



MOPACA

**MIDWEST ALPACA OWNERS
AND BREEDERS ASSOCIATION**

LEARN IT, LIVE IT, LOVE IT!

MOPACA Newsletter

May 2013

Upcoming Events

Fiber "U"- July 13-14

In a few short weeks our 4th annual Fiber "U" will be taking place in Lebanon, MO. This event is all about promoting fiber arts education in the Midwest. Fiber "U" is also a great place to bring your fiber as there will be several groups (AFCNA, NEAFP, ABP, Sock Brigade) and fiber mills collecting fiber there and paying for the freight—what a great way to save!!

Registration opened mid-March and has already exceeded 115 and growing daily. Check out the impressive list of 42 different classes and instructor bios at www.mopaca.org. There you can also find a list of 30+ vendors who will be at Fiber "U" under one air-conditioned roof for your shopping convenience. MOPACA members get a discount on registration fees, but you must pre-register if you want to take any classes.

The summer MOPACA meeting will be taking place on Saturday, July 13 at 5:15 pm in Lebanon. Hope to see you there!!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE JUNE 1

MOPACA's dues year runs June 1 through May 31. Please go to <http://www.mopaca.org/images/NewMembershipApplication.pdf> to print an application, fill it out and send to Cindy Jasper, MOPACA Treasurer. Filling out the application will ensure we know your current contact information and volunteer preferences.

In This Issue

From the Board	2
President's Corner	3
Who's New???	4
Committee Reports	5
History of MOPACA	6
MIAS News	7
From Our Members	
Transfaunation	9
Waterer Plans	10
Foundation Focus on Education	11

From the Board

Greetings from the MOPACA Board of Directors,

First, a huge THANK YOU to Ed and Marta Howe, show coordinators, and each and every volunteer who worked an hour or months of hours to make our 10th Annual MOPACA Invitational Alpaca Show in Kansas City a success!

The Board wants to focus on recruitment and recognition of volunteers because of the essential role they play within the organization. For example, there were 50+ volunteers involved in the MOPACA Invitational Alpaca Show this year doing everything from recruiting and organizing sponsors and vendors to stuffing show bags to setting up ribbons to helping exhibitors set up to pinch-hitting as alpaca handlers and cleaning up afterwards. Without exception, everything MOPACA is and does relies on volunteers.

Those who don't show might feel like MIAS doesn't matter or have a place for them. It makes a difference for all of us. First, the show generates funds that underwrite many member benefits not covered by dues. Second, all those show volunteers represent you to the entire alpaca industry. "This is the best show we attend. Everyone is so nice here." These words set the stage for your customers. It's a positive marketing boost you get just by being a member.

Please don't wait for a personal invitation to join in the many MOPACA volunteer efforts. Just contact a board member, officer, committee chair (all on the website) or send an email to mopaca@mopaca.org. We'll all be glad you did!

Other issues being discussed by the Board include finding ways members might have more opportunities to sell fiber and end products and to promote their farms. If you have ideas, please contact us!

Gwen Wolff

Focus on Volunteers

A big thank you goes to the Education Committee (Deborah Vassar, Barb Willsey, and Claudia Hey) for a well-organized and educational winter seminar.

Kudos go to Mary Lickliger for arranging the first ever video recording of a MOPACA seminar. She and the Education Committee accomplished our goal of extending meeting content delivery to every member. This recording is available as described in the Education Committee Update found elsewhere in this newsletter.

