



Midwest Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association

# MOPACA News

## Summer 2009

### Summer Seminar & Meeting

*Registration is now open!*

Have you been hearing lots of things about EPD's? Now is your chance to find out what this is all about! MOPACA is hosting Brett Kaysen at our semi annual Education Seminar on July 25th, 2009 in Kansas City, Kansas.

To add to the excitement, stay for the Sunday panel discussion on the Alpaca Fiber Symposium! Learn what to do to make the most of your fiber.

Added bonus is the "Meet and Greet" on Saturday courtesy of MOPACA. Lunch is included on Saturday. Breakfast and a MOPACA meeting will start our Sunday Seminar.

Registration deadline is **July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009**. MOPACA members receive a discounted rate of \$40 for the first attendee and \$35 for each additional participant.

Look to MOPACA first and go to <http://www.mopaca.org> for a registration form and more information.

**Please Register Early To Ensure We Have Enough Handouts for All Attendees!**

### MOPACA Needs You!

Our MOPACA Invitational Alpaca Show is well known for its quality and content. The reason, because of YOU, our members! We need more of you to step up to the show ring to head and/or join the committees that will plan, develop and run our 2010 show.

The work is not difficult or time consuming, and it is very rewarding to be a member of this wonderful team. Please take advantage of this opportunity to help make an undeniable statement to the entire alpaca community; our show is great for one reason, "our wonderful MOPACA members."

This year we will be working with a "new" team concept so no job will be too big or overwhelming for anyone. Many of you have agreed to work with us again and we thank you for volunteering, but we still need more of you. Please call any one of our officers or board of directors, see us in person at the next educational meeting set for July 25 and 26 or email us to see what you can do to help make this our "Greatest Show on Earth!"

#### **Contact:**

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Robert Baldwin [koality@hotmail.com](mailto:koality@hotmail.com)

Sandy Binder [applesandalpacas@ktis.net](mailto:applesandalpacas@ktis.net)

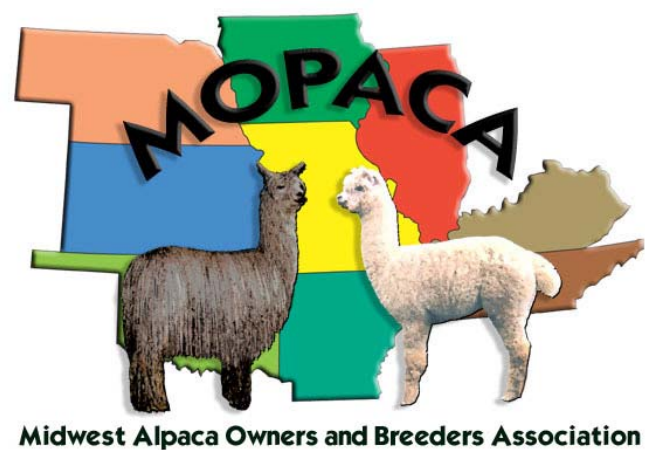
Brian Willsey [brian.willsey@hotmail.com](mailto:brian.willsey@hotmail.com)

Jim Carr [salemhillsalpacas@sbcglobal.net](mailto:salemhillsalpacas@sbcglobal.net)

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or

Renee Prochaska-Keenan [rprochas@radiks.net](mailto:rprochas@radiks.net)



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### Welcome New Members!

