

Fall 2011

Connection

Kiss Me, Momma!

Photo Contest Grand
Prize Winner!

Tracy DiPippo

Angel Dreams Alpacas



From our President....

All things change...

The one thing we can count on is that everything that is now, will eventually change. Not that long ago people interested in alpacas found us. Many of us bought quiet country ranches, well off the beaten path, away from the rat race. When those interested in our alpacas found us, we presented them with our alpaca dream, enticing them to begin building one of their own. Yes, that was then, and this is now. In the current state of the economy, we need to put ourselves in front of the people who have the land and the means to be alpaca owners. We need to take full advantage of opportunities like the California State Fair, Lambtown, the Gold Country Gathering and the California Classic. There are alpacas being sold out there, we just need to make sure they are being sold by you – reputable, caring alpaca owners and breeders.

Dennis Rabe, President

“We need to put ourselves in front of the people who have the land and the means to be alpaca owners. “

Calpaca has Jobs that pay!

The following are paid positions for Calpaca! Specific versions may be issued for specific events to include details like dates, etc. For more information, go to the Calpaca Web site @ <http://www.calpaca.org/about.htm#jobs>

Show Superintendent
Show Manager
Show Spin-Off Judge
Show Program Manager
Show Announcer
Show Photographer
Connection Editor (newsletter)

Connection Deadlines

Winter: December 15

Spring : March 15

Summer: June 15

Fall : September 15

Article submissions:

unique articles, 1 page

(500 to 750 words preferred)

Word document, attachment please

For more information, please check the web :

<http://www.calpaca.org/about.htm#connection>

2011 Calpaca Board**President, *Dennis Rabe***

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**2011 Calpaca Board**

Left to right: D. Scroggins,

L. Findlay, J. Jordan,

K. Rodriguez, D. Rabe

Classified

Shearers 25

Services 25
PropertyHerdsires 26-
27Ajustments, breed- 29
ings & more

For sale 30

Wanted 30

Business cards 33
to
35**Inside this issue:**

Kidney Stones	5
Drips n Dribbles	6-7
Urinary Stones	8
Nov. Meeting Info	12
August Minutes	13-14
Featured Ranch	15
Photo Contest	16-18
Athena's Story	20-21
UC Davis	23
State Fair	24

Please remember, arti-
cles and ads are pub-
lished AS SUBMITTED!

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The following three urinary tract articles were first published in the International Camelid Quarterly (CQ) Magazine, September, 2011. These and over 800 other camelid specific articles are published on-line at www.llamas-alpacas.com/Library

Oh No! Kidney Stones

BY Michelle Ing, DVM

Mention kidney stones to anyone that has passed them and they will recall the excruciatingly painful moments that led to the passing of these stones. After emergency room visits two nights in a row for the early pre-dawn shocking moments of unrelenting pain, my husband was finally able to get an appointment with the urologist, who merely gave him “new and better medication” than that prescribed in the emergency room. The urologist assured him that it would definitely work and that he should not be worried about another bad night and ER visit. I was so skeptical of the new medication that I told my husband that maybe he should check himself into the hospital that evening just the case the medication did not work.

The new medication worked wonders, and seemed like a miracle after two grueling days of intense pain and suspense. What was this medication used to pass kidney stones? Flomax™ in addition to a nonsteroidal inflammatory medication.

This gave me a new idea for alpacas, and the following are two accounts from clients who treated “straining to urinate” in male alpacas. Just to be on the safe side, I emailed several veterinarian friends/colleagues on my idea and they had not heard of anyone using this medication in alpacas. One veterinarian had heard of a fellow veterinarian using it on themselves with great success. They all thought it was a great idea and definitely worth trying, as the alternative is often times dismal for males that are either blocked or found straining to urinate. (Please note that we are not endorsing this medication for use in alpacas. We are merely telling two accounts of apparent successful usage of Flomax™. You should consult your veterinarian on each individual case of straining to urinate.)

About the author: Michelle Ing lives in Granite Bay, California with her husband, Steve Friend, their two children and their 16 alpacas, two dogs, a parrot, a mule and a miniature horse. Michelle graduated from UC Davis in 1996 and spent the following year in Lexington, Kentucky completing an equine surgery internship. In 1998 Michelle started a camelid practice in Spokane, Washington. In 2002 she moved to northern California where she continues a busy camelid practice. Her special interests include camelid reproduction medicine and care of young crias.



