



EAA Newsletter

March 2007

New York Alpacas on National Television!

~ Rob Bruce, Rosehaven Alpacas

Many of you may know that I appeared with 2 of our alpacas on the ABC television show *The View* – that stars Barbara Walters, Rosie O’Donnell, Joy Behar and Elizabeth Hasselback. This is the story behind the camera and a little bit in front of the camera.



I have worked on *The View* as a stage manager for the past 10 television seasons. We purchased alpacas in 2003 and most of the people I work with on the show (behind the scenes) had a great time making fun of my ‘llamas and emus.’ For some reason they just thought that alpacas were hysterical. It never bothered me; I just rolled with the punches and threw comments back at them. Even Regis Philbin got into the

act, because I worked with him on *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*, but he was actually intrigued by them. At times I would even try to do some industry promoting. When Rebecca Buddig came on the show, I found out she was an avid knitter, so I gave her 2 skeins of yarn. (Continued on page 4)

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2007 Empire Symposium & Fleece Event Made History

~ Scott Young, Show Coordinator, Hilltop Alpacas

The 2007 Education Symposium was again host for the annual Empire Fleece Event, and what an event it was. The 2007 version of our fleece extravaganza was the largest Fleece Event to date in NY with 330 entries, that’s over 50% growth over last year. If you want to talk about a focus on fiber, this was it! The judges for this truly national event were Kevin O’Leary and Sara Jane MacLennan for the Fleece Show, Nancy Morey for the Spin-off and Wini Labrecque for the Fiber Arts and Skein Competitions. Each judge remarked on the extremely high level of quality for each of the forms of competition.



All of the judging was able to be completed on Saturday, which then enabled the Superintendents to get the show organized for display all day on Sunday. It was so exciting to see all of the ribbons and banners hanging on all of those beautiful fleeces. To see the yarns made out of that awesome fiber and to see the creativity and quality craftsmanship of our exhibitors in the Fiber Arts was truly inspiring. (Continued on page 3)

Letter from the President

Greetings! What a weird Winter! I am sitting here on March 6th with a wind chill temperature of minus 25. It was in the sixties in December and the animals were still grazing in the fields in January. Next week it is supposed to hit 50 – YIPPEE (my first cria is due next week!)

Certainly the highlight of the Winter was the Symposium and Fleece Event. Even a major snowstorm two days before the big event couldn't stop us! And then another snow storm, predicted to be 8-14 inches on the day of the vet session, couldn't stop 42 vets from NY, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and CANADA! Based on the glowing evaluations and compliments we received and the record number of signups and fleece/fiber arts entries, the event was a huge success. More importantly, the event has been directly responsible for saving 3 animals (see Vet Seminar article on page 3).

Planning an event like this is a huge amount of work and very nerve-wracking. You have to line up the venue and speakers almost a year in advance and be prepared for the inevitable curve ball (or two) that is going to come at you. This year, the day before we were going live with the online registration, one of our primary speakers, who had been booked for about 7 months, had to drop out. Trying to find a replacement speaker just two months before the event was difficult. But everything worked out! And then it snowed!

This year we had a lot of "competition" for the event. A number of EAA member farms went to the new North Carolina Show that weekend (also, congrats to our former president, Polly Michaelis, who I heard did a great job as an apprentice judge at that show. We missed you at the Symposium!). Within a few weeks of our Symposium, NEOBA, U Mass and Cornell all had "Alpaca Health" conferences.

Big "THANK-YOUs" have to go out to all of our great speakers at both the fiber arts workshops and the educational seminars; the hard working judges (Kevin, Sara Jane, Wini and Nancy), the two superintendents (Cindy and Melissa); Scott Young, our fleece show coordinator, and all the many volunteers who helped with the fleece/fiber arts shows. And, a very special thank-you to Barb Sodums, our Education Chair, who helped make this event a huge success.

The big question now for the board is: how do we top this next year?!

More thank-you's go out to Chris Gilman and all the volunteers who staffed the Empire booth at the New York Farm Show in February. A big thank-you to the McCoy's for bringing the 2 very well-behaved boys. The Empire booth had lots of visitors who took home lots of Empire brochures, pens and products.

