



Midwest Alpaca Owners & Breeders Association

# Newsletter

Spring 2011

## New President Offers a Message to Members

Here it is March 4, 2011. I think most of us are wondering if winter is over and spring is around the corner. I am betting Mother Nature still has a few surprises up her sleeve.

Each season has its own set of circumstances to deal with. Right now, we are experiencing 20-30° nights and 60-70° days, enjoying the best of both seasons.

Shearing season is just around the corner. I hope you have your shearer lined up, or if you do your own shearing you are looking at your equipment. Our animals have spent the year growing a wonderful fleece for us to harvest. I hope it will all be put to good use.

Spring cria season is upon us also. Check your cria kits. Are all your medicines usable?

I wish you good luck with this birthing season. Fall births, I think, were affected by our high summer temps. I am curious to see the results on the spring crias.

I hope that you are making plans to attend the MOPACA Invitational Alpaca Show March 25-27th in Kansas City. We invite you to join us at the Friday Night Meet and Greet. Check the Web site for times. Please register with Rhonda Butler, M & G coordinator by emailing [Rhonda@rbalpacaranch.com](mailto:Rhonda@rbalpacaranch.com) by March 20, 2011. Jim Tomaszek, the AOBA Marketing chair, will be at the show this year. He will be available to answer any questions you might have about the MAP and NAAC programs. He is running for the AOBA BOD.

Take care. Hope to see you in KC!  
Mike Green, MOPACA President

### AT A GLANCE.....

#### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**John & Alexis Bunk**  
*Bunk House Alpacas*  
Shipman, IL

**Tom & Kathleen Callen**  
*Zena Suri Alpacas*  
Jay, OK

**Britt & Patty Hasselbring**  
*Hasselbring Harmony Ranch*  
Concordia, MO

**Brian Kunkle**  
*ISA Ranch*  
Fontanelle, IA

**Paul & Terry Passanate**  
*Clover Bottom Alpaca Ranch*  
Clover Bottom, MO

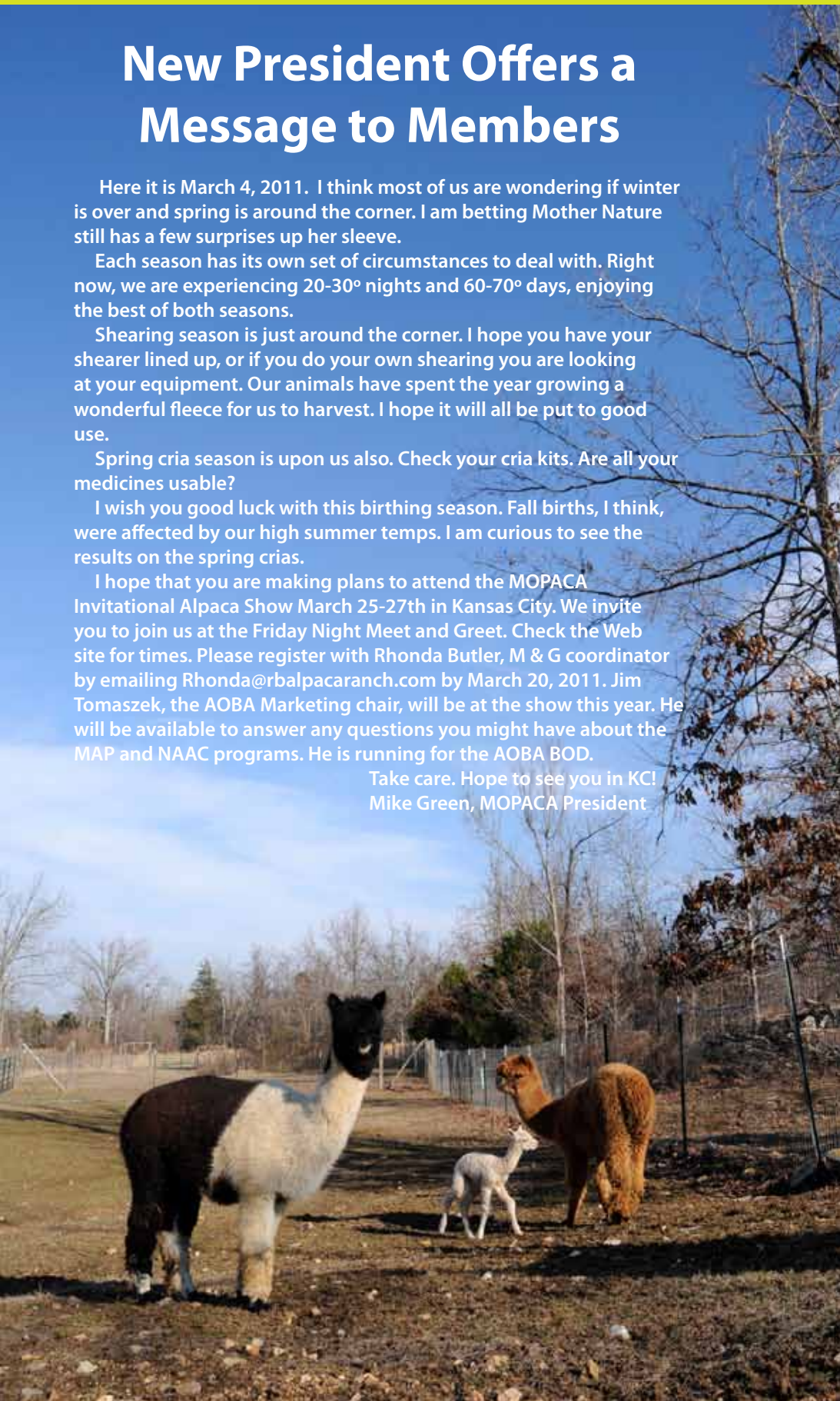
**Tim & Mary Tobeck**  
*Castle Rock Alpacas*  
Castle Rock, CO