Big Smiles, left.... Lots of Lovin' , right

Photos by Renate and Richard Gyuro

Measuring Improvement in Drips, Dribbles, and Streams

By Dianna Jordan, Alpacas of Somerset Farm

The phrase “Urinary Tract Blockage” can send shivers down alpaca breeder’s spines, especially if they have experience with the situation. At the very worst, the condition can be fatal. Full recovery can take a few days or weeks. Days or weeks usually filled with frustration and anxiety.

I was on an extended trip when I received a call that one of our males (11 months old) was straining over the poop pile and only producing an occasional drip of urine. We had experienced this before with one of our males and had been able to turn him around quickly. In that case, we witnessed almost immediate improvement and the male has not been affected since. Although I was concerned I felt comfortable with what to do to start treating the condition.



Wisp , 11 months

With a feeling of some confidence I advised my home team of caregivers to start him on Vitamin C. We started with injectable and then switched to 8000mg (2000mg 4 times a day). Since in our first case there was immediate improvement within 24 hours I became more concerned when the report came back the next day with “no improvement.” I called our veterinarian, Dr. Michelle Ing, for further instructions. She advised us to continue the Vitamin C and start him on an antibiotic (Excede) just in case there was an infection. I kept hoping for daily reports of dramatic improvement like I had seen with our other male. I became more anxious every day the report came back with basically no change. The good news was he was still intermittently dripping with occasional dribbling indicating he wasn’t completely blocked. He was also drinking plenty of water, eating well, and chewing his cud.

I made the decision to increase the Vitamin C to 10,000 mg per day. I arrived home 6 days after his symptoms started. Seeing him the first time was very disturbing. He was straining so hard I was afraid he was going to cause a prolapsed rectum. He would push so long and hard his hind legs would start shaking. He would only stop straining at the pile long enough to eat and drink. He would push occasionally but when he stood up he would return immediately to the pile.

I decided to continue with the Vitamin C and also added other natural diuretics. I made a mixture (paste) of Dandelion Root, Cranberry extract, Vitamin C and water which I gave to him 4 times a day.

I called Dr. Ing again and explained he was holding his own but all he was able to manage were drib-

Measuring Improvement in Drips, Dribbles, and Streams, continued from page 5

bles and a very occasional squirt. She reminded me that the drips, dribbles, and squirts indicated he wasn't completely blocked. We were thinking he had stones or crystals that were not able to pass through the ureter. She said she had consulted with a few other veterinarians and a couple of medical doctors and asked if I was willing to try something out of the ordinary. At this point I was looking for a miracle so I figured why not.

Michelle recommended we start him on Flomax which is used in humans to reduce urinary tract spasms and swelling. My only concern was the affect the medication would have on his system. But since most medications we give alpacas are "off label" I figured it was worth a try so we started him on the drug. The dosage was one capsule a day for 7 days. I added the content of the capsules with the paste made from natural diuretics.

Although he was on Flomax and natural diuretics I continued researching natural remedies and found an herb called Chanca Piedra. Chanca Piedra is the Spanish name for *Phyllanthus niruri*, which translates to "Stone Breaker" or "Shatter Stone". Chanca Piedra is also still used widely in herbal medicine in South America, it is the most popular remedy for gallstones and kidney stones throughout the Peruvian herbal medicine, and it is also used for hepatitis, urinary infections and as a diuretic. In Brazilian herbal medicine, where it has been used for thousands of years, it is called Quebra Pedra and is an excellent remedy to remove uric acid from the urine and to eliminate stones.

I was anxious to start him on Chanca Piedra but Michelle asked me to wait until he finished the full dose of Flomax. I understood she didn't want to add anything other possible remedy to the mix so we could try to measure the effectiveness of the Flomax. After 3 doses (3 days) of Flomax we began to see noticeable improvement. In my eyes progress was slow but it was measurable. The slow drips and inconsistent dribbles were becoming short spurts and then 2-3 seconds of a stream. Instead of spending close to 45 minutes at a time at the pile, he was now there for about 30 minutes.

The day after he received his last dosage of Flomax I started him on 2cc of Chanca Piedra 2 times a day. During the next few days there was continually improvement. Spurts became streams and he was spending much less time at the pile. It was close to three weeks from the time the symptoms first appeared until he was back to normal.

We will probably never know conclusively if it was the use natural diuretics, Flomax, Chanca Piedra, or the combination that solved the problem. I do know that Chanca Piedra, Cranberry and Dandelion Root extracts, and Vitamin C tablets are now staples in our medicine kit and will be used at the first signs of urinary tract problems. If I don't see results in the first day or two I am confident we will start him on Flomax.