A million thanks as well to Ed and Marta Howe, coordinators, and all of the many volunteers that helped make the MIAS 2013 another successful show: Kim Baake, Rob Baake, Rick Bodecker, Jeanette Campbell, Joe DeBrodie, Mary Beth DeBrodie, Cindy Fronk, Mitzi Garlington, Patti Hasselbring, Brian Heimes, Sharon Heimes, John Heise, Stacy Heydt, Dale Hoerl, Debbie Hoerl, Stacy Hopson, Diane Howard, Ed Howe, Marta Howe, Mike Jacoby, Sheri Jacoby, Cindy Jasper, Doug Jennings, Patti Jennings, Steve Knoblock, Tasha Knoblock, Russ Kramer, Sherry Kramer, Amy Lanter, Rod Lanter, Gary Lickliger, Mary Lickliger, Hugh Maclennan, Sara Jane Maclennan, James McGrew, Lorrie McGrew, Marc Milligan, Sharon Milligan, Gayla Morford, Steve Morford, Sara Morris, Frances Mosbey, Tom Mosbey, Raylene Reddick, Julie Ritschard, Ted Ritschard, Andrea Shuffield, David Shuffield, Beverly Stock, Steve Trainer, Liz Vahlkamp, Deborah Vassar, and Jim Wier. We apologize to anyone who may have been missed. Please let us know.

President's Corner

Change

As I write this, change is in the air. It's spring! Every day brings something new to see and feel. Even though some of us have seen more springs than we care to count, each one seems new and different. Change is, however, always present, even in the depths of winter and the doldrums of summer. Each of us changes a little bit every day – physically, mentally, and emotionally. Sometimes the change is dramatic, but most of the time it goes unnoticed until compared against something in the past.

The fact that I am writing this column instead of Brian is a change. Brian has moved up to be one of our board members and I volunteered to follow him as president. Will I be better than Brian? No, just different. What changes would I like to make? Some are resting in my mind, waiting to see if now is the time to see daylight. Most will come from you directly or the surveys you have taken time to complete this year and in the past. One change that I know I want to see is an increase in the number of our members who volunteer and work so hard to make MOPACA better. We are a far-flung group which makes it difficult for all of us to gather in one place at one time. At the same time it also widens our reach. Working on a project together helps bring each member of the group closer.

Our industry has and is changing as well. If we don't want to go the way of the ostrich and emu, then we will need to find ways to survive and even thrive. Some have already, many are still searching, others have already given up. Do what you can to help each other grow and prosper. It is MOPACA's goal as well. One concept in our industry that I would like to change is that of the "fiber male or female." Every one of our animals is a fiber animal. Fiber is their primary gift. Many of them have traits that we believe can improve the overall quality of our herds and so we call them breeding stock, but they are still fiber animals.

Change. It is inevitable. How we face it, what we do with it is a function of who and what we are, as individuals, as families, and as MOPACA. Let's work together to make the most of it.

Eric Morti

Who's New????



Welcome new Administrative Assistant

Please welcome Mary Lickliger, our new MOPACA AA. She replaces Kim Baake, who retired from the position in January but carried on to help transition during February. Thanks, Kim!

The Board advertised the position, conducted interviews, and selected Mary as the best-qualified applicant. We are confident she will continue the tradition of great member service. Email Mary at mopaca@mopaca.org

If you've ever had communications glitch because MOPACA mailings go to one spouse's email inbox but not the other's, we have a solution for you! The Board of Directors has authorized me to accept two email addresses from each farm member for inclusion on the MOPACA mailing list. Here are the details:

- * Send the second address to mopaca@mopaca.org with a note asking to add it to the mailing list.
- * Clear the mopaca@mopaca.org address in the spam filter for the new address.
- * The web software is not set up to list two primary email addresses with your farm listing. If you'd like viewers to see a second address, you can edit your farm description to include it.

Thanks to Sharon Heimes for giving us this idea!

Mary Lickliger, Administrative Assistant

There's a new face in the region!!

Hello, my name is Dr. Jen Lehr. I am one of the outreach faculty members at Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, College of Veterinary Medicine. You are probably wondering what an outreach veterinarian does. I help coordinate private practitioners, pathologists and other researchers, working together to investigate diseases that affect both humans and animals. For example, currently I am facilitating an epidemiology study by requesting more information about field cases of a cattle disease. In some cases I will be collecting and training others how to collect samples. My other main responsibility is to provide continuing education for veterinarians in private practice. This is accomplished by regional meetings, conferences, attending producer meetings and generating written materials. As I get started here, I am very interested in strengthening the relationship between the College of Veterinary Medicine and the alpaca industry in the area.



