ring for all to see. Here were the fleeces quietly making a firm and commanding statement. “We are here. We will grow. We will always be here and we are

proud of it and us.” Maybe the last sentences were a bit of fancy, but I swear that I thought I heard all that.

A dream took a large step to reality.

Thank you Al and Catherine Beatty. Thank you Wini Labreque, Shannon McConnell and Nard Mullen. Thank you to those who entered the “Non Breeders” class in the Fleece Show and the Spin-off.

Thank you to the Board of MAPACA for recognizing the need for a place for a vision and an industry to grow.

And, of course, the last and deepest thanks go to the wonderful animals that give us hope, dreams, comfort and pleasure.

Jillian Ramsay Stern



Rows of fleeces that have been judged and have their ribbons placed.

Thanks to all those that entered the fleece show!

Photo by Jillian Ramsay Stern, Ramsay’s Alpacas, Butler, PA

Calendar of Events

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

June 7 & 8, 2008—Dr. Norm Evans—A seminar for serious alpaca breeders. Dr. Norm Evans has set the standard for camelid health. He's coming to Criative Acres to share his wisdom with us, and we couldn't be more excited! Topics will include herd health/management, parasite control, costly management errors, nutrition to maximize alpaca fiber, breeding through birthing, and mother & cria assessment, blood collection, handling and interpretation, skin biopsy and fiber production, and administering and reading ultrasounds. Limited to 30 participants. Cost: \$225/person. **More information:** www.criativeacres.com. **Criative Acres, Jarrettsville, MD. Renee Petersam—410-557-6869.**

June 8, 2008—Alpaca Heritage fiber Fiesta halter show, private treaty sales, giver products, free seminars, obstacle course Springfield Township (Jobstown) NJ. Free to the public. For more information and show entry form: www.AlpacaHeritage.com . **Halter Show Superintendent: Ingrid Wood 609-261-0696 or email: stormwindalpacas@comcast.com .**

June 20-22, 2008—The Prestige Alpaca Auction! Sponsor: Parkview All American Alpacas & The Alpaca Trading Company. Please join us for The Prestige Alpaca Auction, at the Mountaineer Race Track and Gaming Resort in Chester, WV. Parkview Alpacas, Dr. David & Nancy TenHulzen, & The Alpaca Trading company, Mike & Stephanie Barnhart will offer 35 Elite Suris from the hosts coveted bloodlines as well as Suris & Huacayas from SELECT consignors. Included in this offering will be 9x COLOR CHAMPION, Diamonte of PVA. Free Seminars with Dr. David Anderson and Cheryl Gehly. **Contact: Helen Humphreys-Silver Penn Sales, info@silverpennsales.com www.prestigealpaca.com 724-444-4765.**

June 22, 2008—Herd Management Seminars, Springfield Township (Columbus), NJ and Tabernacle, NJ—\$30 per person / \$50 per couple— Stormwind Alpacas teams up with Jersey Breeders to present valuable information on barn design, fences, alpaca nutrition and reproductive management. You can download a flyer with more information and enrollment forms. **For more information contact Ingrid Wood 609-261-0696 or email her at: stormwindalpacas@comcast.net.**

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 is a free service to current MAPACA members ONLY. Please send your ads to Alice Brown, fpalpacas@aol.com or call 856-697-8127.

- 1. Quality Care Boarding in York County:** A very caring facility to take care of your investment. For more information please contact Barb at Hart-So-Big Alpaca Farm 717-779-6980 or email hartsobig@juno.com www.alpacanation.com/hartsobig.asp
- 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 ½" 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.**

"Just living is not enough" said the butterfly, "one must have sunshine, freedom and a little flower."

-Hans Christian Andersen

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