



EAA Newsletter September 2008

President's Message

~Steve McCarthy, Spruce Ridge Farm

Planning for NAFD, the Extravaganza and even the February Symposium & Fleece Event – BUSY times at Empire! Everything is really going quite well. With the exception of a slight hiccup with hotels for the Symposium, I am really pleased with the way things are falling into place.

It is during these busy times that I have to marvel at the tremendous amount of time and effort the organization receives from its many volunteers, the Board, and especially a couple of key people – Don Tompkins and Scott Young. Don did a tremendous amount of work this year on the membership renewal system and the Extravaganza. He takes extreme pride in what he does, which shows when you see how smoothly everything works. And then there is Scott – what can you say about “Mr. Empire?” Hardly a day goes by where Scott doesn’t do something for this organization, and it sure shows at the Empire show! It has become the ‘must do’ show of the fall season!

I have to also send out sincere thank-yous to our two Board members who will be leaving the Board in October. John Askew has completed his three year term and has opted not to run for reelection. He has served the organization well as its Secretary for those three years and we all appreciate his work and advice. Chris Gilman is completing her second term and cannot run for reelection because of By-Law rules. I lost to Chris in my first run for the Empire Board and the organization is a better place because she won that election. Chris has been an extraordinary volunteer: she was the EAA Treasurer for years, worked as one of the Extravaganza barn managers, headed up the Farm Show and Empire Farm Days, taught courses at the Symposiums and a lot more! She has done a super job for this organization and even though she is leaving the Board, we hope she will continue to help us out because we need her!

My sincere gratitude to both of these “retiring” Board members and to the other remaining Board members who all do so much to make EAA better.

See you in October in Syracuse!

EAA Board of Directors

President:

Steve McCarthy ~ 518-794-6294
Spruce Ridge Farm

Vice President:

Cindy Cuykendall ~ 315- 685-7410
Song Meadows Alpacas

Secretary:

John Askew ~ 518-692-2083
Sunset Ridge Alpacas

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Sue Zelazny ~ 585-798-0867
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Newsletter Editor

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Gaze Acres Alpacas

Chris Gilman ~ 315-689-1649
Riverside Alpacas

Ann Merriwether ~ 607-785-8226
Nyala Farm Alpacas

***National Alpaca Farm Days
September 27 & 28, 2008
More info contained in articles in this issue!***

2008 Extravaganza Is Just Around the Corner

~ Scott Young, Show Coordinator

The kids are getting ready for school and the mad rush for stalls is complete, so that must mean one thing, the highlight of the Fall Alpaca Show Circuit, the Empire Alpaca Extravaganza, is incredibly near! Here are the facts:

- The main barn sold out in a record 45 minutes, with the second barn closed in 36 hours. It's just astonishing how much support everyone gives our shows!
- A record number of farms elected to be sponsors, which we all know helps us do more every year while making the Extravaganza one of the most economical shows in the country. We have not raised any fees in at least 3 years, while our expenses have skyrocketed. Thanks to all for their extreme generosity!
 - Platinum Sponsors at press time:
 - A.L. Pacas Farm
 - Abenaki Acres Farm
 - Autumn Mist Alpacas and Fiber Mill
 - Cas-Cad-Nac Farm
 - Double O Good Alpacas
 - Flying Pony Alpacas
 - French Hollow Alpacas
 - Glen Ridge Farm
 - HaSu Ranch Alpacas
 - Heatherbrook Farms
 - Helwigs' Son Raised Alpacas
 - Magical Farms
 - Marathon Alpacas
 - Marlee Farm
 - Mary's Alpacas
 - Riverside Alpacas
 - Rosehaven Alpacas
 - Spruce Ridge Farm
 - The Alpaca Network

There are many more Gold, Silver, Bronze, Champion and Business Card Level Sponsors, check out the Extravaganza website for a complete list. Thank you everyone for your incredible support!