#### New Farm Members

**Becky & Tom Baker**

Ava's Alpacas, Pocahontas, AR

**Jonean & Chuck Bonnot**

Alpaca Jo's Ranch, Kimberling City MO

**Kathleen L. Friend**

Friendly Farm Alpacas, Chico CA

**April & Robin Gibson, Everett Magagnos**

Missouri Skies Alpaca Ranch, Bland, MO

**Glen & Laura Haigler**

Sunflower Alpaca Farm, Towanda KS

**Jane Hall**

Little Slice of Heaven Alpacas, Kansas City, KS

**Jim Harig**

Shawnee Creek Alpacas, Eminence, MO

**Doug & Connie Harkness**

Oak Ridge Ranch Alpacas, Melvern KS

**Rick & Cindy Hartley**

Red Moon Alpacas, St. Joe AR

**Claudia & Bob Hey**

Ad Astra Alpacas, Baldwin City, KS

**Cynthia Jamar**

The 'Paca Place at Stardust Farm, Mountain View, MO

**Alvin D. & Joan A. Miles**

Pond View Alpacas, Minneapolis KS

#### New Farm Members, Continued

**Tom & Frances Mosby**

Edge of Eden Alpacas, Dover AR

**Mike & Sally Sapp**

Dove Point Alpacas, Edwardsville IL

**Thomas & N. Roxanne Shea**

Tusche's Alpaca Farm, Troy IL

**Ken & Linda Siddens**

Big Creek Ranch Suri Alpacas, Troy MO

**Ruth & Allen Tate**

New Creations Farm, Raymond NE

**Susan E. Tingley**

Purple Post Alpacas, Lindenwold NJ

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#### New Associate Members

**Gerald & Brenda Anton**

Anton's Alpacas, Cedar Hill, MO

**Herschel & Kelly Austin**

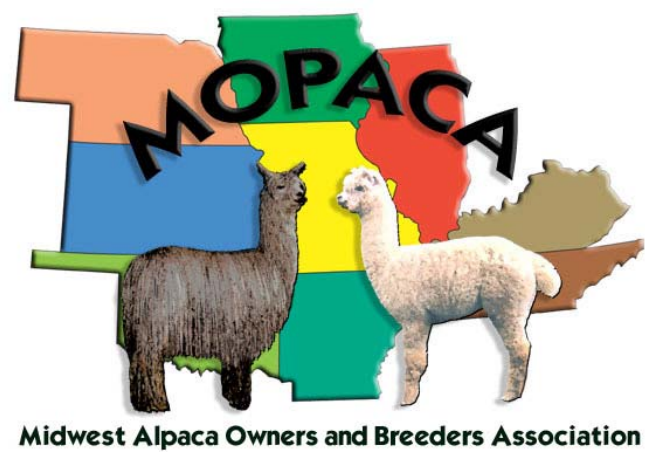
Highland, IL

**Terry & Sue Hart**

Sun Rise Alpacas, Vinton IA

**Carol Havill & Dean Moore**

Well Spring Acres, Sarcoxie, MO



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### President's Corner

#### Fiber

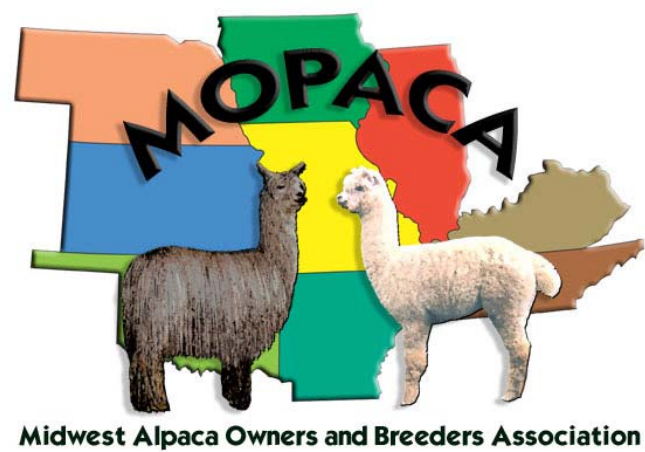
Since this is the IYNF (International Year of Natural Fiber), I'd like to start off by shaking things up a bit and talk about the realities of alpaca fiber in relation to commercial applications as it stands today. First let's talk about some common beliefs regarding alpaca fiber as compared to wool:

It's warmer! It's stronger! It's softer! It's better! It has a better micron count!

I'd like to believe all of those, but it's only true if you are having your fiber sorted. Why? Because wool is more consistent throughout the usable fleece shorn from the animal. 10,000 years of consistent sheep breeding have made that a reality. In fact, there are sheep breeders in Missouri that have animals producing 18 \_ Merino wool today. Unfortunately, the breeding practices of alpacas were dramatically altered in the mid 1500's by the Spanish conquest of the Incan and the subsequent uncontrolled breeding of their herds. If we wish to compete in the world market for textiles, we need to work diligently to bring consistency back to the alpaca. Why? Because the only way that all of those advantages of alpaca fleece are possible are when the fibers are consistent.