History and Procedures of a Male with Urinary Stones

BY Laurie Findlay, Alpacas of El Dorado

On 6/5/11 I noticed Pistol was standing in the dung pile trying to pee with only drops of blood coming out.

drips of urine and still extended periods at the dung pile.

In the past when one of our alpacas displayed this behavior we would try in vain to get him to pee by doing the following. Unfortunately the outcome had not been good and we had to euthanize the male. But we wanted to try.

6/8/11 Increased per Dr. Ing, the Vitamin C to 10,000mg daily, Probiotics, Stone Breaker Herb 2xcc daily, 1000mg of Cranberry and Flomax 0.4mg daily.

Pistol received as follows on the 1st day of discovery:

6/5/11 - 3cc's of Exceed SQ, 8,000mg of Vitamin C orally, and Probiotics for stress

I had put in a call to my fellow rancher Dianna Jordan who happened to be experiencing the same thing and found out she was starting to use an herb called "Chanca Piedra" or Stonebreaker along with what I was already using. I went to the Organic Food store the very next day.

6/6/11 now Pistol was receiving 8,000mg of Vitamin C orally, Probiotics, and Stone Breaker Herb 2cc Orally 2 X daily

On 6/7/11 I put a call into Dr. Michelle Ing who added Flomax at 0.4mg orally daily to my regime of 8,000mg of Vitamin C orally, Probiotics, Stone Breaker Herb 2cc Orally 2X Daily, 1000mg of Cranberry Extract

I mixed the Vitamin C, Cranberry and Flomax with a small amount of warm water to make a paste and used a 60 cc syringe to dose about 15cc of watery paste.

At this point Pistol was observed drinking water, continuing to eat hay and his pellets. No blood seen, but only

Observed chewing cud, but still only drips in dung pile.

6/9 same as 6/8 but 2nd dosage of Exceed, still observed only dripping in dung pile.

6/10/11 increased dosage of Flomax to 0.8mg daily, in the AM, 10,000Vitamin C and 1000 mg Cranberry and probiotics, plus Stone Breaker Herb 2cc 2 X daily.

At 6:00pm observed Pistol peeing normally in dung pile twice. No dripping or blood observed.

Will continue on Flomax for the duration of 7 days.

Will continue Vitamin C and Stone Breaker Herb as Pistol could be prone to getting stones.

This is the 2nd male I have had with stones, both around the same age. The first male did not receive Flomax or Stone Breaker and had to be euthanized. I am hoping the use of Flomax will be a breakthrough for these male alpacas that could be prone to getting stones.

Thank you Michelle Ing for getting me the prescription, and most likely saving Pistol's life.

As of September 9, 2011, Pistol is peeing freely and a very happy alpaca!



Pistol is a 2.8 year old male huacaya who weighs 145 lbs.

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**From left to right: Mike Herrick
Owner, Dave Scroggins Calpaca
Marketing Director, Ron
Calcagno Sales Manager**


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IAN WATT SKIN BIOPSY REPORT DATA DETAILS:

DENSITY: 79.5 /MM

IN-SKIN MEAN PRIMARY FIBER
DIAMETER: 22.0

STANDARD DEVIATION: 3.4

RANGE: 16.3 TO 32.2

IN-SKIN MEAN SECONDARY FIBER
DIAMETER: 14.0

STANDARD DEVIATION: 2.5

RANGE: 7.9 TO 21.6



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**McCarty Creek
Ranch**

November Calpaca Meeting Saturday, November 12th 2011

KT-Lee Ranch

Veterinarian Dr. Gail O'Bannon will be the speaker

Have you ever had a cria that needed a plasma transfer? If you have not, you will, at some point in your alpaca career. What, no plasma handy? What, no veterinarian handy? A flat cria is a critical condition and a plasma transfer can not be delayed. So, you have the dam, you have the cria, with a few easy steps you can do the transfer yourself. No more worries about out of date plasma (if you even have it) no more worries about your vet being unavailable. With knowledge comes power and YOU can save a crias life. It is almost miraculous to watch a dying cria get up and behave as if nothing was wrong, once a plasma transfer has been accomplished.

This will be a "hands on" learning session. After a brief talk by Dr. O'Bannon, we will be doing blood draws and simulate injecting crias. You will learn how to draw the blood and prepare the cria. So all you folks out there who have been putting off learning how to do blood draws – this will be an opportunity for you to learn.