- As of September 1st we already have over 800 animals registered with many more to be added.
- 32 youth participants so far, surpassing our previous total by 5, with much more time to register children.
- The world famous "coffee guy" ~ enough said!
- Spectacular Seminars
- Quite possibly the highlight of the Extravaganza, the unmatched EAA Volunteerism that makes our show such a success. Watch for a call for volunteers in the near future!
- News Flash - This year the 2008 Extravaganza will feature Judge's Choice Male and Female for both Huacaya and Suri (if the suri show reaches a level 3 show). This is the first time this award will be offered at an AOBA Certified Alpaca Show and the Extravaganza is proud to bring this to you. All of the champion alpacas of a gender and breed will be lined up in front of the judge and the judge will select in their opinion the most outrageous alpaca of the group. This is a very exciting award and we can't wait for it to take place.

Thanks to everyone, we really look forward to sharing our world class line-up of judges with you and we will see you October 24-26, 2008 in Syracuse. Even if you are not showing animals please make plans to stop by and visit with everyone.

National Alpaca Farm Days

~ Steve McCarthy, Spruce Ridge Farm

In 2007, AOBA sponsored the first ever National Alpaca Farm Day and it was a huge success. This year, the event has officially been expanded to "Days" and is scheduled for September 27th and 28th. AOBA members can register their farm on the AOBA web site: www.NationalAlpacaFarmDays.com.

Again this year, Empire is undertaking its own marketing effort to supplement the AOBA campaign. Empire members can also register their farm's participation on the Empire web site. A series of files have been created and available to Empire members in the member section of the web site. These files include a press release that you can tailor for your farm and distribute to local newspapers and a series of jpg and pdf files that you can print out or edit with your own information to create flyers and newspaper ads.

EAA has also contacted radio stations throughout New York, requesting Public Service Announcements on NAFD, driving people to the Empire web site to find a participating farm. Letters have been sent to television stations throughout the state asking the stations to do a piece on NAFD which includes a visit to an alpaca farm.

A request has been made to Governor Paterson for a proclamation declaring September 27 and 28 "National Alpaca Farm Days in New York". We hope that these efforts will help make your NAFD a huge success!

Alpaca Craft Project for Children of all Ages

~ Ann Merriwether, Nyala Farm Alpacas

Are you getting ready for National Alpaca Farm Days and looking for a fun project or two? These fiber arts projects are fun for children of all ages. For projects 1&2 you need packets of unsweetened Kool-aid Drink mix

Project 1: General Dyeing with Kool Aid

You Need: Pot

Dawn dishwashing liquid or any liquid soap

Vinegar

Water

Yarn or fiber (white or beige if you want bright colors, up to medium fawn for more "folk colors")

Hot plate or stove

Kool-aid, the drink mix of my childhood, can be used as a color fast dye - Really! It will fade in the sun if it's left out for days (like most acid wash dyes) but otherwise is color fast. You get really nice bright colors when dyeing white or beige. You can get some interesting "folk or country" colors over-dyeing fawns. You can dye some fiber or yarn in advance to have for folks to see or dye it as a demonstration during farm days. I usually dye lots of orange, blue, pink, and green in advance for felting projects and demonstrations.

I use two packets of unsweetened Kool-aid to 4 cups of water with a dash of vinegar. I put in about 2 generous ounces of white or beige fiber/yarn and let it heat on the stove in a pot for about 40 minutes (it should be steaming but not boiling). Let it cool then rinse the fiber in cool soapy water and then rinse the soap out in cool water. (I use Dawn dishwashing liquid). Any of the regular unsweetened Kool-aid flavors work. My favorites are Berry Berry Blue and Kiwi Lime Watermelon (green). Avoid the invisible flavors they are in fact invisible and useless for dyeing. The "ice" flavors are a bit chalky, which I don't like but it can be an interesting effect. Let the fiber/yarn dry in the sun or under a fan. You will know it's dry when it blows all over your yard (so be careful if it's windy out).