**Jim & Karen Tomaszek**  
*Safehouse Farm Alpacas*  
Barrington, IL

**Dan & Carola White**  
*Arrowpoint Farm, LLC*  
Bentonville, AR

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## AT A GLANCE...cont.

### MEMBER INFORMATION

Please visit the MOPACA.org Website for updates on:

- Meeting minutes
- Midwest Alpaca Farm Website
- Member benefits
- Show information
- Past newsletters
- Herd Sire Gallery

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS & OFFICERS

**Mike Green**, *President*

**Jim Carr**, *Vice President*

**Becky Baker**, *Secretary*

**Dave Binder**, *Treasurer*

**Don Haus**, *Director*

**Mary Lickliger**, *Director*

**Gwen Wolff**, *Director*

# Calendar of Events

March 25-27

March 25-27

Apr. 2-3, May 14-15,  
July 9-10, Aug. 13-14

April 30-May 1

April 29-May 1

May 19-20

May 28

July 9-10

MOPACA Invitational Alpaca Show, Kansas City, MO

Southern Select Alpaca Show, Shelbyville, TN

Alpaca Farming 101 Class & Handprocessing Fiber Class,  
Maxwell, Iowa

Great Midwest Alpaca Festival, Madison, WI

Great Western Alpaca Show, Denver, CO

AOBA National Show, Denver, CO

Dos Donas Alpaca Farm Show Stock Sell-a-Bration,  
St. Louis, MO

Fiber U, Lebanon, MO

*Check the Web site for more information  
on seminars and events.*

[www.mopaca.org](http://www.mopaca.org)

## MOPACA wants to hear the voices of its members

In 2011, the board and officers have made a commitment to get input from MOPACA members in a very deliberate fashion. First, the organization issued a survey to determine how you perceive the organization and it's direction for the future. Your input was taken into account in developing goals for the board of directors and officers for the year.