After the meeting I am sure you will need a glass of wine or a beer. There will be both. Wine will be supplied by Idle Hour Winery, an award winning local winery that offers several varietals, all of which are delicious.

If it is a nice day we will be outside on the lawn, if not, we will be inside. KT-Lee will supply the meal; please bring dessert & a chair. Coffee, tea, muffins will be supplied in the morning. There will be wine, beer & appetizers afterward.

Agenda

10:00 AM to 12:00 PM - Business Meeting

12:00 PM to 1:30 PM – Lunch

Please bring desserts to share. Drinks will be provided

1:30 PM Speaker: Veterinarian Dr. Gail O'Bannon

Please bring a chairs for your use.

RSVP: (559) 877-3560 or E-Mail: kt-leeranch@netptc.net



MINUTES FOR AUGUST 13 CALPACA MEETING

Dennis called meeting to order at 10am. All board members present except for Jack. Dennis thanked Kay for hosting the meeting on such short notice.

Bonnie made motion to approve minutes as posted, Joan seconded. Minutes from last meeting approved.

Jack was not present to give treasurer report but there has not been much change in any of the accounts. Calpaca is still strong.

Lin was not present to give report but Laurie advised that there had been 1 new member and 1 renewal since our last meeting. Did not have the names of the new member.

OLD BUSINESS:

WINAGATOR – Dave advised that we still have 96 tickets to sell and hope to give the gator away at the Symposium. Each board member has tickets to sell and we will have the gator at the Dixon show and the Gold Country Gathering.

STATE FAIR FOLLOW UP – Dennis, Dave and Laurie all

manned the Calpaca booth and Winagator during the fair. 21 tickets were sold for the gator and this was a very big marketing place for Calpaca to be. Over a thousand people went by each day and were very interested in the llama/alpaca show that Cal-ILA sponsored. Alpaca people missed a great opportunity here and we will have a presence again next



year. The building was great, not too hot with a fan, and the stall prices were amazing! The public is asking great questions too. So plan on being at the fair next year. Start working with those PR pacas and maybe a costume also! Alice Lessard and Jeanette Mathews from Cookie Cutter Alpacas also helped out with the booth. Thank you all!

CALIFORNIA CLASSIC – Joyce advised that plans are moving along. Both judges are

confirmed, Kristin Bergman and Jill McCloud, both from Canada. They will be sharing expenses to make it easier on the show. Classes will start with group classes first thing Saturday morning so we won't have the afternoon lull that we had last year. Dates for Ca Classic are April 21-22, 2012. We are back to our normal weekend.

GOLD COUNTRY GATHERING – Kay advised that registration is open and Joan said everything is up on web site except the auction link. Ed is still getting bugs out but it will be ready soon. So please get those entries in and if you want to add an alpaca to the auction it has to be in one for the classes: halter, fleece or spin off. Spin off is closed now and entries have gone off to the spinners. But if you had an entry, it can be entered in the sale. Email blasts will be going out shortly. **Dates for Gold Country are October 22-23, 2011.**

Continued on page 14

Fall 2011

NEW BUSINESS:

ELECTIONS – Dennis advised that Pam and Rick Brady are once again getting the ballots ready to send. This year will be a mail in ballot only. All ballots must be returned by mail and cannot be brought to the November meeting at KT Lee Ranch. Winners of the election will be announced at this meeting. The nominees are Joyce Judy, Janis Bass and Kay Rodriguez. Their bios will be up on the web site shortly.

Over the past few years, Calpaca membership has been dropping. Is there some way we can get people to come back to Calpaca? We will be sending out a Survey Monkey to find out what you want to get from being a member of Calpaca. Please watch for the survey and be sure to participate in it. Calpaca really wants to know what they can do for you.

CALPACA CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – there will also be survey going out to see who you think should be the Calpaca citizen of the year. Last year was the first year we did this and the winners were Joan Clappier for all her work as web mistress and to Lin Murray, Karen Kelly and their friend Brenda for handling an alpaca rescue so well. Start thinking of whom you think the next citizen of the year should be.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45. Kay had

provided a lunch for everyone.

After lunch, we would have normally had a speaker but with the move of the meeting, we could not get anyone lined up so we had a discussion on what everyone kept in their emergency bags and different emergencies

that have come up. A list will follow on what you might want to keep in your emergency bag. This will be posted on the Calpaca web site soon.