Project 2: Rainbow Dyeing with Kool-aid

My friend Nancy did a rainbow Kool-aid dyeing demonstration with both yarn and fiber at the county fair a couple of years ago. She had a hot plate set up outside. She let some older kids help pour Kool-aid drink mix right from the little packets into the pots. She used multiple colors and got some really pretty rainbow dyed yarns. If you want to try rainbow dyeing, soak the yarn in water with a squirt of Dawn dishwashing liquid. Transfer it to a pot and just barely cover it with water and a dash of vinegar. Sprinkle Kool-aid in (I kind of make a peace sign and then put one or two other colors in the open spaces between the lines of the peace sign.) Don't stir or agitate the pot, let it get hot enough to steam (but not boil) for about 40 minutes. Let it cool and rinse the yarn in cool water and dawn and then rinse with plain water. You could have this in various stages for folks to see. In general people are very entertained that Kool-aid can be used as a color fast dye.

Neat color combos:

Berry Berry Blue and Kiwi Lime Watermelon

Orange and Strawberry

Cherry, Orange and Lemonade (hint: do the lemonade first with a hint of orange) if you add a dash of Grape it looks neat too.

Project 3: Tiny Felted Planet Earth necklace.

You need: Blue and Green fiber
Soap and water (Dawn works well)
Dish to dunk fiber in
Embroidery floss to string necklaces
Embroidery needles for stringing

Dye some white or beige fiber (Berry Berry Blue and either Lime or Kiwi Lime Watermelon Kool-Aid will work). Get a small pinch of dyed fiber. Pull the fiber apart and lay in on top of itself over and over again. It should be very fluffy. Dunk the fiber in warm soapy water (any soap will do but Dawn dishwashing liquid works well). You can kind of toss the wet fiber “blob” back and forth between your hands and it will form a “skin”. Pretend the fiber is clay and start rolling it around in your hands. Pinch it from all directions and alternate pinching and rolling. If it’s not felting (turning into a hard bead) dunk it in the soapy water again. Eventually (in about 5 minutes usually), if you keep rolling and pinching it will felt into a bead. Rinse in the non-soapy water. String your bead. (I use an embroidery needle and embroidery floss). Kids generally just wear them a little wet. You can make rainbow beads too with multiple colors. You can make natural colored beads too.

Project 4: Making a piece of felt

You need:
A felting mat (Purchase some cheap plastic but textured placements, the ones that kind of look woven. Bubble wrap, textured shelf liner, or bamboo placemats also work).
Soap and warm water
Carded fiber
Large pan to dunk in
Surface to roll on (can be a picnic table or your driveway) some place that can take spilled water
Rubber Bands

If you use those textured placemats or bubble wrap you can cut them to be the size you want to make (a few inches square to really big). It depends how much fiber you want to use. Layer the fiber on the mat all going the same direction. Lay another layer going the opposite direction. Lay a third layer going the same as the first layer. Sprinkle the fiber with warm soapy water. Roll up the placemat and put some tight rubber bands on the end. Dunk in warm soapy water. Roll roll roll (kids love the slopping in water part and the rolling part). After about five minutes and you have a piece of felt!

If you don’t have carded fiber you can get a couple of slicker brushes used for dog grooming and card some. Actually that is something else folks can do! Let them card their fiber for the project. I like to use black seconds and thirds for the felt pieces and then lay in some bright Kool-aid dyed contrasting colors.

Try one or more of these out before farm days and see if they work okay for you. It’s a great way to entertain not just kids but everyone. They get a little alpaca souvenir to take home! They will come back next year to do it again. If you have any questions just call or e-mail me (amerriwe@binghamton.edu , 607-785-8226)

Extravaganza Silent Auction & Raffle

~ Steve McCarthy, Spruce Ridge Farm

In the last newsletter, I wrote that we were replacing the 2007 online auction of stud service to the 3 elite males with a raffle. Unfortunately, that is not going to work out. This year to help raise extra money for alpaca-related charities, we are going to have a herd sire silent auction limited to 10 quality studs. Lou Eustance of French Hollow Alpacas has very graciously agreed to coordinate all of the Extravaganza Silent Auction this year – both the herd sire piece and the regular silent auction. Farms interested in donating a breeding to their stud can send information on the stud to Lou at FHalpacas@aol.com. Lou will work with the Board to select 10 studs.

