

CONNECTION

Late Spring/Summer 2019



What's New:

- ◇ Calpaca BOD Candidates
- ◇ Camelid Emergency Preparedness
- ◇ National Alpaca Fleece Initiative
- ◇ Rattlesnakes!
- ◇ Training with Marty McGee Bennett
- ◇ Upcoming Events
- ◇ *and much, much more!*



California Alpaca Breeders & Owners Association
Connecting members to Calpaca, the industry and each other

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In California's tradition as a pioneer of progress, Calpaca was the first, and the oldest, regional, alpaca association in the Northern Hemisphere. Past and current members of Calpaca have been leaders in the American alpaca industry since 1989.

Calpaca represents alpaca owners, breeders, and enthusiasts in California and beyond. We promote the well-being of alpacas and education of the public about alpacas, alpaca fiber, and alpaca products. We support each other through shared information and experiences. We host meetings, speakers and shows for the benefit of members and the public.

We invite you to join us!

Calpaca Membership meetings are held quarterly on the second Saturday of the second month.

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To join or renew your membership:

<http://www.calpaca.org/page/2572/join-calpaca>

Affiliations

Alpaca Owners Association (AOA)

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AlpacaInfo.com

Alpaca Coalition of America (AOCA)

AlpacaCoalition.com

Alpaca Research Foundation (ARF)

AlpacaResearchFoundation.org

International Lama Registry (ILR)

LamaRegistry.com

Stay Connected!

Calpaca Website

<http://www.calpaca.org/>

Group Emails

calpacamembers@gmail.com

Calpaca Facebook

Facebook.com/groups/Calpaca

Advertise in the Connection

Calpaca Members:

- Business Card: Free
- ¼ page: \$15
- ½ page: \$30
- full page: \$55

Contact *Connection* Editor
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It's that time of year!
Current California wildfire info at
http://www.fire.ca.gov/current_incidents/
Be Safe! Be Prepared!



Message from the President

Calpaca members!

**Bring your ACOA fiber to
the Aug. 10th Quarterly Meeting**

With all the “new” members we have this year, and the golden opportunity of the Quarterly Membership meeting at Cindy Harris’ ranch, Alpacas at Windy Hill, you can very easily participate in this year’s ACOA collection!

I have included here the pertinent information from the ACOA website at <http://alpacacoalition.com/national-fleece-collection-initiative-2019/>.

If you are new to this collection option, here it is in a nutshell:

Rancher responsibilities:

1. Skirt fleece and pull the “sweet spot,” or the area with the best fiber. This is typically from shoulders to hips, down to the point where guard hairs become higher in frequency.
2. Remove vegetable matter.
3. Bag it in a clear 33-gallon bag with your farm ID inside.
4. Print and complete the Fleece Submission form, found [here](#) on the website and on pages 6-7 in this issue.
5. Box up bags and form.
6. **Bring fiber to the August 10th Quarterly Membership meeting.**

From here, your fiber will travel north with northern members attending the meeting (Dianna Jordan, Maureen Macedo, or others). Your fleece will then be placed on Steve Aitchison’s trailer, as Steve will continue to pick up ACOA fleece for transport from collections points north (e.g., Dale Davis) on the way to Oregon the next weekend.

This means Calpaca Membership can transport all ACOA submissions at no cost!

Read more about this opportunity to sell your fleece in the commercial market. It might be a great fit for your business!

2019 NATIONAL ALPACA FLEECE COLLECTION INITIATIVE

Sponsored by the Alpaca Coalition of America

The 2019 ACOA Collection Summary Report is now available! [Click here](#) to view the report.

To improve alpaca growers’ access to the commercial market for alpaca fleece and reduce the costs associated with selling their clip, the Alpaca Coalition of America is underwriting a national fleece collection initiative modeled after similar collections in the American wool industry. Growers will receive the market price for their graded fleece upon subsequent sale to commercial purchasers.

Fleece Payment from Market Consignment Sale:

A grower who provides fleeces for consignment sale will have his/her farm’s fleeces individually graded by trained professionals, and included in bales that will in turn be sold to the highest market bidder. Based on previous results, we believe payment will be received by early 2020. Please note that under this option, 15% of the total sales price is retained to compensate trained graders for their services as well as to cover costs associated with storage, handling, and the subsequent packaging and shipment of fleeces.

A market consignment sale will be attractive to growers who:

- Have finer, lower-grade fleeces that command greater value.
- Are willing to wait for their proceeds from sale in order to take advantage of the price premium available to larger fiber lots/bales in the commercial marketplace.
- **Are interested in supporting the development of a viable commercial market for alpaca fleece.**
- Would like a summary grading report of their farm’s fleece production.

For administrative reasons, each farm submitting fleeces to the collection must choose one payment plan for all the fleeces they submit.

Some Guidance on Grading:

Prior to sale, **your fleeces will be graded, not sorted**. This means that a trained professional will put each of your fleeces on a skirting table, evaluate them as a whole, and place them into the grade indicated by the lowest quality fiber present in the blanket. If the blanket fleece is fine, but there is coarser belly or britch fiber included in the bag, this will result in the whole blanket ending up in a less valuable grade.

Fleece Requirements for Sale:

In order to be accepted for sale via the ACOA National Fleece Collection Initiative, growers must provide fleeces that meet the following requirements:

- Both huacaya and suri fleeces may be sold or consigned to the program.
- Only skirted blanket fiber shorn in 2018 or 2019 is accepted.
- Huacaya fleeces must come from previously shorn animals – no cria tips.
- Staple length must be between 2" and 5" for huacaya fleeces. There is no staple length requirement for suri fleeces.
- We ask that you not send fleeces with AFDs you estimate to be higher than 30 microns. These fleeces command so little in the commercial market that it is uneconomical to sell them through this initiative.
- Blankets must contain minimal vegetable matter, have been properly shorn with care taken to avoid color contamination, and bagged only when completely dry.
- Blankets must be individually bagged in clear, 33 gallon trash bags of a weight between 0.75 and 1.0 mm. (These are readily available, and you are quite possibly using them already.)

- The bags must be knotted and securely tagged with the farm name. In addition, an index card with the farm name must be included inside each bag.
- There should be no holes in the bags – please be careful not to create them when compressing fiber for shipping.

Each shipment should include one copy of the summary farm submission form (see pages 6-7). Shipping boxes or bags must be marked with the words "ACOA Fleece Collection." If the grower wishes to sell their fleeces in the "Under-written Cash Payment Program," these words should also be written on the shipping boxes or bags so that they are weighed promptly at the collection site.

How to Consign:

When your fleeces are skirted, properly bagged and ready to ship, print out the submission form at www.alpacacoalition.com/forms/ACOA-Fleece-Submission-Form.pdf. Fill this form out and include it in your shipment, or bring it with you when you drop off your fleece at a collection point.

If you have questions, contact Charlene Schmid at 530.400.2683 or charleneschmid@me.com



**ACOA National Fleece Collection Initiative
2019 Fleece Submission Form**

Please include this completed form with the fleeces you ship or deliver to a collection site. If you are shipping your fleece in more than one box or bag, please note on the outside of the box or bag which one contains this form.