The Holy Grail of alpaca breeders is sub 17\_ fleece. That is a great goal to strive for. To start, what can you do with sub 17\_ fleece and why do we as breeders want it? Let's begin by first listing grades of fleece, what they are commonly referred to in the alpaca industry and what the grades can be used to produce:

Grade	Use
Grade 1 – 14 – 19.9_	Ultra Fine (Royal Baby) – baby garments, christening blankets – heirloom items
Grade 2 – 20 – 22.9_	Super Fine (Baby) – next to skin, sweaters, premium yarns
Grade 3 – 23- 25.9_	Fine – yarns, socks, knitted wear (most versatile)
Grade 4 – 26 – 28.9_	Medium – socks, throws, yarns, outerwear
Grade 5 – 29 – 31.9_	Intermediate – batts, duvets, outerwear, felt
Grade 6 – 32 – 35_	Robust – insulation, rugs, felt
Grade 7 – 36_ +	Coarse – rugs, leads, ropes



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### President's Corner, continued

The grading scale above is not just related to alpaca. All fleece commercially sorted falls into these categories – wool, angora, cashmere, mohair, alpaca, llama, dog, linen, cotton, silk, etc. Sub 17\_ fleece is a premium grade of fiber and commands the highest dollar on the open market. However, as you can see, there are uses for all grades of fiber – and surprisingly, some of the most profitable fiber is Grade 3. Why? Because it is the most versatile!

So, what can we as breeders do to increase our profitable quantity of fiber?

Brian Willsey, President MOPACA

### Your MOPACA Leadership Team

President:	Brian Willsey
Vice President:	Jim Carr
Secretary:	Renee Prochaska-Keenan
Treasurer:	Dale Pessin
Directors:	Sandra Binder Robert Baldwin Don Haus



## Sponsors Field Trip

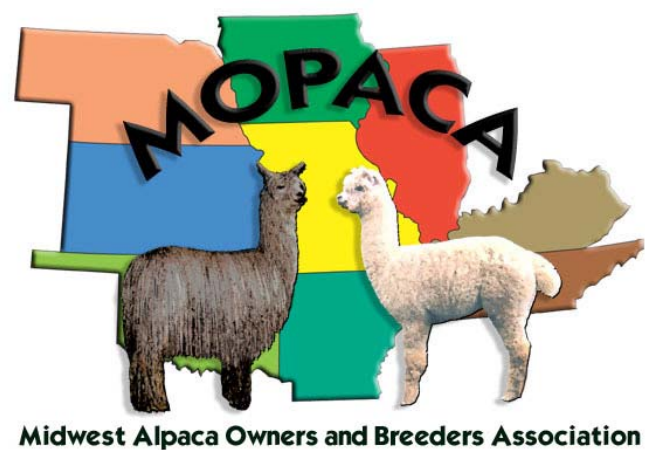
This May, Sheldon elementary "Stars" students joined us at the farm. Students grades 1-5 arrived by school bus. Tina spent time teaching them "alpaca 101" in the store. Then it was out to the corral to meet the boys!

All were amazed at how gentle and friendly the alpacas were. The boys seemed to enjoy it too! We received a personal thank you note from each child and hope to have them back again next year.



### The Alpaca Boy's Club!

Bob & Tina Cochran  
RR1 Box 469A  
Adrian, MO 64720  
816-258-0089  
[www.goldenheartland.com](http://www.goldenheartland.com)



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### Fibery Notes

Ann Mayes

#### Alpacas d'Auxvasse

•MIAS Fiber Competition - First, a huge congratulations to all who entered the 2<sup>nd</sup> Fiber Arts Competition at the 2009 MOPACA Invitational. I was the lucky one who got to see all the entries before the show and I was so impressed with the diversity and skill of all the fiber artists. Can you believe that the number of entries TRIPLED from last year! And the best thing was, with all our new display equipment, these beautiful works could be displayed properly for all to see and enjoy. Many thanks to the show committee for purchasing the display equipment and putting the spotlight on our fiber in its own spectacular arena. And thank you to all the members who entered and supported our competition. Let's see if we can triple the entries again next year!