Farms or businesses interested in donating other items to the silent auction can contact Lou as well. We have already received a number of great silent auction items such as an aerial photo shoot of your farm, a men’s alpaca jacket, and a barn wireless camera system to name just a few. There will not be any raffle this year. We thank all of you who have responded so early with your donations. If you haven't done so already, please consider submitting your silent auction donation today. It is a great opportunity to promote your farm, your farm products and your herd sires to the Empire Alpaca Association community while also helping raise much needed funding for alpaca related charities. Please help us make this the best fund raiser yet! It cannot succeed without your generous participation.

Empire Alpaca Extravaganza Photo Contest

~ Barb Rossi, Bel Canto Farm

The Empire Alpaca Association's 4th Annual Photo Contest has some exciting changes and additions:

1. **Sponsorship:** This year's contest is judged and sponsored by Doug and Donna Herrmann of Photography by Herrmann, LLC.
2. **Cash Prize Awards:** The top three winners in each category will receive a cash award.
3. **Youth Category:** For those young aspiring photographers we have added a category for children under the age of 18 who would like to show off their photographic talents.
4. **Expanded Participation:** The photo contest is now open to non-members as well as EAA members.

The photo contest is fun for all and a great way to showcase your farm and alpacas. For more information on the Photo Contest go to the Empire Alpaca Association website: www.nyalpacas.com, or contact: Barb Rossi at info@belcantofarm.com or 607-387-7122.

2009 Symposium

~ Steve McCarthy, Spruce Ridge Farm

The 2009 Winter Educational Symposium and Fleece Event is scheduled for February 6-8 in Syracuse at the Renaissance Hotel. I have lined up three of the main speakers. Dr. Toni Cotton will be focusing on reproductive health. We hope to have live animals as part of her ultrasounds demonstrations, at least at the vet session on Friday. Dr. Robert Van Saun of Penn State will cover nutrition. He has a PhD in ruminant nutrition. Brett Kaysen, of Colorado State University, will speak on Expected Progeny Differences (EPD). Additional speakers are being lined up. Further updates will be posted on the EAA web site as they become available.

AFCNA Clip Collection at the Extravaganza

~ Cindy Cuykendall, Song Meadows Alpacas

The Alpaca Fiber Cooperative of North America is once again subsidizing freight charges for Regional Clip Collections. For shipments of 200 lbs. or more, AFCNA will pay 50% of the freight charges. On shipments of 500 lbs. or more, AFCNA will pay 100% of the freight charges. In order to assist Empire members and Extravaganza attendees in taking advantage of this tremendous opportunity, we will be offering a Regional Clip Collection at the Extravaganza. In order to take advantage of this money saving opportunity, you must box your fiber according to AFCNA requirements and pack it in 18" x 18" x 18" boxes. Fiber packaging instructions can be found on the AFCNA website, www.afcna.com. Once you have your fiber boxed, pre-register by emailing one of the Clip Coordinators listed below. Bring your prepackaged fiber to the Extravaganza and drop it off at the Clip Collection site. It's that simple! Fiber will be collected on Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 to 2:00. If you need to arrange a different time to drop off your fiber, you may do so by contacting one of the Regional Clip Coordinators.