Date: _____

Farm Name: _____

Owner(s) Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Contact Telephone: _____

Contact Email: _____

Included in Submission (check one):

_____ **Huacaya Fleece**

_____ **Suri Fleece**

_____ **Both Huacaya and Suri Fleece**

Total Number of Fleeces Submitted: _____ Huacaya _____ Suri

Estimated Total Weight of Fleece Sent (lbs): _____ Huacaya _____ Suri

Please note: Your submission form is not complete until you have read and indicated with your signature your acceptance of the terms and conditions below:

Terms and Conditions:

By consigning fleeces to the ACOA National Fleece Collection Initiative's *Market Consignment Sale* program growers agree to the following:

All grading decisions and ACOA-determined fleece weights are final, including those in which the submitted fiber is deemed to have no commercial value and discarded. Growers will receive payment for their fleeces when lots to which they are contributed are completed, sold, and paid for by purchasers. Prices will be the best we can achieve when the fiber is offered for sale, and 15% of the sales price will be retained by ACOA to cover the cost of grading and preparing the fleece for sale and shipment. We cannot guarantee either the timing of a sale or the price that will be realized. Once graded, fleeces will not be available for return to the grower under any circumstances. ACOA, the collection farms, and those working on behalf of the collection initiative assume no liability for any loss of fiber or loss of value of fleeces due to damage that occurs after they have been submitted to the Collection Initiative for sale.

By my signature below, I indicate my acceptance of the terms of the ACOA National Fleece Collection Initiative as of the date noted above:

Signature

Printed Name

Title/Farm Name

Calpaca Member News

Meet Your New *Calpaca Connection* Editor

L'illette Vasquez — L'illy Llamas & Alpacas

I was first introduced to llamas in January 2000, when I was renting a small house on five acres outside the Dallas TX area. After receiving an unexpected vacation check from a “dot.com” closure, I decided it was too cold to attempt that long-dreamed of trip to Ireland. So I bought my first breeding pair of llamas (which made perfect sense at the time)!

I'd been a contract technical writer/editor for many years, and loved doing that. But I loved spending time with my llamas much more. After almost four years in Texas, I ran a “Have Herd, Will Travel” ad in some llama publications. Bobra Goldsmith, owner of Rocky Mountain Llamas outside Boulder CO contacted me, invited me out to visit; and 10 days after my 50th birthday, I stuffed as much of my belongings as would fit into an SUV and two little trailers, sent eight llamas on ahead, and carried in my SUV my seven cats and one great big dog.

My camelid adventure had truly begun. I stayed at RML for over seven years, working and training and showing and starting a llama/alpaca 4-H group. After Bobra died, I ran another ad, which was noticed by a friend of Dave and Nancy Helwig of 925 Sterling Alpacas. The Helwigs were planning to relocate from Thousand Oaks to Plymouth CA, and needed a ranch manager at the new location. I've been here since May 2011, and can't say I've ever been happier.

I also continue to work with Southwest Llama Rescue, Inc., assisting with coordination of rescues and rehomes in and around California; am a current member; former board member, and newsletter editor for Llama Association of North America (LANA); a current member of Calpaca. .. And now delving into Calpaca's website updates and editing this newsletter. What a great journey!

You can reach me any time at llamas@lillette.net, or call/text me at 720.839.0787. Hope to see you soon!

Calling for **YOUR** Contributions to the *Calpaca Connection*!

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of editing a newsletter is coming up with articles and ideas that are current, relevant, interesting and beneficial for our members. I like to write... I could fill each issue with my own stuff; but that's not why I'm here.

To create a truly valuable resource for Calpaca members, we need Calpaca members to contribute.

- You have ideas all the time, right? This is a great place to explore and express them.
- Have you solved a problem at your place or with your animals? I'm betting lots of us would like to know how you handled the challenge.
- Do you get calls or emails asking your advice on fiber, herd management, breeding, and other aspects of living this lifestyle? Harness your responses, and let's share them!
- What other ideas or suggestions do you have to make this the best publication possible? I'd love to add regular columns, tips'n'tricks, pictures, anything you are interested in that will also interest your cohorts.

Email me at llamas@lillette.net!

Calpaca Board of Directors Candidates

Editor: Just as we go to publication, there are two more candidates. Watch for email announcement!



Hello, my name is Jackie Jones, and I am running for a position on the Calpaca Board of Directors.

I began fulfilling my dream of alpaca ownership in May of 2015 when I purchased my first ranch home. I quickly became acquainted with Dianna and Jack Jordan (Alpacas of Somerset Farm), spending many weekends visiting their ranch and learning. Back 40 Farms was established, and the dream became a full reality when I brought my first six alpacas home in August of 2016. Since then, I have grown my herd to 25 with five cria on the way, and relocated to a larger ranch I purchased in Valley Springs, CA. My herd includes Huacayas and Suris.

I am eager to learn as much as possible about these amazing animals and the industry. I have an affinity for multis and appaloosas, and I am building my breeding program around that focus.

I enjoy showing my alpacas, and I am excited about bringing my “home grown” youngsters to upcoming shows. I have met many wonderful alpaca people, and I am looking forward to further deepening my relationships and ties within the Calpaca community and the alpaca industry.

My career has been in the Mortgage Banking industry, and I recently became the Director of Mortgage Operations for a major lending company. Through the years, I have developed vast leadership and project management skills. If elected to the Calpaca Board, I will use these experiences and skills to serve the Calpaca membership and Board.

Thank you for your consideration.



I was introduced to alpacas in 2008, when I chanced upon them in the Monterrey Bay area. It was love at first sight. Fast forward to March 2017 when I bought my first three females. I now own 24.

Since my first purchases, I have participated in as many educational events, shows and groups as possible to become the very best alpaca rancher I can be. I am constantly learning thru reading, watching You Tube and, of course, caring for my herd.

I have applied to the Judges Qualification program, and once I have enough time as an owner and have completed all the reading, I hope to be accepted. It would be my dream come true.

It was an honor to have Scott and Laurie Findlay suggest me for the CalPaca board. I know that if chosen, I will bring 30 years plus of business operations know-how, and 2.5 years of passion for alpaca to the group. It is my hope to bring local and national awareness to these incredible creatures. I do as many local events as I can, marketing the beautiful products made from the fiber, and of course, introduce animals to the attendees. We are in the process of buying a good amount of acreage where I will create an alpaca haven, complete with, a yoga/mediation area, fiber processing area for classes, and a safe interaction area for humans and alpacas. I love these animals, their funny personalities and their incredible fiber. I have used them as therapy, not only for myself, but also for my business, working with mental health/substance use clients.

— Stacey Payne



Suri Network

Dedicated to the preservation of the Suri alpaca



Suri Symposium And all Suri Fleece Show

August 9 - 10, 2019 • Embassy Suites • Loveland CO

Suri
SIMPLY STUNNING.

Come and join new and experienced breeders as we learn how to create Suri, Simply Stunning in our own herds!

Speakers Include:

- ◆ Jude Anderson
- ◆ Amanda VandenBosch
- ◆ Wini Labrecque
- ◆ Dr. Tim Holt
- ◆ Amy Hall from designer Eileen Fisher

Topics Include:

- ◆ Breeding Selection
- ◆ Fleece Characteristics
- ◆ Alpaca Showing 101
- ◆ Pain management for reproduction
- ◆ Sustainability in the textile market

The All Suri Fleece Show is now including international fleeces and we will of course be bringing back the Suri Breeder Cup awards! Our judges are the amazing Cheryl Gehly, Amanda VandenBosch, Gabrielle Menn and Wini Labrecque judging Fiber Arts.

*The Premier Suri
event of the year!*



Suri Network

PO Box 1984
Estes Park, CO 80517
970-586-5876
office@surinetwork.org



Be a part of what's special about the Suri Network. [Join here!](#)

Discover the [Benefits](#) of membership.



**El Dorado
Captain
Jack Sparrow**



AFD 18.5 SD 3.9 Spin 18.0 CF 99.2



**El Dorado
Blues
Troublemaker**



AFD 18.3 SD 4.1 Spin 18.0 CF 99.4

ONES TO WATCH!!!!

