



MAPACA

Mid-Atlantic Alpaca Association

Newsletter

May 2006
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MAPACA Jubilee 2006



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Jubilee Update!

MAPACA Jubilee 2006 – Another Success Story

By the time you read this the MAPACA Jubilee 2006 will be an event of the past. Although I can't foresee the outcome, I can say with certainty that the interest and demand in this premier event is as strong, if not stronger, than ever.

The show pens filled the first week after registration opened! The statistics illustrate that the Jubilee continues to be one of the most popular alpaca shows in the country.

Participating farms: 411

Number of attendees receiving name badges: 1152

Stalls reserved: 841

Halter Show entries: 1539

Fleece Show entries: 252

Number of volunteers: 81 (estimated)

A show of this size is impossible to produce without numerous hours of volunteer time. Besides receiving a limited edition volunteer tshirt, volunteers at this year's Jubilee were also treated with a complimentary massage, right at the show. We wanted to make sure they all know how truly valuable they are! (Mental note for next year. If you don't get stall space, consider coming to volunteer. There are hidden perks!)

Whereas we can't list every volunteer in this newsletter, I feel it important to identify the lead volunteers who lead the way and coordinated different aspects of the show.

Board Liaisons to newly hired Show Manager: Jovi Larson and Andy Schneider

Silent Auction: Marion and George Sykes

Fleece Show Superintendent: Al Beatty

Check In: Carol Pfister

Seminars and Announcers: Scott Gove

Scavenger Hunt: Lisa and Rick German

Besides the fierce competition in the show rings, there was a Pizza Welcome Dinner Thursday night, Buffet Dinner with comedian Joey Vincent on Friday, the 3rd Annual Jubilee Alpaca Auction on Saturday afternoon, the inaugural Fiber Arts and Skeins competition, seminars, and so much more.

If you weren't able to join us this year, be sure to watch for registration information next year, and send it in as soon as you can, to be included in this incredible event. If you did attend, the MAPACA Board of Directors and I hope you enjoyed yourself and found it a valuable experience. See you next year!

Anne Hallinan

President's Message:

What a wonderful Jubilee! In an atmosphere that was relaxed and unhurried, everything ran smoothly. The Board's sincere thanks go to the volunteers who gave of their time and expertise and to Anne Hallinan and Ken and Marsha Hobert. Our congratulations to all the ribbon winners at this highly competitive show!

I cannot let the opportunity pass to share one of the most insightful comments heard at the show. This comment came from a longtime alpaca breeder and consignor to the auction. While I may agree that the auction results were disappointing, I think Page Nitterhouse's comments will bring us back to reality. After listening to increasingly agitated complaints about how the auction was going, Page commented that, after all, the consignors who sold ended up with profits for their farms since their consignment alpacas were most likely born on their farms. She also commented that the results were positive from the **purchasers'** perspectives, not a bad thing as we try to grow the numbers entering our industry! Adding breeders to our growing industry is what it's all about. Many new breeders came away from the auction excited about their new purchases.

While the market has a lot of high selling alpacas, not all alpacas are worthy of such prices. Further, in an auction, you never know what you're going to achieve. This is the excitement of consigning an alpaca to an auction! Not everyone can afford the high prices, but still want to have good production females upon which to base their herd. This was what was accomplished at the 2006 MaPaca Jubilee auction. I have to say that I was delighted to purchase a low priced alpaca at a recent auction. Was it her lack of quality that yielded those results??? Absolutely not, as she was a ribbon winner the very next day! So, don't come away from our event thinking the bottom is dropping out of alpaca prices. These were the results on a specific day. Just like your multi ribbon winning alpaca not achieving a ribbon at every show!