Happy Spring! ~ Steve McCarthy, Spruce Ridge Farm

Livestock Guard Dogs and the Law – One Farm's Experience

~Debbie Serino, Aspenwood Farm Alpacas

Ah, the sound of two barking Great Pyrenees livestock guardian dogs (LGDs) can be heard in the distance of our 10-acre alpaca farm in Kinderhook, Columbia County. However, what may be music to our ears is not so comforting to one of our neighbors. This is the "tail" of our experience with our two LGDs, a particularly nasty neighbor, and the NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets. Lucky for us this story turns out well, but the year and a half ordeal that led to this conclusion was more stressful than you can imagine. I want you to be better informed about the Right to Farm in New York State and how to protect yourself and your investment. Here goes...

The process of choosing appropriate predator control should be of utmost importance to alpaca farmers. We have all heard stories about that "other guy" who lost an alpaca to a predator. Incorporating prevention into your farm plan begins now. Though we haven't lost an alpaca to a predator we decided that we would be proactive in preventing a disaster.

The type and degree of predator control measures depends on your area. (Continued on page 6)

Alpacas at the Farm Show

~Chris Gilman, Riverside Alpacas

The Empire Alpaca Association manned a booth at the 22nd Annual NYS Farm Show at the Fairgrounds in Syracuse, NY February 22-24, 2007. Our EAA booth had products for sale, photos on our display board, an interactive laptop with our website, and two wonderful PR boys from Foxrun Farm Alpacas (thank you Dick and Debbie McCoy!). Ann Merriwether provided a spinning demonstration and needle-felted hat making. Our busy booth was well staffed to answer questions from the public about raising alpacas and where to find a farm to visit near them. Thank you to all who volunteered their time! Chris & Mickey Gilman - Riverside Alpacas, Polly & Ken Michaelis - Finger Lakes Alpacas, Casey Mantoine - Golden Oaks Alpacas, Dick McCoy - Foxrun Farm Alpacas, Roger & Jessie Kemmel - Stoney Elm Alpacas, Cathy & Larry Rice - Rice Farm Alpacas, Paulie & Ed Drexler - Springside Farm, Carolyn Clark - Heavenly Sunset Farm, Linda & Rudy Horlbeck - Merry Hill Alpacas, Ken & Brenda Clark - Tartan Acres, Ellen Souva - Tug Hill Alpacas, Sara Lamanna - Claddagh Farm, Becky Hendricks - Victory Alpacas, and Ann Meriwether - Nyala Farm Alpacas.

Empire Vet Session Saves 3 Lives (& Counting)!

~ Steve McCarthy, EAA President

I know it sounds like some headline ripped out of a tabloid, but it's true! Shortly after our February 16th "Alpaca Health Seminars for Veterinarians and Vet Students," we were told of two instances where vets were able to identify a serious situation and save the animals as a result of attending our seminar. Here, in their own words, is what Lynda & Glen Finbow of Split Rock Farm told us:

"After recently attending the Empire Alpaca Association seminar at the Turning Stone Casino, Verona, NY with our vet, Dr. Nicole Bourque of the Dunnville Vet Clinic, our new-found knowledge on dealing with uterine torsions was put to immediate use. Our girl, Midnight Passion, was in obvious distress. Her symptoms would have ordinarily been seen by most vets as colic--a very big mistake in this instance. Dr. Nicole to the rescue. She was very excited (we were very nervous) that she had a chance to perform her magic on Passion's uterine torsion, all ending very happily. Her magic hands saved Passion and her pregnancy. Had it not been for this particular seminar, our vet would never have known or suspected that we had a "real" uterine torsion on our hands. Moral to the story, always learn as much as you can."

A second story came to us of a NY farm with a pregnant female down. Their vet had attended the seminar and when he got to the farm, he was able to properly diagnose the girl in distress, acted promptly and she was saved (the cria had already died). The vet said that it was due to the seminar that he was able to realize the severity of the problem and get her treated right away.



big banners and this year was no exception. We offered class placings of first through sixth place, Color Championships, Judge's Choice and special awards in the Fleece Show. First through sixth place, Highest Scoring in the color group and Judge's Choice in the



Dr. Bedenice in action

Even before we heard these amazing stories, we were thrilled with the success of the vet seminar. Dr. Ahmed Tibary of Washington State and Dr. Daniela Bedenice of Tufts are both amazing instructors. Their dedication to our industry and their concern for the well-being of our animals came through in their lectures.