@ Alpacas of El Dorado

530-642-8082 (Ranch) ** info@alpacasofeldorado.com

Camelid Emergency Preparedness

Compiled by Karen Conyngham for Cal-Ilia

Why Camelid Owners Need to Be Prepared

Transporting animals to safety when disaster strikes can be difficult. Disaster preparedness is important for all animals, but it is particularly important for livestock because of the animals' size and the requirements needed to shelter and transport them. Even if you think you are in an area relatively safe from natural disasters, remember that disasters can happen anywhere and include barn fires, hazardous material spills, propane line explosions, and train derailments, all of which may necessitate evacuation. It is imperative that you be prepared to protect your alpacas and llamas, whether by evacuating or by sheltering in place.

Some state legislatures are considering legislation that would require first responders to take animals into account when evacuating areas threatened by flooding waters, earthquakes, wildfires and other life-threatening disasters. Monitor your state legislature or state veterinary medical association's web site to determine if such a bill is under consideration for your area.

Make a plan ahead of time

Make a disaster plan to protect your property, your facilities, and your animals. Where will you go, how will you get there, what supplies will you take, how long will it take to gather and load the animals?

- Create a list of emergency telephone numbers, including those of your employees, employer, neighbors, your veterinarian, state veterinarian's office, county extension service, a contact phone number for yourself other than your cell phone (e.g. close friend or family who are outside the impacted area). Have a copy of this list ready to give to each person helping in your evacuation.
- Have a designated person who can implement your plan in case you are not home when an emergency happens. If you update your plan, be sure this person also has a copy of the latest version.
- Keep a current copy of your association's membership directory in your vehicle.
- Have several alternative destinations depending on type and extent of disaster (within a 15 – 40 mile radius recommended). Keep a current

state roadmap in your vehicle. Possible evacuation sites: pre-arranged farm/ranch of a friend who is not in the affected area; show/fair grounds, sale barns, equestrian centers, veterinary colleges, racetracks.

- Make sure every animal has identification. Microchip ID is fine but also have halter or neck tags with your name and phone number ready in case all animals are not chipped.
- Have a halter and lead for each animal; keep ID tags on each halter. Organize halters and lead ropes on a peg board in barn hallway. Dog collars can serve as an emergency substitute for halters; be sure the collar fits snugly enough that the llama or alpaca cannot slip it off over its head. Train all animals to lead and load into a trailer.
- Include a picket line, bungee stakeout lines and stakes in case there is no pen or enclosure at the receiving area.
- Maintain permanent health and I.D. records for your animals in a safe place. Take them with you if you evacuate. Backup software programs at least monthly. Store a backup of the data file either on disc and keep it in your safe deposit box/home safe or email the backup file to a friend or relative.
- Print up a list of all of your animals and make copies. Photograph your herd and keep it with your master list. Organize your herd into groups (geldings, studs, moms and babies).
- Identify an alley, lane or pen that can easily be used to confine animals and is readily adjacent to where a trailer or truck can access them.
- Know who can transport animals if necessary and where animals can be relocated, or be prepared to leave them behind if you must.
- Find out if anyone nearby has equipment which may be shared, such as trailers, generators, water tanks or portable pens.
- If you own too many animals to evacuate in one trip, decide ahead of time what the priority evacuation list will be. Some may have to be left behind.
- Truck and Trailer - Check your truck and trailer regularly to make certain they are ready to transport camelids. Check the floor, tires, brakes, lights and hitch to be sure they are in working order. Make sure you have a full tank

of gas. Do not carry full gas cans in your trailer. Always back your vehicle into your driveway facing the exit, in front of your trailer if possible. Keep your trailer in an easily accessible place.

Supplies to take with you if possible:

- Water buckets
- Feed pans
- Hay/feed for at least 3 days
- Medicines for any animals currently under treatment; syringes if needed (3-day minimum)
- Animal and people first-aid kits (see “First Aid Kits for Camelids” on the next page).
- Clippers to treat broken toenails
- Tweezers to remove thorns
- Scissors
- Brush for grooming
- Microchip reader

If you need to shelter in place

- Install a hand pump and obtain enough large containers to water your animals and family for at least a week (municipal water supplies and wells are often contaminated during a disaster.)
- Identify alternate water and power sources. A generator (4 hp minimum) with a safely stored supply of fuel may be essential, especially if you have electrical equipment necessary to the well-being of your animals.
- Have 48-72 hours of water and feed on hand for animals. Use child's plastic swimming pool, boats, trash cans, bath tubs to store water.
- Turn off power and gas lines in advance.
- Keep the following emergency supplies on hand:
 - ◇ Plastic trash barrel with lid
 - ◇ Tarpaulins
 - ◇ Water buckets
 - ◇ First aid items for animals and people
 - ◇ Portable radio, flashlight and extra batteries
 - ◇ Fire-resistant non-nylon leads and halters
 - ◇ Sharp knife and wire cutters
 - ◇ Leg wraps (disposable baby diapers make

good emergency wraps or bandages)

- ◇ Duct tape, magic markers
- ◇ Lime and bleach (disinfectants)
- ◇ Portable pens/fencing or crates if appropriate
- ◇ Film - Obtain film for your camera and camcorder to document storm damage. If time permits, take pictures of your structures prior to the storm. Review your insurance policy to determine storm coverage then document damage accordingly.
- ◇ Water purification – Iodine or chlorine treatments and an actual physical filter (paper towels, clean cloth, coffee filters for filtering brackish water) may be needed if water sources are contaminated.
 - Iodine dosage: using ordinary 2 percent tincture of iodine from the medicine chest, 3 drops per quart of CLEAR water, or 6 drops to each quart of cloudy water, and stir thoroughly, allow water to stand for at least 30 minutes before using or filtering for additional protection.
 - Chlorine dosage: 8 drops(1/8 tsp. or .5ml) for 1 gallon of CLEAR water; 18 drops(1/4 tsp/1.25 ml) for CLOUDY water. When storing water in 55 gallon drums or inflatable bags, use 55 ml or a stinging, 1/4 cup per 55 gallons of capacity. Average potable water needs are 1 gallon per person per day; llamas/alpacas may need 2 gallons or more each per day.

After the Disaster

- Watch for unstable roads and highways.
- Looters and vandals could be in the area.
- Survey the area around your barn and pastures to identify sharp objects, dangerous materials, contaminated water, downed power lines and dangerous wildlife such as snakes.
- Walk fence lines.
- Handle livestock quietly, calmly and in a manner they are familiar with.
- Release animals into safe and enclosed areas only.
- Reintroduce food in small servings, gradually working up to full portions if animals have been without food for a prolonged period of time.
- Allow uninterrupted rest/sleep for all animals to recover from the trauma and stress.

When Should You Evacuate? BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE! !

Sources:

- **American Veterinary Medical Association**
<http://avma.org/disaster/default.asp>
- **Clemson University**
http://clemson.edu/ep/A_E_instructions.htm
- **Colorado State University Extension**
Caring for Livestock: Before, During and After Disasters
<http://ext.colostate.edu/pubs/livestk/publive.html>
- **Emergency Water Purification Techniques**
<http://www.aquatechnology.net/emergencywaterpurification.html>
and
<http://epa.gov/safewater/faq/emerg.html>

- **Llama Association of North America**
<http://llamainfo.org>
- **Rocky Mtn. Llama & Alpaca Assoc.**
http://rmla.com/Fire_Flood.htm
- **Univ. of Florida, Small Ruminant Emergency Preparedness**
<http://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu/PDFS/CHAP07/DPR-0724-web.pdf>

Although the following is written for equine owners, all of the recommendations and procedures will apply to llama and alpaca emergency preparedness as well:

- **What Do I Do With My Horse in Fire, Flood, and/or Earthquake?**
<http://www.etinational.com/docs/Red%20Book%20Revision%209-2004.pdf>

FIRST AID KIT FOR CAMELIDS

By Dr. Kristy Brown
(originally published in LANA News, Fall 2004)

I have several first aid kits made up and I'd like to share ideas with you to create your own. I have a standard size toolbox (about 8" high and deep and 18" long) in the back of the truck with emergency supplies while we're "on the road." I like to keep the emergency kit in the truck, not the tack box, so that it is available every time the trailer is hooked up, not just when we're headed for a show. (This box would work for the barn as well.)