November meeting will be at the KT-Lee Ranch in North Fork, CA , November 12



Featured Ranch:

Lazy K Ranch

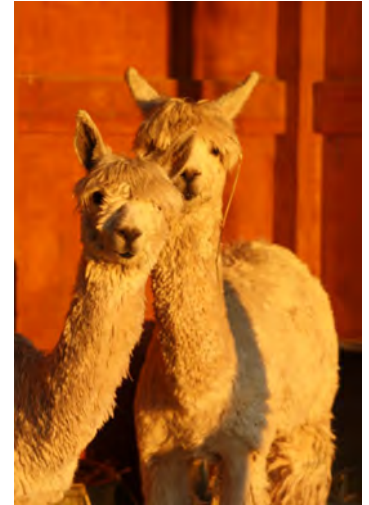
Lazy K Ranch started in 1999 down in Southern California when we purchased our first alpacas from Pet Center, Stakowski Alpacas and Alpaca De Valle Cereza. We started with 6 young females and 2 pet boys and 2 lama/alpaca crosses! We hit the show scene and have not stopped since!

We moved to Nevada in the fall of 2000 and started to build the ranch as it is now, a constant work in progress! We now have 110 alpacas, 3 horse, 2 dogs, 2 birds and 5 cats! Kay now has the zoo she said she would have in third grade!

Kay does all the cleaning and caring for the alpacas and Ed is the shot giver. Lazy K Ranch is anything but lazy! We start early and pass out at night, but there is nothing more rewarding than working and being around the alpacas. Interaction is a must every day. Everyone gets looked at, talked to; tormented if needed and loads of love.

We are the only ranch in Nevada with 2 AOBA National Champion herd sires, Grand Moreno and Magic Man. We are very involved with the Calpaca shows and IAO.

We are always trying to improve our alpacas and are looking forward to a few new upcoming males to improve our females.



photography Contest

Grand Prize is our Cover Photo, AND Cindy will receive her winning photo mounted on 8x10 stretched canvas by Shauna Shipley - \$100 value!



Flies, get off me! Traci DiPippo, Angel Dreams Alpacas

Artistic (digitally edited)

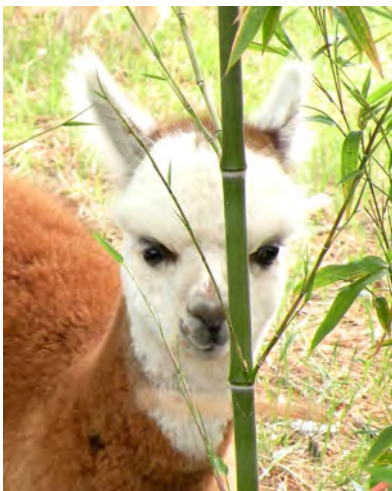


1st Place (Artistic)

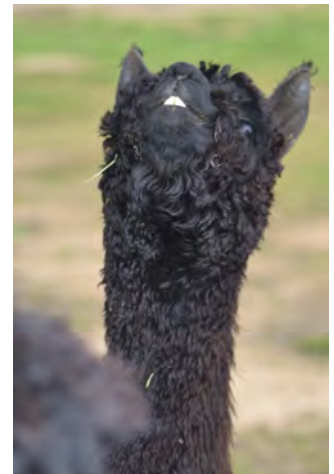
Running Rainbow, Cindy Harris, Alpacas at Windy Hill



GRAND PRIZE: Love you, Momma!
Traci DiPippo, Angel Dreams



Paca or Panda? Susan Crane,
Andante Alpacas



Look, up in the sky.. It's a bird,
it's a plane! Traci DiPippo, Angel
Dreams Alpacas



I can't see you... Traci DiPippo,
Angel Dreams Alpacas



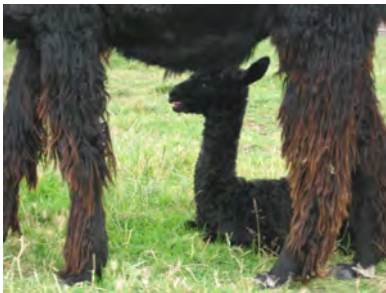
Me & my shadow, Susan Crane,
Andante Alpacas



I thought everyone knew
how to roll their tongue!