Committee Reports

Education Update Spring 2013

A 3-DVD set of the winter 2013 seminar presented by John W. Vassar, "Pasture Establishment and Management for Camelids in the Central United States," is now available.

Pricing is as follows:

Seminar attendee	\$10
MOPACA Members	\$20
Non-MOPACA Members	\$30

A shipping fee will be added. Please contact MOPACA@mopaca.org to order your copy.

The Education Committee is currently taking suggestions for seminar topics and speakers for winter 2014. We welcome all suggestions, as we want the winter seminar to meet the needs of the MOPACA membership. Once we get the annual survey results, we will start the planning process.

We are also investigating venue options for 2014. The 2013 winter seminar venue was the result of a MOPACA member leveraging her workplace benefits. We were allowed to use the venue free of charge which allowed for funds to be spent on other portions of the seminar. We are confident that other MOPACA members have similar benefits and are asking for venue and location suggestions for winter 2014.

Please forward all topic, speaker and venue suggestions to the Education Chair, Deborah Vassar at mariposafarm@gmail.com.

MOPACA Officers and Board of Directors

Eric Morti - President
Beverly Stock- Vice President
Sharon Heimes- Secretary
Cindy Jasper- Treasurer
Gwen Wolff- Director
Brian Willsey- Director
Liz Vahlkamp- Director

Please visit www.mopaca.org for membership information, meeting minutes, show information, upcoming events, herdsire gallery and past newsletters.

Website Committee

You won't find individual member advertising in this newsletter. How can you find out what classes others are offering, services they'll perform, and products are available to stock in your farm store with the "Made in USA" tag? Go to the MOPACA website!

All members are welcome to list their activities on the event calendar that shows right on the home page. Clicking on the big "Alpaca Products" button bring up a page where you can search for goods, services, and alpacas too. You'll find photos of products for sale and descriptions of services, along with contact information to make a purchase or schedule a service. Alpaca owners from many states away have contacted members to purchase fiber items already. If you need help getting started, email mopaca@mopaca.org.

Volunteers will soon be recognized on the home page in a special way. Their names and farm logos will be displayed. Keep an eye out!

MOPACA - A Brief History

by Diane Peckham

On October 14, 1995, a group of Missouri alpaca breeders met at the Alpaca Company in Columbia, MO. Diane and Nick Peckham hosted this first meeting of MOPACA.

Attending the meeting were five of the 13 Missouri members of AOBA: Diane and Nick Peckham, the Harrisons (Margaret Stine), John and Louise Martin, Francine and Jim Pettyjohn, and Patti and Danny Watson.

After touring the farm to see the Peckhams' herd of 13 alpacas, a lively discussion of alpaca tips took place. Some of the tips included DO NOT hose the blanket, consider a cool water enema to lower body temperature, hose a limestone bed for belly cooling and provide shade in a shelter or barn and use electric fans.

Other tips regarded how to feed alpacas and how to shear them. The group discussed leaving an inch of fleece on the alpaca to avoid sunburn and were cautioned not to make any second cuts because spinners hate this! Fleece prices ranged from \$4 to \$6 per ounce of washed and carded wool.

Two members of MOPACA sold knitting and spinning equipment. Patti Watson sold Brother knitting machines, and Francine Pettyjohn sold Ashford spinning wheels and Schacht Spindle Company looms.

The group agreed to incorporate MOPACA and become an AOBA affiliate. The chores to go ahead were laid out, and officers and committees were formed. The biggest chore was preparing the by-laws of the organization and then becoming an official affiliate.

