

AMERICAN LLAMA

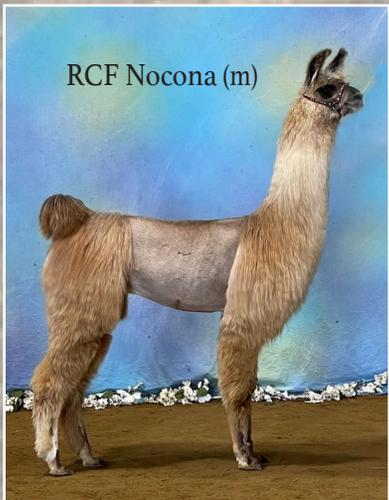
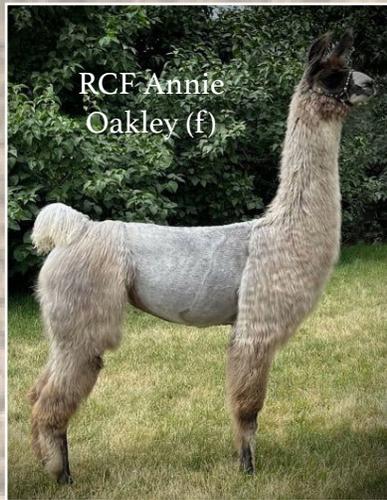
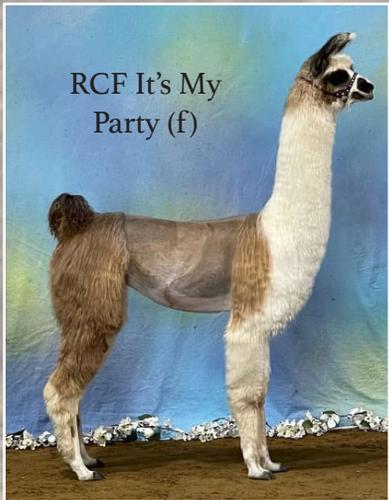
*Preserving Our History
Promoting Our Industry*

Issue Eight
April 2022



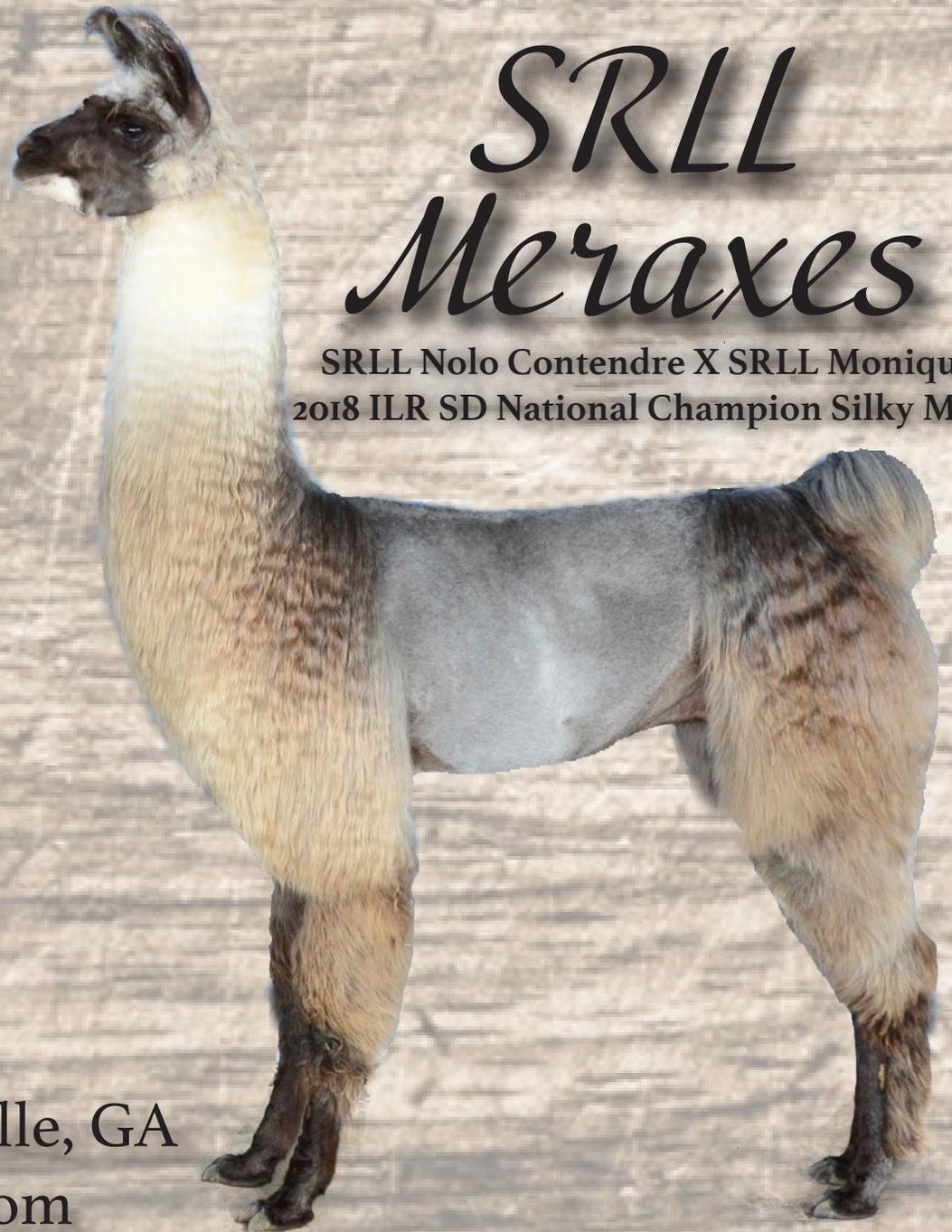
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His first cria offered at public auction sold for \$12,500!



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April 2022

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Letter from the Editor

Hello fellow llama enthusiasts,

This letter is typically the last thing I write after I finish writing articles, creating ads, assembling, and proof reading. After the storm of activity I take a quiet moment and think about if I have anything left of interest to say.

As we prepare to release this issue my thoughts are on Paige McGrath, who has very recently passed away and is gone far too soon. I did not know Paige personally, but I have read her writing as much as any published author and looked at her artwork more than any famous painter. As the longtime publisher of Llama Life II, I hear from her on a consistent basis as I flip through the pages of her wonderful, oversized magazines. I love all of the old magazines and each had their own strengths. Llamas Magazine had their helpful articles and full color ads. Llama Banner had their show results and close ties to big events. But none of the llama publications could compare to the writing and reporting in Llama Life II. I know that her contributions to the llama community and beyond exceed her literary works, but to me the first thing that comes to mind is that she was the best "llama journalist" we've ever had.

We hope that we're putting out an issue that would make Paige proud. This issue features an interview with Andy and Cheryl Tillman, which was one of the most engaging and thought provoking conversations we've had since we started this work. We also have a tour of Northern California llama farms, including New Leaf Llamas, Red Ryder Ranch, and Redwoods in the Meadow Farm.

Happy Reading,
-Kyle Mumford

About the Editor

Kyle Mumford and his wife Jerrika live in Ridgefield, WA and own Volcano View Ranch, a herd of approximately 25 llamas. The Mumford family has owned llamas since 1980.



After **43** years and hundreds of llama babies, birthing season is still our favorite time of year! Follow us on Facebook to see the crias from these great sires as they arrive.



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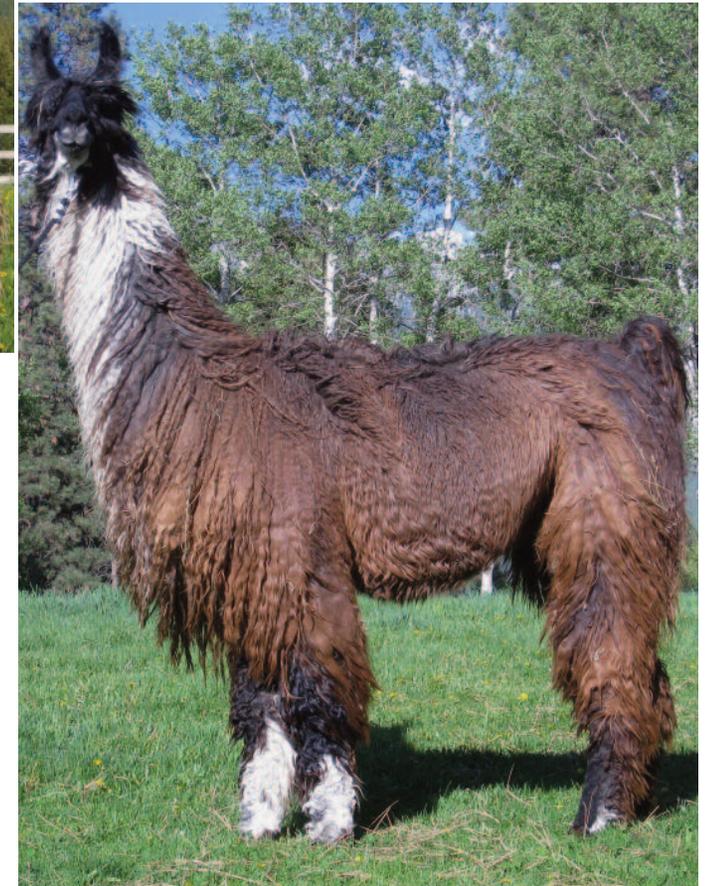


Currently standing at stud:

GNLC Hightower (top)
GNLC Merlin x GNLC Silver Lining

GNLC Brunello (left)
GNLC Merlin x GNLC Valentina

GNLC Tesio (right)
Sijama Ikandy x GNLC Lady Luck





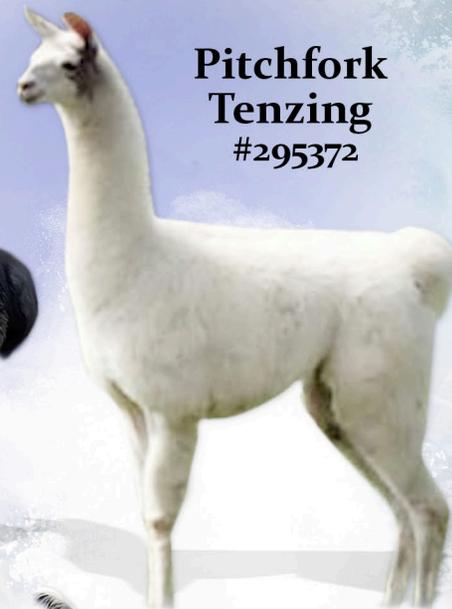
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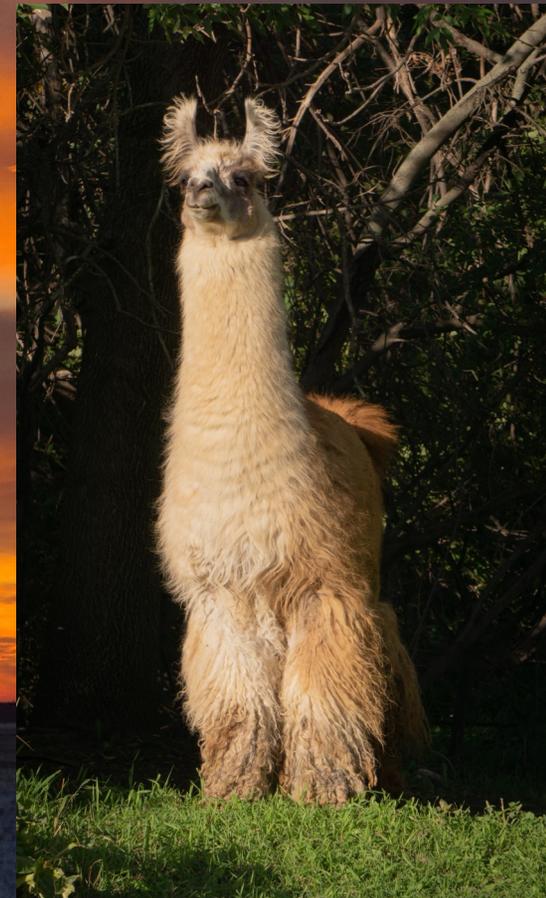
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A special thank you to Stephen and Tammy Fritz for purchasing WOL Chiri Tumalo, and for partnering with us on Ollendick Farms Baba Jo!

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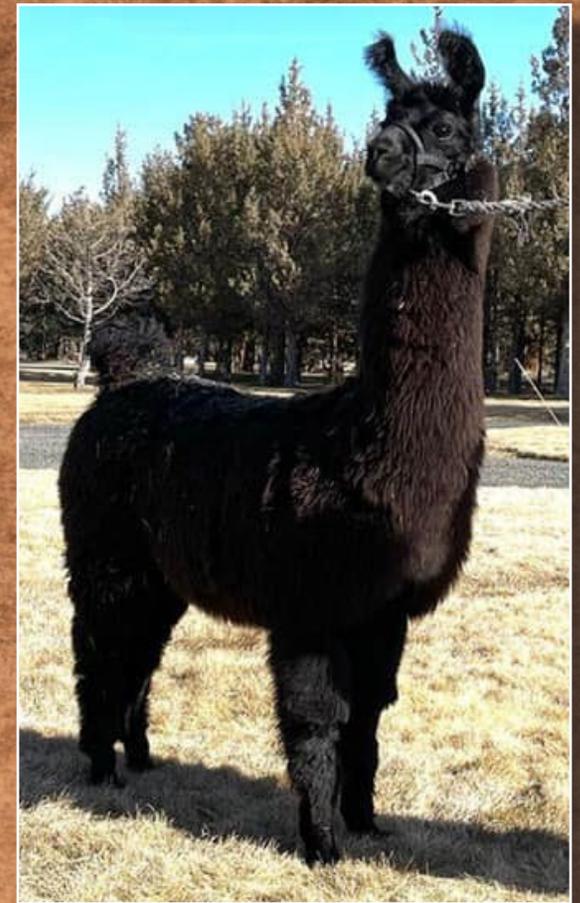
MSF Summit X WOL Cleocatra's Dancer

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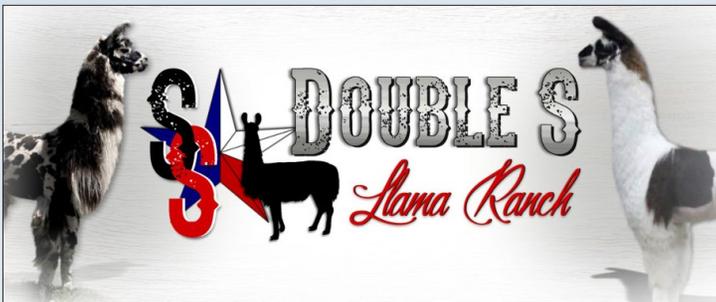
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Sonya and "Sal" (Clark) Salisbury established the Double S Llama Ranch in Clyde Texas in August 2017. The Double S Ranch was created in part thanks to "Steve the Llama" a large white male classic llama who spent most of his life alone, abandoned on a farm in Baird Texas. Steve was gifted to Sonya by her sister Kim in late 2016 and the foundation of the Double S Llama Ranch was laid. The rest, so they say, is history!

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March Llama Madness



It is hard to make an argument for a lower point in the history of the US llama community than the winter of 2013. The Great Recession had not been kind to the llama market, as we saw prices get lower and many titans in the llama business disperse their herds or stop breeding. And then, in November of 2012, it was announced that the Spring Celebration Sale and Futurity, the flagship event of the llama community, would not be happening in 2013. Dan and Marilyn Milton had taken over the event from Celebrity Sales in 2010, but they announced that they did not believe they would be able to cover their expenses at the beautiful, but expensive, Heritage Place facility in Oklahoma City.

While their decision was disappointing, it was hard to argue with their logic. Show numbers were declining. The prior year's sale, though it still featured a \$10,000 seller, had several no-sales and some surprisingly low winning bids. This was a watershed moment for the US llama industry; things certainly could have gotten worse from here. Instead, Darrell and Merlene Anderson decided to start a new spring show, and it is clear that this decision played a big role in bringing the enthusiasm to the llama community that we see today.

When we interviewed the Andersons in 2019 Merlene said, "We had always talked about having a show, so when Celebrity said they were canceling I said, 'Darrell let's do it!' But our vision of it was maybe 80 llamas and that would be it. It would just be our friends that would want to come have a fun weekend with us."

"We held the first MLM at the Michiana Event Center in Howell in 2013," Darrell told us. "We had about 185 llamas and the sale averaged \$1,647. The numbers grew in 2014 and we could see that we were going to outgrow the facility. After researching and visiting possible venues, we discovered the C-Bar-C Expo Center in Cloverdale and it has been home for the MLM ever since. The sale increased that year as well, averaging \$2,276."



Above: High Selling Female at the first MLM Sale of Champions, \$3,300. Consigned by Sean Hart and Venessa Benagh.

Left: Original MLM Logo

While the early sale results of MLM may not have exceeded the Celebration sales, they were respectable and were at the top of the llama industry at the time. The importance of MLM went far beyond the sale average or high sellers. I am reminded of something Tom Simmons said when we talked to him about the first Celebrity Sale in 1989. "The main thing I remember from the first sale was the support we had and the electricity in the place... I think everybody felt relieved when it just took off. They just thought, 'We have a home; we have a place to go.'" When the Celebrity llama events ended, MLM became that home for llama enthusiasts for ten years.

Darrell told us that they experienced an annual growth rate of 20-25% with regard to show entries. One reason for their success was Merlene and Darrell's innovative ideas for the show. They created the Olympic Futurity with scorecards that judges held above their heads. In their second year, they introduced the 3-on-3 tournament. Breeders were invited to choose their favorite 3 show animals and show them head-to-head against other breeders in an elimination-bracket tournament. The Ollendicks won the inaugural 3-on-3 tournament. As the class sizes grew they started the 6th man competition, where all of the 6th place animals from the halter classes competed against each other for a cash prize.

Darrell and Merlene were quick to give credit to others for MLM's success, "MLM became the largest llama show in the country because of the volunteer staff, many of which worked at every show, and dedicated breeders who consigned their best every year."

Another popular component of MLM was the online livestream which allowed llama enthusiasts to be a part of the fun, even if they couldn't attend in person. This feature was put on by the Anderson's grandson, Sam, and the production value increased each year.



MLM Best of Show winners through the years



As the show grew, the prices at the Sale of Champions did as well. In 2018, the top selling female, Ollendick Farms Baba Sue, brought \$14,000 and the top selling male, MSF Summit, brought \$12,000. The sale average was \$4,676.

In 2019, the sale soared to new heights with the high seller, MSF Purple Reign, bringing \$20,000. That price milestone had not been hit since the Celebration Sales. This sale also featured two other 5-figure sellers in CVL Pride's Marquis Dymond and Ollendick Farms Zariah (sister to Baba Sue).



CVL PRIDE'S MARQUIS DYMOND

FEMALE DOB JUNE 1, 2017
ID 290922



Offering a Top Quality, Multi Champion and BOS Winning Pride daughter! We had always said that when we decide to offer a top female at auction, that we would go thru the MLM sale for its incredible reputation of selling amazing quality llamas year after year. Marquis Dymond aka "Gemma" is that special girl! She began her show career in 2018 and has done exceptionally well! She is large, correct moving with a solid frame...and gorgeous to look at! Her huge MGF mama Lilibet stands a true 47" at the wither, and has the easy-going Argentine personality. Her sire Pride is also 47" and is a dual National Champion and dual Futurity winner himself! We feel Gemma will continue her winning ways in 2019! Raise your hand high! Tears of joy will flow when she changes hands at MLM.

2018 Show Highlights: MLM - 1st/Reserve Champion HW (first show); NTLS - Double 1st/Double Grand HW, Double Best in Show; Lincoln Creek ALSA/ILR - Double 1st/Double Grand, ILR Best in Show; LFA Futurity - Champion FEMALE 12-24mo; Fall Harvest - 1st/Champion HW, Best of Show; ILA Futurity - Champion Female 12-24mo, Best of Show; ALSA Nationals - 1st/Grand HW; NAILE - Double 1st/Double Grand HW.

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5

In 2020, the Andersons were forced to cancel MLM due to COVID, but that didn't stop them from putting on a show. They held the first virtual llama show, the MLM Showdown. The show was judged by Darrell and the footage was assembled by the Anderson's grandson Sam. Exhibitors from 14 states participated, and it was "must see TV" as llama enthusiasts were stuck at home and missing shows. The in person event returned in 2021. "We had 390 llamas from 24 states, and the sale was energized with a \$7,600 average," Darrell told us.