Leah Jackson-Hurley, Park
View Alpacas

Cria continued



My oh my! The view from down here
is looking better and better! Leah
Jackson-Hurley, Park View Alpacas



Mommy! Traci DiPippo, Angel
Dreams Alpacas

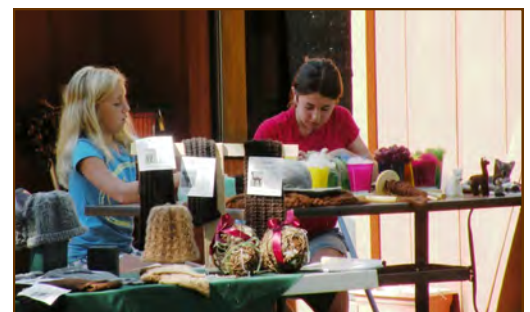


Kiss me, you fool Traci DiPippo,
Angel Dreams Alpacas

**Thank you to
Shauna Shipley,
our Photo Contest
Judge!**

**Any errors are mine —
M. Macedo :)**

Fiber Arts



**First Place: (Fiber Arts) Crea-
tive minds, hard at work
Susan Crane, Andante Al-**



"Excuse me, when did you say we were shearing?" Laurie Findlay, Alpacas of El Dorado

Feeding time, Cindy Harris, Alpacas at Windy Hill



Ranch Life



The other side of the fence, Cindy Harris, Alpacas at Windy Hill



Yee-HAW, Cindy Harris, Alpacas at Windy Hill

First Place (Ranch Life): Hey, Cutie Susan Crane, Andante



First Place (Humans & Alpacas): Mind if I hum along? Susan Crane, Andante Alpacas



Sun worshipper, Cindy Harris, Alpacas at Windy Hill

Humans & Alpacas

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SOME THINGS YOU CAN FIX...SOME THINGS YOU JUST CAN'T

By Christi Amoroso, Alpaca Acres Ranch

Something that we don't think about very often, an internal organ twist, can be a virtually silent and invisible killer until it's too late to do anything about it. We experienced just that on September 30, 2010...

AAR'Z Athena, our lovely bay black girl out of LV Silver Sage (Lassen View Alpacas), had had her first cria, a beautiful little black girl, on September 20th, just 10 days earlier. The cria was a petite 12.6 lbs at birth but had been consistently gaining 8/10ths of a pound a day for the past 8 days. She weighed 19.2 lbs on that terrible night.

September 30, 2010...it was about 6:10 when we went out to do the evening feed and Athena was just walking around acting normally. She nursed her hungry little girl while we got the grain ready to feed. The first sign...at 6:20 she refused her grain, which was most definitely out of character. At about 6:30 I noticed that she had started breathing a little rapidly. She went to the dung pile and sniffed but didn't lift her tail or attempt to go. She repeated that behavior several



times then went to the fence and rubbed against it then laid down. For the next 10 or so minutes she was up and down, walking a little, stepping oddly backwards and side to side. This was something we had never seen before and it was definitely getting worse instead of passing...time to call the vet. We kept them on the line after that for quite a while.

When she laid down we felt her stomach - bloated, hard as a rock and making loud gurgling sounds. Athena, who normally didn't like to be touched, made no protests while we gently touched her belly. She tried rolling a few times, obviously trying to untwist her insides. She stood up successfully and passed a little gas and a few beans - no urine. She walked a few feet and then laid down again. We spent the next 15 or so minutes coaxing her to get up and each time she was successful in struggling to her feet we tried to get her closer to the transport vehicle so we could take her down to the vet. 20 feet short of the gate she went down and we couldn't get her back up - she was just in too much discomfort. With just 2 of us there, one with a bad shoulder, we were

unable to lift her into the transport. As I said before, we were on the phone with the vet's office during this entire process describing what was happening. They, in turn, were communicating everything to the vet who was preparing for our possible arrival. Once we realized Athena wasn't going to get to the transport we asked that the vet come out as fast as possible. The wait for the vet was going to be tough for Athena to endure - we knew she was at least 30 minutes away and she had to stop and pick up help (another vet) along the way. By this time an hour had passed - it was about 7:30pm.

Athena got up a few more times as we waited what seemed like an eternity for the vet to arrive. Each time she was only successful in taking a few steps before she went down again. We tried as hard as possible to keep her moving but we were fighting a losing battle. By the time the vet arrived, close to an hour later and in the dark, she was down and could no longer get up. With lanterns all around, and with Athena moaning and groaning and suffering, the vet tried everything she could. Her temp was normal - there was no infection. She was so distended and bloated that the vet couldn't even get her small hand inside to feel around. When an internal exam couldn't be performed they headed for the other end and tried tubing her, just in case there was a blockage that could be cleared and gas, or whatever, possibly released through the tube - no luck with that either. When the vet was finally sure she could do no more she called the experts at

UC Davis.