REGIONAL CLIP COORDINATORS: Ann Kennedy – (315) 406-5455 or email: limerickhill@yahoo.com
Cindy Cuykendall – (315) 416-3142 or email: cuykendallfarms@aol.com

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- Follow the packing instructions on the AFCNA website. Both prime and seconds will be accepted. Each box must have your farm name, co-op number, and box number (ie. Box 1 of 5) clearly marked on the outside.
- You **MUST** use 18" x 18" x 18" boxes. In order to load the fiber onto pallets as required by AFCNA, we must have uniform size containers. Fiber will not be accepted in odd-sized boxes. We will have a limited supply of boxes on hand for purchase.
- You must pre-register your fiber for the collection. Email one of the coordinators with the number of boxes and total weight of the fiber you wish to contribute.
- If you are not a co-op member, you can still send fiber. Contact Ann Kennedy for information.

This is a great opportunity to send your fleece to the National Co-op without paying expensive freight charges. Don't miss out!

Affiliate Congress

~ Steve McCarthy, Spruce Ridge Farm

In July, I attended three days of meetings in Nashville as the EAA representative to the Affiliate Congress (AC). Each of the 41 affiliate Presidents is invited to join the AC. These semi-annual gatherings started 2 years ago and the weekend usually consists of meetings of the AC members and then a meeting with the AOBA Board. The concept behind the creation of the AC was to improve communication amongst affiliates and between the affiliates and the AOBA Board. The AC also develops its own series of tasks and has committees to work on the various projects.

While I may be personally a bit frustrated that we are still discussing organizational structure issues after two years, I am pleased with a number of the actions that the AC has accomplished. The latest version of the organizational structure and the AC's interaction with the AOBA Board has been drafted; it is pending an approval vote of the AC and then presentation to the AOBA Board. If anyone is interested in viewing this draft document, please contact me.

My favorite part of the meetings is the discussion and exchange amongst the affiliates. The affiliates range in size from very small (a dozen members) to very large (400+ members) so it is interesting to hear about what the affiliates are doing, how they interact with their membership and what they provide to their membership.

AOBA Education Committee

~ Steve McCarthy, Spruce Ridge Farm

Several months ago, the AOBA Board requested that the Affiliate Congress name liaisons to several of the AOBA committees in an effort to keep the affiliates aware of the committees' activities and enhance communication between the committees, the affiliates and the affiliate membership. I volunteered to be the liaison to the AOBA Education Committee (EC), since education is a major interest for me. I also hoped that it would help me with organizing the EAA Symposium and Extravaganza seminars.

While I don't relish the thought of yet another monthly teleconference call (I now have 3 alpaca-related monthly teleconference calls in which I participate), I do enjoy the education committee.

The EC currently has 4 major projects:

- Alpaca Breeders Handbook (completed, being reviewed by 50 breeders)
- Distance Learning (DVD series under development on various alpaca topics)
- Speakers for the Mid Winter Conference
- Speakers for the National Conference

We are looking for 80 speakers (that's right, speakers, not speaking slots!) for the Nationals in June. People interested in speaking at either conference can submit their information online via the AOBA web site and the EC members will review it. If you want to speak or know of someone who would be a good speaker, you can also contact me or one of the EC members for more info or visit the AOBA web site to complete an application.

The Education Committee is also looking for additional members, so if you would like to join this group, please contact me.

By-Law Amendment

~ Steve McCarthy, Spruce Ridge Farm

Included in the election package that was mailed in early September is a sheet containing information and ballot for an amendment to the Empire Alpaca Association's By-Laws. This amendment was discussed at the 2007 Annual Meeting and is necessary because of way the current By-Law is worded. Section 9.1 of the By-Laws requires an annual "certified audit" of the financial statements by a certified public accountant (CPA). Due to an unintentional oversight, a certified audit had never been done. When the Board of Directors became aware of this oversight, the decision was made to perform a certified audit of the then most recent financials, the year-ended December 31, 2006.

A CPA firm performed the audit and issued an unqualified opinion (also called a "clean" opinion) in 2008. This opinion means that the financial statements were fairly stated and no issues of misstatement or misappropriation were identified. The CPA firm also issued two Letters to Management recommending changes to our policies and

procedures. All significant recommendations, such as the purchase of accounting software, have been implemented. The audited financial statements and the Letters to Management can be downloaded from the member section of the Empire web site.