During MLM 2021, Darrell and Merlene announced that the theme of the event in 2022 would be "The Final Game", and that they would be retiring from running their highly successful llama show. Last month at C-Bar-C, the Anderson's grand finale was held. "Supporters showed up with 485 llamas from 27 states," they told us. "The sale was exciting as we broke the record for MLM when the Ollendick female sold for \$40,000 to Rick & Mary Adams and Stephen & Tammy Fritz. The 30 sale llamas averaged \$8,633, which made it a modern-day record sale."

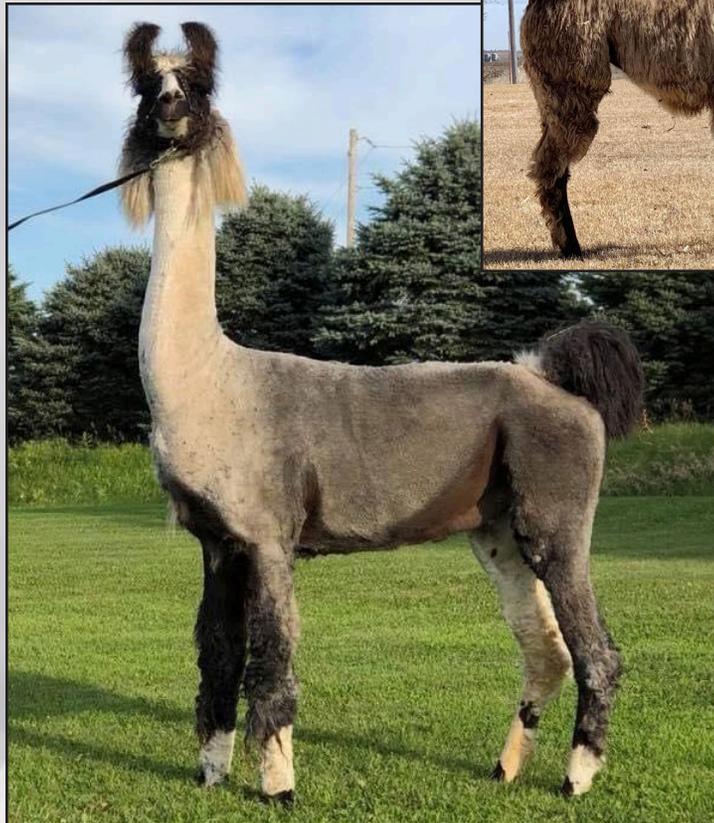
The best of show winners were Ollendick Farms Baba Jo, MSF Esquire, and Hard Rock's Need for Speed. The final MLM sale featured Justin Timm as the auctioneer, as Darrell said he was "passing the baton." The \$40,000 sale price for Ollendick Farms Baba Jo was the highest at public auction since Tillman's Greaseball in 2007, a few months before the start of the Great Recession. It was the highest price for a *female* llama since the recordbreaking FFF Final Fiesta, another memorable sale auctioneered by Darrell Anderson. Truly a full-circle moment to complete the story of MLM.

In closing, Darrell and Merlene had the following to say, "We have been so blessed by so many folks as we have traveled through this MLM experience. We want you to know that we know none of this show's success would have been possible without so many llama enthusiasts willing to support us with their time, talent and treasures. We were so pleased to hear that ILR will be conducting a spring show at the same facility in 2023."



Heroes and Friends Farm

CVLR Kipton
and keeper daughter
The Huntress HAFF



Hard Rock's
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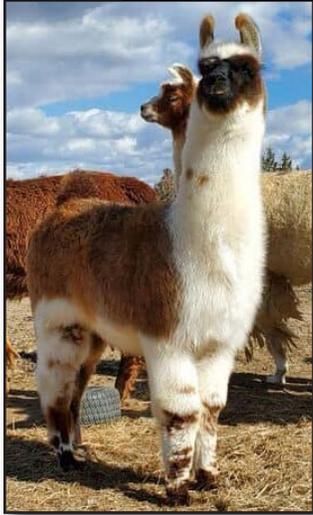
HIDDEN OAKS LLAMA RANCH | ESTACADA, OR



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April 23rd-24th 2022 | Salem, OR

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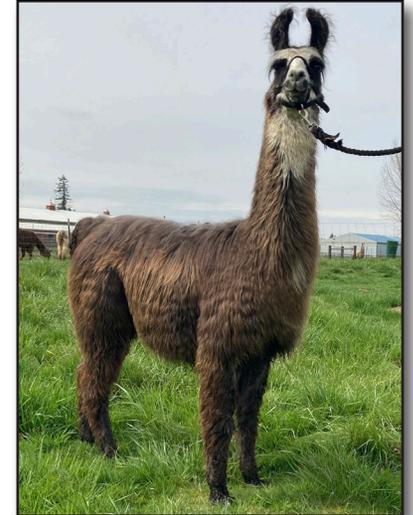
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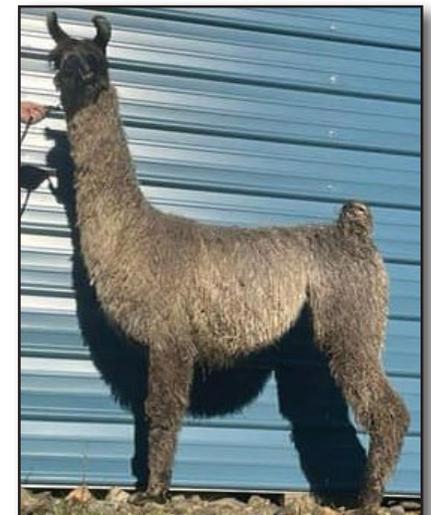
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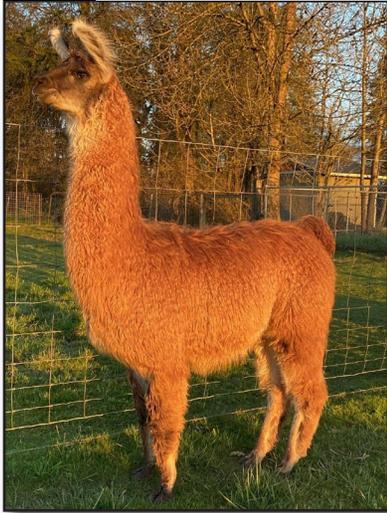
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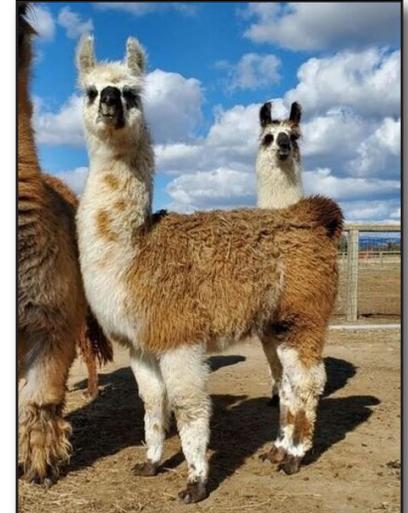
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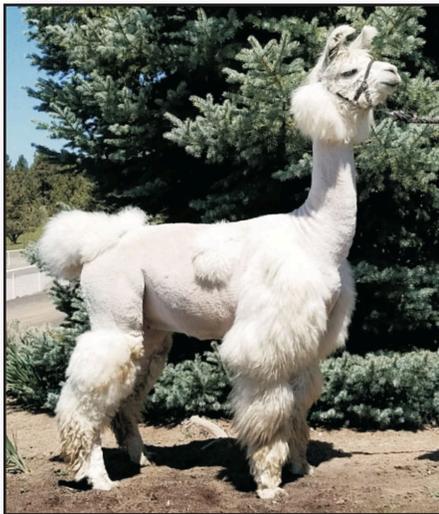
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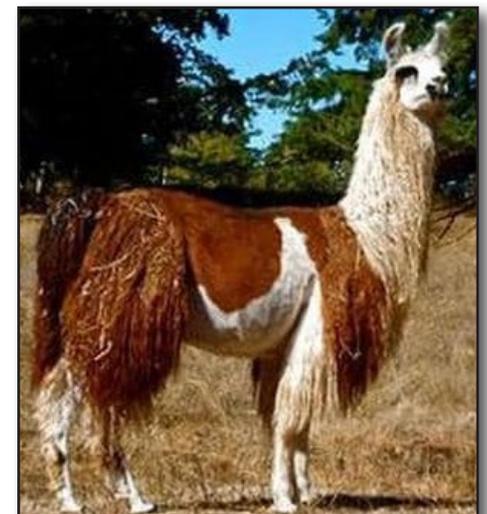
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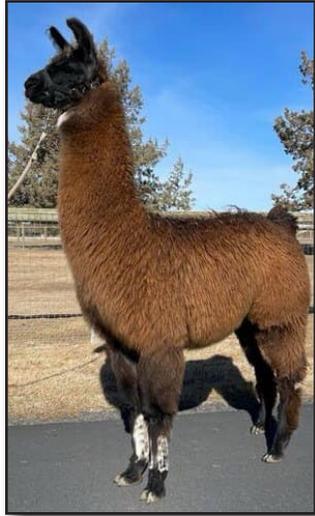
DDLRL Demelza
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Di's Dream Llama Ranch, OR



Cascade Llama Sale Preview

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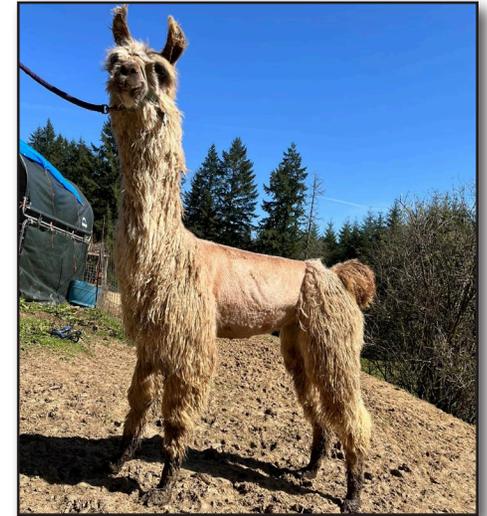
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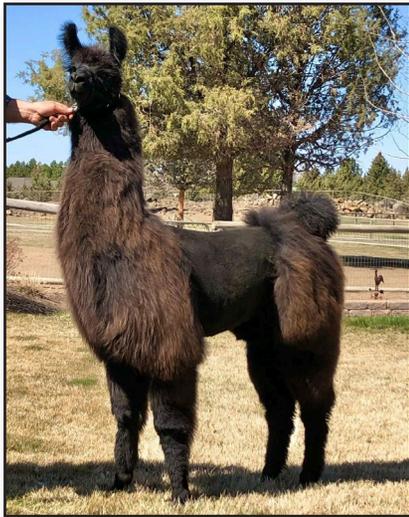
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Wild Oak Llamas, OR



Catra
ILR: 295632
Evergreen Llamas, WA



Make Mine Champagne
ILR: 295830
Tanya Swanson, OR



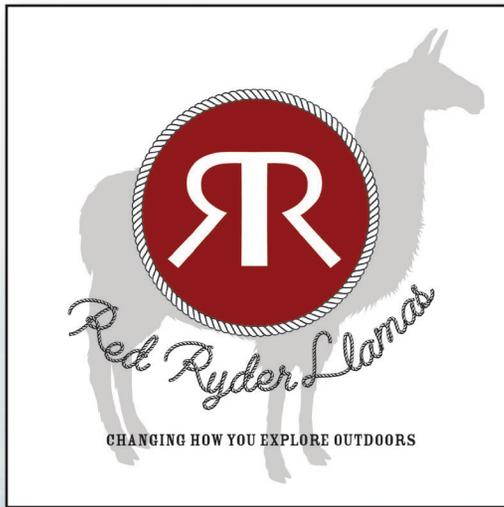
RGA Blackhawk's Golden Rose
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CONFORMATION SPOTLIGHT

Conformation of the Feet and Pasterns *By Jerrika Mumford*

This article is the third in a series on conformation, in which each part will focus in depth on one area of conformation in llamas. We consider ourselves students of conformation, we would not claim to be experts. This series will be a learning experience for us as well. As we dive into sources, we will do our best to explain the strengths and weaknesses of conformational traits and illustrate what they look like.

We will continue this series with an in depth look at the feet and pasterns of the llama. The ideas in this article largely come from two sources, llama conformation articles written by Murray Fowler, DVM and *The Horse Conformation Handbook*, by Heather Smith Thomas.

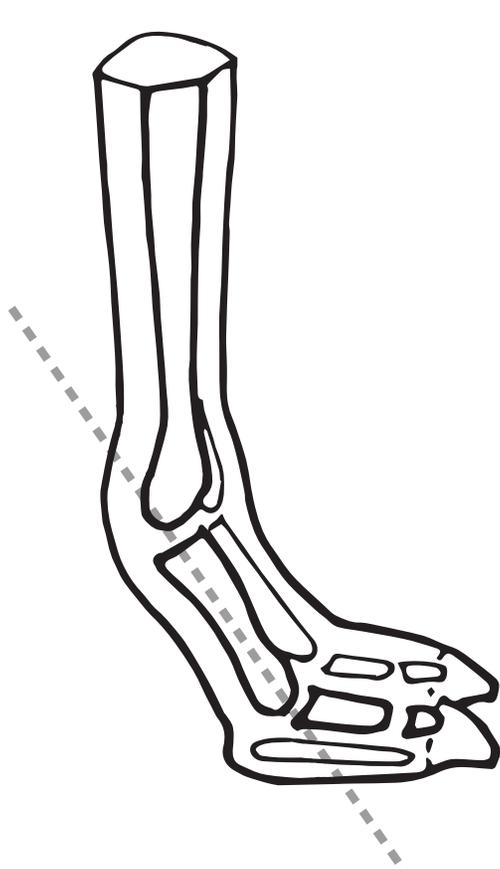
Imperfections and Movement

Conformation issues can sometimes be spotted when the animal is standing still. However, fiber can hide imperfections or even make a well conformed animal appear flawed. Watching a llama while in motion can help you spot imperfections that may not be obvious when the llama is standing still. Slight imperfections are normal, and usually do not make an animal unsound. Because no llama is perfect, it becomes a judgement call on what should be tolerated in conformational flaws (2).

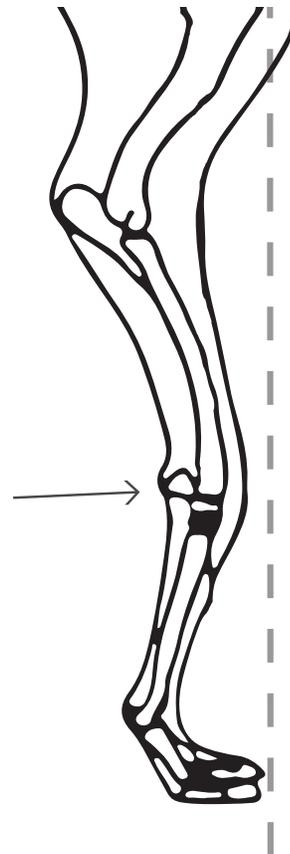
The angles of the joints, the placement of muscles, the structure of ligaments, and the directional forces applied while a llama is standing or moving are all designed to minimize excessive tensions and pressures. The shoulder, elbow, and fetlock are cushion joints of the forelimb, and the stifle, hock, and fetlock are cushions of the hindlimb. Improper construction of these can cause a llama to be more prone to injury. Certain imbalances in the structure of the limbs are more detrimental than others (1).

A llamas' pasterns are their best shock absorbers, especially in the front legs. The hock provides cushioning in the hind legs, but in the front legs the majority of the shock absorption is in the pasterns (2). It is essential to llamas that they have a strong, supportive pastern.

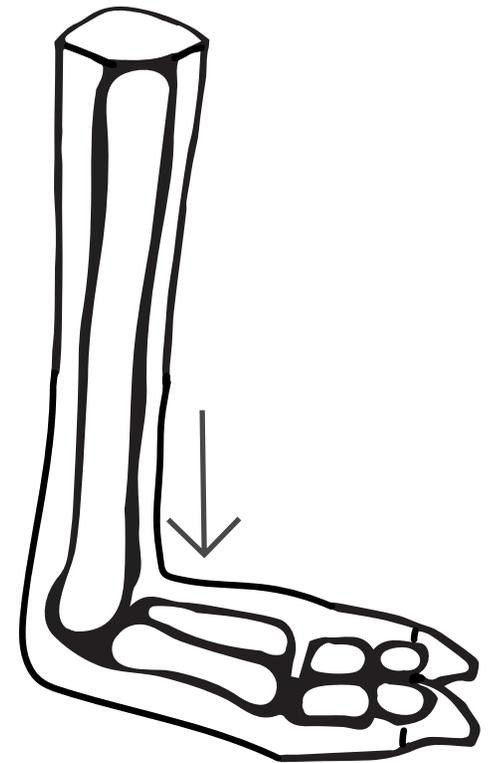
There doesn't seem to be detailed research on the ideal pastern angle for llamas. Murray Fowler referenced 40-55 degrees as being ideal, but does not expand on his reasoning (1). The ideal horse pastern angle was once generally accepted to be 45 degrees, but now is 50-55 degrees. It is thought that an angle too steep may not provide enough cushioning, the long term consequences being possibly arthritis or buck knees (2). An angle of less than 40 degrees is too much slope, which will not provide adequate support. Pasterns too long and/or too sloped often result in a llama who is down in the fetlock or weak in the pastern. The fetlock is not designed to come in contact with the ground (1). A llama with this condition will be in pain when they walk. This is a serious flaw and animals with weak pasterns have a poor quality of life.



Ideal Pastern



Buck Knee



Dropped Pastern

Feet provide the foundation for llamas. Good construction of the feet will help provide the support needed for the life of the llama. In proper conformation of the foot, the foot should be placed in a straight line below the legs and the two toes should point forward. Each pair of feet, the front pair and the rear pair, should match or be very similar in size and shape, and bear equal weight. Toenails should be trimmed if they get too long and start to curve. Poorly trimmed toenails can cause the foot to not be in the proper position.

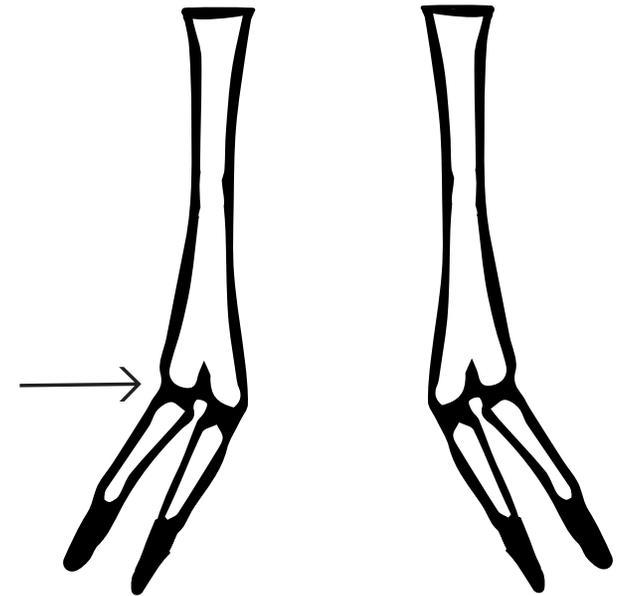
Draft horses have been bred for large, pancake feet to help keep them from sinking on soggy ground (2). Similarly, an ideal pack llama would benefit from a larger foot. In pack llamas, too small of a foot can cause them to sink. A broad heel and short toes give llamas a good base. Toes that are too long cause more weight to be shifted to the back of the foot and puts more pressure on the pasterns (3).

The following are imperfections of the feet.

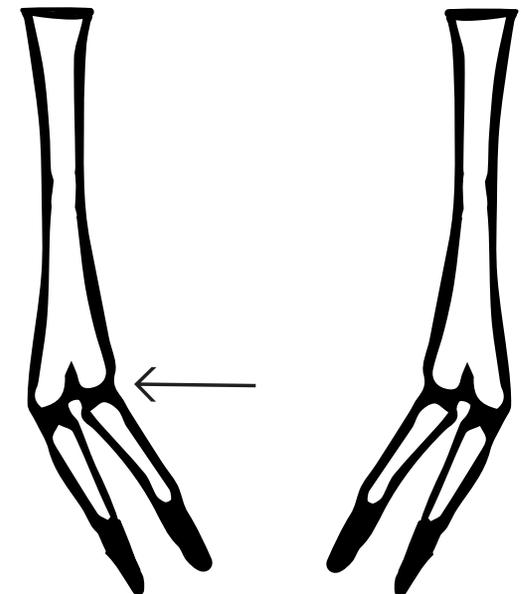
Splay footed/toed out - The pastern is twisted outward the toes point away from each other. This can occur in the front or rear feet and affects the swing of the limb when moving. This is commonly seen alongside knock knees. In motion, the legs will “wing in.”

Pigeon toed/toed in - The pastern is twisted inward and the toes point toward each other. This can occur in the front or rear feet and affects the swing of the limb when moving. In motion, the legs will “wing out.”