We had 52 vets signed up for the vet session from as far away as Maryland and Maine. Unfortunately, a big snowstorm hit that day (8-14 inches predicted) and Dr. Tibary started his first lecture with 3 vets in the audience. Slowly over the next hour, more and more vets started flowing in. We ended up with 42 vets and vet students! I was absolutely amazed at their dedication and perseverance to drive through a major snowstorm to attend seminars on alpaca health. They cut their lunch hour short and stayed more than an hour beyond when the lectures were officially scheduled to end in an effort to learn as much as they could about our animals.

These vets are our partners in animal care; it is clearly to our advantage to encourage them to attend sessions like this and important for EAA to continue to bring in top vets like Dr. Tibary and Dr. Bedenice to teach seminars like this one.

Symposium & Fleece Event:

(Continued from page 1)

All weekend long the Spin-off competition was available for display and many people could be seen looking over the results from that show.

As always, Empire offers big ribbons and

Spin-off Competition. First through third and Judge's Choice in the Fiber Arts and first through third placing in the Skein Competition. It was a very exciting show and I believe everyone loved the opportunity to be able to take their time and browse through the entries and look at the quality that was there as well as listen to the Judge's Oral Reasons on Sunday.

A huge "thank you" goes out to all of the volunteers that came to give of their time while balancing busy schedules, networking with other alpaca enthusiasts, socializing with their friends and taking in all of the educational opportunities the Symposium had to offer. It was spectacular that you could spend some time in the show helping to make it go smoothly and making it the tremendous success that it was. Thank you to all who sent in or dropped off entries and we look forward to amazing growth again next year.

The View: (Continued from page 1) When we shot the Empire Video “Showtime,” some of the cameramen and editors were from *The View*. They definitely walked away with a new understanding and appreciation of alpacas. Michele and I have also made it a habit of giving “one of a kind, hand made” alpaca gifts to some of our bosses. Michele gave a one of a kind sweater to Dave Chappelle and I gave a one of a kind afghan to Meredith Viera. Those were handmade by Beverly Meade from Riverside Alpacas. And all that yarn we gave out – all processed at A+ Alpaca Fiber Mill.

After Rosie joined the show, I gave her assistant, another knitter, a couple of skeins of yarn. I didn’t think about it after that. In November I got a call from Jerry Miller from the AOBA PR Company who said he had heard from one of the producers on the show, looking to get information on alpacas. Now Jerry and I had talked quite a few times trying to figure out a way to get an alpaca segment on the show. Never quite came close though. However, this time, it turns out that Rosie was really interested in alpacas, and so were her kids. So for a couple of months there would occasionally be a mention about doing something, but nothing more than that. Then after the New Year it started heating up again about a possibility. In television, especially live television, everything seems to happen at the last minute, and this was really no exception.

A week before the show, the segment was put up on the boards as an active segment, and they asked for two crias. Pretty quickly we had to figure out which ones to bring, arrange for transport medical work, and also figure out how to get the alpacas down to the show. Meanwhile, Jerry Murphy (our farm manager) and I were very busy haltering and training the best cria candidates we had, Augie and Autumn Dancer. They were doing very well, and we planned to bring one dam with us and not the other one. Augie would be fine, almost old enough to be weaned anyway. And then, two nights before the show, they decided they wanted an adult alpaca. The dam we were bringing for Autumn is not one we wanted to be on camera – not a good representation for camera. No time to do transport medical on any of the other girls - everything was really behind. Luckily, Isabella just came back from Ameripaca where she had been bred and had just been on transport and was a very well trained halter girl. But we really had no idea how any of them were going to do under the lights and with 200 people applauding.

Still in all, it wasn’t until the night before that we really, really knew that everything was ‘a go.’ That was when AOBA released the announcement and we told everyone it was happening. Then Michele and I sat down and went over talking points. They did give me the questions the day before, and they also made us run up to the farm and do B roll of the farm (a ‘B roll’ is footage you see in the background when



someone is talking on air). I had given them the “Showtime” DVD in hopes they would use some footage of the kids doing obstacle or dress up from it. They showed a quick cut from it. I think Jim Cobia’s hands made air. What with still working, making sure that Jerry was bringing the girls down in the morning, worrying about the transport paperwork, worrying about what I was going to say, the whole thing was pretty nerve wracking.