A new committee — MEMBERSHIP — has been formed within MOPACA to give additional strength to your voice. In 2011, a board member or officer will contact each of you to engage in a dialogue. We hope to learn what you value most. This input will be taken into consideration as we further formulate our goals and strategies for achieving them. In addition, there will be a table at the show manned by officers and directors to dialogue with you on any topic you choose. In return, we ask that you address a few simple topics with us, such as:

1. Would you like to see MOPACA hire an advertising agency to promote MOPACA and it's members?
2. Would you like to see MOPACA concentrate more on education or marketing?
3. Have you had more equerries from the MOPACA Web site or other Web sites and magazines?

We are in this organization to promote our collective interests. We value the opinions of our members and hope to develop profitable goals for all.

## TAKING THE TEARS OUT OF SKIRTING: TIPS TO PREPARE FOR SHEARING

Pastures may look good from a distance, but alpacas can find a vine or any odd bit of junk to carry in their fiber. Leaf and hay dotted animals may not shake us up on a regular day in the barn, but it is a nail-biter when you are plucking debris during skirting your fleece.

It makes sense to groom your pastures to avoid trash from being collected in fiber. Most alpacas have a dense enough fleece that the trash they carry in tends to ride on

the surface. Relatively little will work its way deep into the fleece.

Keep your animals "bed-room" as clean as possible. Clean out hay or straw daily near shearing. Some even sweep the area where the animals sleep. During the day, as they graze or hang out in the pasture some of the bits they pick up will fall off or blow away in the breezes of spring.

Be sure that your alpacas are dry on shearing day.

Before beginning, pick the really big bits off the alpaca. Some ranchers swear by using a shop vac. Others advocate using a blower. Both methods have their critics. With a vacuum, some report that it destroys the fleece's characteristic, makes the fiber too fluffy, and contributes to a blanket that will not flow from the shearer's blades in one piece. Critics of using a blower say that it tends to blow dirt and bits of junk deeper into the fleece.

Obviously, vacuuming will be more time consuming. Experiment. It is likely that the method used to clean can cause the result to be beneficial or overdone. If you elect to use a vacuum, you might find it helpful to hold the fiber in place by bending it over as you vacuum rather than letting the vacuum run wildly over the surface. Just remember that strange noise and touching will make for a stressed out alpaca.

If you have dirty tips, it

**cont., p. 6**

# MIAS NEWS

Hello Members,

The Board of Directors and Officers extend an invitation to all MOPACA members to join us at the Friday Night Exhibitor's Meet & Greet at the MOPACA Invitational Alpaca Show (MIAS) on Friday night, March 25, 2011.

MIAS' Friday Night Exhibitor's Meet & Greet has been enhanced this year! (See the schedule below.) There will be five champion Silent Auction Herd Sire Breeding Candidates showcased during this time; general and special awards announcements for auxiliary competitions, and our guest speakers, Mike Green, MOPACA President and David E. Anderson, DVM, College of Veterinary Medicine, Kansas State University will be speaking about our organization and online video education program.

The herd sires and their owners will be at the Meet & Greet for you to visit with and meet these sires up close and personal. The breedings/bid forms will be at our silent auction till noon on Sunday. Bidding opens Saturday morning at 9:00 AM. The MIAS silent auction benefits alpaca education through the Mid America Alpaca Foundation.

While at the Meet & Greet, visit with our Meet & Greet sponsors and thank them for their support. For a list of our supporting show sponsors, see our Website.

## Meet & Greet schedule:

Friday, March 25

4:30 - 7 pm

Meet & Greet

4:30 pm

Cash bar opens

5:00 pm

Food line opens (Provided by Sweet Cheeks Catering)

5:00 pm

Showcased Silent Auction

Herd Sire Candidates for

review

5:30 pm

Announcements and

awards

6 - 6:45 pm

MOPACA Guest Speakers

7:00 pm

Meet & Greet closed

8:00 pm

American Royal Closed

**Non-show exhibitors,**

**if you can make it, please**

**RSVP to our Meet & Greet**

**Coordinator, Rhonda**

**Butler at 913-226-7431 or**

**Rhonda@rbalpacaranch.**

**com.**

If you can't make it by on Friday night, we will have a MOPACA table set up for the duration of the show for you to come by and visit, ask questions, or just meet with directors and officers to discuss future goals and plans for MOPACA!