Dropped fetlock/weak pasterns - When the pastern is weak. In severe cases the fetlock touches the ground (pastern angle of zero degrees), this is a serious fault.



Splay Footed/Toed Out



Pigeon Toed/Toed In

Cocked ankle - a shortened ligament in the ankle can cause the pastern to angle forward and be entirely out of proper position. Sometimes caused by injury. This is a serious fault.

The following are defects of the feet.

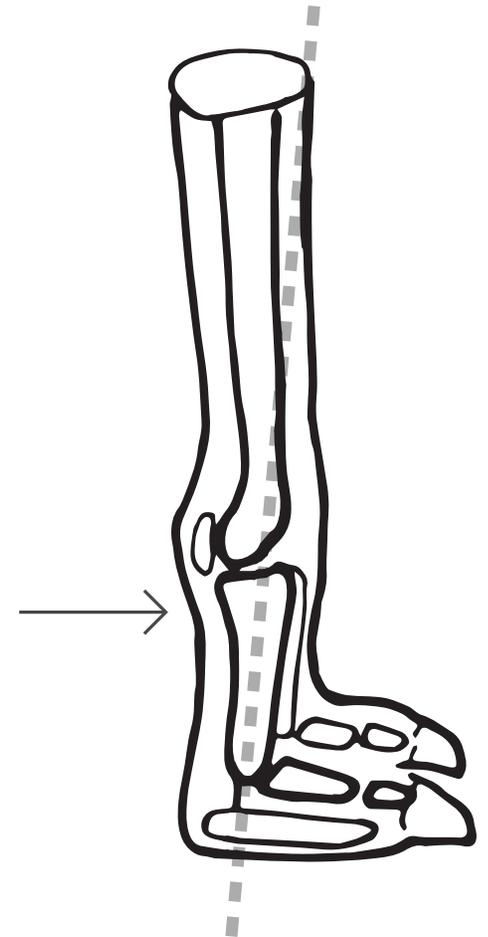
Fused toes - when the two toes are attached from the heel to the toe with no “V” space between the toes separating them.

Extra toes - Extra digits on the feet are a serious defect and crias are unlikely to live long after birth.

Foot imperfections, as well as other flaws in conformation, may be a trait that is inherited, the result of a nutritional deficiency inhibiting growth, or the result of injury.

A llama’s forelegs carry a higher percentage of weight than their rear legs, so it is more common to see weak pasterns in the front than in the rear. This isn’t to say the lameness in the rear can’t happen, rather there is a slight more importance on the front when evaluating structural soundness.

When evaluating a llama’s structure, correctly conformed legs are important, but other aspects of conformation are important as well. Overall balance and correct proportions of a llama’s structure play a fundamental role in the correctness of the legs. In our next issue, we will go in depth on another aspect of llama conformation.



Cocked Ankle

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2. Smith Thomas , Heather. The Horse Conformation Handbook. Storey Publishing, 2005.
3. “Conformation for the Working Llama.” North American Ccara Association, www.ccarallama.com.



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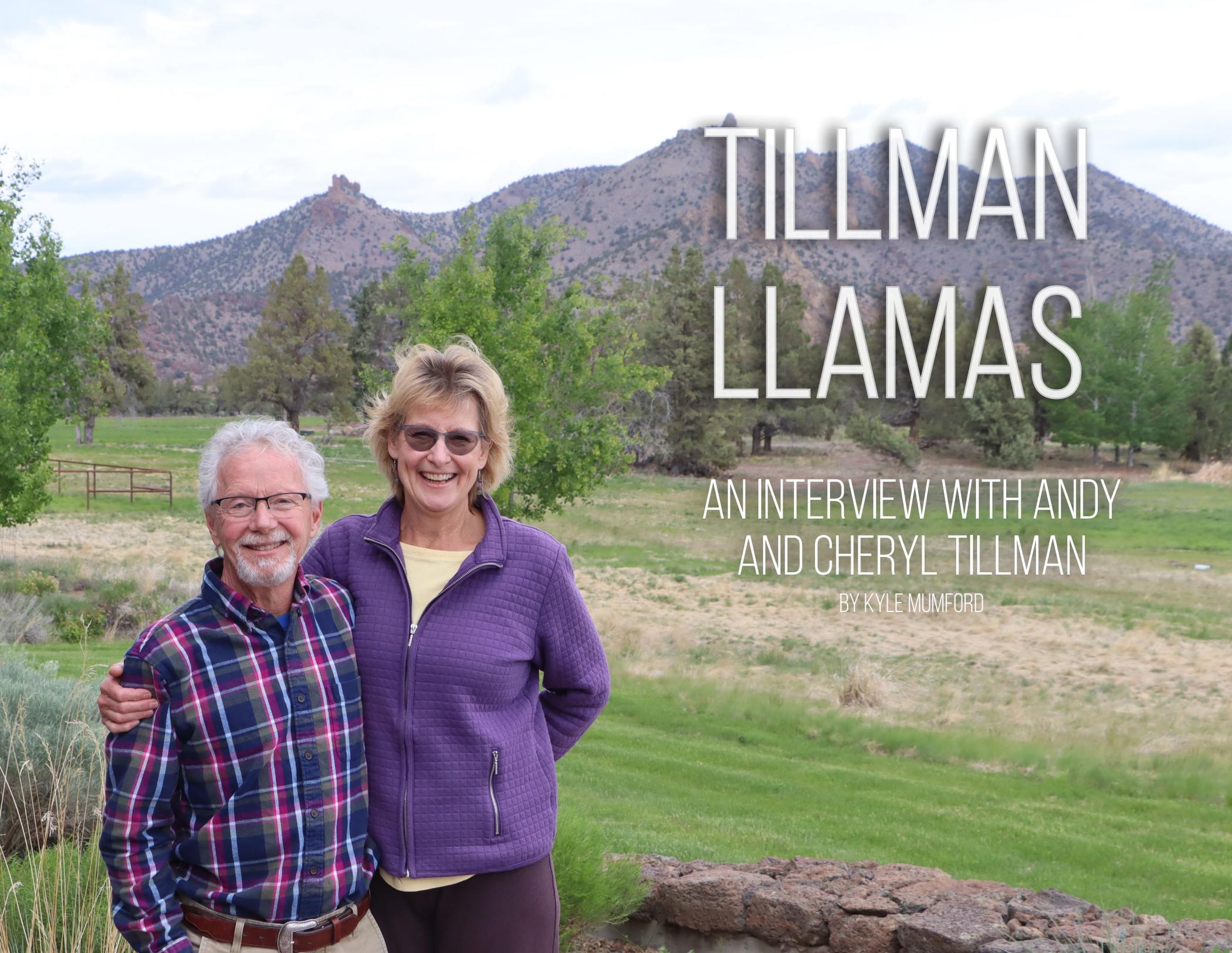
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TILLMAN LLAMAS

AN INTERVIEW WITH ANDY
AND CHERYL TILLMAN

BY KYLE MUMFORD

As we stepped inside the home of Andy and Cheryl Tillman there are a small number of llama-related artifacts spread throughout the room, cluing the uninitiated into their thirty-plus years spent as leaders in the llama and alpaca industries. A basket of yarn sits on a table next to the front door, a lovely blanket made from llama fiber is draped on the sofa, and various treasures from South America. On a bench in the entryway is an enlarged black and white photograph of an older-style black llama with banana ears and striking eyes. If you had asked me to guess which llama I would see as I entered the Tillman's front door, I probably would have said Papa Noel with his dense, lustrous locks. Or perhaps the legendary Federico, and his unmistakable silhouette. I might have described the photo of the exotic Tillman's Greaseball that graced the cover of Llama Banner, or the tall and elegant Stiletto from one of their best dam lines. Futurity winners, auction high sellers, U.S. and Bolivian National Champions, and renowned herdsires have all graced the Tillman Llamas' pastures. But this black female, named Nairobi, is the one that is featured prominently in their home. This was the most important llama of them all.

Andy had been raising llamas for ten years before he met Cheryl. What started as a hobby in 1975 had quickly grown into a breeding program and much more for Andy as he found himself as one of the most recognizable names in the quickly expanding U.S. Llama industry. On July 4th, 1985, one of Andy's prized llamas, Catskill Nairobi, was in trouble. She was running a fever and had aborted her baby. Andy knew more about llamas than most at that time; he had literally written the book on llamas. *Speechless Brothers*, the first English language book on llama care, had been published earlier in the decade. Andy knew that when a strong, stoic llama starts to show concerning symptoms you need to spring into action. So, on this 4th of July holiday, he hitched up his trailer and drove from the Tillman family ranch in North-eastern Oregon to the Washington State University vet hospital in Pullman. The veterinarian in charge was Dr. Cheryl Blake.



"I was just out of vet school, and I started an internal medicine residency at Washington State," Cheryl recalled. "Being a resident, you take all the calls on the 4th of July holiday. I can remember my boss handing me this note that this llama was coming in from Athena and I'm thinking, 'What the (heck) is a llama?' They did not mention the word llama in the curriculum between '81 and '85. No mention of the word llama. I can remember walking down the old McCoy Hall. I've got these white pants on and my blue smock top, the real doctors had the green ones. I'm so nervous, so scared. I opened up the door and I walked into receiving, which is where you bring in the cattle. I was going to be working with cattle, OK? I was a large animal vet. Production animals: sheep, goats, pigs, cows. And here's Andy with this llama. I can remember talking to Andy. I think getting the history from him took over half an hour because I was going, 'Could you tell me the normal temperature? And how about the respiratory rate?'"

Cheryl recounted an amazing number of details from her inspection of Nairobi. She remembered that her fever was 106 or 107 and that she had aborted her cria. She listed off several things they tested for, like a virus or bacteria. Eventually, she said, "It's gotta be coming from the brain. Nairobi was the first llama to be CAT Scanned in the United States, probably in the world. I can remember in radiology when we CAT scanned her. I wasn't in radiology because the radiologists are doing the machine, the anesthesiologist is doing the anesthesia, and I'm just the resident with the case standing next to the animal. And I hear this big 'Whoo!' in radiology because there was a lesion in the brain. They found the problem. It was where the thermal regulation was being taken care of, and it had a bony area in it. And what they figured had happened is she'd gotten ivermectin during the migration of a parasite. The parasite died and then the body walled that dead parasite off, putting pressure on this part of the brain during this time period of her life. So that's a pretty bizarre thing."

Andy added that there was some irony in this diagnosis because he had been the first llama owner in the U.S. to get permission from the USDA to import Ivermectin from Canada. While all of those details were extremely interesting, it is another memory that Cheryl shared that helps to explain why this moment back in 1985 was such a pivotal one for her, "I can remember putting the stethoscope on the left side of the armpit of Nairobi and looking into her eyes and literally falling in love with llamas to a very deep level."

Andy chimed in and said, "Cheryl tells people that she fell in love with llamas right away. But it took a while for her to notice that I kept bringing llamas back to Pullman." Cheryl and Andy were married three years later. Cheryl's wedding gift from Andy was a lovely black llama named Nairobi.

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“Hi, I’m a llama!”

Andy’s introduction came in the early 1970s, more than a decade before that fateful 4th of July when he took Nairobi to see Dr. Cheryl at WSU. During college, he was offered the world’s best summer job, “We had a family friend who was the curator of the Oakland Zoo and he came to our ranch and hunted pheasants every year. He was a veterinarian and he let me tag along with him for a summer. I fell in love with Sumatran rhinos, Bactrian camels, and llamas. And the only one of those three I could ever possibly raise myself were llamas.”

As Andy spoke about his early experiences with llamas Cheryl proved to be quite the adept interviewer, as she thought of many insightful follow-up questions, “What attracted you to the llama out of all zoo animals?” She asked, coyly pretending she didn’t have decades of experience with the magical draw of llamas, “I mean, that’s a lot to choose from. I would’ve gone for the giraffes myself.”

Andy responded, “Yeah, I mean giraffes and elephants were cool. Val De Leone, I still remember his name, from Thailand, was their elephant trainer. He could train even wild African elephants. Most elephant trainers deal with domestic Asians, but he could even train Africans to stand on one leg and hop around in a circle while holding their trunks out of the way so it wasn’t dangerous to people. It was an amazing experience.” Andy started to bring the story from giraffes and elephants toward his introduction to llamas, “I was just a (manure) cleaner basically at the zoo. I was not doing anything talented. And I’d take the rake and rake the hair off the Bactrian camel and it would just quiver and lean into it.” Andy pauses to mime the itching motion that most llama owners are familiar with, “So that kind of got me into camelids and then I thought, ‘Well, let’s look at the little camelids. Oh, well, these guys are a lot less spooky than a camel.’ In zoos mostly it’s wild animals, so you had to be cautious around them. But the llamas would just come up to you and say, ‘Hi, I’m a llama!’”

Building the Herd

Upon returning home to the family ranch, Andy began to search for llamas for sale. That brought him to the expanding llama program of Dick and Kay Patterson in Sisters, Oregon. Andy remembered buying his first pair from them, Le Beau and La Paz. “I didn’t really have a plan to breed llamas,” Andy said. “It’s just that my first few llamas got in the local newspapers. And then people would drive from 50 or 60 miles away to come by and look at the llamas. I was in a very rural North-east Oregon community. And I thought, ‘Gosh, I can sell these things.’ That’s when I started buying from zoos in earnest.”

Andy began to follow a similar herd-building plan that the Pattersons were using in the 1970s. He would buy groups of llamas, select his favorites, and sell the others. His breeding program was able to quickly grow, and he already had a profitable enterprise on his hands. “I could buy a llama from a zoo for two or three hundred dollars. I probably had substantial shipping costs, but Richard and Kay were selling them for 1,500 for a pair. I was the youngest member in the United States of the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums, AAZPA. Not through any qualification I had, but again through our family friend, the curator of the zoo. Being an AAZPA member meant I could buy animals from zoos because even in the ‘70s there was very strict control in selling to the public from zoos. You couldn’t do it unless you had some kind of qualification.”

In reflecting on his start in the llama business Andy told us, "I started with a pickup truck with a stock rack and \$500. That's how I got into the llama business."

Cheryl added, "And before long you went out and got a loan. In this little town of Athena, they go to a little tiny bank, an agricultural bank. And the banker is going. 'You're going to do what? Well, that's a new one. I haven't heard that one before. Sure, why not, it's the future.'"

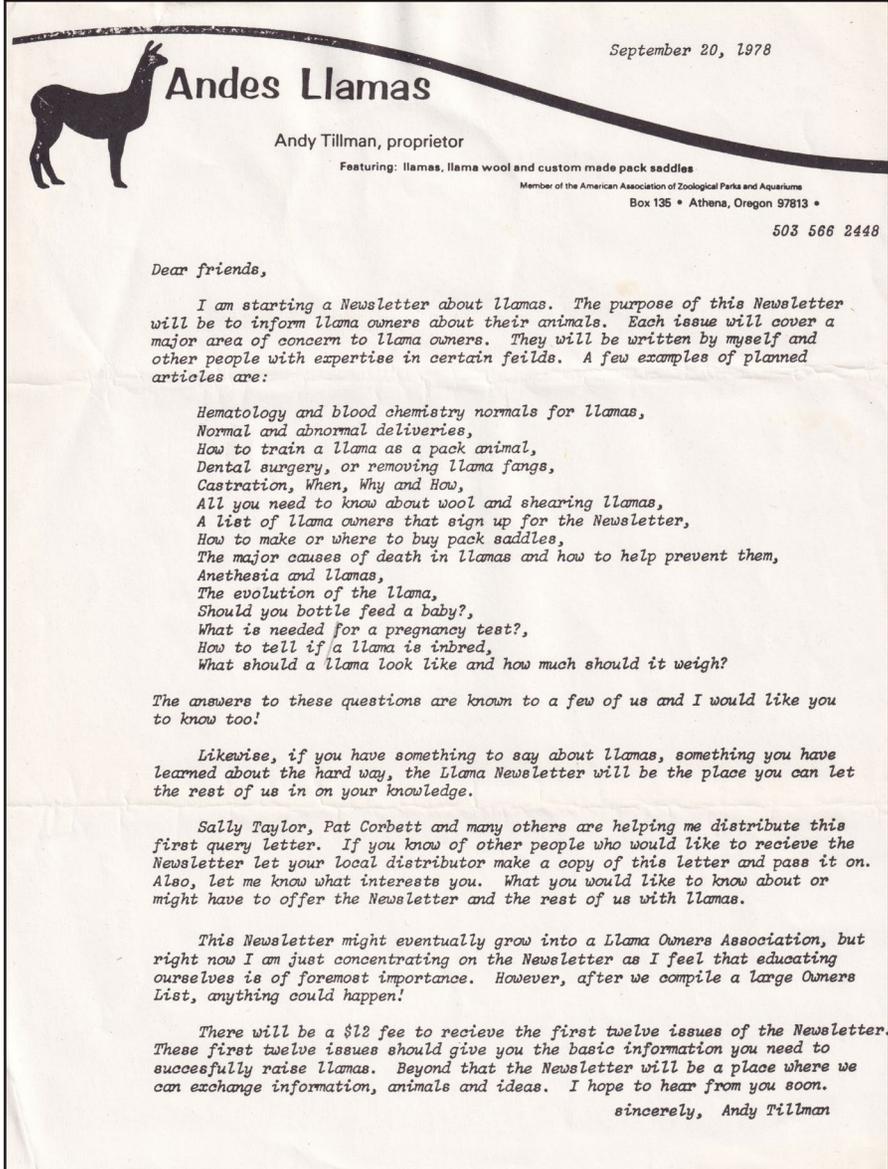
Andy said, "Yes, the 1976 group from Denver Zoo was my first really big group. And my dad had to co-sign the loan."

The Llama Newsletter

Andy joined the burgeoning llama industry as an energetic young man and was a part of the pioneering group of llama owners who had to figure out how to care for these wonderful animals with a lack of published information on the topic. Many llama owners stepped up to answer phone calls and share what they knew, but in 1979 Andy took a bold step by publishing the first newsletter for North American llama owners, called The Llama Newsletter.

"We talked about berserk males in the Llama Newsletter because it was a huge problem," Andy said. "There were roadside attractions with guanaco-llamas that were bottle-fed and would spit on you. When I went into the business that's what a llama was. The zoos were part of the problem because they would have petting zoos. They would sell them at the end of the season while they were still cute and before they were attacking people. We sent out a survey, I think we got a response of like 30 or 35 people with stories about berserk males. There was a large enough sampling that we were able to determine from the survey that castrating after aggression began did no good. It was learned behavior, so you had to nip it in the bud before they turned aggressive."

Andy published nine editions of The Llama Newsletter, with topics ranging from Berserk Male Syndrome, training advice, color inheritance, toenail trimming, shearing, hand spinning, heatstroke, dental care, reproduction, dystocia, newborn care, blood chemistry normals that he determined from doing serology on his herd, and much more. The ideas were



September 20, 1978

Andes Llamas

Andy Tillman, proprietor

Featuring: llamas, llama wool and custom made pack saddles

Member of the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums
Box 135 • Athena, Oregon 97813 •
503 566 2448

Dear friends,

I am starting a Newsletter about llamas. The purpose of this Newsletter will be to inform llama owners about their animals. Each issue will cover a major area of concern to llama owners. They will be written by myself and other people with expertise in certain fields. A few examples of planned articles are:

- Hematology and blood chemistry normals for llamas,
- Normal and abnormal deliveries,
- How to train a llama as a pack animal,
- Dental surgery, or removing llama fangs,
- Castration, When, Why and How,
- All you need to know about wool and shearing llamas,
- A list of llama owners that sign up for the Newsletter,
- How to make or where to buy pack saddles,
- The major causes of death in llamas and how to help prevent them,
- Anesthesia and llamas,
- The evolution of the llama,
- Should you bottle feed a baby?,
- What is needed for a pregnancy test?,
- How to tell if a llama is inbred,
- What should a llama look like and how much should it weigh?

The answers to these questions are known to a few of us and I would like you to know too!

Likewise, if you have something to say about llamas, something you have learned about the hard way, the Llama Newsletter will be the place you can let the rest of us in on your knowledge.

Sally Taylor, Pat Corbett and many others are helping me distribute this first query letter. If you know of other people who would like to receive the Newsletter let your local distributor make a copy of this letter and pass it on. Also, let me know what interests you. What you would like to know about or might have to offer the Newsletter and the rest of us with llamas.

This Newsletter might eventually grow into a Llama Owners Association, but right now I am just concentrating on the Newsletter as I feel that educating ourselves is of foremost importance. However, after we compile a large Owners List, anything could happen!