I have a friend that uses the small, flip top coolers as an emergency kit - anything small enough to store and carry easily, yet large enough to hold a few essentials will work. Bubble wrap sheets work great to wrap around medicine bottles to prevent breakage and is readily available at most office supply stores. Or better yet, reuse the wrap from packages you receive. Ziplock bags work great to protect and organize items in the tack box.

General Supplies:

- **Vetwrap** – to wrap wounds or support joints.
- **Diapers** - these work great to place over wounds, they are very absorbent and won't stick to wounds.
- **2" PVC pipe** - cut length wise to use as a splint - cut the pipe as long as will fit in your emergency kit. If you don't have PVC pipe available or can't cut it, the same length of 1" dowel rod will

also work-keep 2 pieces of dowel rod in your kit to wrap one on each side of the injured area for support.

- **Duct tape** - the "miracle bandage." Duct tape can be used to waterproof a bandage, hold a splint, pull the fiber away from a wound, secure a bandage, and any other creative use you can come up with. This will annoy my husband because he is an HVAC contractor and thinks duct tape is only for one specific use for his sheet metal projects, not an all purpose item.
- **Contact lens (sterile saline) solution** - this can be used to rinse out an inflamed eye or a wound. Saline is "tissue friendly" and will flush a wound well without leaving a residue that could prevent your veterinarian from stitching the wound. Buy the cheap generic bottles and discard them after they are opened.
- **Eye salves** - keep a couple of tubes of non-steroidal antibiotic salves in your kit. Again, they are safe for a scratch on the eye or to place on superficial wounds. Do not put cream into deep wounds if you can get to a veterinarian within a couple of hours.
- **Antibiotic injectable** - consult with your veterinarian for their favorite drug for your use. I keep both Penicillin (good for wounds) and LA200 (good for respiratory infections) in my travel kit.

- **Banamine** - Banamine is good for colic, inflammation and pain. Consult your veterinarian for the appropriate dosage and to dispense an appropriate volume of drug for your use.
- **Gastroguard** - this product is used to treat ulcers. It is not something to use without your veterinarian's approval, but may be appropriate to use on an animal that is stressed while on the road.
- **Antihistamine injectable** - antihistamines can be used for insect bites, snake bites, allergic conditions and respiratory conditions.
- **Injectable steroid** - this should be used only for snake bites, shock or severe allergic reactions. *Consult your veterinarian.*
- **Epinephrine** - antidote for drug reactions and insect/snake bites—again, *consult your veterinarian.*
- **Vegetable oil** - a pint of vegetable oil is useful for constipation or colic on the road. Vegetable oil has flavor and can be syringed into the animal's mouth and they will swallow it. Mineral oil

has no flavor and is easily aspirated. *Consult with your veterinarian* for an appropriate dosage.

- **Syringes and needles** - a variety pack. I keep an extra Ziplock for garbage (used needles/ syringes). When I empty the used items, I know exactly what I need to restock the kit with.
- **Hand towels** - can be used to support an injured leg or to clean a wound.
- **Bottled water** - to give animal to drink or to flush a wound or rehydrate yourself.
- **Betadine or Nolvasan Surgical Scrub** - a small shampoo container of either of these fits nicely into a kit and can be used to clean a wound. Your veterinarian can possibly still suture a wound if cleansed with these products because tissue residue is not a concern.

This kit fits easily in a vehicle or a llama pack for use on the trail. You may prefer a backpack or cooler or other container; anything that is easy to grab and run with in an emergency and anything you can easily take on the trail.

Calpaca Quarterly Meeting

Hosted by Cindy Harris, Alpacas at Windy Hills

“Starting and Running a 4-H Program on Your Alpaca Ranch”

Speakers:

Maureen Macedo and Cindy Harris

Jennifer & Clair Boone ~ Mother/Daughter Organizers for Ventura 4-H

Claire has just earned her Emerald Star by designing and implementing a recruiting event for our alpaca program which begins in September.

9:30 — Coffee and breakfast goodies | 10:00 — Meeting begins

Bring your favorite ‘cria observation chair’ and your smiles.

We will meet under the trees by the OB and Nursery pastures.

7660 Bradley Rd., Somis CA 93066 [\[MAP\]](#)

www.alpacalink.com | 805.907.5162 |

Calpaca 2019 Membership List

LAST	FIRST	RANCH NAME	WEB ADDRESS
Ater	Madelyn & Gary	Ater's Alpacas	AtersAlpacas.com
Almeida	Victor & Danice	Outlaw Alpacas	OutlawAlpacas.com
Ball	Karen	Heart & Soul Alpacas and Spinner	HeartAndSoulAlpacas.com
Beatty	Lisa	Rockstar Alpacas	RockstarAlpacas.com
Bechtold	Alice	Alice's Alpacas	
Berry	Stephanie & Bruce	Berry Alpaca Farm	
Bisceglia	Kim & Mike	McCarty Creek Ranch	McCartyCreekRanch.com
Borcich	Jonelle	Sweet River Alpacas	
Borden	Sheri	Dieci Alpacas	
Bradford	Art & Valerie	Alpacas of Menifee Valley	AlpacasOfMenifeeValley.com
Caole	Anita & John	Humming Hill Farm	
Chaikin	Laurie	Renaissance Farm	RenFarm.net
Clawson	Heather		
Cline	Linda	C-Line Alpaca Ranch	
Cooper	Alisha	Hilltop Terrace	
Cornell	Gaye	Vello Vellon Farm	vellovellon.com
Craig	Margie & Steven	Peavine Alpacas	
Davis	Dale	Derwydd Alpacas	derwyddalpacas.com
Derrow	Susan	Rainbow Ranch Alpacas	
DiPippo	Tracy	Angel Dreams Alpacas	
Dotson	Kathryn & Anton		
Escarcega	Arnold & Marta	A & M Ranch	aandmeranch.com
Findlay	Scott & Laurie	Alpacas of El Dorado	alpacasofeldorado.com
Galway	Deb	Menagerie Hill Ranch	menageriehillranch.com
Gaudy	Kimberly	Topaz Ranch	
Goehring	Tom & Mette	Ranch of the Oaks	ranchoftheoaks.com
Gyuro	Richard & Renate	Alpacas at Lone Ranch	alpacasontheweb.com
Hamilton	Michael & Alyss	New Hope Alpacas	
Harris	Cindy	Alpacas of Windy Hill	alpacalink.com
Harvey	Terisue & Craig	Horsefeather Ranch	
Hayes	Janet	Diamond Valley Alpacas	
Hazard	Rick & Patti	Hazard Alpacas at Alpacas de Jamul	
Helwig	Nancy & Dave	925 Sterling Alpacas, LLC	925suris.com
Hibbits	Victoria & Ken	Alpacas by the Sea	
Houts	Tom & Robyn	Southern Cross Farm	
Jakovljevic	Alek & Marla	Heartshine Ranch	
James	Wendi	Little Providence Alpacas	
Joaquin	Nadine & Richard	Bear River Alpacas	bearriveralpacas.com
Johnson	Brad	Alpacas del Valle Cereza	