Hope to see you there!

MOPACA Board of Directors and Officers

[www.mopaca.org](http://www.mopaca.org)

## MIAS Update from the Show Committee!

Update 03/10/11

### SHOW PROGRESS:

The show committee has been hard at work and we want to share some exciting news with you! We have approximately 612 alpacas registered, with 22 registered in optional classes – our biggest show yet! That's 100 more alpacas than last year! Our judges this year, Tim Lavan and Kristin Buhrmann, are quite confident that they will get through this many by 5:00 pm. on Sunday, without having a third judge and ring...but lookout...MIAS could be well on its way for just that in the future! MIAS/MOPACA is known by so many in the industry to present a top notched show – especially known for our hospitality by all the many volunteers; a great venue and excellent Midwest-central location!

The most exciting news is that at the end of all halter judging, we will have Judge's Choice for both Huacaya and Suri – females and males! That is an accomplishment that a lot of shows don't see!

For those of you that live in the KC area, be listening to your radio...you just might catch our ad on it! We have several spots slated for the week of the show. We also have quite a few print ads planned for the next couple of weeks!

Our sponsorships are again over the top and we so appreciate their generous support! Please visit all our sponsors HERE on our Web site. Vendor response was just as good and we have over 30 vendors signed up.

### FLEECE GALLERY, SILENT AUCTIONS AND MORE!

In the Fleece Gallery, you will find the Fleece show with all the beautiful, judged fleeces on display; the spin-off results will be exhibited on our new display rack, and all the lovely work from our fiber arts/skein competitions will be on display. Here you will see demonstrators from area Kansas City Guilds and MOPACA members volunteering their time to help you learn more about fiber, processing, skirting, spinning, weaving and more! Next to the gallery is where you will find our silent auctions. There will be five champion Silent Auction Herd Sire Breeding Candidates, plus many alpaca and non-alpaca related products donated by vendors, exhibitors, members and more! All the proceeds benefit education through the Mid America Alpaca Foundation.

Don't forget to visit the Photo Contest area too and see all the wonderful entries on display!

Even if you are not exhibiting alpacas, we still

Cont.

MIAS update, cont.

hope you join us March 25th -27th for some fun, learning, and networking with fellow members and alpaca breeders across the nation! Hope to see you there!

2011 MIAS Show Committee!

<http://www.mopaca.org/showinfo.shtml>

Social  
animals?

Whether or not social networking is your thing, it might be a new means of finding customers. Owners are listing their farms on Facebook and similar sites to attract attention. You are able to track the number of persons that hit your site and make new "friends."

## Mid America Alpaca Foundation Announces New Program

March 7th, the Foundation introduced a new educational program for veterinary students. Students who show interest in camelids, will now be allowed access to the on-line education program free of charge. There are procedures to control the courses and student access, however, this is a game changing program. Now vet students can gain valuable insight into alpaca health care, presented by top professionals on their lap tops, anytime, anywhere!

This program will help prepare the next graduating class of veterinarians to have a greater appreciation and skill sets to manage the alpaca herd

Pete Caffrey  
President, MAAF



## Education for MOPACA Members

The MOPACA education committee is busy planning another great seminar for winter 2012. We had a good turnout this past January in Columbia, MO for marketing with Jim Tomaszek of NAAF. The Holiday Inn provided a delicious buffet lunch and everyone agreed they would come back to this venue. Mark your calendars for the 2nd or 3rd week of January 2012 for MOPACA!

Topics we are discussing for 2012 include pasture management, nutrition, insurance & liabilities, genetics, and another vet panel for all types of husbandry issues. Please contact Catherine Stickann, Deborah Vassar, Barb Willsey, Dale Pessin, or Mike Green if you have any thoughts on what you would like us to consider. Write to MOPACA@MOPACA.org and your emails will get to us.

Have you attempted to go online with the FREE TO MOPACA MEMBERS K-State online education program? There are new seminars being loaded each month. It is very easy to access this site and there is something for everyone! Programs range from 30 to 60 plus minutes and are taught by veterinarians from K-State, the University of Missouri, Oklahoma State, and some well known researchers around the world. If you are not sure how to access these programs, contact MOPACA@MOPACA.org to get your user ID and password.