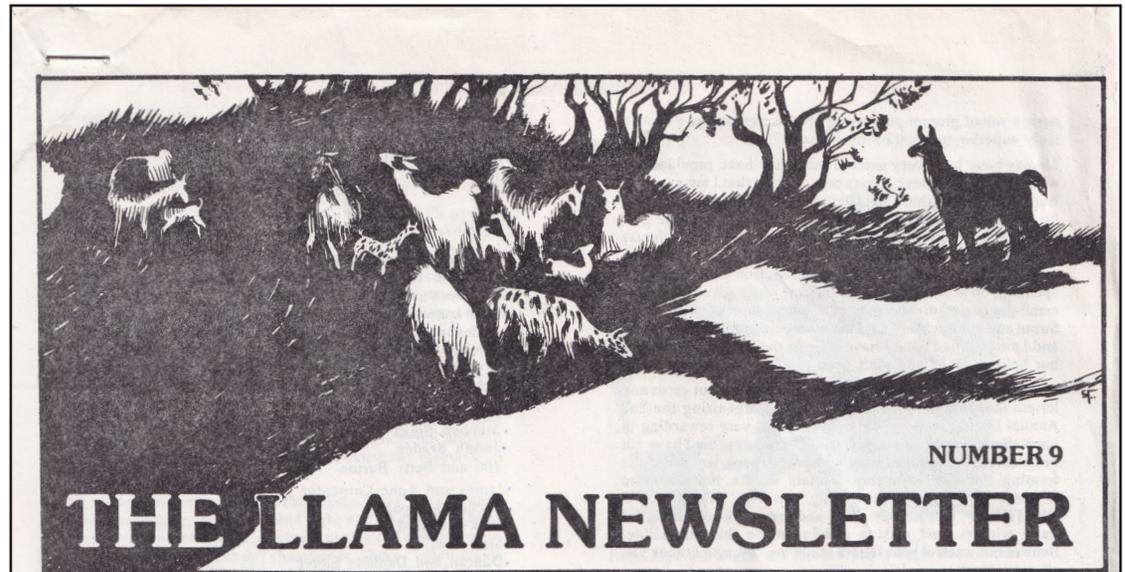
There will be a \$12 fee to receive the first twelve issues of the Newsletter. These first twelve issues should give you the basic information you need to successfully raise llamas. Beyond that the Newsletter will be a place where we can exchange information, animals and ideas. I hope to hear from you soon.

sincerely, Andy Tillman

developed through a mix of scientific research and practical experience and were a revelation to llama owners who had been figuring things out as they went along. Issue number 8 announced the first National Llama Owners Conference (a regional gathering was held the year prior). The conference took place in July of 1981 in Bend Oregon and was co-chaired by Andy and Dick Patterson. That convention, attended by more than 300 llama owners, would lead to the creation of the International Llama Association and later the International Llama Registry.

Andy reflected on the impact of the Llama Newsletter and said, "The Berserk Male study and the first blood chemistry normals for llamas that I developed were probably the most important thing that came out of the Llama newsletter. That and the fact it created a database of owners that led to ILA."

The "created a database of owners" piece that Andy largely glossed over may have been Andy Tillman's most important contribution to the llama industry as we know it today. As we have talked to various llama owners from the 1970s we have heard multiple stories about breeders who had no idea that they lived a stone's throw away from other llama owners. No idea, that is, until Andy came along and brought everyone together. The last issue of the Llama Newsletter announced the formation of the ILA, and that The Llama Newsletter would transition to Llama World Magazine. Andy became the first president of the International Llama Association.



INTERNATIONAL LLAMA ASSOCIATION (I.L.A.)

After the Bend Conference, sponsored by Dick Patterson and myself, it became obvious that a majority of the 320 llama owners who were present wanted to be able to attend a National Llama Owners Conference once a year. It was also apparent that a National Association ought to take responsibility for the perpetuation of educational and scholarly gatherings. As a result we are forming a non-profit organization called the International Llama Association (I.L.A.) to act as an umbrella organization which will sponsor a National Llama Owners Conference once a year, disseminate information on llamas and encourage regional gatherings of llama owners to supplement the National Conference.

Dues for I.L.A. membership will be announced in the next issue of the Llama Newsletter, which will be changing its name and format to LLAMA WORLD (see accompanying article). Llama World will be the official publication of the I.L.A., and as such the Llama Newsletter will cease to exist. The number 10 Llama Newsletter will be the first issue of the I.L.A.'s LLAMA WORLD.

Advisors to the Board:

Dr. Warren C. Foote
Roland Lindeman
Dr. Cesar Novoa
Dr. Julio Sumar

Founders and permanent Board Members:

Dr. William F. Franklin
Dick Patterson
Sally Taylor
Andy Tillman

In addition to the above four Board Members will be three elected Board Members. Until they can be elected at the next Llama Owners Conference the Board has appointed three temporary Board Members to fill their positions:

Roger Anderson
Sharon Herriges
D.V.M. Ben Huff

We are also forming Regional branches of I.L.A., and invite llama owners and breeders from throughout the country to create regional clubs and associations which can affiliate with I.L.A. Though the number of these regional affiliates will

It is our intention to keep politics to a minimum in this organization. What you do on a local level will be up to you. Please contact any of the listed Board Members if you have an interest in organizing a Regional branch of I.L.A. and they will put you in touch with other interested parties within your Region.

A partial list of those who have already pledged their support for the I.L.A. follows. If you would like to be listed among the supporters of this organization dedicated to bringing unity and cooperation among llama owners, please return the xeroxed form stapled to the front of this Newsletter. We will print your name, and you will have an opportunity to join I.L.A. in the first issue of LLAMA WORLD.

Sincerely, A.T.

LLAMA WORLD

The number 10 Llama Newsletter will be called LLAMA WORLD MAGAZINE. The Newsletter has grown in size to justify the expense necessary to convert over to this new format. Where as the Newsletter was written predominantly by Susan Torrey and myself, LLAMA WORLD will not be so closely associated with me or my business. I will only be the Publisher and Susan Torrey will be the Editor. It will be a salaried, full time job for Sue, and only a part time job for me. We will encourage and actively seek articles written by other llama owners as well as the most knowledgeable llama-scholars from throughout the world.

To start with, LLAMA WORLD will be published in black and white, but we hope to step up to a color format before too long. Besides scholarly articles on herd management techniques we will be publishing light hearted stories about both serious (and not too serious) subjects. Professional quality cartoons and illustrations will be standard features of LLAMA WORLD. So will regular columns by llama veterinarians, outfitters and trainers. There will also be a llama owner-breeder featured in each issue, plus classified, and half and full display type ads.

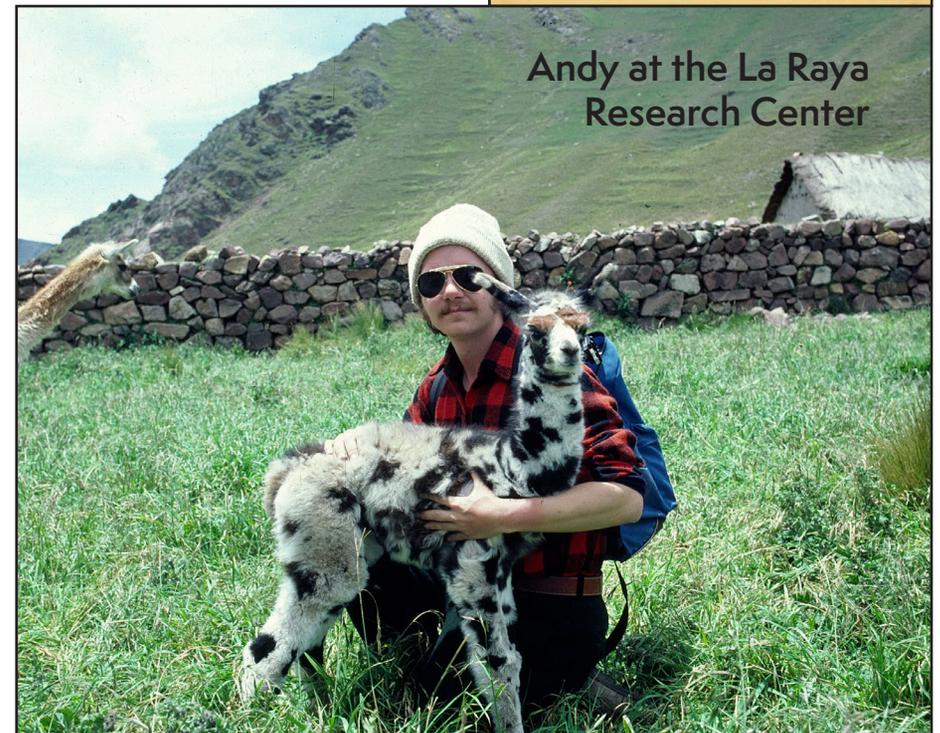
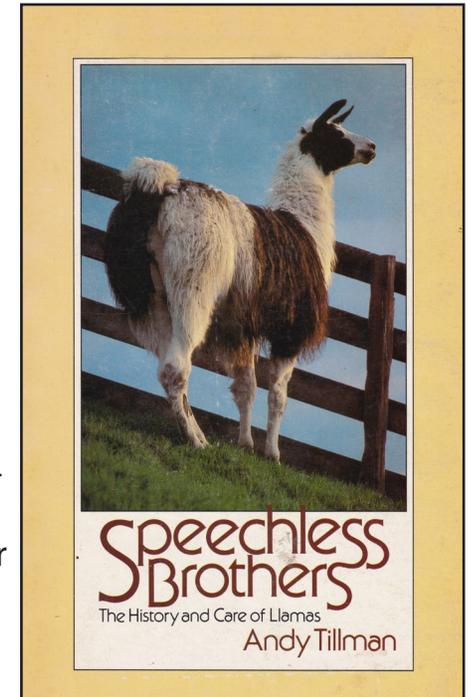
LLAMA WORLD will be "the voice of the International Llama Association," and be that association's official publication. Price for both LLAMA WORLD and membership in the International Llama Association will be announced in the first

Speechless Brothers

The Llama Newsletter and Llama World were not Andy's only literary contributions to the Llama Community. In 1981 he wrote the first book on Llama husbandry written in the English language, which he called Speechless Brothers. In addition to the research already conducted for the Llama Newsletter, Andy was invited by the US Agency For International Development (AID) to travel to the La Raya Research center. Andy told us about his long walk from the train station to the Research Center in the high altitude of Peru. On the way there he was carrying a new ultrasound machine for the Research Center, and on the way back he was carrying a box full of research and literature on llamas from Dr. Julio Samar, to be used for Speechless Brothers. The book was published by an outdoor company, Early Winters, based out of Seattle, Washington.

Initially, Early Winters wanted some photos of pack llamas for their catalog, and Andy arranged a pack trip into the Idaho wilderness to accommodate their request. Later, they asked Andy if they could offer trained gelding llamas for sale in their catalog, alongside their outdoor equipment. Andy said, "I told them they couldn't unless they had an owner's manual, and that they would need to screen people. And they said, 'Well, could you write a book about llamas?' So that's how I wrote Speechless Brothers."

The name, Speechless Brothers, was something Andy had been sitting on for a while, "On my first trip to South America, I was on the train from Cusco going to Lake Titicaca on the Peruvian side. This train was notorious for thieves, and I was sitting between a Catholic priest and a Yanomamo Indian from the Brazilian side of the Amazon. (The Yanomami) are big men, like Shaq O'Neal... So we were pretty safe. We would stop along the way and the priest and I would watch the Yanomamo Indian's stuff and he'd go out and go to the bathroom and get some food and come back and then he'd watch our stuff. And no one would steal from a priest. So we were The Three Musketeers for a day. The priest said, 'In the highlands, llamas are known as a speechless brother in the Aymara language because only a brother would carry a burden for you at high altitude like they do.' As soon as he said 'speechless brother,' I had a chill down my spine. And I said to myself, 'Someday I'm going to write a book about llamas and I'm going to call it Speechless Brothers.'"



Speechless Brothers went through two print runs, and Andy estimated that there were around 15,000 copies printed. It provided more information for people who already owned llamas, but even more importantly, it helped to show many people unfamiliar with llamas that owning them was practical and enjoyable. It most certainly added to the boom of interest in llamas that took place in the 1980s. One high profile example was Mike Lee of Storm King Llamas, who was quoted as saying “I want this animal to be a part of the rest of my life” (quoted by Don Linkem in his in memoriam piece written after Mike’s passing).

Andes Llamas

Andy named his first breeding program Andes Llamas, a play on words with his name and the Andes Mountains of South America. When we discussed Andy’s early breeding goals he mentioned that fiber became a priority early on, and remained a focus for the entirety of his camelid breeding career. “I liked woolly Llamas from the get-go,” Andy said. “They were extremely rare back then, but they were just so much prettier to me than the roadside attraction guanaco-llamas.” He shared that his affinity for the “long woolled” llamas even dated back to his first experience at the zoo, where most of the llamas were short woolled, but a small percentage were medium or heavy wool. The fiber component was added to Andy’s selection criteria as he built his herd. He remembered seeing beautiful long woolled llamas during his visits to the Patterson Ranch, “That first Doolittle generation just totally changed the look of llamas,” Andy remembered. “It was the look I had been trying to get from around the country.”

In the late 1970s Andy acquired a young male named Lopez who would go on to be one of his most important llamas from the early stages of the Andes Llamas Program. “I purchased Lopez from a guy who was selling his small herd in southern California. I received a letter asking if I would sell his herd for him, and there was a picture of Lopez. I was on my way to Peru with AID (The Agency for International Development) and I called him up to say I’d take the whole herd.” Lopez was initially believed to be sired by Zorro PL but was later proved to be a son of Chief Sitting Bull after blood typing was introduced. Andy now had a sire who was producing the desired style of the day, but unrelated to the Doolittle line that was becoming more and more common.

Lopez produced 133 registered offspring and was one of the most popular sires of the early 1980s. His most famous offspring was Federico, a striking, athletic male who eclipsed his sire in name recognition and acclaim. His



Lopez

fiber laid flat and was extremely high luster with low Average Fiber Diameter and low guard hair content. At the time llama breeders didn't have a name for this fiber type, but Andy would later refer to him as "probably the first suri type llama in the United States." Federico is the grandsire of Riny's King Crimson, another suri llama born before US breeders had ever heard the term. While Federico would likely get bumped out of a suri or silky class today, his fiber and build marked a change in direction for the US llama industry. Andy said, "I was proud of Federico because he was the first National class stud that wasn't bred by Dick and Kay. He was born one year before Fiduciary." Federico would sire 202 registered offspring including Riny's Grand Slam (sire of King Crimson), Tomollas Prospector, Tomollas Jubiliso, and several foundation females in the Tillman program.

Andy told us, "Throughout the thirty-some years with llamas, what made it fun is that there was always something to learn. Initially, it was about medicine, anatomy, physiology, and herd health. Then I got really interested in the breeding of animals. I named Federico after Federico Tesio, who wrote a very influential little book called *Breeding the Racehorse*. So I studied breeding and had the animals to experiment with and see 'wow, well that worked' and 'oh, that didn't.' One thing I learned about breeding Lopez and Federico was how important the distaff side of a pedigree is. Lopez's long crimped fiber came from his dam, Lolita Gabor, a Jerry Berman female. Federico's fiber refinement and stature came from his dam, Frederika, who I purchased from Jim Brown and was a total outcross to the Patterson lines."



Federico, photo courtesy of Don Linkem



LOPEZ OFFSPRING

Left: Federico (far left) and two Lopez daughters, Dusty Rose and Katia

Below: Tillman's Lopez Star, high seller at Celebrity II.



Hybrid Vigor and Regression to the Mean

One of the most impactful things that Andy shared was a lesson he learned while visiting the La Raya research center in Peru, "Ted Nelson, a researcher from Cal Poly, explained that it takes 19 generations to create a breed. He said that when you cross an animal, you invariably get the gene pool of characteristics that you started with 19 generations before. If you pick your five favorite characteristics and you only breed animals to animals that have those five characteristics, you never cross five and four, it's always five and five. If you do this for nineteen generations," Andy slows his speech for emphasis, and then continues, "then you create a breed. So that whenever you breed that animal with other animals of the same breed it will breed true. So a llama generation is about 2 1/2 years, multiply that by 19. I was 25 when I went to La Raya, so I was looking ahead and saying, 'At about 70 years old, I might get something done.' That had a huge impact on my life. It reinvigorated my commitment to fiber characteristics and setting fiber types. It actually wasn't too hard to get the type we wanted, just to get it to breed true takes a lifetime."

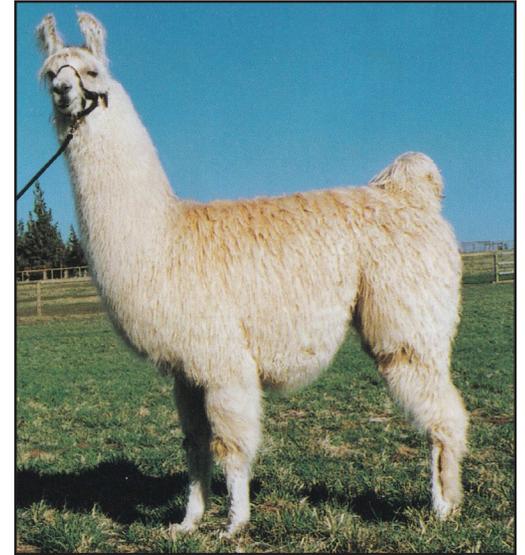
The 19 generations rule came up at another point in our conversation when I asked Andy about a term I had seen in articles he'd written: regression to the mean. Andy explained that this term is most relevant when you get an animal with hybrid vigor from crossing animals of different types.

Andy: "On a dissimilar first-generation cross, magic can happen. At the very least you're going to get hybrid vigor, meaning health and early maturity. But you can also take a wooly Lopez, and breed him to a silky medium wool, sound set of wheels in Fredericka, and get the next generation (Federico)."

Cheryl: "It was fun taking imports and then breeding them to our domestic lines. Oh my God. It was a home run. That first generation was just "Wow!" Hybrid vigor to the max. It was kind of nice to take Papa Noel and go, 'let's bring him over to this Lopez daughter, ooh, isn't that nice!' But then the next generation you didn't quite get that first jump. You would increase the quality, but not to the degree you did in the first generation. The generational changes were a little bit slower after that."

Andy: "Then it's regression to the mean, and 19 generations to create consistency... Think of an exceptional male, whether he's domestic or imported. He is 95th percentile, he's basically perfect. And then he's crossed to an average animal, in the 50th percentile. And you get a cria that's 90th percentile, plus maybe you fixed something that was wrong with the male. But the next generation, it's regression to the mean. It's no longer the outlier, it's just slightly better than the mean. And that's where the '19 generations' comes in. That's what I've learned from breeding llamas for 30 years."

In 1986, Andy decided to disperse the large majority of his herd, including Federico. Andy shared that he was burned out after ten years at the top of the llama industry, serving multiple terms as the president of the ILA, co-founding ALSA, helping to develop the ALSA judges manual, and training the first ALSA judges, in addition to other literary and structural contributions to the llama community. Most of the llamas sold went to Don and Liz Linkem of Tomolla Farm, and the sales set several recorded records for llama prices at the time.



Life of the Party: by Papa Noel, out of a Federico granddaughter



Shooting from the Hip

While Andy was writing books and articles, forming National Llama Associations, and building his llama herd, Cheryl was working her way through veterinary school. She started as a vet tech, funding her studies by saving all of her earnings from 4-H sheep projects. Later she returned to school to become a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM), and eventually met her first patient as a freshly graduated resident, Nairobi. Dr. Cheryl developed an interest in camelids during her time as a resident at WSU, helped in part by a young Andy Tillman, who kept finding reasons to bring llamas to the University instead of having his local vet check them out.

While Andy was a pioneer of the U.S. Llama Industry, Cheryl was a pioneer of veterinary medicine in camelids. After Andy and Cheryl were married in 1988, they moved to the llama capital of North America, Central Oregon. Dr. Cheryl Tillman started her own practice and began to specialize in camelids. Cheryl told us, "There were over a hundred llama breeders in central Oregon when we moved here. I was busy because they were valuable. A base female was \$10,000 when I got into the

industry and we're talking white and ugly, no wool. It was a very fun time period because everybody was pretty upbeat in Central Oregon. Everybody was very excited about llamas."

Cheryl recalled that there was just as much excitement about llamas in the veterinary field, "In the late '80s there was this desire for knowledge because all of these veterinarians were shooting from our hips. We were sharing things about anesthesia, or, 'Don't give a steroid in the eye... They will abort with the eye drops that have steroids in them.' And so it was a very exciting time period and I kind of liked the newness of it. I think that's what was my big attraction...All the veterinarians were very excited about this new animal in town."

The International Llama Association started to gather camelid vets together for conferences, which Andy and Cheryl agreed was one of the most important contributions of the ILA. "Every year at one of the veterinary schools, usually UC Davis or Colorado State, the veterinarians would get together and have llama meetings. Llama medicine or surgery meetings where we learn from each other. It was LaRue Johnson at Colorado State and Murray Fowler at UC Davis. And every year there was this core of veterinarians but every year that core grew and grew and grew and we got more veterinarians throughout the United States coming to these meetings because the industry was growing."