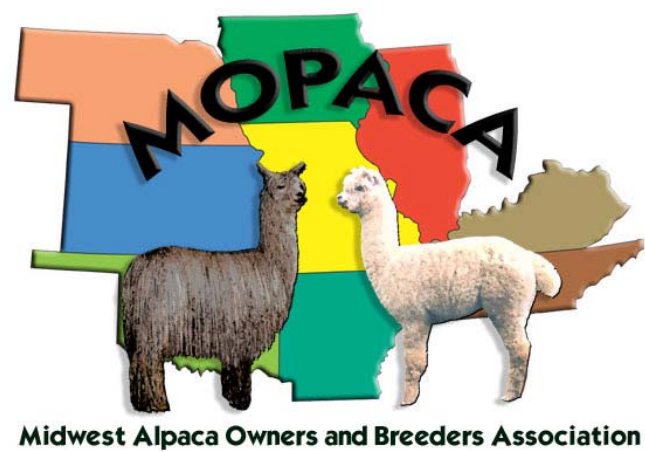
•**Super Seminar** - Are you having trouble connecting the dots between that cute alpaca rolling in the dust or wading through the mud in your pasture to the beautiful creations seen in our Fiber Arts Display? Then you need to attend one of the Suri Network's new seminars being presented across the country. It will take you on a hands on journey from raw fleece to finished product with all the information you need to make good decisions on how to handle your fiber, talk to the mills and give you ideas for best uses for whatever fiber you are producing. Valuable information is presented in a easy to understand format that can be used by both Huacaya and Suri owners. It took me five years to search out this information for myself and I would have killed to have had all this information in one place. Now the Suri Network has done just that. Go to [www.SuriNetwork.org](http://www.SuriNetwork.org) to register.

•**Shearing Day Tip** - Are you like me on shearing day when you look at your animals that you may or may not have cleaned up prior to the shearers coming and given up as hopeless the thought of getting all that hay and trash off their fiber that they can collect 10 minutes before their turn to be sheared? Well this year, I tried something different. I invited some wannabe alpaca owners to shearing day and gave them each a dog brush. As an alpaca was haltered and waited to be sheared, three people vigorously brushed the animal down prior to delivering it to the shearers. My fleeces are cleaner than they've ever been and the wannabes had a field day getting to touch all alpacas they wanted. Caution – not a good idea on a show fleece!

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### Stacy Heydt speaks at the 2009 World Alpaca Conference and AOBA National Conference

Stacy Heydt (White River Alpacas) and Lisa Hertan spoke at the 2009 World Alpaca Conference and AOBA National Conference this June. They presented the 2Friends 2Farm Seminar, From the Bag to the Bank – Processing Your Fleece for Profit, a 2Part seminar encompassing how to effectively market your fleece in every stage of processing and how to prepare your fleece for the mill. This seminar received rave reviews at the 2009 AOBA Mid-Winter Conference in Las Vegas.



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### Alpaca Day Camp

This is the third year for us to offer Alpaca & Nature Day-Camp. This year our camp is full with 11 campers, ages 9 - 13 attending one to three of our one week sessions. Our camp teaches alpaca husbandry, halter training, spinning alpaca fiber on a spinning wheel and weaving. Every session is tailored to the campers attending.

This year we added a Counselor In Training (CIT) position. Three CITs can be added each year. The applicants must have attended at least two camp sessions, be at least age 11 or older and complete an application. Once designated a CIT, they remain in the CIT program for as long as they attend our camp. Our CITs enjoy some extra camp time and training. Due to the interest from our campers' parents we have added an Adult Spinning weekend and an Adult Weaving weekend. For more information, please contact:

Catherine Stickann, Director  
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 573-815-9500  
[busycs4@aol.com](mailto:busycs4@aol.com)  
<http://www.alpacanation.com/sycamorecreekfarm.asp>



*Learning to halter*



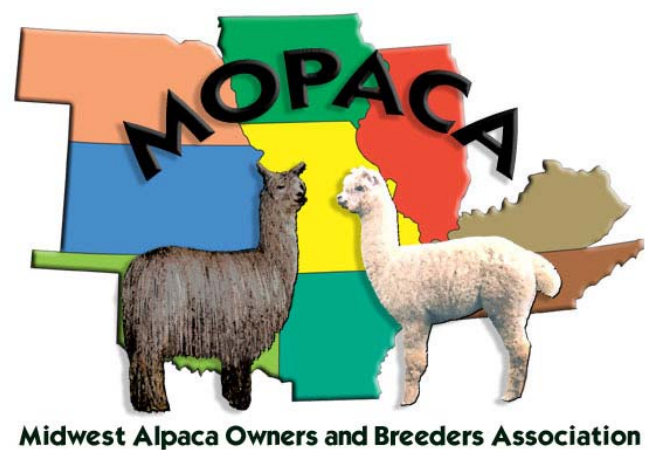
*Spinning alpaca fiber*

### You are making a difference!

**Pete Caffrey**

There are two organizations that are making a difference today in alpaca health care. It might surprise you that both are located in the Midwest and supported by you and your friends. This year three scholarships were offered to veterinary students at University of Missouri, Oklahoma State and Kansas State. These scholarships are provided through the generosity of MOPACA. Veterinary students that exhibited high interest levels in camelid medicine received these awards. These students are focused on alpacas now; they will graduate with a broader understanding of the species.