Nancy Johanson

A Big Thank You to Our Jubilee Auction - Herdsire Breeding Do- nors

**CPeruvian Accoyo Express, Stan
& Chris Shepherd, Alpacastock
Farm, Grand Blanc, MI**

**MFI Peruvian Eternal Flame,
Amy & Arlin McCroskie, A and A
Alpacas, Greenville, Texas**

**PPPeruvian Royal Fawn, Barbara
& Ernest Kellogg, Double "O"
Good Alpacas, Gainesville, Virginia
Robin & Mike Tierney, Maple
Brook Farm, Westfield, MA**

**Snowmass Invincible, Barbara &
Ernest Kellogg, Double "O"
GoodAlpacas, Gainesville, Virginia
Nancy Johanson, Brookhollow
Farm, Boonton, NJ**

Beginning Alpaca Marketing Strategies Part II – Marketing In Action

By Renee & Barry Prokop Alpaca Vista Suris, Spotsylvania, PA

Marketing - some people love it, and some people hate it. However, whether you are on one side of the fence or the other, it is a necessary activity for any successful business. In the previous article we talked about developing items that will brand your farm in the marketplace. After this has been accomplished, we still need to communicate them into the marketplace. There are a number of ways to communicate to/prospective customers. Some of them are easy, others harder and more technical. Some are inexpensive while others can become quite pricey. We will go through each of these alternatives to understand what is available. This is by far not an exhaustive list since people are coming up with new and creative ways everyday to communicate their message. In each of the examples that are given below there can certainly be variations on the theme. You will find that your marketing campaign will start to take on its own personality – and that is great. However, one should make sure that everything that is being communicated is consistent with their ability to follow through. The worst tactic anyone can take is to try to be something they are not or promise something they cannot deliver.

Alpaca Website – We talked before about creating a farm name and matching that farm name with a web address. Web addresses are easy to purchase. One can go to a web site such as www.godaddy.com and try different addresses. The site will be able to tell you which ones are available. If you have ever purchased personalized license plates for your car, it is the same process. While we are talking about cars, in many states the Department of Motor Vehicles have .com license plates. This would be another way to get the same message out about how to reach you – put your web address on your license plate.

Once you have a web address you can then create your web site and your email addresses. In most cases, the internet site provider where you purchased your web address will also provide web site hosting services. This simply means that while your web site can be accessed by anyone, anywhere, anytime, it is physically located on your provider's computers. The hosting provider will offer a set of tools so you can manage your site.

Creating a web site can be as simple or as complicated as you want it to be. The hosting site may provide the tools that you need to create a simple web site, you can purchase web development software like Microsoft's Frontpage to develop your own web site or you can purchase the services of someone who specializes in creating web sites for businesses. However, at a minimum you should have basic information about your farm, your alpacas, and how to reach you.

Email address – Everyone today seems to have an insatiable passion for sending emails. While it is no substitute for personal interaction, it is a great and quick tool to communicate. In most cases when you purchase web hosting services you can get email boxes and addresses associated with that web address. As an example, if your web site address was www.alpacavista.com, you could also have an email address like suris@alpacavista.com. The hosting provider will provide you with a way to access the email box and manage it. If you do not have a web site you can still develop a memorable email address. There are many free email systems like Yahoo, MSN, and HotMail that will allow you to create an email address for free. While it will not allow duplicate email addresses, you could incorporate your farm name into the address. Maybe alpacavista@yahoo.com?

Business cards – Business cards should include your logo, farm name, tag line, farm address, phone number, email address and web address. They are a great low risk, low cost way to leave information about your farm with anyone interested in talking more about alpacas. We carry our business cards everywhere we go since you never know where you will run into people that are interested in alpacas and in raising, breeding, and selling alpacas. We think of business cards as a way to allow others to think about your elevator pitch and get back to you in a way that is most comfortable for them. We prefer business cards that are created with enough information so that the person can communicate with you but not so much information that they feel that you have told them the whole story. Think about leaving some white space on the card (maybe on the back) in order to write notes to remind the other person (or ourselves) what we talked about or information that they were interested in receiving. We try to never rely on our or the other person's memory if possible. Since it is always difficult to know where your next sales lead will come from, it is critical to pass your business cards out. Think of them as a "hot potato". I have handed them out at alpaca shows, lodge meetings, the grocery store, and yes, even in elevators! Hand them out!