Cheryl is a generally outgoing person who can carry a conversation effortlessly. But during our lengthy and far-reaching conversation, two topics could really get her going. One was llamas, and the other was veterinary medicine. Cheryl gave impressive specifics on breakthroughs and tests she ran during her time as a veterinarian, she mentioned specific animals that she diagnosed with this or that malady decades ago, and she discussed her role on various committees and boards helping to determine how research dollars would be spent. She even gave us a detailed briefing on why Oregon State University was one of her preferred places to send research dollars. There is no doubt that Cheryl was deeply passionate about her career as a veterinarian and as a camelid breeder.

Wool Coats in Summer

Cheryl began to implement husbandry and breeding practices from her dairy background in the Tillman Llamas program, and advocate for better practices industry-wide. On some topics, it was easy for her to win Andy over. Things like emphasizing personality and maternal abilities were things Andy was already interested in, Cheryl simply brought a new perspective and an added emphasis.

One of the more challenging battles that Cheryl fought, first with Andy and then with the industry at large, was convincing the industry to adopt annual shearing. Throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, “long wooled” llamas were the fad of the day. It was the generally accepted practice to leave years of fiber growth on the llama and never shear them. Fleece left on the animal was believed to be valuable, while shearing it off was seen as a waste. A shorn llama was a rare exception, not the rule as it is today. Cheryl, with a love of llamas, and still a bit of an outsider’s perspective, thought the practice was ludicrous.

Cheryl said, “We were married like a year. This is like 1988 or 1989. Lopez is now in Tumalo with us, and I hand sheared him. I came down with Lopez to show Andy and he wouldn’t talk to me. I went out the next day and bought a dozen roses for Andy.”

“That’s right,” Andy said matter-of-factly, poking fun at himself for being upset about this decades ago.

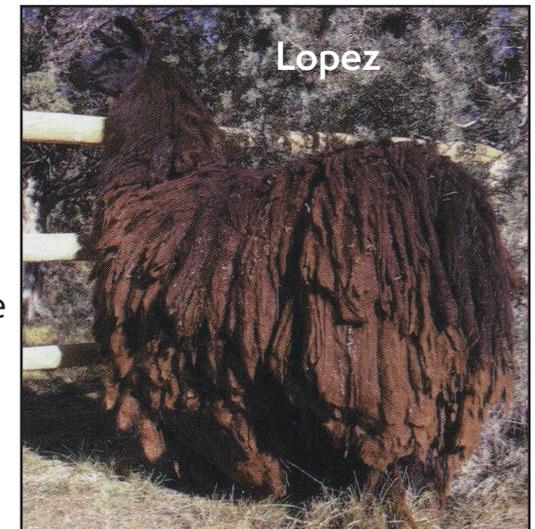
Cheryl continued, “I told him, ‘I did this because I love Lopez. Because of love. Because not shearing is like torture to an animal.’”

Andy added on, sharing a clear picture of the moment he was fully convinced of the benefits of shearing, “He was, all of a sudden, a yearling overnight. He was leaping around and jumping.”

Cheryl finished the topic with, “I could just tell that Lopez was not happy (before shearing). When I gave him that haircut he was running. We had this huge rock in the middle of his pasture; he was on top of the rock. It was kind of like skinny dipping... very liberating. So I was one of the very first to remove this valuable fleece off the animals.”

With Andy convinced of the benefits of shearing after seeing the impact on Lopez, Cheryl set her sights on the industry at large. “In my practice in the late 80s and early 90s, here in Central Oregon, nobody was shearing and we had all these preemies. We had (garbage) milk production. It was a freaking wreck from a husbandry point of view. We started shearing those animals and the health went way up. The mothers could milk, they were going full term. My amount of plasma transfusions went way down. I was also very much into educating my clients.”

Cheryl shared one of her pitches on the benefits of shearing to her veterinary clients. “I said ‘I’m gonna put you in five wool coats, now let’s walk around out here. It’s only 90 degrees. Why don’t you go out and have a baby? It’s going to be the most physical thing you do in your life. Go for it. Let’s see how you feel.’ And if you talk to a lot of people at that level they will get it... A lot of people started getting it.”



Second Wind

When Cheryl and Andy were married, Andy had sold all but two of their llamas. "I definitely just went to a hobby, pet, sentimental level," Andy said. "I couldn't sell Nairobi, she had a bone in her brain, and I kept Lopez as well."

"Andy was done," Cheryl said, pausing for effect. "But I had just started." Everyone at the table laughed as Cheryl continued, "The second wind was kind of my energy. He was the first part, and then from '88 forward I was like, 'Woohoo! Let's go play!'"

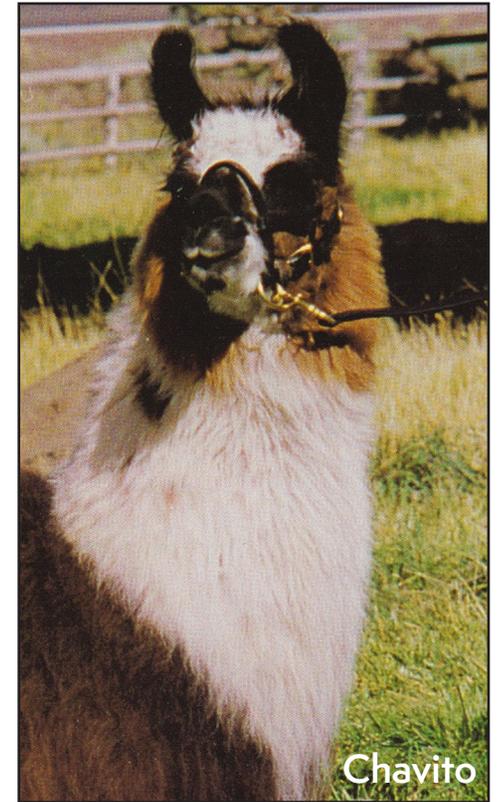
Andy added, "So I had two years off from having a large llama herd."

With Cheryl's enthusiasm leading the way, the Tillmans set out to build up a herd again. In 1991 they made a splash, buying the high seller from the second-ever importation of Bolivians. Chavito was purchased in partnership with Iris and Donald Christ of Llama Woods Farm, also based in Bend, Oregon. While Chavito would prove to be an important component in their breeding program in his own right, his purchase was even more impactful because it allowed Andy and Cheryl to develop a relationship with his breeders who attended the sale. Billy, Sergio, and Tito Bohrt, known as the Bohrt brothers, had a large llama and alpaca breeding program and fiber processing operation in Bolivia. The Tillman purchases from the 1991 importation of Bohrt animals was the start of a relationship that would lead to Andy and Cheryl making breeding decisions for the Bohrt herd in Bolivia, importing over 500 alpacas and llamas into the U.S., and acting as the Bohrts exclusive agent for llamas and alpacas that they retained in the states.

The Tillman's relationship with the Bohrts started their suri alpaca breeding program, which they would continue until 2007. Cheryl told us about the first group of suri alpacas, which drew the attention of their Tumalo neighbors. "They were all white," Cheryl remembered. "And we've got really bright Central Oregon light reflecting off of them. It was like a pasture of light bulbs. They were like little beacons out there. People would stop in the street and say, 'What is that?'"

The Tillmans traveled to Bolivia in 1993 to visit the Bohrts. They began to work with the Bohrts to make breeding decisions for their llama and alpaca herds, and discussions began about a future importation to be organized by the Tillmans. In 1995, they experienced success on both fronts. They won the opportunity to hold an importation, and the results of their Bolivian breeding program won the first, second, and third place suri alpacas, first place black huacaya, and first and second place woolly llama at the National Fair in La Paz, Bolivia. These were the first and only Bolivian National Champions imported into the United States.

The Tillmans began their selections of llamas and alpacas in Bolivia, starting with the prize winners from the Bohrt herd. "We were in this valley called the Acero Marca Valley, this is where all the animals were kept before they went into quarantine," Cheryl said. "There were hundreds of animals. And I get to pick out these llamas. It was like being a kid in a candy shop because I was really addicted. I mean a severe addiction like I can't sit on my hands in the auctions. We were down in this little cabin on the Acero Marca River. Our Bolivian partners would come in every day and we would work the herd be-



cause we had to select through all of these animals that they had commingled to figure out which ones we were going to import. I did a physical exam on every single one. We took fiber samples, we were taking pictures, and documenting which ones we wanted. It was quite a process. I can remember one morning we woke up, and we're so excited. The moon was up and it was very bright. So we got up and got ready. And then we looked up the clocks. It was 2 o'clock in the morning! But we're ready to go to work, I'm ready to see my llamas!"

As we were discussing Chavito and the Bolivian selection, Andy and Cheryl asked us to stand up from the kitchen table and follow them to their garage, where they showed us a giant printed photo of Chavito at the Bohrt farm in Bolivia. It was leftover from a past Celebrity Sale promotion stall, and they decided to hang it on the garage wall to admire. "He was a yearling when that was taken," Andy said. "That's the bottom pasture of (the Bohrt ranch) at about 11,000 feet, and the top end was the tallest barn in Bolivia at 16,500 feet, and a nearby glacier. They had this famous trout stream, the Acero Marka River, and it went from 16,000 feet to 11,000 feet. There were these huge, straight vertical Canyon walls on either side. The llamas could walk up and down those canyon walls like a goat."

Cheryl added, "They're crossing rickety bridges and stuff. It was like a cartoon, it was surreal."

Betting the Farm

The Tillmans' importation wasn't just candy stores and beautiful scenery, it came with a great deal of stress and hard work. "There is an incredible financial risk with importation," Andy said. "If one animal comes down with FMD (foot and mouth disease), TB or Rinderpest, they'd all be killed."

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Cheryl added, "And we would have lost our farm and everything because we really leveraged ourselves for this event. It was \$5,000 per animal for our overhead, back in the mid-'90s. You've got 450 animals in there. That's a lot of money. We had to borrow from a bank."

Andy said, "If things had gone poorly we would have lost everything... We had a big loan and we didn't know whether or not we were going to be able to pay it back. It was agriculture for us, it wasn't discretionary income. It wasn't fun, it was business."

The Tillmans were importing a higher percentage of alpacas because the alpaca industry had grown and strengthened in the late '90s, while the llama market had softened.

Andy said, "We imported llamas because we like llamas."

Cheryl continued, "It was wholly market-driven. And I thought, 'Well, I want to import some llamas, and these 400 alpacas will come with them.'"

With their 70 llamas and 400 alpacas selected, the animals needed to enter quarantine. Cheryl received special permission to oversee the quarantine at the Harry S. Truman Animal Import Center in Key West, Florida. "I had the most successful importation in the history of the world with any species," Cheryl said. "We started with 450 animals and I had 526 animals leave quarantine. They allowed me, as a veterinarian producer, to go into USDA quarantine. They had never done that before."

Andy interjected, "In the first week of an importation they would typically have 50 rumen shut downs die. This was the dirty little secret of importation that nobody talked about. Nobody knew about it."

Cheryl continued, "The USDA Vets would just wait for somebody to die, and then they would do their sample collections, do a necropsy, and collect. They didn't do any treatment. Well, I was doing preventative medicine. I had rumen shut-downs. I was retrieving ruminal content from our sentinel cows and they don't know what I'm doing. I said, 'This is what we do in practice out in the real world'. I only put two animals asleep and one other died. Typically they lost 30% of the importations and all of the crias."



Cheryl with an alpaca cria in quarantine

In addition to the Harry S. Truman Center staff, Cheryl was aided by two herdsman from South America, one from Bolivia and one from Peru. Cheryl told us, "Every day we would open up each pen. There were 30 animals per pen and I would have them just walk them out of their pens and around the inside of the barns. Just to get them going, to be normal... They're not used to being in a feedlot situation. We had live births, and I brought the moms and babies into my office without the big fans. I realized the mothers could not hear the babies and the babies could not hear the mothers, so they couldn't imprint. I was doing IgG plates on every single animal. I was doing plasma transfusions. I lived in Key West, Florida for those three and a half months and barely left the quarantine." Cheryl was presented with an award from the USDA at a special ceremony after the highly successful quarantine.

Andy said, "You asked me what my proudest moment in the llama business was, and I think it was leaving quarantine. Leaving quarantine after having the most productive importation in

history. That was a very private moment. I was the last person in the quarantine center. And our two favorite male llamas were the last two to leave. So here's this huge empty building and I'm walking behind them and these are just great, friendly llamas. It was like my first year with llamas where I'm walking behind them and they're walking in front of me. It was just a very special moment."

Friendship Sale

Andy and Cheryl retained a majority of the 70 llamas they imported and kept a group of suri alpacas, but a majority of the 400+ alpacas were sold. They had pre-sold about a third of the alpacas to help fund the importation, and another large group was to be sold at auction.

Cheryl told us, "We called it the Friendship Sale because a group of Chileans were coming in at the same time. I said, 'Let's not compete. Let's sell them all together. It's Mother's Day; who wouldn't want a beautiful alpaca on Mother's Day?... We flew our banker out to the auction in Kentucky. And he's sitting with my folks because he knows them. The first animal comes into the arena. That was Pop Tart, the one I really loved the most. This beautiful suri alpaca. I think she went for \$70,000 or something. And (the banker) turned to my folks and he said, 'They did it!'"

The Friendship Sale averaged \$30,000, and the Tillmans could finally breathe a sigh of relief after betting the farm on their llama and alpaca importation.

Selling the Favorites

Andy and Cheryl shared some of the downsides of raising llamas and alpacas as your primary income. Cheryl said, "My love was llamas. I didn't have children,

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they were my family. So that was the hardest part of selling. It broke my heart, I didn't like that part of it. I really wanted to hang on to everybody. But when you're a producer and you're making a living on it you have to sell your best. When the best baby is born, you're all over it. You know it's your best baby of the year and you're really, really attached to it. And then you gotta go out and sell it? But what saved me was people would call up and go, 'Oh my God, this is my favorite llama.' And I'm thinking, 'That was my favorite too!'"

Andy mentioned another challenge, slower progress toward breeding goals, "If you have five favorites here, you'd have to sell four to pay bills and you get to keep one. But we were still able to build up the herd like we wanted."

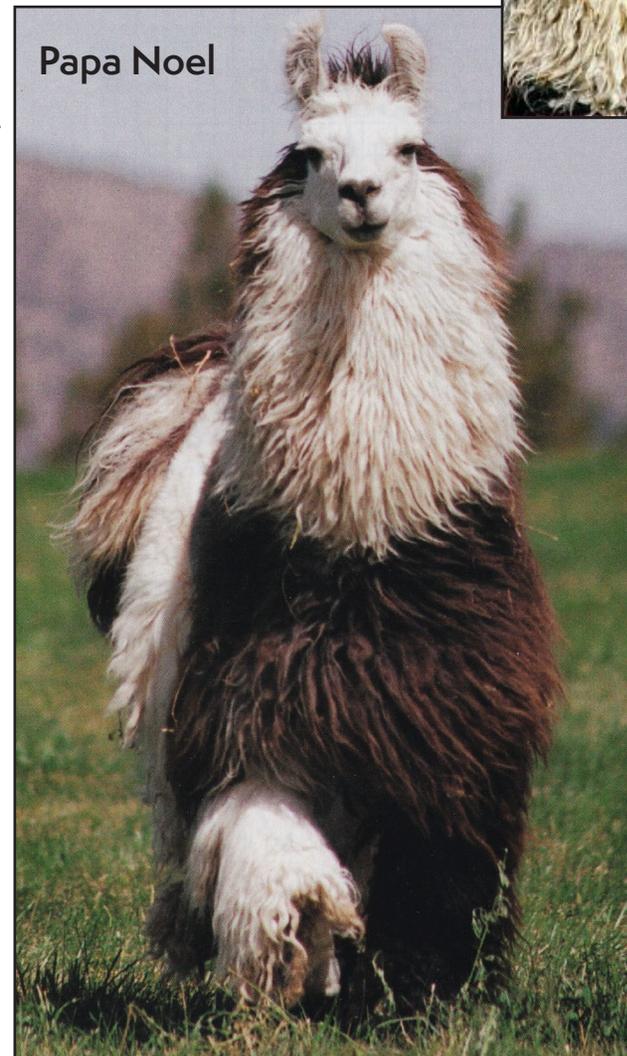
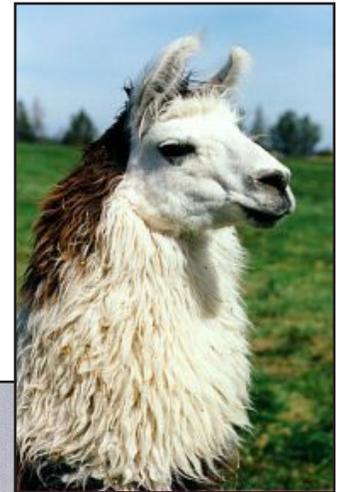
Cheryl added, "We would have built up a better herd if we could have retained more of our top animals. Iris (Christ) had that ability to always retain her top animals, and I was always kind of envious of that. I would have to go out and sell my best female. So it was always this struggle of being in business and realizing that you're going to have to sell something you love so dearly. For me, that was the most difficult thing."

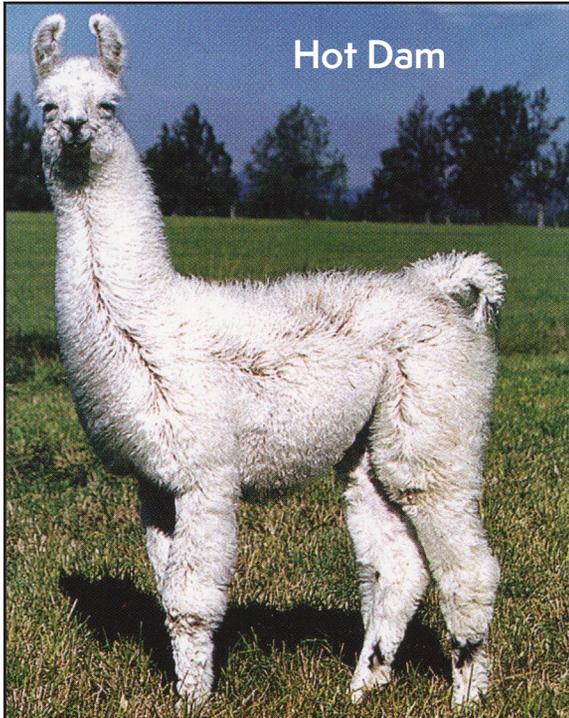
Papa and Napoleon

While Chavito and their new imports were strengthening the Tillman's Bolivian Llama program, they also had a rising star from Chilean lineage. Papa Noel was a flashy paint known for his locked, silky fiber. He would go on to sire the ALSA Western Regional Champion Get of Sire group four years in a row. He was bred by Loyal Nordstrom-McMillan, and out of imported parents. "Papa is probably what put us on the map again. Andy found Papa Noel up at Loyal's just in some back pasture. She had like 400 or 500 animals and this male comes up and Andy is going, 'Who is that?!'"

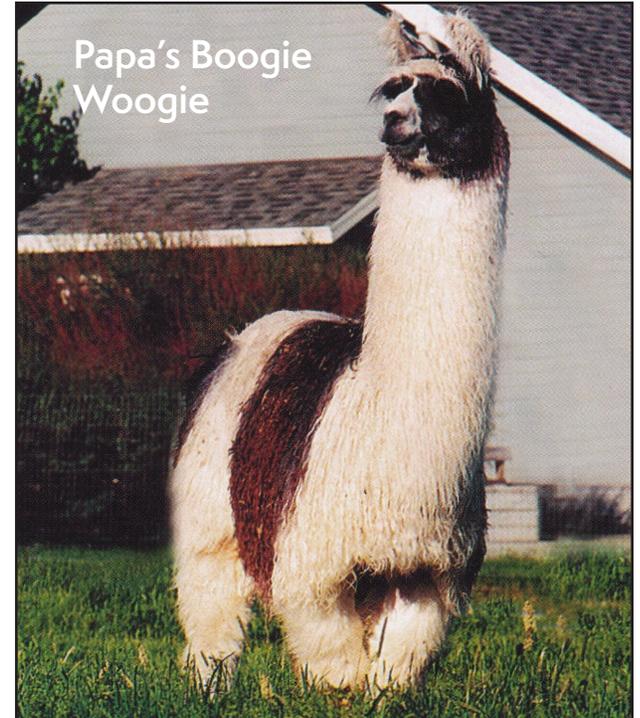
Andy added, "Loyal needed us for a partner like she needed a hole in the head. But she was all about love and association, so she let us partner on him. We just loved working with Loyal... She was just such a lovely person and a kind person."