Three weeks later, the Peckhams took 3 yearling alpacas to the Small Farm Show in Columbia, and Nick gave a talk on "Alpacas as an Investment" to a group of about 100 people from all over the United States. This was followed by a lively question and answer session which revealed a high level of interest in alpacas.

MOPACA agreed to meet quarterly and set up the 1996 schedule: February was alpaca health at White River Llamas and Alpacas (the Pettyjohns), May was shearing alpacas at Dale Natoli's farm, August was being at the Missouri State Fair, and November was the MOPACA Convention.

MOPACA's first newsletter was a summary of this first meeting and was put out in November 1995.

Did you know that the MOPACA leadership sets aside funds for educational grants for MOPACA members? These funds often go unused. If you are considering hosting an educational event, please contact MOPACA@mopaca.org for more information about the grant program.

THANK YOU to everyone who helped make the MOPACA Invitational Alpaca Show 2013 a great success! This goes to all the many volunteers, from the committee chairs to the people who just put in a couple of hours during the actual show . . . everyone was an essential piece of the whole MIAS puzzle. As a group, we can put together a wonderful event. Let's continue to pull together to make next year's show an even better event!

New News! □ As we look forward to the MOPACA '14 Show, we want to announce that Jeanette Campbell has stepped up to be our new 2014 Fleece Superintendent! Jeanette was our judge of the Fiber Arts this year. Jeanette and her husband have been in the alpaca industry since 2004. She has served as a fiber superintendent in the past and is ready to jump in again. She is certified as a sorter/grader and classer through Olds College and has been involved with many aspects of the fiber industry. Welcome Jeanette. We look forward to hearing about your future ideas for the fleece portion of the show.

Breaking news!

Looking ahead, several show chairs are retiring after many years of service. We need your help to fill these spots. While the work is a challenge, it is rewarding, fun, and worth the investment. The following volunteer positions are open in the 2014 MOPACA Invitational Alpaca Show. Please look at the openings and see which one matches your interests and abilities.

Show Publicity Chair –This person coordinates the advertising for the show that goes out in print and email, and also radio spot placement. S/he is supported by other members of the MOPACA Publicity Committee and show volunteers. This individual spearheads the effort that results in a good turnout of both public visitors and alpaca participants at the show. While no experience is required, good organizational, writing, computer, and graphics skills are helpful. You will have a detailed desk manual to follow from the previous chair and support from the show coordinators, publicity committee, and MOPACA board. Publicity assistants would also be welcome! Please contact Marta and Ed Howe, Show Coordinators, to volunteer or for more information. howe2206@gmail.com

Sponsor and Vendor Chair–This person is the primary point of contact for show sponsors and vendors. S/he will initiate contact with potential event sponsors and vendors and maintain a relationship with them before, during and after the show. Well-developed people skills and good organizational skills are qualities this person will need. You will have the support and advice of the previous sponsor/vendor chair, show coordinators and MOPACA board. Please contact Marta and Ed Howe, Show Coordinators to volunteer or for more information. howe2206@gmail.com

Registrar/Treasurer–This person is the liaison for the online registration system and handles all registrations for the show. S/he coordinates all changes to the registration system, monitors all the registrations as they come in, pays all bills, collects all fees and maintains records of these payments in Quick Books or Excel - so being very detailed orientated and having knowledge of accounts receivable and payable is required. You will have the support and advice of the previous registrar/treasurer, the show coordinators, and the MOPACA board. Please contact Marta and Ed Howe, Show Coordinators, to volunteer or for more information. howe2206@gmail.com

MOPACA IS WORKING FOR YOU...PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!!!!

SURVEY SAYS

Thanks to all who responded to the annual MOPACA member survey this spring. Your input guides MOPACA projects and budgeting. If you missed the survey, please email any board member with your feedback. If you'd prefer for it to remain anonymous, please email mopaca@mopaca.org where your name will be removed and comments forwarded to the board. Survey results will be presented and discussed at the annual meeting in July during Fiber "U" and subsequently posted on the website.