Two programs I have reviewed include **The Good the Bad the Ugly of Common On-Farm Treatment Protocols** presented by Dr. Dusty Nagy of University of Missouri (found under herd health section). This video (with accompanying written slides) describes how to develop protocols and when faced with an incident – a premature cria born unobserved – discusses what could or did go wrong. Things such as umbilical swelling, plasma and colostrum issues, enemas, and antibiotic needs are described. Modifications to the original protocols are determined. This runs for approximately 30 minutes and is easy to understand.

For those looking for more intense education, check out **Artificial Insemination & Embryo Transfer** by Dr. Jane Vaughn from Australia (found under Reproduction).

This is a great one to view for lots of information. You might want to open it just to see "Professor Anderson wearing a snorkel"; or to see why there is a picture of a herd of alpacas with a kangaroo! This one lasts 60 minutes and is worth the time.

You can watch any of these programs for free as a MOPACA member. It is the cheapest and easiest way to inform yourself, your vet, or prospective new alpaca owners.

[www.mopaca.org](http://www.mopaca.org)  
[www.midwestalpaca farms.com](http://www.midwestalpaca farms.com)

# Fiber U, 2011

Please join us for the 2nd Annual Fiber U July 9-10, 2011 at the Cowan Civic Center in Lebanon, Missouri sponsored by MOPACA.

Fiber U is a wonderful opportunity for all fiber artists, from beginners to experienced, to get together and to learn from 20+ educational classes being offered and taught by Midwest artisans.

More than 30 vendors from the Midwest have gathered to tempt you with the latest fibers, rovings, yarns, equipment, fiber mills and services to the fiber industry. One-stop shopping and air conditioned comfort are all under one roof.

Our host hotels are just 2 miles or less down historic Route 66 with discounted rooms for Fiber U participants. Car pool, share a room, or camp out- will help hook you up with others from your area to help keep your budget in line.

The classes, registration forms and instructor bios will be posted on the website by the 1st week of April. Please visit [www.mopaca.org](http://www.mopaca.org) and click on the Fiber U button or call Liz Mitchko at 417-533-5280 for more information. We hope to see you in July!



photo by Kat Madrea of M2A Farm

## AOBA has been hard at work for you!

Alpacas have been getting a lot of attention recently. In the past several months, we have seen alpacas on The Late Show with David Letterman, The Martha Stewart Show, RFD-TV, CNBC, in Creative Knitting magazine's newsletter, GRIT Magazine's newsletter, Out Here magazine, Yarn Market News, and in ongoing articles in Western Farm and Ranch & Dairy.

AOBA had a successful presence at the first Mother Earth News Fair as well as Future Farmers of America's 83rd Annual National Convention, talking to thousands of agricultural enthusiasts, distributing information, giving demonstrations and collecting new leads.

All of AOBA's marketing efforts aim to direct target audiences to its website, [www.alpacainfo.com](http://www.alpacainfo.com). Website visitors can then locate farms to visit through the farm and ranch locator or by calling the AOBA office. As a result of the attention alpacas have been getting, AOBA has received reports of increased farm visits and inquiries!

To further promote YOUR alpaca farm or ranch, AOBA has developed the Membership Advertising Program (MAP). This affordable, member-driven marketing program is designed to bring alpaca buyers and sellers together to promote mutual benefits and profits, increase awareness of the North American alpaca, increase the demand for North American alpacas and increase member profits.

In addition, MAP is a partnership with a professional advertising firm to both promote and advertise your alpacas. This program is sure to further increase the visibility of your alpaca business to even wider audiences.

KLM Creativity, AOBA's new advertising agency, has designed a comprehensive marketing plan to maximize AOBA's advertising dollars. The theme of the 2011 campaign is "We are green from field to fleece!" and touts the advantages of raising an environmentally friendly livestock—for the owner, for the land, and for the end user of the eco-products that are produced from the alpaca's fleece. Ads are running in numerous national publications and radio commercials are

being aired cross-country. In addition, we now have a dynamic presence on Facebook and Twitter under the name Alpaca Life. The advertising materials being produced are available for affiliate or individual farm use by downloading them from the AOBA website. Call the office for more details.