As a separate scholarship, but again supporting vet student education, the Mid America Alpaca Foundation awarded the MAAF Externship. Three veterinary students from the University of Missouri attended Dr. Toni Cotton's Alpaca Neonatal Seminar using funds from this program. Two students, one from Oklahoma State and one from Kansas State will use this scholarship to work with Dr. Cotton this



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### Making a Difference, Continued

summer in Colorado. Dr. Cotton, as most of you know, is one of the leading experts in alpaca reproduction and neonatal care. These scholarships receive donations from the MOPACA 'S silent auction that partially underwrite these projects.

Mid America Alpaca Foundation's on-line education program was launched this year. This provides continuing education for practicing veterinarians focused on alpaca health care. Your vet can obtain advanced education with the click of a computer key, today. This program is geared toward both large and small animal veterinarians. This fee based program is also available to vet techs and alpaca owners. This program offers a great convenience to your vet; let them know it is available. In fact, this unique program can be accessed anywhere in the world. Partial support for this program comes from the proceeds of the MOPACA silent auction.

Please visit [www.midamalpacafoundation.com](http://www.midamalpacafoundation.com) for more details on all of these programs. No, it isn't some huge national organization that is changing alpaca health care today; it's the effort of MOPACA and the Mid America Alpaca Foundation. Thank you for making a difference.

### Inspired Alpaca Names

**Julie Wier**

My husband, Jack, was in a life-threatening accident at our farm two years ago on May 20, 2007. He was helicoptered out of our pasture with a 6-inch tree in his guts (impaled by a 20-foot tree while in the Bobcat).

The doctors at St. Louis University Hospital that saved his life were four docs on the SLU Trauma Team. I named the next four alpaca males born on our farm after them! Doc Andrus, Doc Bailey, Doc Scifries and Doc Freeman

Doc Bailey is sold and went to Kenton, Tennessee. Doc Scifries is sold and lives in Collinsville, IL. Two of the alpacas are being leased by the St. Louis Zoo and on display in the Children's Zoo this summer. They are Doc Andrus and Doc Freeman.

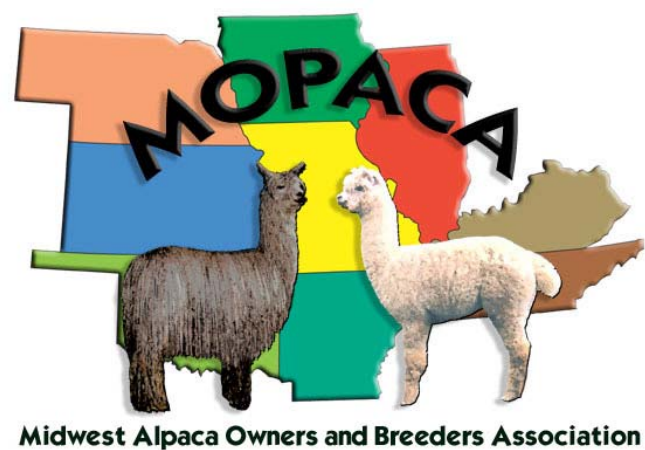
The Zoo is trying out the camelids. If all goes well, they will purchase them as permanent residents of the Children's Zoo. The SLU doctors are aware of their namesakes at the zoo.

A side story: Dr. Freeman is a wood carver as a hobby. He actually was there when Jack came into the ER -- and was one of the surgeons responsible for removing the 6-inch TREE from Jack's abdomen.

BTW - Jack is fine and has lived to tell the tale !



*Julie Wier with Doc Andrus and Doc Freeman at the St. Louis Zoo*



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### News from the 2009 AOBA Mid Winter Conference in Vegas –

#### I Left Nothing in Vegas Stacy Heydt

Vegas was the host city of AOBA's Mid Winter Conference. Vegas in January – what a treat, especially when I left the airport in KCI, it was -4°. But that was only the beginning of the treats Vegas had in store for alpaca owners.