By this time more than another hour had passed - it was now almost 9pm. The vets at Davis said our vet had done everything possible that could be done in the field and that we, basically, had 2 choices...we could (1) trailer her to Davis for examination and surgery or, (2) euthanize her to stop her suffering. We were told by Davis that the minimum cost would be \$5,000 and they were not optimistic that they could save her. By then she was having extreme difficulty just breathing and was in an enormous amount of pain. None of us thought she could survive the almost 3 hour trip to Davis - we were sure we would find her dead in the trailer (after torturing her with that long drive) once we got there. Both on-sight vets agreed. There really was no choice but to euthanize her. It was about 9:15 now and time to say our goodbyes. By 9:30 Athena was no longer suffering and we were all in tears. There were somber hugs all around and assurances that we had all tried our hardest and done our best.

*The wait for
the vet was
going to be
tough*

If you don't have a hanky you should go grab one now because the story isn't quite over just yet...

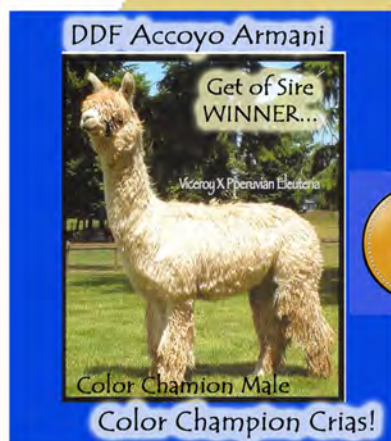
Athena's little cria, during the whole ordeal, was crying for mommy. She, obviously, couldn't understand what was happening, but she clearly realized mommy wasn't focusing on her new baby anymore and was totally ignoring her. She had nursed shortly after we originally came out at 6:10 but, being the voracious eater that she was from the moment of her birth, she wanted more by around 8pm. At one point, must have been around 8:45 when the vet had returned to her vehicle for supplies, we took the cria over to Athena who, laying in pain on her side, let the little one nurse one last time. It was amazing to watch - Athena's moans quieted a little and the baby drank her fill. We just stood there watching and crying and telling Athena what a good girl and wonderful mom she was. When the baby was done she moved a short distance away with the rest of the girls in the pen and they quietly continued to watch as her mom got worse and worse and, eventually, the moans stopped.

Oh, our beautiful Athena! We're just devastated. She's the first we have lost to an issue like this. Injuries and illness due to old age have caused us to euthanize alpacas in the past, but this unexpected and brutal event was so very different. The feeling of helplessness while we watched everything unfold was completely unnerving. The vet said it was one of those unexplainable things that just happens from time to time. She assured us that there was absolutely nothing we could have done. Athena didn't start showing any signs of discomfort until 6:30pm and was bad enough by 9:15 that we had to make the decision to put her down. Less than 3 hours - amazing that something like that can happen so fast!

Athena was the happy result of one of the very first outside breedings we did when we started in the alpaca business. We still have her lovely sister Bella here with us - the sisters were born just a day apart. Bella kept a close eye on her niece until she left for her new home.

Athena's baby - Capeena - is doing wonderful. We sent her out to Paige Romine (The Alpaca Whisperer) at Retiredice Alpacas to be a pal to another little female orphan on her ranch. They are the best of buddies and it's working out just fine! We miss her, and her mom, every day.