Got Fleece?

Jeanette Campbell
MIAS 2014 Fleece Show Superintendent

It's that time of year again when what you've worked so hard for all year has come to fruition: the annual fleece harvest. All that glorious fleece now awaits your decisions: what to sell, what to process, what to send to fleece shows. MOPACA can help you with the last one. Choose your four best fleeces and earmark them to be sent to the 2014 MOPACA Show next March. Our judge next year will be Diane Timmerman, one of the most experienced AOBA fleece judges. I'm excited about that, aren't you?

For your entry fee, you will get an assessment of your fleece and if you're lucky a ribbon or two! (Isn't purple your favorite color?) Your fleece will be displayed throughout the halter show, right next to the halter rings. What better marketing for your breeding program? And you don't even have to leave home if you don't want to.

Now it's time to get those fleeces on the skirting table and get that job out of the way early too. See you or your fleece next March.

From Our Members

Our Cria Lived in Spite of Me-Transfaunation by Sharon Heimes

"You never stop learning" is true in many aspects of life, and never more true than with alpacas. As soon as I start feeling comfortable in my knowledge of the behavior and physiology of these animals, one (or more) of them throws me for a loop. I have learned a lot from our little boy, Levi, and I am writing this hoping you will learn something, too.

Levi was born 10/11/12 to a proven dam and weighed in at 12.5 lbs. We have endophyte-infected fescue pastures, so he and his mom were dry-lotted until the last fall cria was born three weeks later. We had read that the infected fescue could cause premature births and decreased milk supply in horses and possibly in alpacas, but we had not had any problems with nursing dams previously, so out to the pasture they went. Within four days, the two youngest crias had died of starvation and Levi had lost three pounds even though all three appeared to be nursing regularly. *Lesson 1- I now believe that endophyte-infected fescue does decrease milk supply in alpacas.*

Following this, Levi had marginal weight gain each month, which we thought was a milk supply issue despite giving his mom extra supplements (alfalfa, beet pulp, and oats with molasses). At six months, Levi weighed only 38 pounds, and mom was losing weight (5 pounds that month), and so he was weaned hoping that he would eat more and start gaining faster. At that time he was eating hay but no alpaca crunch or other solid food. One week later he had dropped to 34.5 pounds. Failed weaning, right?? We put him back in with his mom, who refused to allow him to nurse. *Lesson 2- I now know that you can't always count on nursing to resume once dam and cria have been separated, even if only for a few days.*

Can you start bottle feeding at 6 months? Yes, you can and we did. We used a formula of half and half, whole milk and yogurt. It only took him a day to catch on and nurse eagerly from the bottle. His weight went up to 36 pounds in two days, and then he refused the bottle. I tasted the milk and ohhhhh . . . the yogurt made it taste so sour. I thought he probably didn't need the bacteria in the yogurt since he was eating all that dirty hay, so I took it out. He started drinking again the following day, but started losing weight again, about 0.2 pounds per day. *Lesson 3- As long as I am bottle feeding, I will include yogurt in the formula unless I am feeding unpasteurized goat's milk.*

So, now we are about three weeks out from weaning and his weight has reached a low of 33.3 pounds. He is still active, producing normal beans and good urine output, eating hay and very occasionally a piece of alpaca crunch. He sees the vet, who draws blood and sends a fecal. Exam is normal. Blood work comes back all normal except a slightly low protein. Fecal is negative for parasites including e.mac. Our vet, in her wisdom and after consulting with several other vets at various vet schools, suggests a transfaunation. What is that??? *Lesson 4- Transfaunation is the transfer of symbiotic fauna (usually mutualistic protozoa) from one host to another.* How is this done? You take the rumen fluid from one animal and give it to another. It can come from another alpaca (messy business to collect), or a freshly slaughtered cow (or sheep or goat I have been told.) So . . .out I go to find a local meat market slaughtering that day. I need to get there before they slaughter the donor animal so the fluid is fresh. I gave them a thermos that I **NEVER** want to use again, and had them fill it with warm rumen fluid. I then brought it back to our vet, who strained it and passed a stomach tube and gave it to Levi. Along with hay, he started eating alpaca crunch that evening on his own and hasn't stopped since. A second transfaunation was done the next day. Since then he has gained over $\frac{3}{4}$ pound per day consistently. SUCCESS!!!!