We all go to seminars to become more knowledgeable. And AOBA offers some a wide variety of knowledgeable speakers and topics. But the opportunity to network and talk to many successful farms and agricultural experts such as Brett Kaysen, and to discover that our philosophies are very similar and reaffirming that what we teach and practice is right on track – now that is invaluable knowledge. I attended the Mid Winter Conference as a speaker and came home with new knowledge and new friends from around the country – even Hawaii. AOBA did a superb job of offering a wide variety topics and knowledgeable speakers including EPD's, Marketing in a Down Market, Record Keeping WITHOUT a computer (one of my favorites), and several on the future of the fiber industry.

Most interesting and positively exciting was AOBA's announcement of their role in supporting the Fiber Breeder's market. David Barboza announced that AOBA will change their marketing strategy from the "huggable investment" to more substantial ad campaigns of the uses and marketability of the alpaca fiber. I for one am glad to see the investment of time and money spent on the viability of alpaca ownership and developing the demand for goods made from alpaca fiber.

I decided that "what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas" was not going to be my mantra. I learned so much during the conference – that I decided to bring it all back to Missouri (including the whopping \$20 I took to gamble with). I've already incorporated some of what I learned - including a Blog that is difficult to keep fed.

There were so many more classes I wish I could have taken. I'm so thankful to AOBA for providing such quality information, and informed speakers in such an organized manner. The hotel was fabulous, and the city rocks. I encourage all of you to consider attending this event next year. Just a tip; bring gel inserts and Band-Aids because there's a lot to see and you will enjoy the walk if your feet are happy.

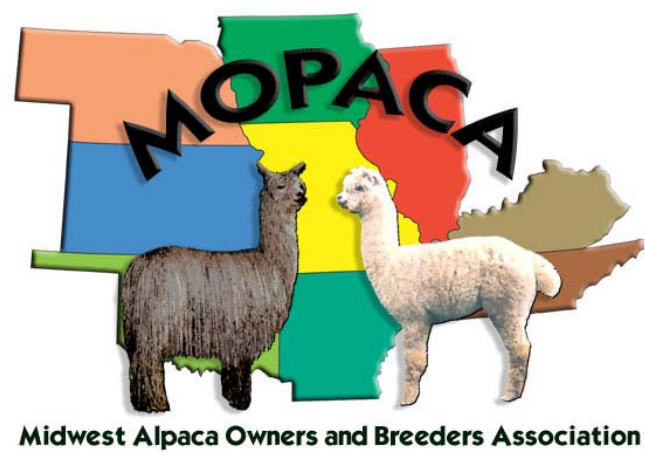
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### Stray Rescue

Wendy Tyler

One Sunday morning our dogs found a baby fawn abandoned in our field, and stood guard protectively. Bret went to see what they were guarding, and found a fawn who was all of 24 hours old! We left it there and removed the dogs in hope mom would come back, but she did not. So as night fell, we brought him in and fed him. We would contact the Forest Service the next day.

Monday morning rolled around, June 8th, Bret came rushing in to my office with an emergency. We had a newborn alpaca with a life threatening condition, we called the vet. She arrived and told us the terrible news, there was nothing we could do. We were devastated! As our vet was leaving we showed her the little fawn. Bret said "hey we have a mom without a baby and a baby without a mom! Too bad they can't be united!"



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### Stray Rescue, Continued

We all looked at each other and said, "Well, lets try... What could it hurt?" So I broke open the placenta and wet down the baby fawn. We then brought him in with the mother who lost her baby and waited....

Mom rushed over to the fawn and said "There you are! I have missed you....HUNGRY?"

"Absolutely!" said the little fawn.

They say pictures tell a story....



We've had TWINS!

It's a Boy AND a Girl!

Silver Phantom and Astrid are the proud parents of True Black Huacaya Alpaca TWINS!

Born: Friday, June 5th at 12:19 and 1:05pm

Weight: 12.9 lbs. and 9.9 lbs.

Name: Toppo and Coppola

Born at: Whirlwind Ranch, Lebanon MO



*Do you have stories, events, updates and photos you'd like to share?*

*Please submit your MOPACA News to Renee at [poncahillsalpacas@cox.net](mailto:poncahillsalpacas@cox.net) by **September 15, 2009** to be included in the Fall 2009 Newsletter.*

*Written submissions should be formatted in Word (\*.doc) or Adobe (\*.PDF) files. Please submit photos as attached JPEG files.*