Calpaca 2019 Membership List

LAST	FIRST	RANCH NAME	WEB ADDRESS
Jones	Jackie	Back 40 Farms	
Jordan	Dianna & Jack	Alpacas of Somerset Farm	
Karr	Sabina Pokorney	Autumn Day Alpacas	autumndayalpacas.com
Kelly	Karen	Arapaho Rose Alpacas	arapahorose.com
Kram	Edna	Good Vibes Alpacas	
Kukla	Megan	MLK Alpacas & Friends Fiber Farm	
Livingston	Sue & Peter	Bosque Ranch Alpaca	
Low	Deborah	Near Sawrey Farm Alpacas	
Macedo	Maureen & Larry	Macedo's Mini Acre	macedosminiacre.com
MacBain	Wendy	Shekinah's Alpacas	shekinahsalpacas.com
Mello	Brandi & Russell	Picotoot's Pack of Paca Farm	
Moles	Denise & Robert	Ocean View Ranch	oceanviewranch.com
Morris	Donna	Luv R Pacas	
Nelson	Bruce (dec) & Joan	Ahh...Sweet Alpacas	sweetalpacas.com
O'Neil	Valerie	Big Rock Ranch	
Ostby	Signe	Valhalla Farms	valhallafarmsalpacas.com
Owen	Jeremiah	Hiraeth Ranch	
Pellegrino	Tracy & Donald	Faith and Fleece Alpacas	
Petersen	Tom & Susan	Alpacas All Around	alpacasallaround.com
Phillips	Darcy	Rare Gem Alpacas	
Poplawski MD	Donna	American Pride Alpacas LLC	americanpridealpacasllc.com
Porter	Claudia	Black Rock Mountain Company	
Posey	Bill	Quidish Fields Alpacas	
Potter	Bonnie	Fair Winds Alpacas	fairwindsalpacas.com
Rabe	Dennis & Vicki	101 Alpacas Ranch	101alpacas.com
Ray	Yvonna & Matthew	Ray of Sunshine Alpacas	
Rogers	Richard & Renee		
Schmid	Charlene	Integrity Alpacas & Fiber	
Scroggins	David & Sheila	Colusa Riverside Alpacas	colusariversidealpacas.com
Slack	Ellie	Red Head Alpacas	
Smith	Shalon & Lester	Belvoir Mine Alpacas	belvoirminealpacas.com
Stoneberg	Eric	Stoneberg Alpacas, LLC	
Strachan	Scott	ALBA Alpacas	
Theis	Lisa & Ken	KT-Lee Ranch	ktleeranchalpacas.com
Wallace	Sandy	Alpacas of Marin/SoCal Suri Alpaca	alpacasofmarin.com
Winterstrom	Sarah	Winterstrom Ranch	
Zandberg	Dave	ZZ Alpacas	zzalpacas.com

Rattlesnakes: A Common Scourge of Livestock Farmers

There are few more heartwarming sights than those of babies playing; in my case, alpaca babies in my back yard, which is also the birthing pen and nursery. Alpaca crias play hard. They run laps and leap over imaginary obstacles, are wonderfully curious, practice their neck-wrestling moves on each other, chase birds and squirrels, sometimes follow lost bits of paper blown by a morning breeze. They play “queen of the mountain” on the sand and gravel pile, crash full-steam into the adults just to get a reaction; they prunk like tiny deer, are fascinated by their environment and, like all kids, fill their days with exploration and discovery.

But not little Rosie. She lost her spark, her joy, the night her mother died. In the hour between my closing the “yard girls” into the barn for the night and going back out for the night’s final check, our beautiful, young, healthy Tuscany Rose was bitten and killed by a rattlesnake. Bitten on the nose, the swelling suffocated her.

When I entered the barn and found Tuscany Rose lying dead in the stall, the alpacas with her were huddled in one corner, standing in a group staring at her body. Among the girls was her cria, seven-week old Tuscany’s Rosette, “Rosie,” must have watched her mom die.

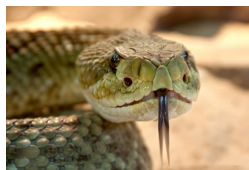
Tuscany Rose wasn’t the first alpaca to be bitten here, but she was the first to have died from the bite. Though we had taken “usual” measures to prevent rattlesnakes getting to the animals, spring 2016 was terrible. One alpaca, Lali, was bitten in April—almost exactly two years after her first rattlesnake bite in 2014; and three others were bitten in June. All were in or around their shelters. Those survived; Tuscany Rose’s fatal bite was in late July. She wasn’t the first to have been bitten here; but she was the first to die.



Prevention

So how does one prevent rattlesnakes from coming onto the property? How can you prevent an innately curious animal from getting close

enough to examine this strange creature? Is there anything that can be done to treat a poisonous snake bite, assuming you get there quickly enough? Just how soon is “quickly enough”? Are there any answers, any real solutions?



Like they say about house burglars, you can’t really prevent them from getting into your house 100% of the time—but you can make someone else’s property

more desirable, easier to get into to. Same goes for snakes. They’re with us; all we can do is our best to eliminate the things that attract and protect them.

These are some basic prevention measures you can take:

- Determine if the snakes are denning in your area or just passing through. That will help you decide whether to use snake repellents, which kind and how much. Pellets and solutions can be spread around the likely areas: thicker if snakes are in residence to prevent them from crossing this barrier, a lesser amount to reroute them if they just tend to pass through. Instructions are on the repellent containers, and you can find a lot of information and product reviews on the Internet.
- Snakes look for dark and cool places to sleep and hang out in the cool of the day, moving to sunlit spots to warm up. Eliminate lumber, wood piles, roofing materials, even large rocks—anything a snake might hide under.
- Snakes follow the buffet: keep populations of mice and other small rodents to a minimum. We spread snake repellent pellets around areas where snakes and alpacas would most likely meet: rock piles, areas of the paddock borders with holes or little “caverns” made by rainwater flow, around the shelter spigots, etc. (Snakes may be more evident after periods of heavy rainfall, since their holes may be filled with water.)
- Clear away any thick vegetation, keeping the grass mowed low and clearing out beneath bushes and hedges. Not only does this reduce its attractiveness to snakes, but makes it much easier for you to see them.

- If you have holes in doors or walls, cover with screening or patching materials to reduce the snakes' entries. This is also a good place to distribute snake repellent.
- Remove any shallow pools of water, even to the extent of keeping your animals' water containers away from the water source. We run hoses from spigots on one side of the shelter, across the floor, to a bucket on the other side. Snakes seek shallow pools of water for hydration—at least four of our snakebites likely occurred around the water buckets under spigots at the walls—locations where snakes could enter and thirsty animals are most likely to encounter them.
- Use olfactory or sonic deterrents; i.e., pellets or liquids that dissuade snakes from crossing their “barriers,” or an ultrasound device that uses LED lighting with specific sonic vibrations that repel snakes.
- Snake-proof fencing is probably the most effective deterrent, and certainly the most expensive. We haven't tried this yet, but you can find info on the Web; e.g., on WikiHow.com at <http://wikihow.com/Rattlesnake-Proof-a-Backyard>

Signs of Snake Bite

For our animals who were bitten on their lips, the first sign was the swelling, various amounts of bleeding, and the two fang piercings that may be visible under close examination.

Crystal's Lalique was our first rattlesnake bite victim in April 2014 when she was just a few weeks old. We surmise that a large rock in her paddock was the likely location of a hidden snake. Coming too close to the rock, perhaps hearing the consequent warning rattle and investigating closer, she was bitten on the lip. I noticed the swelling, likely within a very brief amount of time, and we rushed her to large animal emergency facility at U.C. Davis.

This “rush” took five hours from the estimated bite time to beginning treatment at the large animal emergency center. We had called various local veterinarians, finally locating one to advise us, though none who could come out to the ranch. It took over an hour before we loaded Lali and her mom Crystal, and drove the 90 minutes from Plymouth to the U.C. Davis Large Animal Hospital. We were incredibly

lucky that little Lali survived long enough to get to medical help.

When Lali was bitten the second time in 2016, it was also on the lip. She had perhaps built up some immunity from her first bite; and though very sick for a while, she had no lasting ill effects.

