



Quarterly



Winter 2007

Thank Goodness for that "handy" Christmas Gift!

By MOPACA Member, Phyllis Turner, of Shady Creek Farm

The date was Saturday, March 3rd, 2007. Jon Turner loves to cut wood in the cool brisk days of early spring and we had lost a couple of trees over the last year that he wanted to get cut down. He started out that morning by cutting down one of the trees, cutting it into manageable pieces and splitting it all. Sunday, the following day, I promised I would help him haul and stack it in the wood pile, since he had done the previous day's work without me. I'm not as fond of the brisk spring air as my husband is so I had busied myself in the house that day, safe and warm and out of the gusting wind. Anyway, after lunch, we fired up the 4-wheeler with cart in tow and proceeded to load our fresh cut firewood into the cart, drive it over to the woodpile and stack it into nice, neat rows. The weather was...well, not my choice, but it was...OK. At least it wasn't windy like it was the day before. Jon started a smoldering fire inside of the stump so that it could burn down over time as is our custom. While we picked up pieces of wood, I'd occasionally toss a twig or two into the hole in the stump to keep the little fire burning. (Continued on page 3).

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Michael & Sally Sapp
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PLEASE NOTE: The next MOPACA Meeting will be held on February 10th, 2008, at 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. BEFORE Dr. Merriwether's seminar at the Marriott, in St. Louis, Missouri. Registration form can be found at www.mopaca.org

5th Annual 2008 MOPACA Invitational Update!

"Look" for us in Springfield, MO at the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds! Show dates: March 29-30. The show registration is now live on the MOPACA website at www.mopaca.org. Also on the website is show information that is a must to read. There are new AOBA show rules to follow as well as other important information including about how the Fleece and Fiber Arts competition tags will automatically be populated with the information you enter as you do the online registration! Registration for the Marty McGee-Bennett seminar can be found online too.

If you have any questions, please contact Rhonda Butler, MIAS Coordinator, at rhonda@rbalpacaranch.com. We look forward to seeing you at the show!

WEBSITE COMMITTEE NEWS! Updates are completed to the Herdsire Gallery!

MOPACA continues to update the website with news and information regarding the show, seminars and other area events. The member's map is a benefit of membership and a great locator tool to guide those that want to visit area and regional farms. The Herdsire Gallery has been updated with the latest entries and the next update will be sometime in late February. Visit www.mopaca.or to check out MOPACA member's herdsires for hire. Here you will see some of the finest herdsires in the mid-west region! This is a benefit for MOPACA members and allows 2 entries per farm member. The MOPACA website is a member website. Thanks! The Website Committee; Kim Baake, Ann Mayes, Bev Rasmussen, and Mary Lickliger.

Letter from the President



Hello fellow MOPACA members,

Seasons greetings MOPACA members. This last year has given the Midwest a full array of extreme weather. Ice storms, blizzards, killing freezes, tornadoes and floods along with the normal hot and cold temperatures have challenged all of us. Remember it is okay to ask for help if circumstances get the better of you.

Dale Pessin and the education committee have organized a great seminar in February. The hotel block is full but I was able to reserve a room with AAA rates. Attending just one of the educational seminars can recover the yearly dues cost.

Rhonda Butler is busy with the MOPACA Invitational Alpaca Show, MIAS. Many thanks to her and show committees for the hard work in putting on a first class alpaca show. We will get updates about the show in our Sunday morning MOPACA meeting at the February seminar.

Thanks to all of the candidates that volunteered to run for MOPACA offices. This will be MOPACA's first completely mail in election. It was our plan to have a December meeting but with the ballot mail out dead line, weather and cost, the Board decided to delay meeting until the seminar. I do enjoy getting together with alpaca owners but not having to travel freed up a December weekend, always in short supply.

It was great to see our alpacas out grazing today, Friday December 14, after a week of ice cover but need to get ready for tonight's snow. On the behalf of MOPACA and here at Alpacas 'R Diamonds we wish all a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful next year.

Glenn Alpert, 2007 MOPACA President

Area Events 2007

For Details of each event, visit www.mopaca.org or contact each event coordinator.

Feb. 10 – MOPACA Meeting 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
BEFORE Dr. Merriwether's seminar in St. Louis.

Feb. 9-10 – MOPACA Educational Seminar on Genetics - St. Louis, MO, with Dr. Merriwether.

Mar. 8-9 – Education Seminar – Linn, KS, with Ian Watt. Contact Ralph & Connie Mueller, 785-348-5419 or rcmuelleralpaca@yahoo.com

Mar. 29-30 – MOPACA Invitational Alpaca Show – Springfield, MO. Visit www.mopaca.org for details.

Apr. 26 – Shearing Seminar. – Centerview, MO. Visit www.alpacawings.com

May. 10 – Open House. – Centerview, MO. Free food - Cash Bar available - Children welcome! Contact Annie Earhart at Visit www.alpacawings.com

IMPORTANT NOTICE!!!

Please remember to mail in your annual MOPACA dues by January 31, to MOPACA Treasurer, Mary Licklider, Curly Eye Alpacas, 6701 W. Gillispie Bridge Road, Columbia, MO 65203.