Introduction postcard – A person that we know once complained that business was so slow. I asked her, "And what do you attribute this to?" She sighed and said, "I guess it's because I'm never open." Well, in starting an alpaca farm, nobody knows that you are open either. You have to tell them. One way to do that is to decide who you would like to know that you are open for business and mail them an introduction card. You can also email them, but I think that most people will retain an introduction card longer than an email.

www.usps.com has a quick design tool that you can use; you can create something in Microsoft Word or have the postcard professionally created. It can include everything on your business card and more. You can put your elevator pitch on it as well as farm and alpaca pictures. The names and addresses can be collected from

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a variety of sources. Search the Internet for other local alpaca farms, look on alpaca association websites or even contact magazines like *American Livestock*.

American Livestock has a service where they will take your postcard and mail it out to their subscribers. However, they will not give you their list due to privacy restrictions (which is an excellent policy). They will even create your postcard from scratch. So whether you create something yourself or have it done, it is a simple process to start to announce that you are open for business.

Newspaper announcement – Many local newspapers will run a press release or business announcement free of charge. Look in the local paper for examples of the style and the information that is included in them. Model one after it and send a press release to the newspaper complete with a color and black & white picture.

Alpacas stir more interest and curiosity than opening a dry cleaner store since one does not run across an alpaca farm on a daily basis. One area that we continue to explore is getting a feature written about us as a human-interest story. Another way to generate media interest is to host visits that will be of interest to the local community. Host a visit by the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H Club, or an elementary school. These visits accomplish two objectives. They give you broader exposure in the community while also potentially linking you up with future customers.

Car Signs – Magnetic car signs are another way to let people know that you are in the alpaca business. We have one on each side of our Chevrolet Blazer. We even thought about buying a Blazer to match the colors of our logo but then we knew that we were going a little over the top! We even make a point of parking in a corner space so that more people see the sign. The sign was created by taking our business card and having it blown up to the right size. We provided a copy of the business card and the logo graphic file to *Signorama*. They took care of the rest and provided us with a camera-ready copy to approve before producing the sign. *Signorama* can also produce painted-on car and windshield signs.

Shirts & Pins – If you've got it, flaunt it. Like the car sign, you are trying to get the word out that you are in the alpaca business. If people see you in an alpaca farm shirt complete with logo, they are more likely to ask, "Tell me more." I was actually riding on the metro and had on a shirt with an alpaca farm name on it. As I stood there someone next to me started talking about how beautiful alpacas were. It took me a second to realize how they knew that I was in the alpaca business but after that we had a great conversation and exchanged – you guessed it, business cards.

Associations – As Willy Sutton once responded to the question, "Why do you rob banks?" His answer was, "That's where the money is." Alpaca associations, by their very nature, are where people go in the alpaca industry to give and receive information. An essential part of marketing is to be seen where the buyers are and as-

sociations are a great place to be seen by participating and interacting with them. Whether you are on a committee, list your farm information on the association website, or just belong in their directory, it is one more place where you can be reached. The more active you are, the better and more exposure you will get.

Alpaca Shows – Alpaca shows are a lot about winning ribbons and a lot about networking. If there is a choice between purchasing two equal alpacas from two equal farms for the same price and one has accumulated more blue ribbons than we would guess that the blue ribbon alpaca would be the one that was sold. Even though they may be alike in all other aspects. An alpaca with winning credentials is more marketable than an alpaca without credentials. With that being said, it is important for your marketing program to get out to the shows and validate that you have high quality alpacas. It will help your alpaca sales and your farm's reputation. Another reason to attend the shows is to see first hand what marketing activities are working for other farms and include them in your plan for the future.