I had found her lying on her side in the shelter when I went out to feed that evening, and I was unable to get her even up to a kush. There was no way of knowing how long she'd been down. This time, we had a vet close enough that he could come out. We were able to eventually walk her up to the barn where we could care for her. Banamine, long-acting penicillin, probiotics, a paste to protect the gut from the antibiotics, electrolytes in water, vitamin injections. Time and attention. Today, she's just fine.

[Update: This article was written in 2016. In May of this year (2019), Lali was again bitten. I cared for her here at the ranch, following the regimen we used the previous time with a few additions, such as MSE Antimicrobial Drench, and ever more determined feedings and drenching with water containing electrolytes and vitamins.]

Bites Are Often Fatal to Obligate Nasal Breathers

Should the worst happen and a rattlesnake bite your alpaca or llama, it will most likely be because the animal's curiosity got it into striking range—one-third to one-half the length of the snake—and the snake was startled or frightened. If, as with most of our animals' bites, the strike is to the lip or muzzle, there is an excellent likelihood that the animal can be saved. Because llamas and alpacas are obligate nasal breathers, however, a bite on the nose or upper lip can quickly be fatal. The inflammation caused by the venom causes the nasal tissues to swell, suffocating the animal. It happens quickly; immediate action is critical!

A few months ago, our boy Logan, pictured here, was bitten on his lip. Though the swelling had begun to decrease noticeably, he couldn't chew and remained in obvious pain. He was never able to eat enough to ruminate. Despite giving him food and water orally, we never saw him



chewing cud; he didn't eat for proper rumination, and eventually there was nothing more we could do for him. Though the swelling didn't kill him, the bite, nonetheless, did. Logan was ultimately euthanized.

What to Do When Your Animal is Bitten and Down

I keep vet phone numbers on my cell phone. I also carry a sort of mini "field kit" in the golf cart I use around the ranch, and I keep a more complete emergency kit at the barn. The portable one contains things I might need in an immediate emergency: gauze pads, vet wrap, NOSTRIL OPENERS! That latter item is critical to the life of your animal and can be anything you can use to keep the nostril open, allowing air through.

If you suspect a rattlesnake bite, it's critical, life or death, that you act quickly:

1. Recommendations I've found include a small plastic hair curler, tampon tube, straw, flexible tubing... anything of an appropriate size and smoothness. The objective is to keep an airway open and to do it *quickly*. The end of the tube pictured here is flat, which could scrape delicate nasal tissue. You can gently round the outside by using a heat source to make it malleable. Personally, I would first choose the tubing; if none available, I would take a chance with whatever I have on-hand that could work. If the airways close, your animal dies.
2. When I've found an alpaca who had been bitten by a rattlesnake, the snake itself has never been near. Don't take that for granted though, and do take a good, quick look around the area so you don't end up bitten, too!
3. From your on-hand emergency kit, insert your airway-opening item into a nostril and, if necessary, tape it to secure it on the animal. The situations here haven't made that an option, but I carry clear plastic tubing that I purchased at Tractor Supply Company (see Bobra Goldsmith's suggestions at the end of this article); then use heat source to gently round the flat edges at end of



tube that will go into nostril.

4. Call your vet! If she can come out, great; if not load your animal as gently and quickly as possible, and head for the nearest large animal vet or veterinary teaching hospital. If you don't have a number handy, Google whatever facility is near you and *keep that number* in your kit or in your phone contact list.
5. If your alpaca is down, move it only if necessary—calm is important for both it and you. We've walked a snakebite victim up to the barn, but the bite was on the lip and the swelling wasn't reaching her nose at that point. She made it, but we had the vet meet us in the shelter the next time that same girl—yes, our sweet Lali—decided to tempt the Fates!
6. Reassure your animal. I talk a lot to mine anyway, so a calming tone seems to help. And *you* must remember to breathe. It will calm you and, in turn, help your animal remain calm.

If I had seen the snake strike Tuscan Rose, there's a chance I could have saved her, at least kept her alive long enough to get to a vet. Had I been there, had I seen it, perhaps I could have saved her. Maybe not. As with every crisis we encounter, we do the best we can with the knowledge we have at that time. And the next time, we will have more information and experience to call on.

Be aware, be alert, take precautions, be ready for the worst... and may that never happen to you and yours!

.....

Author's Note: Although I am not a veterinarian or veterinary professional, I have been an owner, caretaker, steward and lover of camelids for 20 years. As such, I hope my experience may be of benefit to others. Always, always, always check with your vet first! If you can't reach your vet, try another camelid caretaker in your area.

Sources:

- "Rattlesnakes – "It's that time of year" by Tracey Wallace
- "Herp Care Collection" by Melissa Kaplan
- "8 Best Snake Repellents"

Treatment Protocol, Dr. Norm Evans, *Alpaca Field Manual*:

- Blood tests to monitor CBC, platelet count, clotting factor, BUN, creatinine, CP, glucose.
- Benadryl at 75mg per 100 lbs. body weight to counteract allergic reactions to antivenin.
- Lactated Ringers Solution fluids should be administered aggressively to combat the primary problem of hypovolemic shock.
- Polyvalent antivenin of equine origin should be carefully administered if platelet counts are low and dropping. One vial per 75 lbs. body weight in one liter, administered slowly. Observe closely for anaphylactic shock. If reaction occurs, stop infusion and administer Benadryl, wait ten minutes, restart infusion at lower rate. Epinephrine should be on hand. Repeated administration may be necessary dependent on platelet count, clotting factor, regression of swelling.
- Broad spectrum antibiotic.
- Do not administer corticosteroids, DMSO, aspirin or butazolidin.
- Of course, keep the airway open.

Note that rattlesnake bites may have no to large amounts of venom injected, so I's primarily the repeated blood tests and secondarily the swelling indication that one must go by and treat accordingly. A hospital environment with a laboratory is probably best for conducting the repeated testing.

Keeping Nasal Passages Open

From Bobra Goldsmith, Rocky Mountain Llamas, Longmont/Boulder CO:

"Sandy Mubarak of Southern California has saved 13 (!) llamas from rattlesnake bite successfully. She recently recommended to me to get flexible tubing with 3/8 in. interior dimension and 5/8 in. exterior size. I found 3/8 in. x 1/2 in tubing and got that. It should be 2 ft. long. This is to insert in the nostrils to keep the air passages open.

"The tubing I got is clear, like what a vet uses. Also, it needs to be rounded at the end where it was cut at the store so that the edge isn't sharp. And one of the things Sandy told me was that all her animals did eat and drink. All but two were on their feet all the time. The other two she propped up in sternal position with bales and put another bale under their heads while they were kushed. The important thing was to keep them eating and drinking to dilute the toxins and flush the system, plus the IV, of course.

After the tube is inserted in the nostril the excess should be passed up between the ears and fastened on with duct tape. Her vet puts the llama on IV and the animal is kept calm, etc."

Suggestion from an Unidentified Owner:

If you live in an area with rattlesnakes, keep the round hair curlers on hand. If a bite occurs on the nose area, take the tube, the part you wrap your hair around, and insert it into the llama's nostrils as soon as possible. You may have to tape in place. These will keep their air supply open as the swelling continues.

Upcoming 2019 Calpaca Events

- 08/10: Membership Meeting | Alpacas at Windy Hill, Somis, CA | Cindy Harris
- 09/28-29: National Alpaca Farm Days
- 10/11-13: Gold Country Gathering | Grass Valley, CA
- 11/09: Membership Meeting | Arapaho Rose Alpacas | Redding CA | Karen Kelly

For more member events and updates, see calpaca.org/events

What to Do If You Encounter a Rattlesnake

By Tom Lohr [\[see online\]](#)

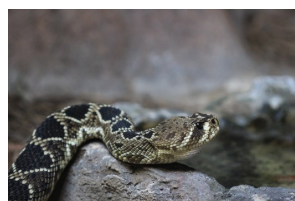
Updated on July 12, 2018

Tom Lohr lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where he explores the region with his canine sidekick, Ella the Brown Wonder.