The morning of the show, Jerry did get stuck in NYC traffic, he was supposed to get there by 8:30 but did get there at 9am. We were able to rehearse on stage without the audience there, so Autumn and Isabella did know where they were going. Of course the Ladies from the View weren’t there at that point, but it still helped. The alpacas did a pretty good job, and, all of a sudden, all my friends at the View thought they were pretty interesting. No more jokes! Then I had to get ready for the show myself (working) besides going on camera. If you noticed I still was wearing my headset on camera.

Finally the show started, and pretty quickly it came to be my turn to go on. As soon as I hit the stage I wasn’t nervous anymore. Isabella and Autumn were both terrific and easy to handle the whole time. The segment went really quickly, quicker than I would have imagined. Remember I have spent my career behind the camera. Now I have a new sense of respect for people who go on live television shows and do segments. Even though I had been briefed on the questions they were going to ask, the way they were thrown out was amazing. I felt like I was never finishing a thought and there was another question. But later when I watched the tape, it seems I did get a lot of information out to the general public. And then when Rosie announced that we had been given 4 alpacas I was absolutely stunned. What a great and generous thing to do. Amazing.

After it was over, it was really amazing how many people from the alpaca industry sent emails thanking me for doing the show. I think it has opened the eyes of some of the general populace to alpacas - what they do and what can be done with them. And I am very happy to say that my friends at the View now think we are smart that we have alpacas.

And no, I haven’t gotten any fan mail yet!

ATTENTION! RENEWAL NOTE REMINDER!

In an effort to streamline the EAA membership renewal process, starting in January 2007 **all** membership renewals will be in effect until **June 1, 2008**. This will make every member's renewal due June first thereafter. For 2006 only, the amount due will vary depending on when your farm's normal renewal time is, but thereafter will be for 1 year.

My 2007 Empire Symposium Experience

~ Ann Merriwether, Nyala Farm Alpacas

When I saw the purple glow of the giant sign spelling out "Turning Stone," I was ecstatic. It was 10:30 Thursday night and the snow was coming down so hard the exit ramp was just plain gone. I am such a chicken snow driver and my white knuckled drive was finally over. My daughters Kenny and Helen were asleep but bounced out with excitement when we pulled up. My husband Andy was speaking at the Texas show so the kids got to come with me to the Empire Symposium at Turning Stone. They attended last year and think the symposium is the bomb (that, by the way, means good in kid talk). Soon the valet had rounded up our motley collections of suitcases and a couple of alpaca toys and in we went. The first people I saw were Barb and Mark Sodums. A big round of "Yay!" "You made it!" and "How about this weather?!" ensued. Barb, as education chair, organized a lot of the speakers for the weekend and they were out exploring the casino. We were too tired to do much exploring that night and retired to our room, but the girls had to play with every single room feature, they particularly liked the make-up mirror in the bathroom and the big TV that swiveled around. (We don't do TV at home so TV in a hotel is a major cool thing.)

We were up early Friday as I was teaching one of the fiber arts workshops on making felted hats. It was still snowing like anything. Today was also the vet talks and over 50 vets had signed up to hear Dr. Tibary and Dr. Bedenice, but the weather was so bad; would any of them come? Vets are hardy folk, most of them made it and shaking off the snow they were ready to learn some new alpaca stuff to take home to their practices. I was thrilled our vet Dr. Wendy Hartman braved the winter storm. You go Wendy!

Kenny and Helen set up my vending booth of felting supplies and I started my hat class. We had seven felters out of the 10 that signed up ready to jab away. Felters are hardy folk too! Soon we had seven different hats shaping up. The 'snick-snick-snick' sound of the needles going into the foam forms filled the room with the occasional 'ouch' when someone stuck themselves with a felting needle. (Mental note next time bring bandaids).

Lunchtime arrived and the vets were all discussing what they learned and the fiber art class attendees were doing the same thing. Chatter about dystocias and spinning and weaving facts filled the room. Back to the vet talks or fiber arts classes for the afternoon and "yay" the snow let up! I taught a felted Christmas stocking class and again the 'snick-snick' noise filled the room with a few more 'ouches!' Kenny, my eldest, took the lap loom class and really enjoyed it. She is almost done with her first-ever weaving project. Kenny and Helen were proud to help sort the fiber arts entries into classes. Scott Young had arrived with the spin-off entries and they were set up in the dining area where they could be viewed by all. Scott also had more fleeces and the fiber arts judging was being set up. That door to the fleece room remained shut until Sunday morning when, with great anticipation and excitement, it was finally opened and we could see the results of the judging all day on Sunday. This really allowed us all to see gorgeous fleeces and fiber arts and skeins. It was nice to have an event that really highlighted fleece and fiber arts. The Meet and Greet rounded out the first day and it began the theme of the weekend that everyone had time to really talk and get to know each other and connect.