News From the Education Committee

By Dale Pessin

Don't forget to register for the February 09-10, 2008 seminar with Dr. Andy Merriwether! Learn all about alpaca genetics and color genetics from Merriwether. Dr. Merriwether is an associate professor of anthropology at Binghamton University. He has a BA in Medical Anthropology and a BS in Biology, and MS in Genetics, and a Ph.D. in Human Genetics. **The seminar will be held in St. Louis, Missouri. Visit the MOPACA website for details and registration form. www.mopaca.org**

We are still planning a very exciting surprise for our summer seminar. The details are not yet confirmed, but remember to **save the week of August 10th through 16th of 2008.** As soon as we have the exact date, we will notify you of the specific dates. This is another **NOT TO BE MISSED** seminar, so watch for further details and make your summer plans accordingly.

Our education committee is working diligently to provide comprehensive seminars that fill your needs. Several of you have made wonderful suggestions for programs. Please contact Gwen Wolff, Rob Long, Macel Koerth, or me with any of your suggestions and comments on content, location, dates, etc. Thanks!

That “handy” Christmas Gift...Continued from page 1

We were making one of our last trips from the piled wood by the stump to the stacked wood pile and as usual, we buzzed by the alpaca's pastures and greeted them as we passed by. On this particular trip though, it was odd to me that all of our alpacas were at the furthest end of the pastures and all in a huddle at the fence line. When the 4wheeler stopped seconds later, I waited and watched as our littlest one was cushed at the fence...I saw him attempt to stand and then fall to the ground again. I could not get up fast enough and ran like the Michelin man in my stiff-from-underused coveralls yelling for Jon to get wire cutters! For once, a Christmas gift came in handy as he had the Gerber thingy that clips to his belt clipped securely and it was poised and ready for use! He followed me to where the alpacas were huddled around their littlest buddy with what I would swear was panic in their big, dark eyes. What in the world would posses that boy to stick his head through the hog wire fence, not where it would FIT, but near the bottom where the squares are narrow, and tight around his fluffy neck!? And then, it seemed that once he got it in there, he didn't know he could back out and be free...he had his entire head and neck on the other side with the wire square tight around the base of his neck where the shoulders meet. Ok...our next predicament was how to hold this guy when we do cut him free...will he thrash around frantically to free himself and injure himself even worse on the cut wire?! The jugular vein haunted me as I worked up the adrenalin I'd need to hold his 76 lb. body from panic and the flight instinct. With two snips, he was free. We got him cut out of the fence, but our little one could not yet stand on his feet, he was exhausted and out of air. We waited for him to catch his breath and regain his strength and helped him to his feet. It took what seemed like another 30 minutes or so, for him to begin breathing normally again with his mouth closed and without drooling. When I think about all of the various things that fell in to place so that we would be outdoors on such a cool day and passing by the pastures at just the right time to see what was happening, I just can't help but think that this was meant to be a lesson for us. Not a tragedy but a lesson. We need to replace our fences. In our opinion hog wire fences can be deadly. If we had not been home or had we been indoors, we would have discovered a dead alpaca that day. We got to him just in time to save his life. We just put the hog wire fencing up less than 2 years ago, but it's coming down and we are moving to a no-climb soon.

Okay...I'm not finished. Our day was just beginning.

After we had gathered our thoughts and composure, we went to the house for a quick drink of water and Jon announced to me that he would go and check on the stump. I found the nearest soft place to sit and melted into it. I was spent...my body, my emotions, my heart. Callaway was the very first cria born on our farm in April of last year and I was there to witness his birth, to dry him off, help him to nurse and I got his first kisses. I have a special bond with that little guy. His loss would be nothing less than devastating. As I sat pondering the “what if's” Jon burst through the door...”I need help...we have a fire!” Scrambling, I pulled my boots back on and zipped up my coveralls. We gathered shovels, hoses and whatever else we could grab to fight a small grass fire. Jon ran to hook hoses together for length and then to the hydrants closest to the fire at the farthest end of our 650 foot driveway. I ran as fast as I could with shovels in hand and proceeded to try and beat down the small flames with the back of the shovel. This was working just fine for me, until the wind picked up. In the interest of time, I will tell you that hoses kept in the barn all winter will be frozen when you need to use them in the spring to fight a fire. I will also tell you that if the wind is strong enough, a spark can fly a long way. Also, if the wind is strong enough the fire WILL jump the gravel driveway. Another thing I learned is that smoke, cold air and tender lung tissue are a bad mix. You cannot stand downwind of a fire and keep it from spreading! I will also tell you that it's better to not try to fight a fire but to let the fire department do what they are trained to do. When the 911 operator asks, “Are there any structures involved?” A good answer is, “well, it depends on how long it will take them to get here!”



Have a Safe and Wonderful Holiday Season! The Turners.

(Photo by Phyllis Turner)

If you have a story or photos about your experiences that you would like to share, please send to the newsletter editor, Kim Baake at newfenwick@wildblue.net

Please know that due to file size, space on the newsletter, or nature of your story, that not every story may get published. All submissions for newsletter and website are subject to edit and approval.