

Dennis Rabe

A bit about my background: I was born and raised in Prunedale California. I worked for 10 years with my family's grading and paving company and then for 21 year with Graniterock, a construction materials supplier for the Monterey and San Francisco Bay Area. Currently I am the operations manager for Germain's Seed Technology in Gilroy, California. Over the years, I have had the opportunity



to serve on the board of directors for Rotary District 5230, The Central Coast Chapter of the California Landscape Contractors Association, the Northern California Chapter of the Interlocking Concrete Paver Institute, the Salinas Chamber of Commerce, Business Advisory Committee, and the Salinas Valley Builders Exchange. The experience gained from serving on these boards, and various committee assignments, has provided me the tools for managing budgets, improving existing programs and growing membership.

One evening in March of 2003, my wife, Vicki, and I saw the “I Love Alpacas” commercial on TV. I turned to her and asked if she had ever thought of raising alpacas, and she replied that she had, but thought I wouldn’t be interested. By January of 2004, the first alpacas arrived at the ranch, and we have been busy alpaca ranchers ever since. On the ranch, Vicki, and my parents take care of the day to day operations on the 16 acre property, I join in after work and on the weekends. Our family really enjoys the opportunity to work together as we grow our herd and make improvements to the ranch. We have 40+ alpacas, now, with half of them agisted for our clients. We were fortunate to receive wonderful guidance as we began our journey into the alpaca world from Amanda Vandebosch. It is safe to say that without her help, and kindness we would not be where we are today.

While participating in and working around the alpaca industry, I have met the nicest, most interesting group of people ...the alpaca owners. My favorite question for them is “so what did you do before you had alpacas?” Because we have all come from doing something else before we had alpacas, it makes the alpaca owner unique in their ability and willingness to share their knowledge with new owners. It is the wide variety of experience and the opportunity to pool those resources for the betterment of all alpaca owners, that make the possibilities for our industry so promising, even in these hard economic times. Owners are looking to their local affiliates to help them market their

business' to prospective clients. They are looking for answers to help them understand best management practices for their business, because the industry is really still new, and advances in caring for, and understanding our alpacas are ever changing.

We need to make sure that CALPACA is the source for open communication for issues that affect the alpaca industry. We can achieve this with the further development of the Connection Magazine in multiple formats and strength of content.

We need to make sure the quarterly CALPACA meetings continue to be great opportunities to network with other owners, learn about industry related topics and get a chance to see other members ranches.

We need to use the united voice of our CALPACA members to make sure our concerns for the industry are heard at the national level. We need to make sure we continue to give everyone the opportunity to bring their alpacas to shows where they can get a fair assessment of how their breeding decisions match up with what other alpaca owners are doing, and where they have the opportunity to market their product to the rest of the alpaca community.

We need to build on the success of the Camelid Symposium, where all camelid owners can come for a very reasonable price and listen to the top authorities in the world as they let us know what new developments are coming to our industry for the care and upkeep of our herds.

We need to continue our partnership with UC Davis to help rebuild their camelid program and our support of new veterinarians who have an interest in caring for camelids, is key to providing future alpaca owners the support they will need for healthy herds.

Yes I did say we need to do these things. No board of directors can do it all by themselves. Too many times we take for granted that the wonderful events that make CALPACA special happen seemingly effortlessly. We need to make sure that we are all participating to make this the strongest affiliate in the US, and that is only possible if we all get involved and help lighten the load on the members who are doing most of the heavy lifting for us. I would like to see everyone take a part in at least one aspect of CALPACA, because it is in the bringing together of our members diverse knowledge that we will find solutions to help us succeed in the years ahead

With the help of Amanda Vandenbosch and Dale Davis, I learned the ropes of alpaca shows, serving in all the positions available, including halter show superintendent for Alpacamania, the Monterey Pronk, Alpaca Fest West, and the Southwest Regional Alpaca Show. Now it is time for me to "pay forward" their kindness and support. For the last two years I have served on the CALPACA board as secretary in 2009 and vice president in 2010. I promise to give my best for my fellow members of CALPACA. Our industry and particularly CALPACA has been very fortunate to have had wonderful bright people come forward and build a strong foundation for our organization. We have the opportunity and obligation to continue to build on the good work of those who created the alpaca industry as we know it, so it will be available for future generations of alpaca owners. I look forward to the opportunity to continue serving on the CALPACA board, and helping our industry move forward successfully in the coming years.