Saturday I was looking forward to attending talks. Dr. Tibary's 3 talks on alpaca reproductive health were just downright fabulous and the highlight of the symposium for me. I'm an avid conference attendee and love to learn new things but I have to say his talks were easily the best I've attended. He systematically went through male and female reproduction and cria issues. His talks were peppered with great video clips of everything from ultrasounds to torsion correction. He answered questions about all kinds of problems and was not only informative, but warm, supportive, and encouraging. Someone would ask a question and not only did he have an answer, but most of the time he had a video clip of the situation he could show. He is lucky he made it back home to Washington state, as there was a plot to kidnap him and keep him here in New York forever! Everyone was tired by the end of the day, but also excited by all they had learned.

That night I promised Kenny and Helen I would take them to one of the fabulous (Continued next page)

(Symposium continued from previous page) Turning Stone restaurants. They picked the Brazilian Steak House, as they are both little Flintstone-esq carnivores. Strapping young men kept bringing swords full of meat. These guys say things like, "Hello my name is Bernard and I'll be your prime rib gaucho for tonight." They just keep bringing meat like, 10 courses of it. When you are done they should provide some kind of wheel chair service back to your room. K & H loved it!



The next day the doors opened on the fleece and fiber arts. Wow! I thought the fiber arts were particularly lovely this year. There were elegant scarves, purses and hats, whimsical felted sculptures and sweet baby clothes. Kenny and Helen were thrilled they took first and second in the

LGD's & the Law: (Continued from page 2)



Your local agriculture extension can help you determine what critters are more prevalent in your area. Many will say that the neighborhood

domestic dog ranks highest on the list of most likely predators. Our particular farm is situated between a residential area and other farms so we were looking to provide safety mostly from dogs and coyotes. We chose four rail fencing with no climb wire and a single strand of electric wire on the outside. We added the security of our LGD's, Buddy and Pal, two years ago.

After doing some research, we decided to purchase two litter mates from an alpaca farm in Ohio. The pups had been living with the breeder's herd before coming to our farm in December 2004. By the time they were six months old they started to bark more regularly and were patrolling their perimeter fence line. One of our neighbors did not appreciate their routine and decided that they had to go- regardless of our agricultural property status or their classification as "working dogs." She wanted the dogs silenced under the local dog control ordinance and was determined to call the dog control officer 24 hours a day. When she received no satisfaction, she went to the local Town Board meetings EVERY month for 6 months. Hence the fun began....

This article will focus on the things I learned without burdening you with the details surrounding this particular neighbor's nasty (and notorious) attitude.

junior division (okay they were the only entries there but in general entries were much larger than last year and so exquisite). The fleeces were stunning and you could really get a look at what makes a champion fleece.

The talks continued with inspiring topics of fiber arts, herd management, and marketing. Again, I learned so many things; the fiber arts talks gave me some great ideas for new felted work. When it was time to head home we gathered up our stuff and headed out, bidding goodbye to our old alpaca buddies and new friends.

I got home and hurried out to the barn to check on the herd. We have a great team of farm sitters but still you miss the alpacas. All was well and they were happy to see me and began to do goofy pranks and show off. Really, I think they missed me. I missed them, but I learned so much about how to better care for them. Thanks Steve and Barb and all the folks that organized this one, it sure was a winner!

However, every neighborhood has one person who makes it their life mission to control their surroundings. Please consider this before it becomes a problem. I took my local dog control officer's advice to contact NYS Agriculture and Markets shortly after our neighbor's first complaint but I didn't realize how long the process of obtaining protection would take. Go with your gut instinct and be proactive.