And don't forget, [alpacaowners.com](http://alpacaowners.com) features a "Tell Us Your Story" link in the "PR Support" section. AOBA is always looking for new and interesting stories about their members to help promote the alpaca industry.

AOBA has many more exciting promotional projects and opportunities coming up. Stay tuned!



## Megan Scott receives the U of Missouri MOPACA scholarship

The University of Missouri winner of the 2010 MOPACA scholarship is Megan Scott. Megan originally hails from St. Peters, MO. She was first introduced to camelids while studying abroad in New Zealand. She has had the opportunity to shadow veterinarians that do camelid work and has attended multiple seminars and wet labs on camelids. Megan is a member of the veterinary class of 2013. She is very active in student clubs and is currently the vice president of the small ruminant and camelid club. In this position and through her work with the Zew club, Megan has not only increased her own knowledge, but has exposed large numbers of veterinary students locally and nationwide to camelids.

## Kansas State Announces the recipients of the 2010 and 2011 MOPACA Scholarships



Celia Gaches is one of the 2010-11 recipients of the MOPACA Camelid Scholarship. Celia is a second year veterinary student at Kansas State University. She grew up in Tempe, Arizona, where she always had cats, and later a dog and a horse.

Celia's eventual goal is to be a predominately equine practitioner; however she has found camelid biology and medicine to be very interesting. Her long-term plans entail a move to Australia after graduation, where many of the equine

positions she has found are at mixed practices, and they request experience with camelids as part of the job advertisement. Due to this circumstance, as well as her existing interest in the subject, she has made it one of her secondary goals to learn more about camelid medicine throughout the course of her education. So far, she has been able to attend one of the South American Camelid conferences at K-State and aid in the over-night care of camelids at the teaching hospital.

She is hopeful that more opportunities will arise for her to expand her camelid medicine education as her learning career progresses.

Brittany Streiff is a recipient of the 2010-2011 MOPACA Camelid Scholarship. Brittany is currently a third year veterinary student at Kansas State University.

Streiff's interest in camelids was piqued in 2008 when her family purchased their first four alpacas. She was intrigued by their sweet and inquisitive nature. Since then, she has attended several camelid conferences and volunteered at the Mid-America Alpaca Show in Topeka, KS.

She was born in Liberal, KS. She attended Pittsburg State University where she majored in biology. She was a member of the Honors

College and ran cross country and track. Streiff is excited about finishing her veterinary education and anticipates working in a small animal or mixed practice in the Wichita area upon graduation.

*The photograph is of Streiff and her favorite alpaca, Athena.*



### Shearing, cont....

will be easier to comb them out than to tug on them as you skirt. When they are separated, it is amazing how much of the odd dirty tip color comes off.

If you are shearing early, do your intensive fiber cleaning the night before. If that is not possible, be sure to give each animal a break to calm down before heading to the shearer.

Whatever you do, spending a few minutes to prepare your fiber while it is still attached to your animals will make skirting far easier.

Becky Baker  
Ava's Alpacas

## Mid America Foundation

### Star Alliance

Great news from the Foundation, an alliance between STAR and the Foundation is about to be forged. The STAR group, State of Texas Alpaca Ranchers, has agreed to fund a Camelid Externship for Texas A & M College of Veterinary Medicine. STAR is an affiliate of AOBFA with over fifty members.



The Externship fund will provide a \$1,000.00 Externship scholarship for a period of five years. STAR is fully funding this project; the Foundation will act as the administrator of the scholarships. The recipient will be selected each year from a group of veterinary students at Texas A&M exhibiting a high degree of interest in camelid health care. The scholarship allows students to study beyond the borders of their home university exposing them to unique learning

opportunities. This will bring to four the number of externship scholarships awarded by the Foundation. The other universities include Oklahoma State, University of Missouri and Kansas State. We are improving alpaca health care through education.