The Board strategy, as outlined at the Annual Meeting, was to first comply with the By-Laws and have a certified audit performed and then request a By-Law amendment if there were no significant issues uncovered in the audit. A certified financial audit of an organization of our size and nature is unusual. A survey of the 40 other AOBA affiliates indicated that no other affiliate has this requirement. Also, the annual cost of the audit (\$8,000) would make it one of the Association's largest single expense items; about two-thirds of the amount collected for members dues would be used to pay for the audit! The Board believes that these funds would be better used on marketing or funding alpaca related charities.

Since the audit of 2006 did not disclose any irregularities or significant issues, the Board believes that the elimination of the annual requirement is in the best interest of the Association. The proposed wording of the By-Law would allow the Board to request an audit if the Board deems it necessary or appropriate.

The Current and Proposed wordings are below:

Current By-Law wording: The Treasurer shall cause the books and records of the Association to be certified annually by a certified public accountant.

Proposed By-Law wording: At its discretion, the Board of Directors may cause the books and records of the Association to be certified by a certified public accountant.

The Board intends to continue to use a CPA firm to prepare its tax returns, which is unrelated to the audit requirement and separate from the \$8,000 expense.

The Board urges you to support this amendment and send in your By-Law ballot along with your Board candidate election ballot. Please contact one of your Board members if you have any questions on this issue. As is the case with the election of Board members, only New York state farm members can vote in the By-Law election, as per the By-Laws.

2009 AOBA Summer National and World Alpaca Conference

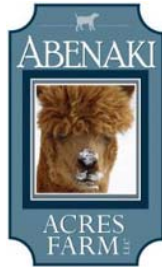
~ Scott Young, Hilltop Alpacas

If you haven't heard the AOBA Summer National Conference and Show is back in the east next year and it has company, the World Conference. The Australians started the World Conference in 2008 and they have asked the Americans to pick up the torch and host the '09 event which AOBA has excitedly agreed to. The Conference will be June 2-7, 2009 in Cleveland, OH at the incredible and ultra-modern IX Center, one of the largest conference facilities in the world. Please put this event on your calendars now and start saving up the money if needed because this is going to be an event not to be missed, in addition EAA needs to show the world that NEW YORK Alpacas Rock.

We are expecting this to be a conference like no other, potentially 6 show rings, thousands of fleeces, events at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, the best line-up of speakers that AOBA has ever offered, an incredible fashion show, tours to farms and wonders of the world, etc. AOBA and Cleveland are opening the alpaca doors to the world and since NY is so close we need to be there to help and support as much as possible. Also new this year is AOBA dollars, available for purchasing AOBA services for volunteers.

This promises to be an amazing opportunity to show the world what the American Alpaca Industry is all about and we hope you look forward to being a part of it. Of course much more will be announced by AOBA in the very near future we just wanted to plant the seed now.

THANK YOU to our 2008 Platinum Sponsors:



Glen Ridge Farm



Marathon Alpacas, LLC



THANK YOU to our 2008 GOLD Sponsors:



Bay Shore Alpacas



Cedar Brook Alpacas

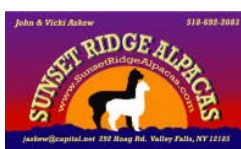
Cinco C's Alpacas



LONG ACRES alpaca farm



Paca Shack Farms



The Farm at Rainbow's End





434 Route 13
Old Chatham, NY 12136

**Empire Alpaca Extravaganza
October 25 & 26, 2008
Check-in October 24
New York State Fairgrounds
Syracuse, NY**

Judges: Jude Anderson, Charlene Friedman, Peter Kennedy, Linda Hayes

Bring your boxed fiber for the AFCNA fiber Co-op pickup, FREE shipping!