The first thing to determine is whether your property is in a NYS Agricultural District. This is different from your local agricultural zoning. The NYS Agricultural District Law will give you "right to farm" protections that can supersede local law if necessary. Don't believe that your local Town Board knows what types of farm protections are afforded to residents located in an agricultural district. Our Town (continues next page) (LGD continued) Supervisor and animal control officer were very supportive and knowledgeable, but most of the Board members were not. You can contact NYS Agriculture and Markets directly at (518) 457-2713 to determine your property status. If you aren't in an agricultural district you can apply to be included.

In our situation, we were seeking a Sound Agricultural Practice Opinion (Section 308) from the State commissioner to protect us from "nuisance suits" (barking/noise suits in this instance). There were only a few staff members in the Agricultural Protection unit to cover all of New York State so we knew we were not going to resolve this quickly. The process itself included a site visit, letters to all adjacent neighbors and investigation of the use of LGD's on an alpaca farm. Each part of the investigation also allowed for a response time from the other side. The Opinion was issued in our favor nine months from my initial request. The good news is that the basic evaluation/evidence for using LGD's on an alpaca farm now has a precedent. The guidelines on establishing opinions are detailed and

can be obtained from your local agent or by contacting me directly.

The local Town Board waited unhappily for the decision to be reached. Our neighbor came to each Board meeting with a video camera, a loud voice and an equally loud mother. I came with documentation and information (my social work/case management background came in handy here). I later came with some very supportive neighbors, alpaca farmers and finally with the Columbia County Farm Bureau. The newspapers reported regularly with headlines such as "Great Pyrenees! State Will Allow Alpaca Farm to Use Dogs as Guards." The neighbor and her mother took over "Letters to the Editor." I was called to Town court on three occasions and easily won each time with the exception of my \$2,500.00 in legal fees (I suppose this was a bargain since I used my brother's best friend).

When the Town Board considered fining us we resorted to another section of the NYS Ag and Mkts law, Section 305-a, which prevents unreasonable restrictions on a farming operation located in an agricultural district by local governments unless public health or safety is threatened. This is determined on a case-by-case basis, but was never used in our case since the Town Board never actually fined us under the local dog control

ordinance. After we received the Opinion in our favor, we were notified that our neighbor was filing an Article 78 against NYS Ag. & Markets in an effort to overturn the decision. Surprise...she lost.

We did learn some positive things throughout this ordeal. First and foremost we learned what great friends and neighbors we have and how much support came our way. Other farms, farmers and the local Farm Bureau took a stand for the Right to Farm Law. People we don't know called and voiced support for our efforts in a way that was more neighborly than we had anticipated. Special thanks go to Matt Brower from Ag. & Markets who took every call I made with a positive attitude and encouraging words. There were a lot of calls. As farms and residential neighborhoods come closer together there will undoubtedly be conflict. There is always the hope that cooler heads prevail and positive communication ensues. Learn as much as you can about the Right to Farm and other protections afforded to you in your locality.

"Woof."

(Editor's note: Debbie can be reached at: aspenwoodalpacas@berk.com or phone: 518-784-2696)

Protect Your Investment Before Shearing!!

~ Chris Gilman, A+ Alpaca Fiber Mill & Riverside Alpacas

Shearing season is just around the corner and preparation is the best way to protect your fiber investment. If you will **not show** your fiber there are steps that you can take to make skirting fast and easy – not a chore. Whether you decide to send it to a mill, send it to a co-op or fiber pool, or sell the raw fiber, cleaner is always better.

It is much easier to clean the fiber while it is still attached to the alpaca. Use grooming wands to remove hay and other particles from the fiber. It is easiest to have the alpaca on a lead to do this. Wave the wands throughout all the fiber to free up the debris. If you offer some grain in a dish on the ground you can lower the alpaca's head to the ground and really wave the wand over the spot where the neck meets the back and collects an amazing amount of hay. Pick out any burdocks, not doing so can cause the animal to get cut during shearing. Then use a vacuum (shop vac works great) or a blower (be sure to aim the blower away from the skin so as not to blow the dirt deeper into the fiber) to get all the dirt from the fiber, we know how alpacas love to roll and it shows up in their fiber. Getting as much dirt out will also help keep the clipper blades sharper longer.

During shearing you will be sorting your fiber into bags of first (prime), seconds and thirds. All fiber has a useful purpose, so it is important too take care of it all. If the fiber is damp, be sure to spread the fleeces out to dry or they can mildew. When the fiber is dry, store the fiber in cardboard boxes (you can leave the fiber in the bags, just leave the bags open in the box). Don't forget to put something in the boxes/bags to keep away moths. Dryer sheets are cheap and easy to spread out in the fiber. Cedar blocks also work well.