Rattlesnakes strike fear into the hearts of humans, mostly due to the over-dramatization of their behavior in Westerns. Make no mistake, rattlers can be dangerous and even deadly, but they are not the reptilian equivalent of being chased through the woods by Sasquatch. Given the room and respect they deserve, rattlesnakes are no reason to end your hike early. Simply assess the situation and take appropriate action.



Rattlesnakes like to eat. Humans are far too large for them to tackle. Rattlesnakes do NOT want to eat you; that is boa constrictor territory. What they do eat are mainly rodents. Snakes are an important part of the ecosystem and help keep the rodent population under control. While most species American rattlesnakes are not endangered, you should not kill a rattlesnake unless you have absolutely no other choice.



Rattlesnakes cannot hear. But they are super sensitive to ground vibrations. If they can sense a rabbit hopping nearby, they can darn sure detect

a human plodding through their territory. Once they feel threatened, they will coil up and try to warn you off by shaking their rattle. That sound means “back off buddy.” You should listen to the snake. At that point the snake already has you targeted, but would prefer to save its venom for something it can actually eat. If you find yourself in this situation, stop; allow the snake to calm down. After that, slowly back off and out of range of the snake. Rattlesnakes can only strike about a third to half the distance of their overall length, but that is very hard to determine while they are

coiled up.

The Best Defense

The best strategy is to avoid contact with rattlesnakes at all. Know when you are in rattlesnake country and take the following precautions:

1. Always look several yards ahead of your intended walking path. Look for snakes either stretched out on the path or coiled up near it.
2. Also watch where you step, if you have to step over a log or rocks, check it out first. Prod with your trekking pole if necessary.
3. Give any snakes you sight a wide berth.
4. Do not throw rocks or antagonize a snake.
5. Consider a pair of snake gaiters if the area is known for poisonous snakes.
6. Rattlesnakes hunt at night. If you are venturing outside of your campsite after dark, take a flashlight and scan the area in front of you as you walk.

If You Are Bitten

Make no mistake, being bitten by a rattlesnake is a medical emergency.

Without seeking treatment, you could suffer severe internal injury or possibly die. On the positive side, about 25% of rattlesnake bites are dry, meaning no venom was introduced into your body. And more people die of bee stings than rattlesnake bites.



In the unfortunate event that you meet the business end of one of these serpents, do the following:

1. Move immediately away. Rattlesnakes can strike more than one.
2. Try to take a picture of the snake's head using the zoom function on your camera or phone. This will help medical personnel identify the type of rattlesnake (there are about 30 different species) and use the correct anti-venom.
3. Remove any restrictive clothing or jewelry. Your body will begin to swell, and you do not want to cut off any circulation.
4. Keep the bitten area below the level of your heart.
5. Do not wash the wound or try to suck out the venom (that only works in western movies). Washing it removes venom the hospital could use to identify the type of snake that bit you.
6. Call for an ambulance immediately. You need to seek medical treatment ASAP.

7. Hiking out is not recommended as it helps spread the venom throughout your body. But in some cases, this may be your only choice. That is one reason they say, "do not hike alone."

You may feel fine or very little effect for the first hour or so, but the symptoms will worsen over time as the venom attacks your organs.

Use Caution, But Don't Get Too Rattled

Rattlesnakes are not to be feared, but respected. Do not let them cancel or change your outdoor plans; just know how to avoid them and what to do if you are bitten. And remember to seek treatment immediately after the strike. Victims have experienced kidney failure, had to have portions of their intestines removed, and even suffered strokes due to shock.

Respect the snake!



"Rihanna" at 360 days pregnant in 90-degree heat.



"Angeldream's Brishen" at 4 days old. Judge's Choice: "Angeldream's Kissed by an Angel" full brother.

Tracy DiPippo ~ Angel Dreams Alpacas

Stand Still, Please

By Marty McGee Bennett ~ Camelidynamics

What is the best way to teach a young llama to stand still, especially during a showmanship class?

First, this a central question that is intertwined with almost everything we do with our animals.

The real question is “Why won’t my alpaca or llama stand?” Llamas and alpacas know how to stand still—they do it all the time. So you really don’t have to teach the animal how to stand; you need to make it safe for the animal to stand still instead of doing what he thinks is the safer thing under the circumstances, which is to run away.

If the animal is going to stand in a show ring, you need to teach your animal that it is safe to have a human approach him and perhaps touch him. This is a *huge* leap of faith for an animal that basically runs for a living. It is like running *into* a burning building. Not comfortable!

The best way to create a sense of safety when you head into the show ring is to change the way you do things at home. If you are in the habit of using the “corner grab & hold approach” to catching, it is going to be extremely difficult to get your animal to stand still in the show ring. Think about it. If you, the person with whom your llama or alpaca has the most familiarity, has to resort to trapping him in a corner to catch him at home—where there are no strange lights, people, and noises—it will be exponentially harder at a show.

How you catch your animals at home is the place for you to begin to make changes. If you are one of the llama or alpaca folks

who use a catch pen for catching your animals, then good for you! If you are not using a catch pen consistently, that is the first thing to change.



To get more bang for your buck in the catch pen, approach your llama from behind his eye and allow him to move around the pen until he comes to a stop. If you catch your llama or alpaca using a corner, the learns that when a human approaches, he must evade until he can’t, and then he must accept being caught.

We typically corner and hold or tie our llamas or alpacas still for most of the interactions we have with them. This provides very little opportunity for them to develop self-control. There are no corners in the show ring! When the ring steward and judge approach your animal, his conditioned response to move away kicks in. The animal will try to move away, and when you hold him still, he will get frightened and try even harder to get away. This is the why he won’t stand.

When you allow your animal to move away from you in the confines of the catch pen until he stops on his own, he learns that it is possible to for him to override his instinctive flight response and remain standing, which sets the stage for improved behavior in the show ring. You cannot get good at something unless you have an opportunity to try it and practice it. Teaching

your llama to stop and stand on his own each time you catch him is a great investment for future success.

Once your llama student has come to a stop, approach a bit closer. If he remains standing, approach still a little closer. If he indicates he is going to move, back up. If he remains standing, move a bit closer. Repeat this dance until you are standing next to the animal.

This can require a lot of patience, especially if your animal student is very frightened. I use a wand and a rope (photo below) to help speed this process up and to avoid frustration for both animal and handler; but *some* version of teaching your animal to stand without being cornered as you approach is crucial to your success in the show ring.



Once you have mastered standing still in the catch pen, you can stage some exercises that mimic what goes on in a show. Enlist the aid of some friends to approach and retreat as you stand with your llama in a very small area, your animal on a halter and lead; then move into a catch pen or other slightly larger area; and next into a somewhat larger area. Always add new challenges incrementally, repeating the previous easier steps if easier if your animal student is having trouble accepting a new step.

Don't move on to the next step unless your llama or alpaca is comfortable with the previous step. **It is never the animal's fault**

if he cannot do what you ask. It is your job to set the animal up for success by carefully adding small challenges, one at a time.

It is fine to use food as a training aid for teaching your animal to stand as other people walk up to him. You can use it as a distraction and incentive to stand and help him relax and breathe. Make sure that you communicate with your helpers so they understand that they only get closer when you give the signal that it is OK with the animal.