Pete Caffrey, President, Mid America Alpaca Foundation.

## NOTE OF THANKS

Dear MOPACA,

I am delighted to have been awarded the MOPACA Camelid Scholarship for the 2010- 2011 school year. I want to thank you for your generous contribution toward my veterinary education at K-State. My interest in alpacas has increased over the last few years as I've gained more experience working with camelids. I was able to volunteer at the Mid-America Alpaca Show in October, which was a good learning opportunity.

I enjoy working with alpacas for several reasons. I love their gentle curiosity and sweet nature, and they provide a means to work with a large animal species without as much inherent danger as equine or bovine medicine. My family owns six alpacas, and we are looking forward to the arrival of three crias next fall.

Upon graduation, I would like to work for a practice that includes both small animals and small ruminants. I'm very thankful for the alpaca teaching herd at KSU, since it will better prepare me for private practice.

As you are aware, veterinary education is costly. Financial awards to offset the expenses are appreciated.

Sincerely,

**Brittany Streiff**  
**KSUCVM Class of 2012**

## KNIT WITS Calorimetry

SIZE

One

FINISHED MEASUREMENTS

Length: Stretches to 24 inches

MATERIALS

1 skein of sports weight alpaca yarn

1 pair US #8/5mm straight needles

2 stitch markers

Safety pin (optional)

Tapestry needle

1 button (Buy the button after the project is completed, to determine the size needed.)

GAUGE

20 sts / 22 rows = 4 inches in 2x2 Rib, lightly stretched

DIRECTIONS

CO 120 sts.

Row 1: Work all sts in 2x2 Rib.

Row 2: Work in 2x2 Rib as set to last 2 sts, turn work.

Row 3: Sl 1, work 3 sts, place marker, work to last 2 sts, turn work.

Row 4: Sl 1, work 3 sts, place second marker, work to next marker, turn work.

Row 5: Remove marker, sl 1, work 3 sts, replace marker, work to next marker, turn work.

Repeat Row 5 fifteen times more.

Row 6: Do not remove marker. Sl 1,



work to next marker, turn work. 44 sts between markers; 38 sts at each side of

piece, outside of markers.

Row 7: Sl 1, work to marker, remove marker, work 4 sts, replace marker, turn work.

Repeat Row 7 seventeen times more. 2 sts remain outside markers at each end of the piece.

Row 8: Sl 1, work to marker, remove marker, work last 2 sts.

Work 1 more row, removing final marker.

Loosely BO all sts.

FINISHING

Weave in ends, using one yarn end to sew a button to one end of the piece.

No buttonhole is necessary; one of the holes which formed at a short-row turning point can serve as a buttonhole.

*Free pattern from Knitty.com*



photo by Nancy Haus

## When your new one doesn't feel like pronking...

It is birthing time for many. If you have any questions, call your veterinarian. There is no such thing as a stupid question. For those who do not have a veterinarian with experience with alpacas, contact one of the midwest's fine veterinary schools. Don't take chances!

## classified.

Deluxe Alpaca Chute for sale. Great for restraining difficult animals, for comfortably securing alpacas for long procedures, and for adding an element of safety when doing herd procedures. See product details at <http://www.lightlivestockequipment.com/chutepage.ASP>. Yours for \$900; over 35% off of manufacturer's SALE price! Would consider trading for a transportable shearing table of high quality. Call 660-723-0077 or email [osagealpacas@hotmail.com](mailto:osagealpacas@hotmail.com)

Heiniger (Shears) XTRA 712-670 120 volt (Kit) with the following extras: Harken Fiddle Ratchet set with all ropes; Heiniger Cutters (9 each); Heiniger Combs (5 each); Lister Combs ( 1); Beiyuan Cutters BB-4.5 (20 each (new)); Stanley rolling case. Shears used less than 20 hours, asking \$850 for everything. Call (913) 727-2366 or email [Hummvmfarm@aol.com](mailto:Hummvmfarm@aol.com) or see Don Haus at MIAS.