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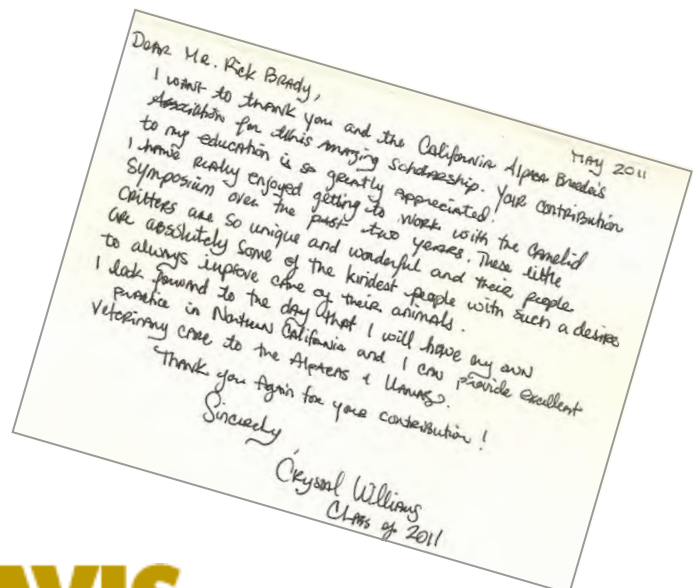
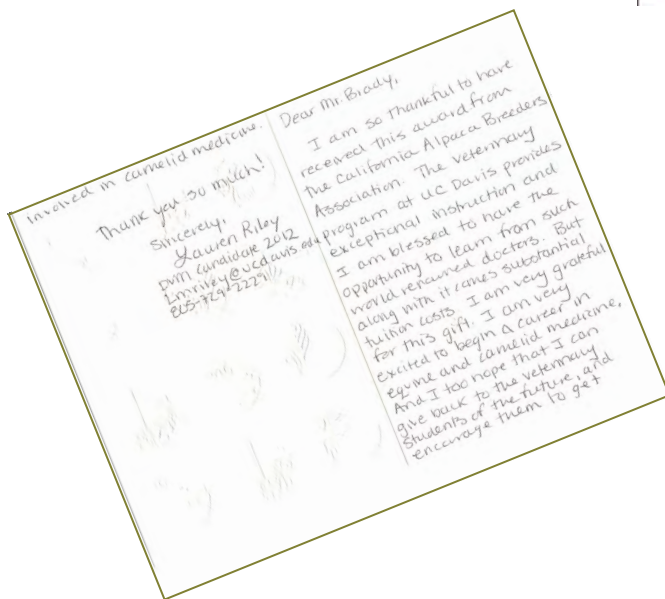
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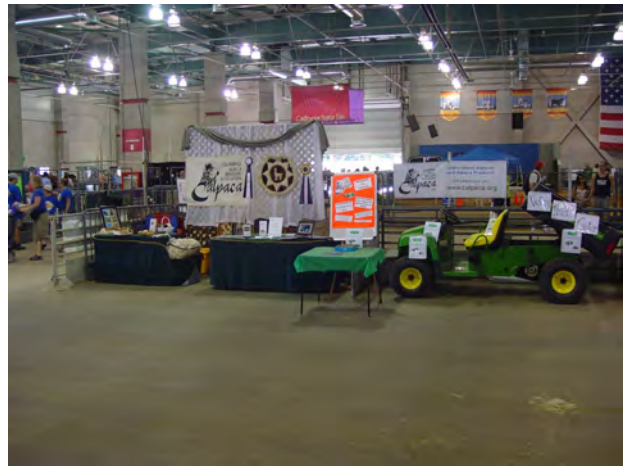


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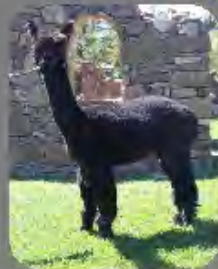
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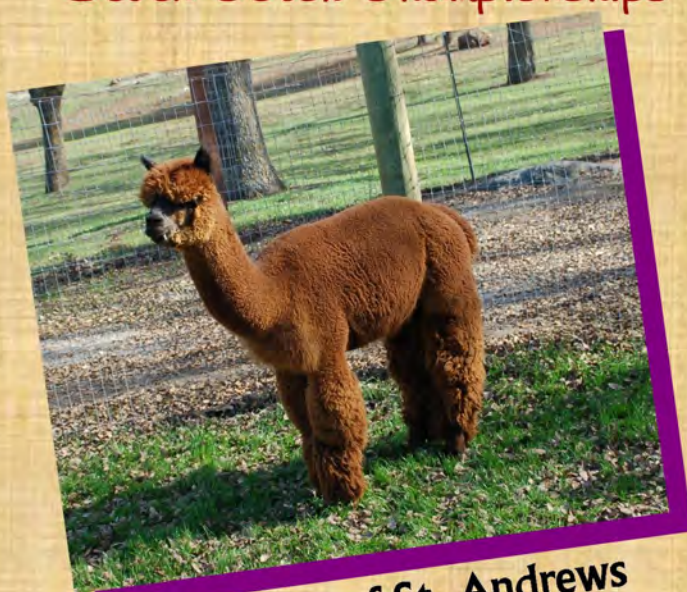
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