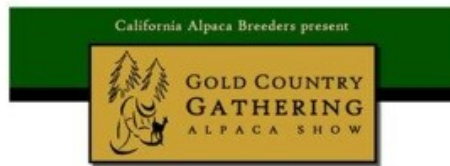
Teach your llama that when someone walks up to him in a field, in a catch pen or in the barn, there is nothing to worry about indeed, at least 95% of the time, good things will happen: a treat will be offered, he might have a walk, or engage in a fun game with a clicker.

Standing still is very helpful for many situations on your ranch: assessing the animal's health and condition; taking that elusive perfect photo; vet checks and examinations of eyes, ears, body condition; and shearing. Typically the llama or alpaca is tied or restrained in these situations. Wouldn't it be nice if, instead, the alpaca or llama could have practiced learning self-control and standing in balance? Relying on force for routine handling might seem quicker, but it makes teaching your animal to stand in other circumstances much harder!

This short article outlines the very basics, but skipping the foundation means that you may not be able to get your animal to stand, or that the learning process will take a *lot* longer.

For more information about understanding what motivates a camelid I recommend my book *The Camelid Companion* and my online courses. You can find out more about both at www.camelidynamics.com

Editor's Note: Marty is a well-respected trainer and has a really great website. Her newsletter contains tips and invaluable information, and even more can be found by joining the Forum in her website. Definitely worth checking out, and maybe even attending one of her clinics next time she gets out our direction.



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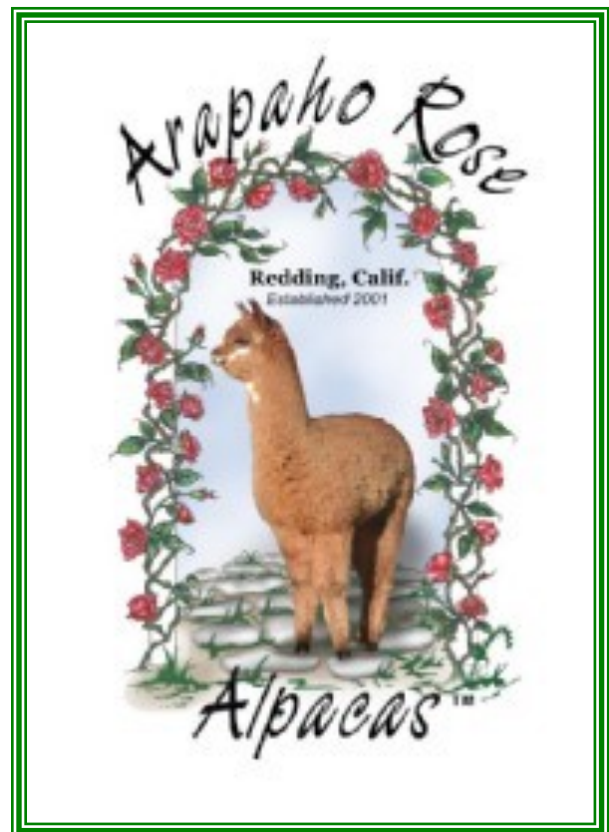
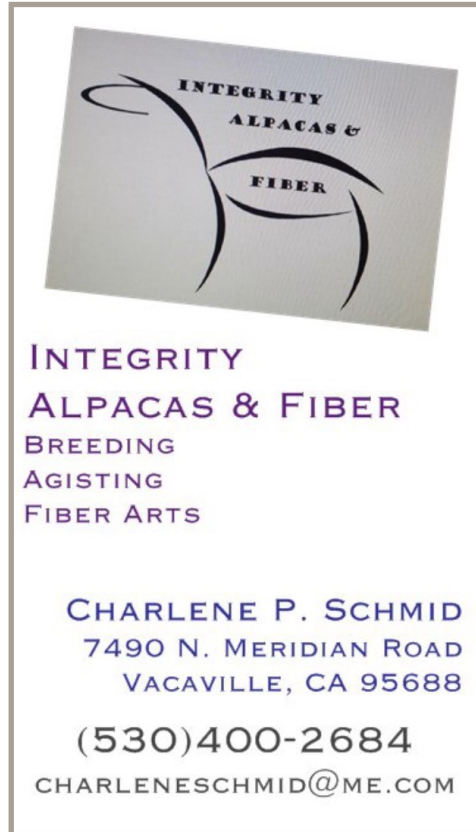
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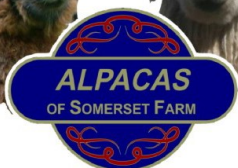
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~ Editor

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Suri: Jar Jar Binks, Sir Baronoff son and Pericles, as Greystone son.

Huacaya: Accoyo Milagro (appaloosa), RR Brubeck (roan), Sundance Kid (light fawn, has sired harlequin greys). Macedo's Mini Acre, Turlock, California.

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Land For Sale

A Long and Healthy Life for Your Lamas

Hello everyone, as we approach mid-summer—well, actually here it just started—but as I look around the country, I am reminded once again of the extreme variables of weather, habitat, feed and parasites our llamas are subjected to. Keep in mind they existed for thousands of years in relatively narrow parameters, and have only had little more than 100 years to adapt to such a wide range of variables. On top of that, they are shipped back and forth across the country from environments like our minus-50F to California's 115F, to the humid interior, to the dry deserts.

Llamas are capable of living healthy lives well into their 20s and probably beyond, even as we learn to address the limiting factors. But in most cases, if not all, that depends on what steps we as their caretakers take to identify problems and deficiencies, and undertake to correct them. I am probably preaching to the choir, but the desired outcome is so dependent on taking action beyond providing climate appropriate shelter, adequate clean water, and forage; so once again, I encourage everyone who has llamas to evaluate their programs.

Here is a start on my own homework assignment:

- <https://highlinetraillamasales.com/feed-parasites>
- <https://highlinetraillamasales.com/vitamins>
- <https://highlinetraillamasales.com/oral-dosing-made-easy>
- For anyone with llamas under 2 years of age: <https://highlinetraillamasales.com/emac>
- Just for fun!! <https://highlinetraillamasales.com/vaughn-s-kids>
- <https://highlinetraillamasales.com/llama-lessons-learned>

Enjoy your llamas to the fullest,

Al Ellis

Highline Trail Llamas

Wyoming and points beyond...

Alpaca Education At Your Fingertips

Do you know the AOA website contains a section called the Alpaca Academy? The Alpaca Academy provides education and information for the entire alpaca community. Topics range from the most common questions about alpacas and the industry to in-depth articles on alpaca EPDs, genetics, and breeding. Alpaca Academy also provides information on the latest alpacas research and links to additional resources.

The following pages contain examples of the various topics available for those wanting to know more about alpacas and the industry.

One of the common themes I have found in reading about what alpaca owners breeders would like is the desire for more education. Perhaps many don't know that many of their questions have already been addressed in the Alpaca Academy. Take a few minutes to review the topics on the right. If you would like to learn more about the Alpaca Academy just follow this link: <http://www.alpacainfo.com/learn> and click on the topic.

ALPACA ACADEMY

- [About Alpacas](#)
- [Alpaca Fiber](#)
- [Alpaca Registry](#)
- [Alpaca Research](#)
- [Alpaca Shows](#)
- [Alpacas as a Business](#)
- [Disaster Preparedness](#)
- [Embryo Transfer](#)
- [EPDs](#)
- [Farm Management](#)
- [Genetics & Breeding](#)
- [Health & Husbandry](#)
- [Marketing](#)
- [Research Registered Alpacas](#)



Video Topics Available From International Camelid Institute Include:

- How To Give an Injection
- Assessing Your Camelid Before You Call Your Veterinarian
- Removal of Fighting Teeth
- Proper Halter Fit For Camelids
- Passing A Stomach Tube in Camelids
- Obtaining a Blood Sample and preparing the DNA Blood Card
- Shearing for the Health of Your Animals
- Training Your Camelid to Halter and Lead