Cheryl said, "Papa was a real vivid suri, and that's kind of what I liked. I liked brio; I liked flash and luster. I just like things that are really pretty and shiny, and I think that's why we went to the silkies and the suris. I went for pizzazz and Papa did that. You could tell a Papa kid from a mile away."



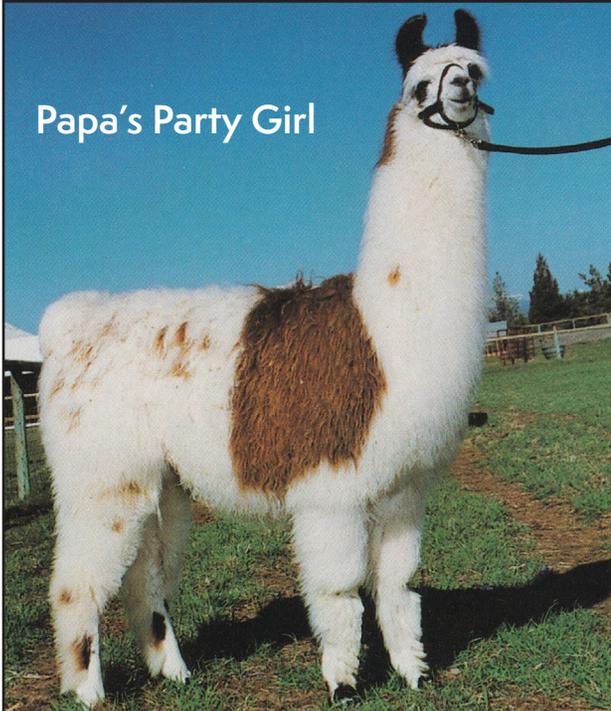


Hot Dam

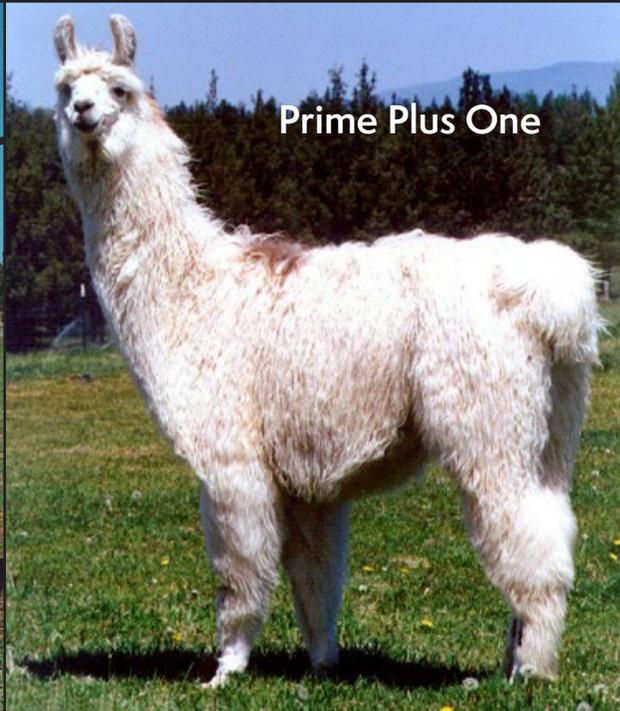


Papa's Boogie
Woogie

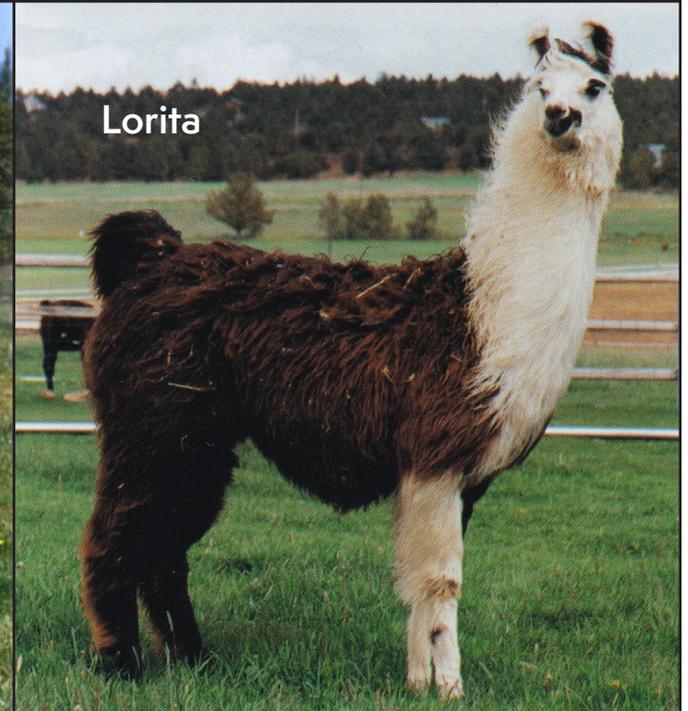
PAPA NOEL OFFSPRING



Papa's Party Girl



Prime Plus One



Lorita

Another important herdsire came to Tillmans from Sandy Jetmundson's Chilean importation, where she carefully selected for silky fiber. Chilean Napoleon was a bold reverse appaloosa who had the high luster, silky fleece that the Tillmans wanted.

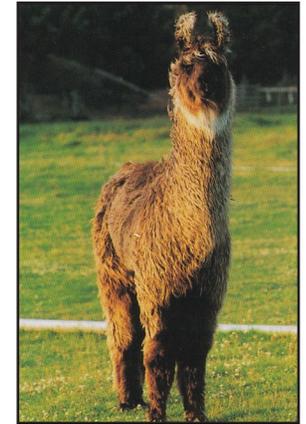
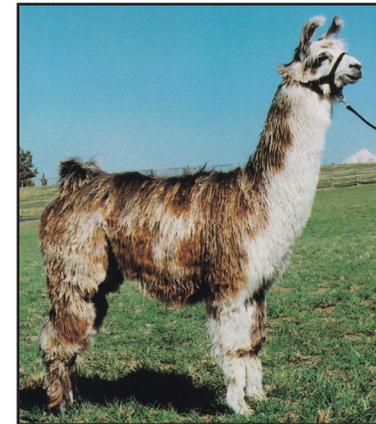
In 1999, the Tillmans had their 25th Anniversary Sale at Celebrity, where they offered fifty outstanding animals for sale. I shared with the Tillmans that, for me, it doesn't get much better than the Papa Noel and Chilean Napoleon offspring in that sale. Their high seller was Sweet Silver Lily, a Napoleon daughter, Papa Noel granddaughter, and Federico great-granddaughter. The sale also featured several Bolivians, including some of the Tillmans' prized 1996 imports.

We always ask our interviewees to tell us about some of their best llamas, which is a fun conversation when talking to someone who bred great animals for as long as the Tillmans did. Andy said, "When I think of, 'Who were your best animals?', I think of Aviance or almost any Papa Noel offspring. Especially a Papa x Federico cross, and throw in a little Napoleon."

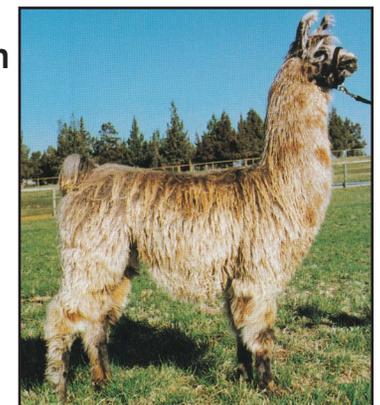
Cheryl added, "That was probably when we were at our strongest, was that combination. It was just bulletproof and they were gorgeous animals. And they were, I thought, structurally pretty right on."



Chilean Napoleon



Chilean Napoleon Offspring: The Fiber Connection, Sweet Silver Lily, and Tillman's Trademark



Brio, Good Wheels, and No Flat Tires

As the conversation turned toward breeding practices and ideal animals we asked the Tillmans to describe the traits they emphasized in their program.

Cheryl started with: "Good wheels, no flat tires, and balance. Early maturity. Good Mother. Gotta have milk!"

Andy: "That neck to back ratio was important to me from early on because of Jane Wheeler. She explained that there is definitely a difference in neck to back ratio between llamas and alpacas, and a slight one between llamas and guanacos. I tried to maintain a llama neck to back ratio."

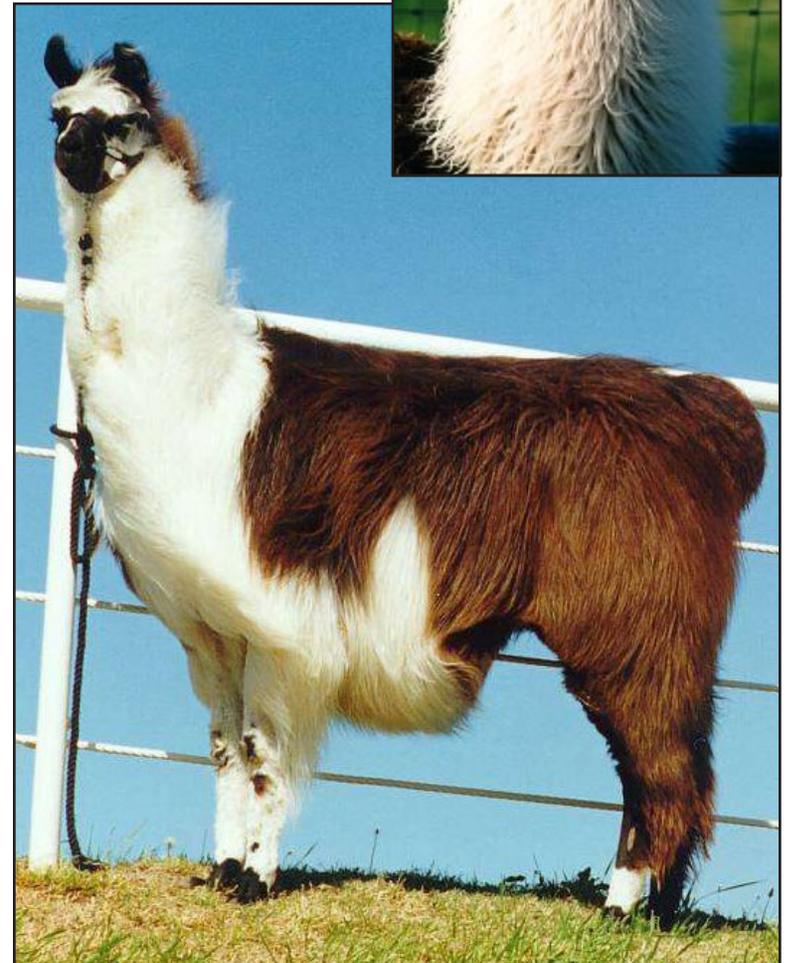
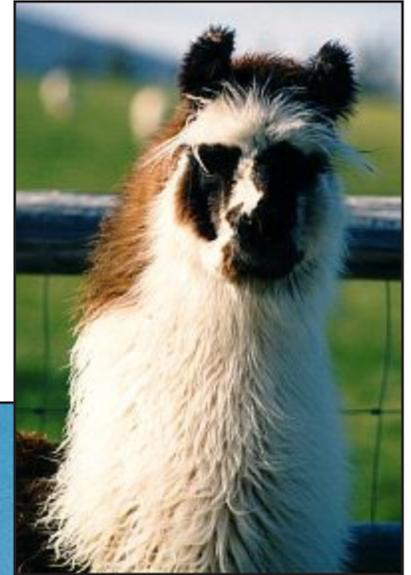
Cheryl: "The ideal llama, to me, number one had to have brio."

Andy: "That means, 'Look at me, you lucky people.'"

Cheryl: "You had animals, you just would walk in the ring and go, 'Whoa, that animal is on.' So brio was important, and along with brio was flash. I didn't like a solid color. I liked patterns, I liked dazzling, and I liked luster... And temperament. You've got to be able to kiss it... Personality, personality, personality. For a veterinarian that was my most important thing. (I worked on) animals that were very fractious, and why would you want a fractious llama? They had to be friendly, I want to be able to walk up to a llama and kiss it on the lips. That is one reason we liked the Bolivians so much. They were definitely bred for personality."

Andy: "The ideal llama for me has an initially favorable impression that holds up to close scrutiny. As an experienced breeder, you can just have that immediate visceral response and go, 'that's the winner!' And then and then when you start analyzing it closer you go, 'Yeah, check that box, check that box, and that box.' Legs, neck-to-back ratio, fiber, and whatever else floats your boat."

Another emphasis of the Tillman breeding program was always fiber quality. "From 1975 I was doing optical measurement with a microscope of llama fiber," Andy said. "And it was very common to have 30 to 60-micron fiber diameter and 50% guard hair. By the time we were breeding Papa we routinely had 20-micron on big, healthy animals. The healthier you are, the larger your fiber diameter. So even on 32-pound birth weight, 200-pound yearlings we were 20-micron, 5% to 6% guard hair at a time when the industry was far behind that."



Aviance: by Papa Noel, out of a Federico daughter

Genetic Diversity

A common theme of the Tillman program is genetic diversity. While lines like The Fiduciary, Macho Comacho, El Fuerte, and Kantu were commonplace in herds across the country, they were not found in the Tillman herd. Andy and Cheryl were constantly looking for outcross genetics for not only their herd but to be able to offer something unique to their customers as well.

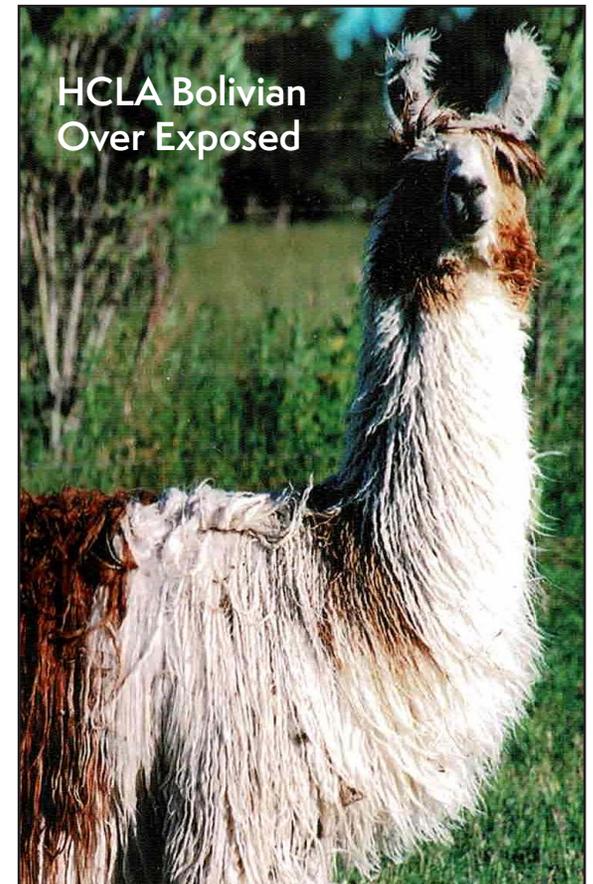
“We wanted to stand apart from our competitors,” Cheryl said. “If we all have the same genetics how can you stand apart? So for marketing reasons and for the health of the industry you needed that genetic diversity. So if the Pattersons are going to be doing Doolittles, I don’t really want to be doing Doolittles 20 miles down the road. Let’s do something a little bit different. Why would I do Fiduciary when in Montana there’s your Fiduciary base? So I think people have their individual breeding programs and their favorite males, and then you could buy and blend.”

Andy told us that pursuing genetic diversity was a constant struggle for them, “We had a pure Bolivian program, a pure Chilean program, and then basically the Lopez line, North American lines. Our biggest challenge as breeders was that for each of those programs, we always had to have a future, up-and-coming, unrelated stud. It was a challenge to do that for three different programs, but we did it. And I’m shocked now to see how little genetic diversity there is in the llama world. I think when the recession happened and we lost a lot of the big producers it went to just a handful of people who were still breeding and showing. That was a chokepoint genetically. Kantu will end up as probably the most influential male of all time because he was heavily bred and the people that kept breeding were using or are using Kantu. I mean nothing against Kantu, like I said he’s been hugely influential, but I worked my whole life from 1975 to 2007 trying to create genetic diversity. I’m worried that a lot of that work that we all did could be lost.” He ended his thought with some advice for llama breeders, “You don’t have many years left to grab those animals. Before those animals are gone, even if you have to do semen collection or embryo transfer. You don’t have many years left to get the sons of sons and daughters of daughters of a Napoleon, Papa, or Greaseball.”

The Next Generation

As the llama industry became enamored with Kantu and other super-suris, the Tillmans made a move to add an advanced suri sire of their own. HCLA Bolivian Over Exposed was a Bolivian Radical son, bred by Rick and Laura Avdich of British Columbia.

The Avdichs imported llamas from Bohrts in Bolivia in the early 2000s, with some support and mentorship from the Tillmans. Cheryl recalled her first encounter with Over Exposed, “From the moment I touched his neck, I immediately wanted him. His fleece was so cool and so slick.”



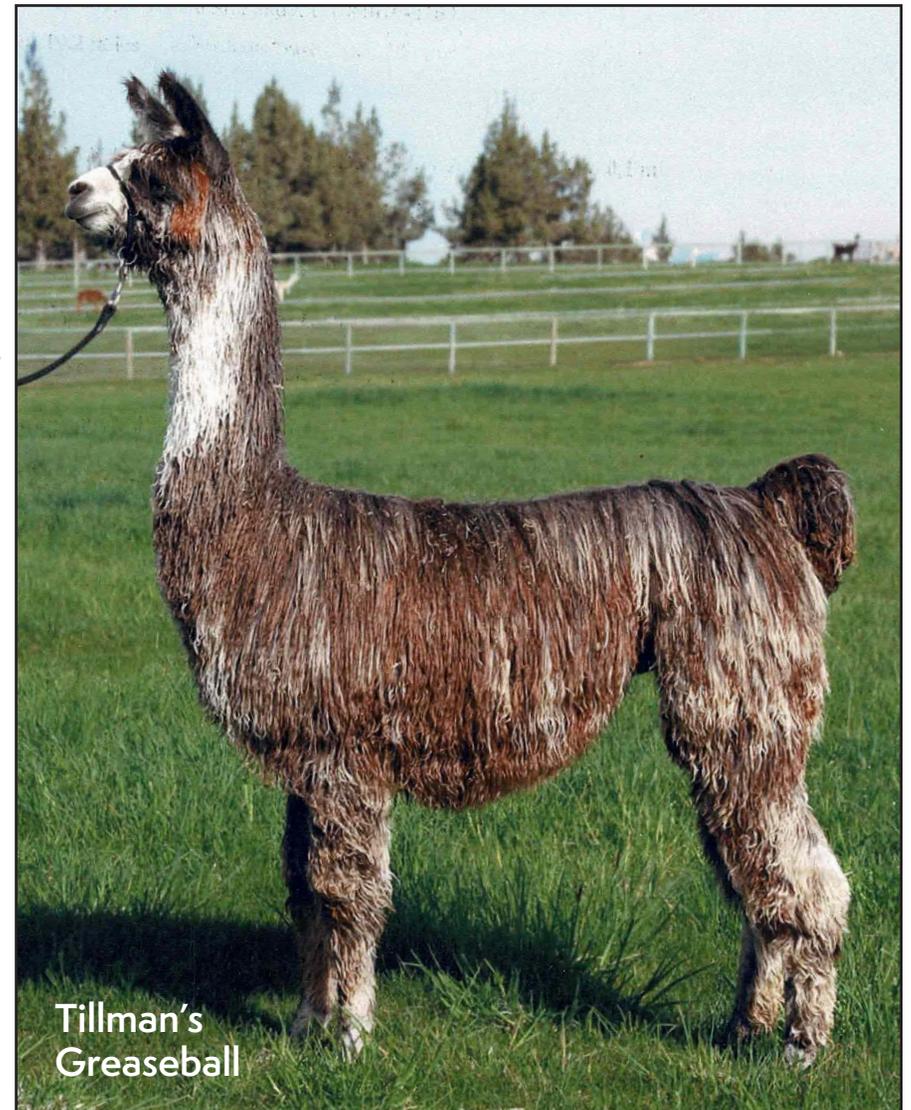
Andy gave Rick the idea for OE's interesting name before they had asked to purchase him. "Rick called him Over Exposed because I told him that you have to overexpose photos of the suris because it tricks the light meter. He was a 2 F-stop llama. You had to overexpose by two full F-stops."

Many llama programs transitioned to suris between 2000 and 2005, but this was hardly a transition for the Tillmans. Over Exposed was just the logical next phase after they had progressively advanced the fiber in their herd from Lopez to Federico, Chavito, Papa Noel, and Napoleon. Andy was very enthusiastic about the prospect of a suri llama breed and helped to found the Suri Llama Association and develop the keuring process. The Tillmans funded Scanning Electron Microscopy research at Washington State University which documented that silky and suri llamas were different at a molecular level from their predecessors, guanacos and heavy wool llamas.