Cont'd p. 10

In alpacas, it only takes a few days of not eating for the normal micro-organisms in their gut to die off. Once that happens, they cannot digest their food. So, even though they are eating, they aren't able to absorb the nutrients, and thus the weight loss. The milk I was giving was probably just sitting in his stomach fermenting and killing off any bacteria he was getting from the environment.

Again, I learned a lot from this little guy and thankfully he is a survivor. Do you have a story to share that could teach the rest of us something? Please share it in future newsletters.

No Swimming by Pete Caffrey

If you are using water tanks and you happen to have alpacas who insist on bathing their feet, this might help. I built a platform of scrap lumber to raise the water tank off the ground. A note of caution if you decide to build this: remember that crias need to be able to drink as well as adults.

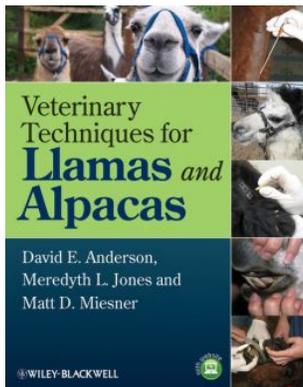
The four corners are 6x6 posts, and the stringers are 2x4s. I used lag bolts to anchor the 2x4s to the corner posts (legs). I think 4x4s would also work for the legs. The top is open, and the water tank rests on the tops of the four legs. This project has solved the feet washing and constant water changing. When the weather turns cold, I place the tanks back on the ground. The tank support might work as a hay crib once the water tank is removed.



From the Foundation-Focus on Education

Winter greetings from Iowa State University! Even though Iowa State University has the oldest veterinary college in the United States (we're 133 years old this year!), our camelid program is fairly young. You would never know this gauged by the enthusiasm of our students for alpacas! We are so very fortunate to have support from our administration for this program, a local alpaca farm and fiber mill. We are so grateful for the learning opportunities they offer our students, and for an increasing case load as word gets out about the services our hospital provides. In February 2011, in large part due to the increasing case load of both small ruminants and camelids and the need for a dedicated examination and treatment area for these smaller species, a new wing of the Large Animal Hospital was dedicated. This happened just 12 months after completion of our new large animal facilities! Our students thrive on time spent outside the classroom and our small ruminant club (which right now includes camelid interests as well) is a very active society of about 80 students. Also in exciting news I received an alpaca venipuncture model created for our program by Ben Kitchen, DVM. I can't wait to use it to teach our students the correct method of drawing blood and placing jugular catheters in alpacas! But to wrap this up, I do want to express our extreme gratitude for the support you have given our students. The cost of receiving an education in veterinary medicine is rising at an alarming rate, and our students and faculty are grateful for your generosity.

Dr. Jennifer Schleining, DVM, MS
Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Surgeons, Large Animal



New Resource for Your Veterinarian

A new textbook focused solely on the health of llamas and alpacas has just been published, entitled *Veterinary Techniques for Llamas and Alpacas* and written and edited by Drs. David Anderson, Meredyth Jones and Matt Miesner. The sole purpose of this book is to meet a recognized need. Many veterinarians were willing and able to perform diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, including surgeries, on llamas and alpacas, but simply didn't have a ready source for how to translate what they knew from other species to camelids. Each chapter includes step-by-step instructions on how to do a procedure, including photos of each step. The book also comes with a webpage link where videos of selected procedures can be viewed.