Another important point about alpaca shows is that this is a place where you will also find prospective customers. The challenge is to balance the show ring and the marketing ring. At a number of shows we have attended there has been no one at the booths to talk about their alpacas and answer questions. They are all out winning ribbons. Balancing winning ribbons and marketing at show events, while difficult and exhausting, may also produce an interested future customer. **"Eighty percent of success is showing up."** ~Woody Allen

Internet Advertising – There are a number of ways that one can advertise on the Internet. One can create a banner ad, which will appear for a certain length of time at a certain cost. If you have already created a business card, introduction postcard, or other type of graphic then you can possibly use that. Most of the ones that we have seen are glitzier than ours and maybe more eye catching but it depends on your style. The websites to place a banner are only limited by your imagination, but again, you will want to place your banners where people that are interested in alpacas will tend to migrate to. Other farms, associations, and alpaca product sites are good locations to start.

What we have been exploring more are sponsored search links like ones offered on Google and Yahoo. The sponsored search links provide you the ability to make your web site and message more visible to people that are using these search engines to find out information about alpacas. This is particularly important if you have not had your website up for very long. The search engines tend to rank search results based on a number of factors which include: the number of hits a website receives, keyword use, and number of sites that are linked to yours. As a new website it would be difficult to get high visibility if these factors are taken into consideration. By creating a sponsored link you are placing your search result near the head of the pack. Now, of

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course, you are going to pay for that privilege; however, it is a great way to jump-start your farm web activity.

Magazines & Newsletters – Everybody has something to share. Whether you are starting a farm or maintaining an existing herd, the search for more information and better ways to manage a farm is ongoing. If you have had trouble finding information about a certain topic and/or had to learn how to do something on the farm the hard way; share your experiences and results with the rest of the alpaca community. In that way, everyone learns from your experience and you get credit for helping other farm owners. One great outcome of any marketing program is to become known in your industry as a positive and forward thinking farm. In addition, the article or newsletter piece can then be added to your website. Marketing is an adventure! There are many ways to approach it and we hope that there are a few ideas here that you may want to try. One important caution though is to be careful what you wish for. The more marketing you do, the more calls, visits and emails you will get. Your future reputation will rely on your quick and courteous response and whether you follow through with commitments that you have accepted. Remember, marketing is only the beginning!

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MaPaca Meetings—

2006

July 16, 2006

October 15, 2006

*Please mark your calendars for these dates and plan to attend. Watch the Newsletter and the web site for announcement of the meeting times locations. The locations will vary.

Classified Ads:

Any member may post an ad for alpaca and/or alpaca farm related equipment and items. The ad may include a short description and contact information. This will be a free service to current MAPACA members ONLY. Please send your ads to Alice Brown, fpalpacas@aol.com or call 856-697-8127.

1. **Farm and alpacas/herd dispersal**—Forkbridge Alpacas is for sale. Due to my wife's unfortunate passing I am moving and unable to keep my herd. Email with your interests/intentions to sam@forkbridgealpacas.com and I will send you the particulars or phone **Sam Perez at 856-358-1613. View the herd on our web site, www.forkbridgealpacas.com.**
2. **Alpaca Wire Mesh Show Panels**—Discounted from original price. 8ft panels-\$68, 10ft panels-\$78. Limited supply! Used panels may not be available at the shows this year, so get yours now while they last. **For pick-up from Wild Rose Suri Ranch, Havre de Grace, MD. Call Patti Anderson—410-734-7084.**
3. **Alpaca & Light Livestock Equipment**—in stock chutes, feeders, panels, and shearing table. Can be shipped or picked up at our farm. **www.lightlivestockequipment.com or call Jay at (518) 524-0545 AuSable Valley Alpacas, Jay, New York.**
4. **Alpaca Cria Sweaters**—Made of 100% alpaca. Warm, durable, lightweight, soft! Small to 25lbs. Large to 35 lbs. Assorted colors. \$50.00 each + tax, S&H. Free shipping with purchase of 3 or more. **Mountain Meadows Alpaca Farm. 540-586-1745.**
5. **Manure Spreader.** Pequea Model 70, ground driven, excellent condition (used 10 hours total), paint faded. 70 bushel capacity. If new \$2,900—asking \$1,500 or reasonable best offer. Pictures available. Contact: **Paul at Big Sky Alpacas—856-223-0570.**
6. **New Alpaca Photos Website—www.alpacaphotosonline.com** 100s, soon to be 1000s of photos of alpacas and products. No charge to submit photos. Contact: **Nancy Lake, info@alpacaphotosonline.com or 301-393-5878.**
7. **Wanted. Long term boarders** (one or two Huacaya females) fair rates, excellent pastures, spacious barn, and plenty of TLC, **call 609-261-0696 or visit Stormwind Alpacas.**