Now you are ready to send off your fiber or take it out for sales and display!

New EAA Display

EAA has purchased a new display for events where the Association is an exhibitor. Those of you who attended the Extravaganza in October got to see its debut. A stunning green in color and double-sided, it serves as a wonderful backdrop to the photographs that members provided (thank you all that submitted – you're fantastic). This display was also showcased at both the New York Farm Show and the Empire Symposium and Fleece Event. Look for it at all future events sponsored by EAA! Don Tompkins has also revamped an old donated laptop computer (donated by Polly & Ken Michaelis) so that the EAA website, articles and promotional materials can be viewed at the EAA booth without an Internet hookup!

The Empire Alpaca Association would like to thank these gracious sponsors for their financial support which helped underwrite the 2007 EAA Symposium and the Alpaca Health Seminar for Veterinarians and Veterinary Students.

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AOBA Show Rules Input

The AOBA Show Rules Committee (SRC) has requested the Affiliate Congress obtain feedback and suggested changes for the 2008 Show Division Handbook from their affiliate members. Each affiliate will then submit one document to the SRC. If you have suggestions, please send them to me at Spruceridgefarm@aol.com by May 14, 2007 and I will compile them and send them to the SRC.

Individual AOBA members may also send their written feedback and suggestions directly to Connie Alexander, the AOBA Show Division Administrator, at aobashows@hughes.net or mailed to her at 5435 W. Mount Carmel Road, Fredericksburg, IN 47120. The SRC will not accept any feedback or changes for the 2008 Handbook after May 21, 2007.

Symposium Wrap-up

The Empire Symposium was the place to be in February. On Friday, we had eight fiber workshops and an all day session for vets. Saturday and Sunday were PACKED with lectures. We had three classrooms going on at all times with each of the six speakers doing each lecture twice.

Everyone loved Dr. Ahmed Tibary. His presentations included video clips that brought the discussions “alive”. We could do an “all-Tibary, all-weekend” event and make a lot of people VERY happy. Dr. Daniela Bedenice of Tufts did a great summary of her BVDV studies and bio-security recommendations. Sara Jane Macleannan, AOBA judge, was able to fit in lectures on two different fleece topics in between her fleece judging responsibilities. Participants were very impressed with Sara Jane; EAA has booked her as a judge for the Extravaganza.

Tom Costner, the AOBA marketing chair, presented a different spin on marketing that riled some people up and got people thinking and talking about ads and their marketing campaign. EAA member Jeannine Anderson gave two fascinating lectures on fiber arts and design, using photographs of many different forms of fiber art as well a summary of design principles and tips, to help jump-start our creative engines. In her two different Cameliddynamics classes, Dorothy Hunt had people up on their feet, interacting like alpacas and their handlers.

There was certainly something for everyone that weekend. The evaluations were glowing. One participant summed it up best in her evaluation: “I had a wonderful learning experience at both the fiber workshops and the various classes. I honestly don’t know how you could do it any differently or better. This Symposium is very well-organized, with great speakers and the Turning Stone is centrally located. Thank you for a great alpaca weekend!”

Thank-you to all the sensational speakers and thank-you to the participants for being so great to work with. Your commitment to learn and participate is what makes this industry great.





434 Route 13
Old Chatham, NY 12136

“Showtime!” DVD Now Available!

In 2005, the EAA board commissioned EAA members Michele Armour and Rob Bruce of Rosehaven Alpacas to videotape the 2005 Empire Alpaca Extravaganza and produce a video that EAA could sell. Michele, Rob and their crew visited farms before the show to film and interviewed people at the show. They edited the footage and produced an amazing video entitled “Showtime!” In October, EAA distributed a free copy to all EAA members and started selling copies of the DVD.

We think Michele and Rob did a great job on this video. This video should be very helpful to people attending their first show and we encourage you to buy copies to give to your customers. Please remember that this video is copyrighted and should not be copied. Thank you to Michele and Rob for a superb job!

Additional copies can be purchased for \$20 by sending a check payable to “Empire Alpaca Association” and mailed to:

Steve McCarthy, Spruce Ridge Farm 434 Route 13 Old Chatham, NY 12136