Over Exposed produced outstanding offspring with the Tillman's foundation females. Sir E Sur-Real was a highly advertised sire going back to Papa Noel, Chavito, and Lopez on the dam side. Tillman's Splashy was a Celebrity high seller, a gorgeous reverse appy out of a Chavito daughter. Another Over Exposed son, Tillman's High Interest, would go on to be a popular sire, co-owned by the Tillmans and Ron and Gail Wilkinson. Tillman's Sweet Stiletto, who Andy named among his favorite llamas, was a gorgeous paint out of one of their best dam lines, Pedal Pusher and Miss Bliss.

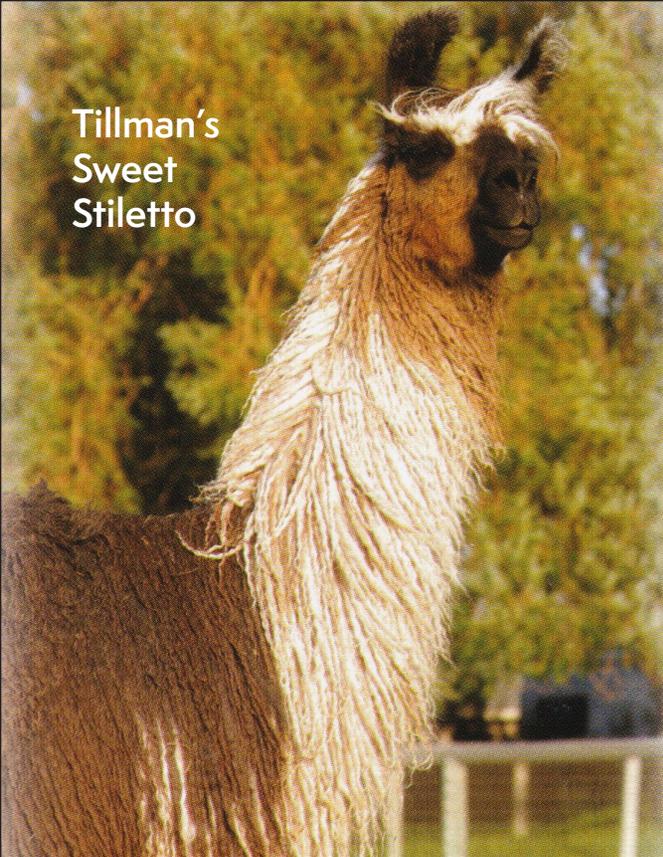
The highlight of OE's production was certainly Tillman's Greaseball, an outrageously colored appy suri, out of a Sandy Jentmundson Chilean named Maldiva. Cheryl remembered, "The day he was born, you know how they have that greasy look when they are first born and wet? He never dried out. I said, 'He's still greasy, I'm calling him greaseball.'"

Greaseball would go on to sire a few crias for the Tillmans before he was offered in their Lifetime Achievement Auction. Greaseball was building name recognition and they had promoted him heavily, including on the front cover of Llama Banner. "Greaseball was definitely the next generation," Andy said.



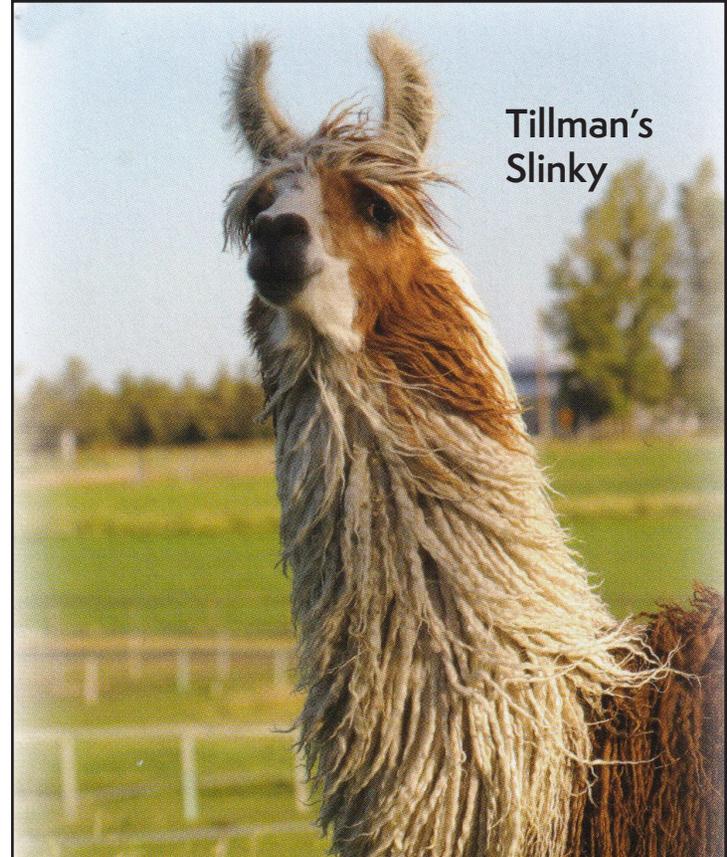
Tillman's
Greaseball

Tillman's
Sweet
Stiletto

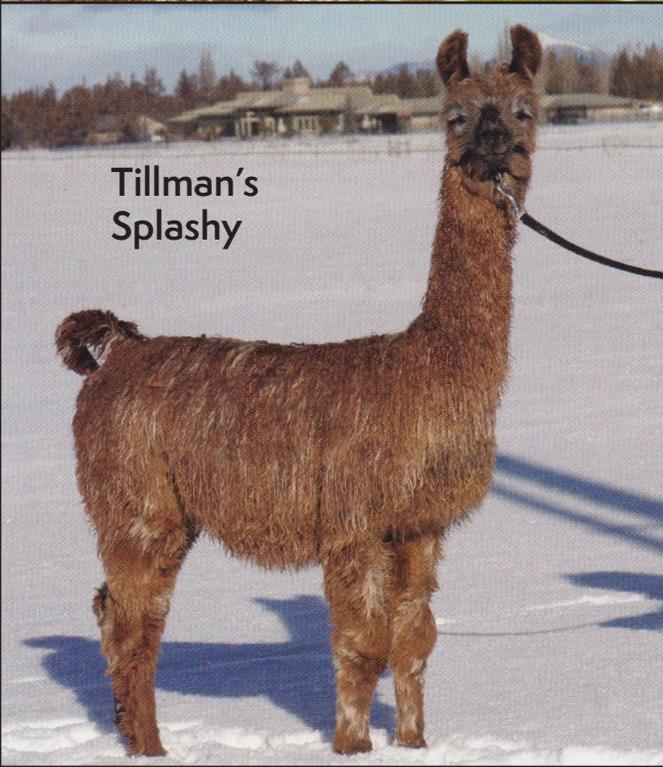


OVER EXPOSED OFFSPRING

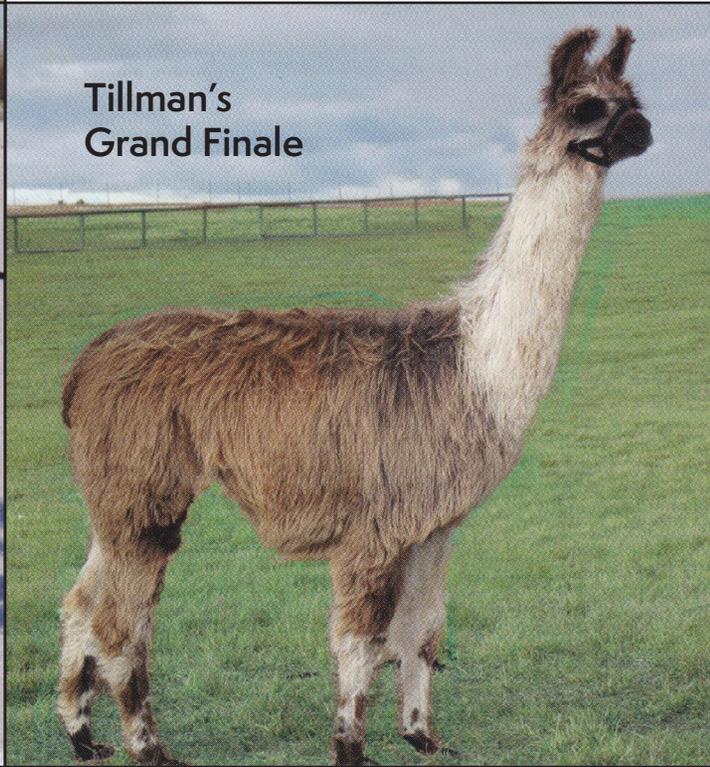
Tillman's
Slinky



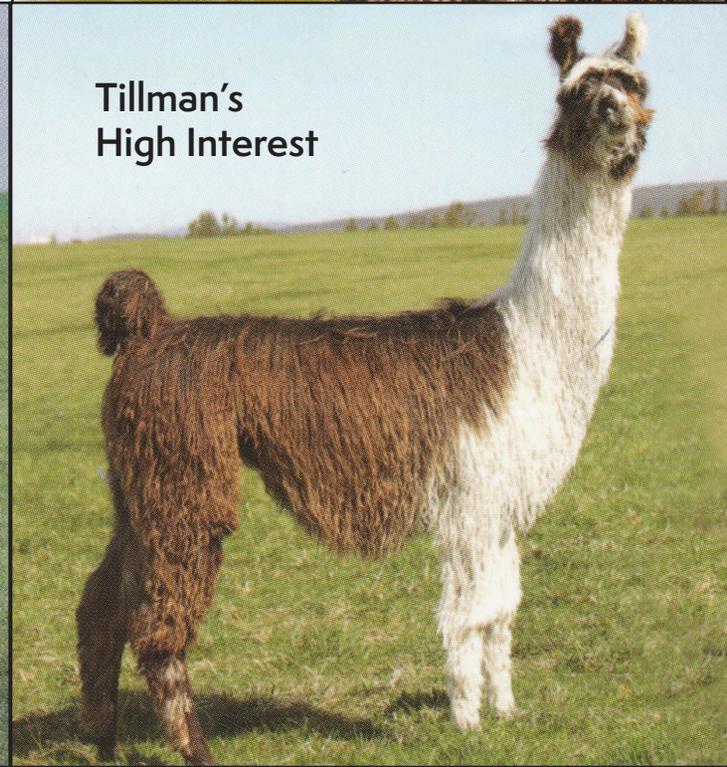
Tillman's
Splashy



Tillman's
Grand Finale



Tillman's
High Interest



Lifetime Achievement Auction

"In 2007 when we decided to do the Lifetime Achievement Auction. I just couldn't do it anymore," Cheryl said. "I had a herdsman who was an animal scientist that worked at Oregon State. She was really good with llamas and alpacas. She called us up in April while we were in Hawaii. She called me and said, 'I'm quitting. I can give you 30 days' notice.' And I said, 'Andy, I'm selling the herd. I'm not breaking in another person. I don't have it in me anymore. The market is softening. The expenses are going up. I'm burnt toast. I'm done.'"

Cheryl and Andy put together quite a party as they celebrated their retirement from the llama and alpaca industry. Cheryl told us, "We had runway models showing off the alpaca clothing, we had entertainment. It was a show. We had Bolivian food and Pisco sours. I got toasted. It was a very..." Cheryl pauses, she had been speaking wistfully about the sale. I expected her to continue on about what a fun time she had, but instead she continued with, "It was a very sad time."

Cheryl goes quiet again and Andy added, "It was very emotional."

Cheryl spoke again, "It was horrible actually. Because I didn't want to do it but I knew I needed to. Just to keep myself sane. I was not enjoying it anymore, and I don't think you were either (speaking to Andy). I mean, there's the intellectual part, fine. But there's a point where it's, 'where you gonna go with it?'"

Andy responds by saying, "I was so desperate to keep interested in it that I was doing scanning electron microscopy." He laughs as he continues. "I mean I don't know where I go from there. This was the end of the road. What am I going to do, x-ray toenails? Look at mange mites?"

"I was proud of our lifetime achievement auction," Cheryl said. "My llama average was higher than my alpaca average! Only by a couple hundred dollars, but they outsold the alpacas by average. That, to me, was an achievement." The high selling llama was Greaseball, at \$57,500, and the high selling female was Sweet Stiletto at \$30,000. Both Andy and Cheryl listed Greaseball and Stiletto among the best llamas they had ever bred.

The Tillmans didn't disperse their entire herd in their Lifetime Achievement Auction. They wanted to continue to stand behind the stock that they sold, so they retained a group of good producers bred to Over Exposed and



Tillman's Lifetime
Achievement
Auction

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Greaseball. The babies would then be available to replace sale animals in the event of a death or a breeding problem. Their long-term plans were to subdivide their farm in Tumalo, which meant they had several years of legal work that they would be spending on their large farm. The following spring they consigned a few more llamas to the Cascade sale and ended up buying the high seller, an Inca Legend daughter named FPL Mellow Model, consigned by Justin Timm.

"You were helping the auction," Andy said.

Cheryl replied, "Yes, I was helping the auction, but also it was like an addiction. You know you can't go to an auction if you're addicted to llamas, that's not a smart thing to do."

They continued to dabble with breeding for a few years, using FFF Chamoso, who they co-owned with Loyal Nordstrom-McMillan, as their primary sire. In 2014, as the sale of their farm was progressing, they sold the last of their llama breeding stock to Penni McClain of Ohio.

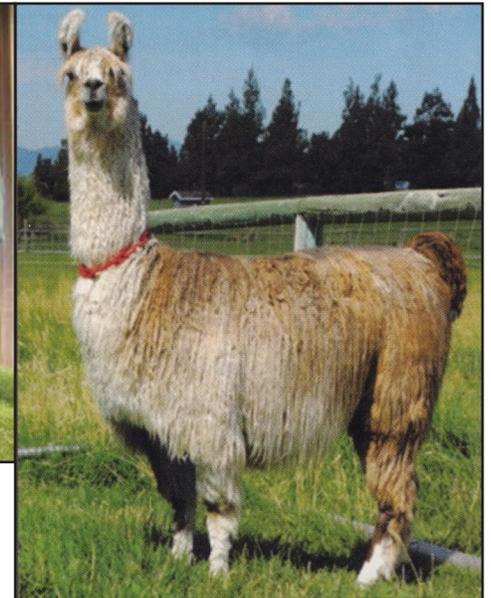
While we were describing some of the great animals the Tillmans have owned over the years, Andy and Cheryl would start with the great qualities they had, but inevitably would mention some traits that bugged them. The ears were too far apart, or their neck could have been longer. We made a comment about how it's hard to breed an animal who checks all of the boxes, and Cheryl's response was brilliant, "Nothing's ever perfect because if we hit perfection then we're done. We go for excellence. And I think we had an excellent breeding program."

Andy had a beautiful piece of insight when he was reflecting on the impact of the Tillman Llamas breeding program. "Being a breeder, I've told people before, you're just a bead on a necklace. Your breeding program was based on animals you purchased from those who preceded you. And your favorite animals are passed on to the next generation. You never really own anything but are a part of the whole. You are a pearl in the necklace. I think we came close to creating a breed. What we produced was pretty identifiable."

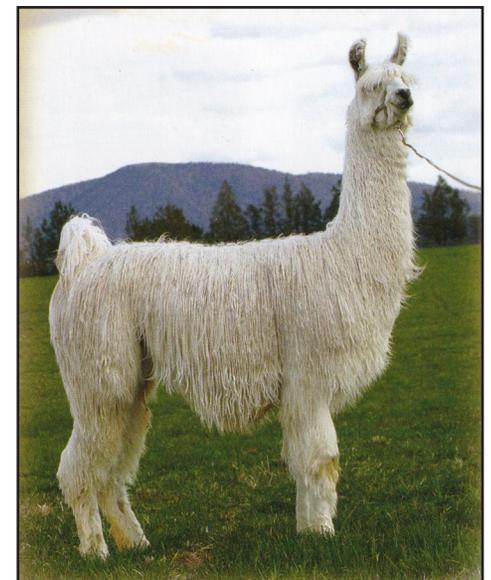
Andy and Cheryl bought a beautiful home on small acreage with a breathtaking view of Smith Rock State Park. They have also purchased a few rental homes in the area. They still own two llamas, which they board at a nearby farm. "We've got two llamas and three cats and I will not replace any of them when they leave," Cheryl said. "We want to do backcountry RVing and packing, and I don't want to always have to rely on somebody else to come take care of the animals."



The Tillmans with Justin Timm and FPL Mellow Model



Tillman's Bambini, an Over Exposed daughter born in '09



The Tillmans purchased FFF Chamoso from the Burgess Dispersal in 2003.

In a letter from the Tillmans on the inside cover of their Lifetime Achievement Sale catalog, they wrote “We truly owe everything we have, even meeting each other, to alpacas and llamas... It’s time to pass our position in the industry on to the next generation of ‘Master Breeders.’” As a member of the next generation of llama breeders, I know that I am grateful to Andy and Cheryl Tillman for all of their contributions to the things we take for granted: llama publications, llama shows, educated veterinarians, veterinary research, and the nationwide community of llama owners that has been going strong since 1979. As lucky as Andy and Cheryl were to have had llamas, we are equally lucky that the llama industry had Andy and Cheryl.

Toward the end of the interview, we asked the Tillmans how many llamas they had at their peak. Their response was lovely and seems to be their lasting memory from the Tillman Ranch. I can think of no better way to close this article.

Cheryl: I think we got up to 200 llamas, maybe 230. Oh God, it was beautiful, though. I mean they were 230 beautiful llamas.

Andy: It was like a field of tulips.

Cheryl: There were colors everywhere and patterns.

Andy: We had this deep swale on the north end of the Tumalo farm and you walk over the hill and look down and it would just be covered in tulips. And the occasional light bulb thrown in.





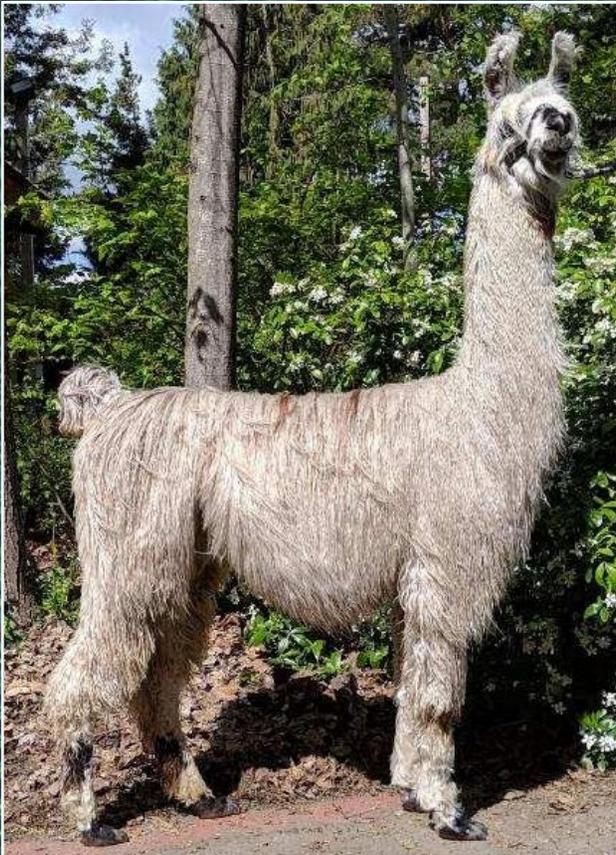
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GNLC TENGEN
SIJAMA IKANDY X GNLC GOOSE BUMP



WOL CHIRI RONDO
CHIRI ALLURO X CANDILIESA

A photograph of a llama with a white face and neck, and dark brown body, standing in a field. The background is a dense forest of green trees under a clear blue sky. Bare tree branches are visible in the foreground, framing the llama and the text.

NEW LEAF LLAMAS

AN INTERVIEW AND FARM TOUR WITH
SARAH MCGOVERN

BY KYLE MUMFORD

New Leaf Llama Farm is located in the rolling hills of northern California, about an hour outside of Sacramento. Sarah McGovern, the owner and operator, is one of the more interesting people you might run into at a llama show. She is soft-spoken but passionate about llamas and always interested in talking about them. Born in Israel, Sarah traveled the globe for various business ventures before landing in Oregon House, California, where she has put down roots.

Her introduction to llamas came when she was working for an area winery that also had a collection of exotic animals. Sarah helped to find and purchase the animals. "We had cashmere goats, water buffaloes, and yaks. It was a menagerie. And both types of camel, dromedaries and Bactrians. That's how I got introduced to Justin (Timm). He was one of my early mentors and I'm grateful to him for helping me quickly get up to speed on desirable traits and marketability. And to Suzanne Penry, a local llama breeder, who helped me by teaching me about conformational traits, as well as training and handling." Over the past decade, Sarah has built an enviable herd with outstanding herdsires and a fantastic group of foundation females. Her llamas have won numerous best in show awards, been high sellers at auction, and have helped to make New Leaf Llamas a respected name in the llama industry.