Calendar of Events

May 6-7, 2006—Sixth Annual “Everything’s Coming Up Alpacas,” Ballston Spa, NY. Join Kelly and Paul Zanella of Spa Alpacas and guest speakers as they share their alpaca knowledge and experience. Seminar on Saturday, May 6th for 8:30AM-4:30PM. Reservations required. \$100 per person or \$180 per couple (includes breakfast, lunch and presentation booklet). Join us for shearing on Sunday, May 7th 10AM-4PM. Contact: **Kelly & Paul Zanella, (518) 885-0585 or pjzanella@aol.com**

May 12, 13, & 14, 2006 Star Events’ Spring Fling Alpaca Auction— WoodsEdge Wools Farm, Stockton, New Jersey. Meet and mingle with breeders from across the country at the Sixth Annual Spring Fling Alpaca Auction, where top quality huacaya & suri alpacas will sell! Educational seminars will focus on fiber, so plan to attend! For more information or to request a copy of the auction catalog, call the **Star Events’ office at (609) 397-2212.**

June 3, 2006 8:30AM– 8PM Alpaca Foundation Seminar—Professional alpaca Judge, Les Foshay, Farm Taxation Specialist—Richard Dickinson, and Camelid Veterinarian—Mary Menard. Learn about special “Farm” Taxation, Find out what the judges are “really” looking for in the ring. Hands-on show ring simulation. Animal health requirements. Hands-on evaluations. \$125/person, \$225/couple from same farm. Meals included. Space limited, register before May 26th. **Contact: www.SunsetRidgeAlpacas.com, Vicki Askew, 518-692-2083, or vaskew@capital.net or Catherine Ziehm –518-692-8684**

June 4, 2006—Bare Naked Halter Show—Columbus, NJ—Alpaca Heritage Events, Inc. “A Cool Show for Hot Alpacas!” Show includes a fiber competition, 100% conformation judging on shorn alpacas, costume, showmanship, and agility classes. A fun show for breeders of all ages. **Go to www.AlpacaHeritage.com or contact Ingrid Wood at 609-261-0696.**



June 24-25, 2006-High Production Factors-Alpaca Breeders Fiber School Course-A Suri Farm, Ltd., Myerstown, PA. Dr. Julio Sumar and Diana Timmerman will instruct this course. Two days with these industry experts discussing the relationship between nutrition and high quality fleece and healthy crias, along with breeding procedures to ensure high fertility in your herd. **For details: www.asurifarm.com/ or call Dennis Balbac and Monica Kline at 717-514-0022.**

June 24, 2006– 8AM-6PM—Seminar—Steve Hull and Tom Cameron– The speakers will cover a myriad of issues such as BVD, pasture management/fertilization, ruminant nutrition, parasite prevention/control, cria/adult vaccinations, West Nile Virus, breeding/birthing/weaning, and other subjects relating to the latest alpaca husbandry and veterinary medicine perspectives. Tap the brains of an animal scientist and a veterinarian at each lecture unit and the “stump the chump” session! Restraint techniques, blood drawing, injections, toenail/tooth trimming, microchip insertion demonstrations. **Contact: Jay Ward, AuSable Valley Alpacas, Jay, NY, 518-524-0545 or Jaywar@AuSableValleyAlpacas.com.**

July 29 & 30, 2006—Silvercloud Farm, ABFS/ Alpaca Fiber Production, Gibsonia, PA—with AOBA & IAJS certified judge Diana Timmerman. A hands-on course, teaching students about alpaca fiber, character, density, uniformity, fineness—recognition and understanding of the factors that make “good fiber.” Learn how your herd health impacts fiber characteristics, how to make breeding choices and select alpacas for the show ring from your own herd. Be sure to bring your newly shorn fleeces for skirting. One “lucky” registrant will receive 50% discount on a breeding to any herdsire owned or co-owned by Silvercloud Farm! **For more information contact: Helen Humphreys at 1-877-MY ALPACA. To register for this course visit www.abfschool.com**

Editor's Ramblings:

Hope all of you sent in your ballots for the AF-CNA, ARI, and AOBA elections. Now with all of that behind us, we can look forward to the coming year in high hopes of seeing our industry make further strides forward in encompassing all those who are coming in o the business of raising alpacas. Within the MAPACA region we have seen many new people starting up with their new herds. We have had many new people join MAPACA. Welcome to you all! To me, it is very satisfying to be able to share the animals that I love with others. It makes me happy to see others finding joy in raising alpacas, just as I have.

Although March and the first 2/3 of April were very dry here in southern New Jersey, spring has finally seen fit to emerge and dump some much needed rain on my pastures and my hay growers fields! Could part of that rain be attributable to the "Alpaca Rain Dance." According to my hay grower, it may. Just before it started to rain, he was complaining to me about the lack of rain and that he didn't know when he would get his first cutting in if it didn't rain. I suggested that I would ask the alpacas to do their "Alpaca Rain Dance." Well, I did ask them and two days later it started raining and has been rain for the last three days now. My hay grower sent me an email and said to thank the alpacas, as their rain dance obviously worked!

Many of you have just arrived home from the Jubilee. Hopefully you are relaxing with a cup of tea, or a glass of ice tea, with your feet up reading your May MAPACA Newsletter. I'm sure with all the effort that went in to producing MAPACA Jubilee 2006 that you had an enjoyable experience and that all went well. If you have any comments or stories in regard to the Jubilee that you would like to share with the membership, by all means send them to me. Humorous stories are welcome!

Well, I'm off to the barn to check on the girls that were due about two weeks ago. Hopefully they will see fit to deliver once all the rain stops later today. Enough dancing already girls!

Best, *Alice Brown*



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Andy & Amanda Bauer, Skipjack Suri Alpacas, Cordova, MD

Terry & Dale Mills, Mills Hill Alpaca, Shade Gap, PA

Diana Moxcey, Thane's Neck Farm. Sandy Springs, SC

Jane & Randy Holmes, Cotacachi Alpacas, Butler, PA

Advertise in the MAPACA Newsletter!

No ads will be accepted that include the PRICE of animals for sale. Stud Service prices are acceptable.

We will insert one-page ads for members in MAPACA Newsletters. Ads cost **\$40.00** for one 8 1/2" by 11" ad, on 24 pound paper or less, if you supply ALL the copies (they can be in color and two sided if you like). If your ad is on heavier paper than 24 pound, the cost will be **\$60.00**. If you would like us to copy your ad, supply us one copy and we will have it copied in black & white, one sided, for **\$70.00** total.

If you know any business that sells products or services relating to alpacas or farming in general that would benefit alpaca farmers, that would like to place an insert AD in the MAPACA Newsletter, you can recommend them if you are an existing MAPACA Member. The costs for businesses would be an additional **\$100.00** added on to the regular member fee for an insert AD. Thus it would be either **\$140.00, \$160.00, or \$170.00**. Please send copies, along with payment, to Alice Brown, 458 Main Road, Vineland, NJ 08360 by the 20th of the month you want your ad inserted. Make check payable to **MAPACA** and include check with inserts. **Any questions, email Alice Brown: fpalpacas@aol.com or call: 856-697-8127.**

Please send your comments to

Alice Brown at:

Fpalpacas@aol.com.