We visited New Leaf Llama Farm in the fall of 2021.



New Leaf's Monica



Sarah and New Leaf's Nora

California has been in a drought for some time now, and though we visited in late October the rains had yet to arrive to bring the burst of green that comes to Northern California each fall. The weather was mild so the llamas were active and wandering around their pastures. We started our tour in a large field with about 20 females and crias, located near the house.

Three crias catch my eye immediately. The first is a gray and white female, with silky fiber and long banana ears. She comes by her ears and her presence honestly, as her dam is a Hinterland bred National Champion, Heylee. This girl is as curious as she is showy; I constantly found her nose in my camera as I took pictures.



Heylee and
New Leaf's Sabrina



New Leaf's Sabrina



Another of the younger crias is a gray/brown silky girl, who stays glued to her dam. Her dam is New Leaf's Azure, an Inca Legend daughter out of Balissima. Balissima was a Silver Peru daughter who sold at the Hinterland Finale sale and has turned out to be one of Sarah's best dam lines.

The other cria who grabbed my attention is out of the same dam line. Her dam is Mona Liza, who is out of Balissima and by Kastizo, a former Hinterland sire. All three crias were sired by GNLC Full Tilt.



Above: New Leaf's Namita

Left: New Leaf's Lior and her dam, Mona Liza



Mona Liza

GNLC Full Tilt is a son of GNLC Santiago and a maternal brother to the Rolfings' outstanding producer GNLC Silver Lining. As we observed Full Tilt in the pasture I could appreciate his great conformation, nice head and ears, and athleticism. But when we got him on the halter I was blown away by his presence, his length of neck, and his responsiveness to the lead line. It is no mystery to me why he won the ILR Gathering, the LFA Futurity, and the Celebrity World Futurity during his show career.

Full Tilt spent time as a herdsire for the Wilkins, the McDougals, and Mark and Susan Smith before coming to Northern California. Mark offered him for sale on Facebook and Sarah had her name on him in a matter of minutes. Sarah is no stranger to making quick decisions on purchases. Before starting her farm, Sarah was a globetrotting buyer in the fashion industry, specializing in selecting and purchasing buttons for high-profile fashion designers. She told us that her experience as an evaluator and buyer likely helped her to develop her eye when she started raising livestock.



Sarah's eye has proved to be quite an asset to her, particularly in selecting studs. Another of the great males at New Leaf Llamas is Nastaza's Raphael, the multi-National Champion bred by Carlos Mendoza. Raphael is the son of two other legendary show winners in Nexstarr's Sambuca and Nastaza. Sarah originally fell in love with Raphael at the 2015 Gathering, where he was named National Champion Medium Wool Yearling Male. She initially co-owned him with Deb Fornari of California, but now Raphael is owned in partnership with Tor Sorenson, and Michael & Patricia West.

Raphael is large and impressive, and we don't turn down the opportunity to get him on a lead as well. In contrast to the statuesque Full Tilt, Raphael wants to stay on the move, and really wants to get back to his girlfriends. He is kind enough to strike a couple of poses, while keeping his eyes locked on his females, and then we walk him back to his pen so he can relax for a moment. Raphael's athleticism, size, and stretch do not disappoint. In my opinion, the New Leaf herdsire lineup is among the best in the country.



Nastaza's Raphael

One of Sarah's early herdsires was Inca Legend. Sarah owned Inca Legend for 7 years and kept 5 of his daughters, and many granddaughters. He is also the grandsire of a young herdsire prospect named New Leaf Cosmos, who is pictured on this issue's cover. Cosmos is out of Azure (by Inca Legend) and sired by Full Tilt.

Across the driveway is the other large pen of females. This pasture is a mix of younger females, and bred females who aren't close to delivering crias. Our favorite female from this pen is a Wayne Rankin bred Peruvian, named Fina. Despite being one of a small number of solid brown females at New Leaf, this female grabs your attention. She has great ears, lovely fiber, and that indescribable "it factor" that draws you in.

Back in Raphael's pen, Sarah is catching one of the females being bred to Raphael. Pinasca is another Wayne Rankin bred Peruvian, she is co-owned with Tor Sorenson, and is catching a ride out to him the next day. Pinasca is *large* and doesn't seem particularly interested in being caught. Sarah walks up next to her, puts the lead rope on her back, and Pinasca quickly turns away and heads back to the feeder. I start to walk toward the gate to lend a hand as Sarah tries once more. Again, Sarah calmly walks next to her and places the lead rope on her back.



GC'S Inca Legend



New Leaf's Herculina



FPL Goody Two Shoes
(recently sold back to Justin Timm)



New Leaf's Cosmos

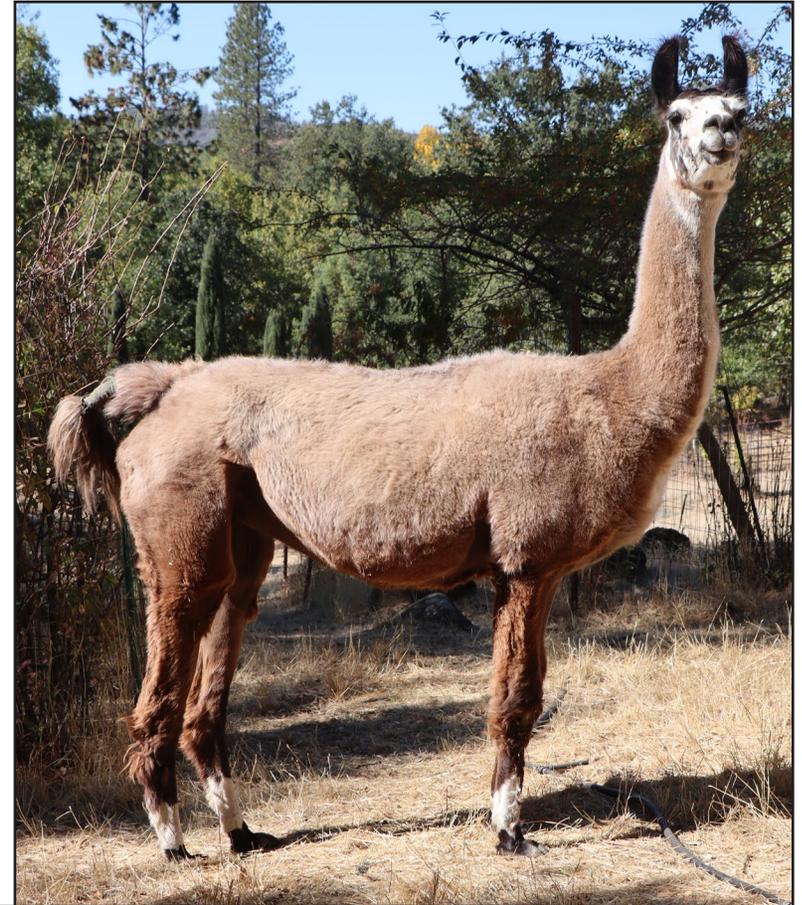


Fina

This time Pinasca stands still and complies as Sarah makes the long reach up to her head to slip on the halter.

I asked her about this moment and she said that she had attended a John Mallon clinic and that it changed her approach to catching and handling her llamas. "With the Mallon training, the idea is that you don't corner them. You let them escape. He really emphasizes that. He said, 'Don't corner them. They need to know that they have an outlet, that they can get away from you.' That was the opposite of what I had seen everybody else do where they get them into a corner. I can catch Full Tilt in the middle of the field because he makes up his mind to stop. They walk a few steps and then they stop. That really worked for me."

Personality is an area of focus for the New Leaf breeding program. One reason for this emphasis is that Sarah offers llama walking experiences on her farm, where visitors can borrow a New Leaf llama and tour the farm. "I like llamas that are approachable," she said. "I like to interact with them, but I don't like them to be pushy and get in your face. In general, I find that most of my young ones are ready to walk the first time we put a halter on them. It doesn't take very long to train them because we are interacting with them all the time." We found Sarah's herd to be generally interested in people and easy to handle, with good manners and boundaries.



Above:
Pinasca

Left:
Friendly
Faces at
New Leaf
Llamas

Next, we stopped in to see KVF Timone's Second Edition, another of Sarah's excellent males, co-owned with Tor Sorenson. Eddie, as she calls him, is a full brother to the great KVF Timone's Pride, herdsire for Chris and Venesa Carter of Missouri. Eddie shares his brother's beautiful head, heavy silky fiber, and excellent production. There were no crias by Eddie when we visited since he spent the prior year at Tor's farm. But there were two outstanding daughters from prior years to see.

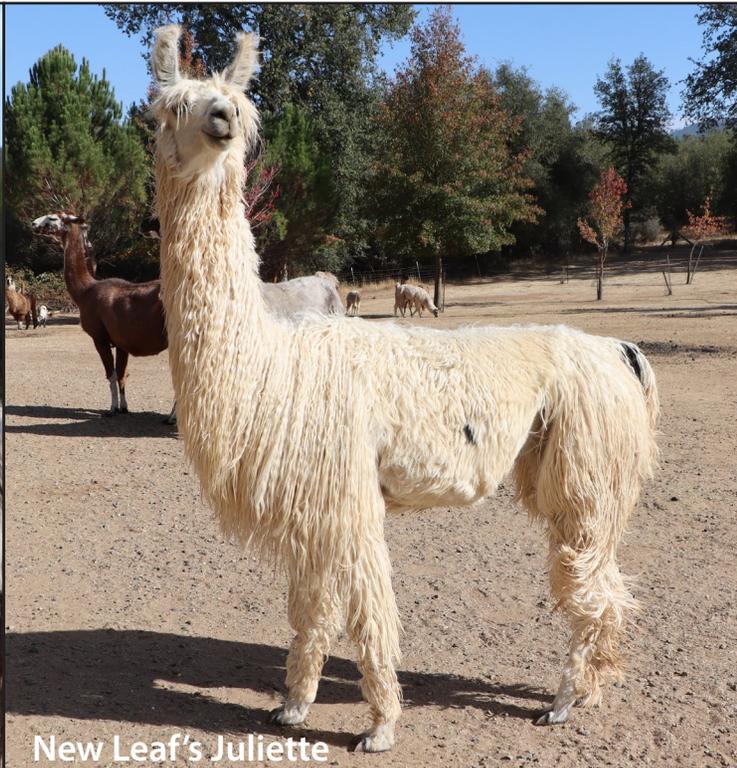
New Leaf's Monica is one of Sarah's larger females, and she resembles her sire in many ways. Her dam, Qay, is another big Peruvian, and she was being pasture bred to Eddie during our visit for a full sibling to Monica. The other Eddie daughter, Juliette, is an exotic suri female with long twisted ringlets and bangs covering her eyes. "I love Juliette," Sarah said. "Her face and those great curls. I just love her." Juliette's dam, MV Arianna, is a loud appaloosa and another farm favorite.



KVF Timone's Second Edition



MV Arianna



New Leaf's Juliette



New Leaf's Monica

Second Edition has another female sharing his pasture, New Leaf's Leonore. Leonore is a tall, stretchy, athletic llama with a commanding presence. She is a daughter of Raphael, and out of Mona Liza, one of Sarah's best dams. Leonore had an illustrious show career, including winning Reserve National Champion Medium Wool Female at the Gathering in 2019. We caught her to stage a few photos in the yard and she immediately struck a pose, with Sarah holding a slack lead. We asked Sarah about the conformational traits she strives for, for which Leonore is a great example. "I would say the top line and tail set are very important to me. And a long neck. I'm obsessed with them standing straight. I can't stand it when they're hunching forward all the time."



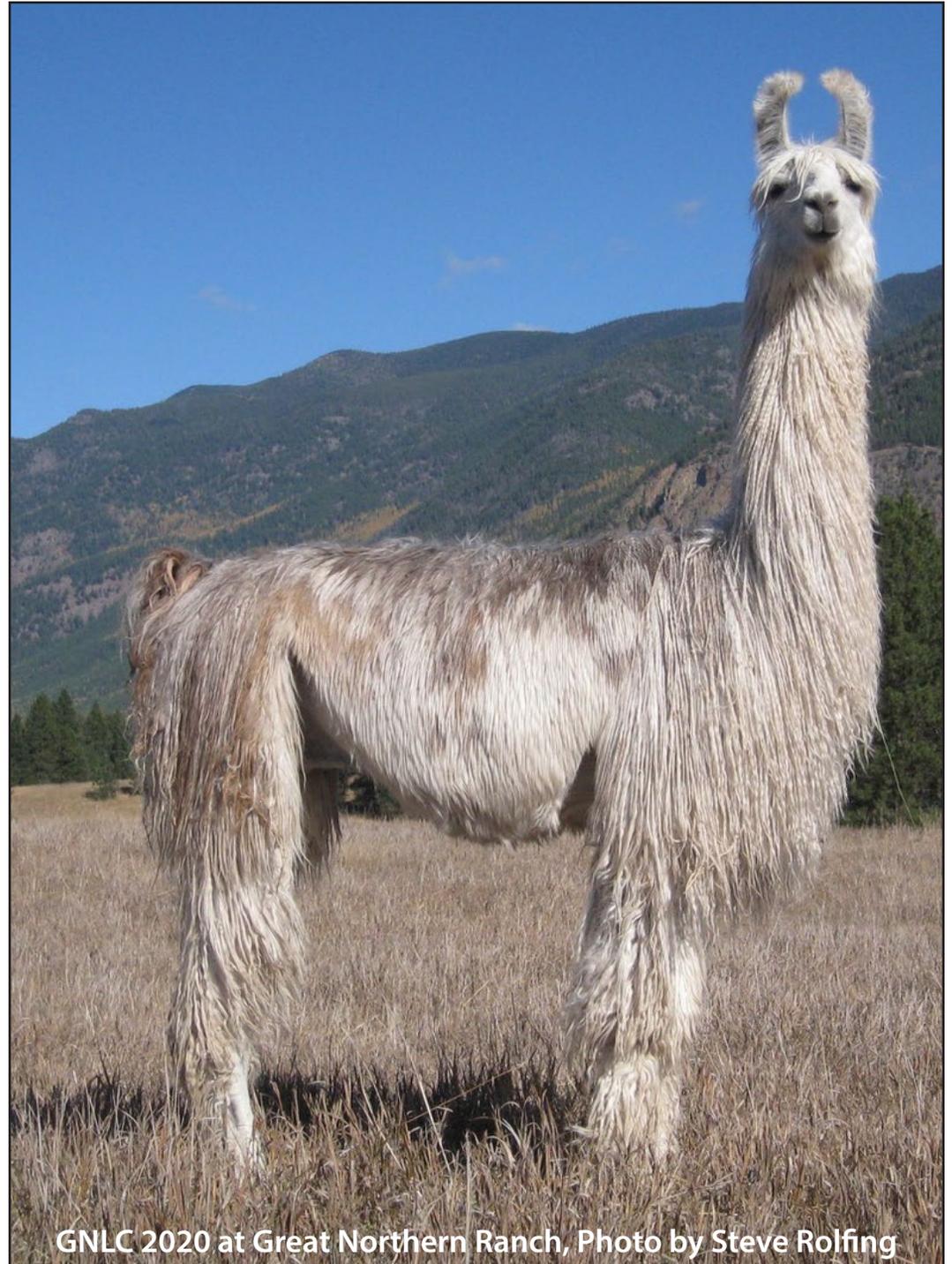
New Leaf's Leonore



New Leaf's Leonore

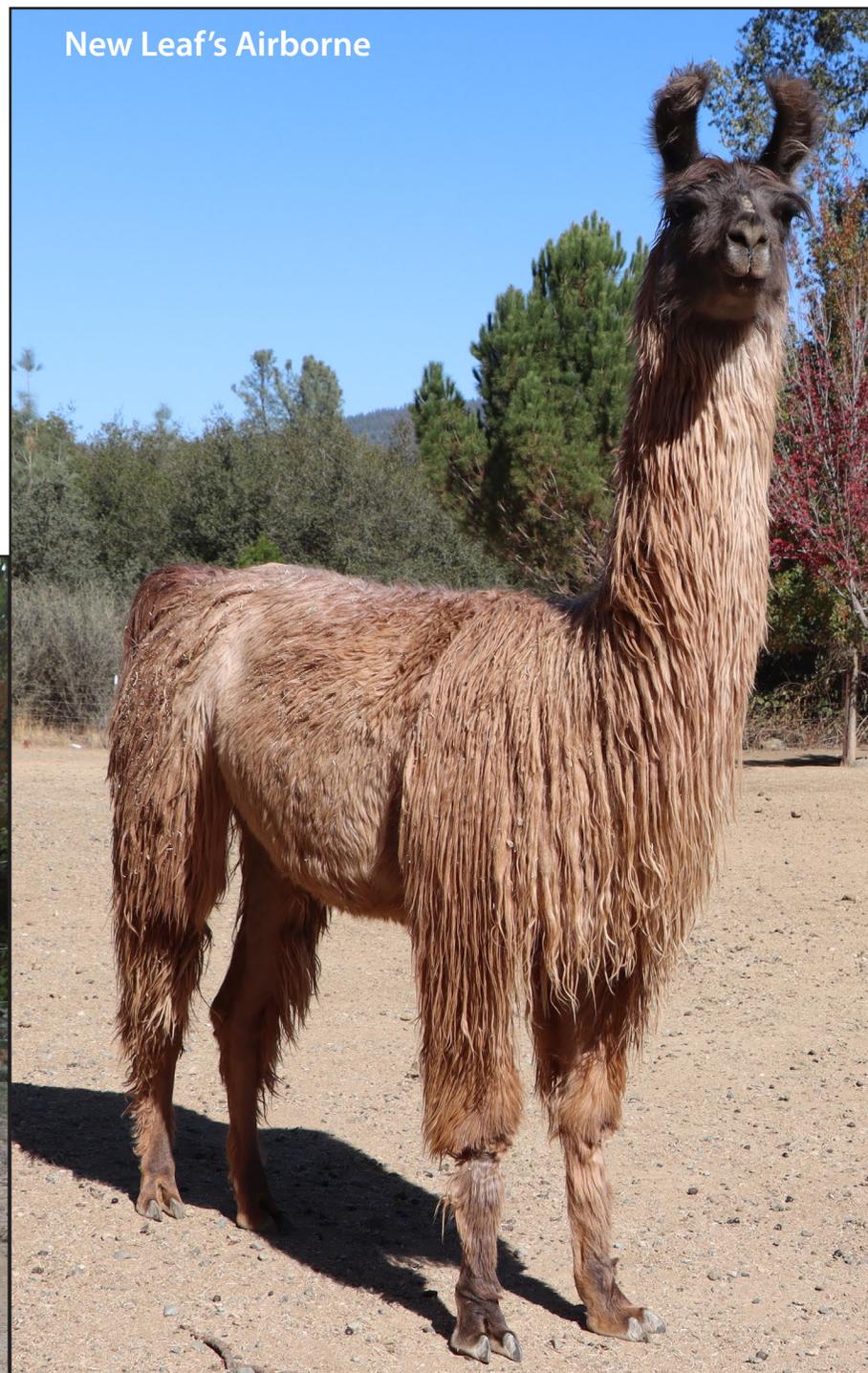
While we enjoyed our time looking at the New Leaf herd, the big topic of conversation during our visit was a llama multiple states away, at the Great Northern Ranch in Montana. In June of 2020, when Jerrika and I visited the Rolfings, we arrived a few hours after a beautiful appaloosa male with long, hooked ears was born. We asked to be kept in mind if he was offered for sale, even while he was getting used to walking on his long legs. We occasionally checked in but were gradually giving up on the idea that he would ever leave Montana. The following summer Sarah took a trip to Great Northern in the hopes of selecting her next herdsire. Her top pick was the same appy male, who had been named GNLC 2020. She was disappointed as she was told that he was not for sale. Jumping forward a few weeks, mere hours before Jerrika and I left to visit Sarah, we got an email from Steve Rolfig that he was ready to offer GNLC 2020 to us. We talked to Sarah about her impressions of him, and it quickly became clear that a partnership made a great deal of sense. Throughout our time at New Leaf, we were excitedly working out the details, and checking for new photos or messages from Steve.

We always ask the breeders we interview to describe their ideal llama, and when we asked Sarah she had Great Northern Ranch on her mind. "I would say that (GNLC) 2020 is really up there for me. I love his fiber, the lock structure, the shine. His dam, Gracie, is one of my favorites as well." GNLC 2020 will be test bred at Volcano View Ranch this summer and make his debut at New Leaf Llama Farm in the fall.



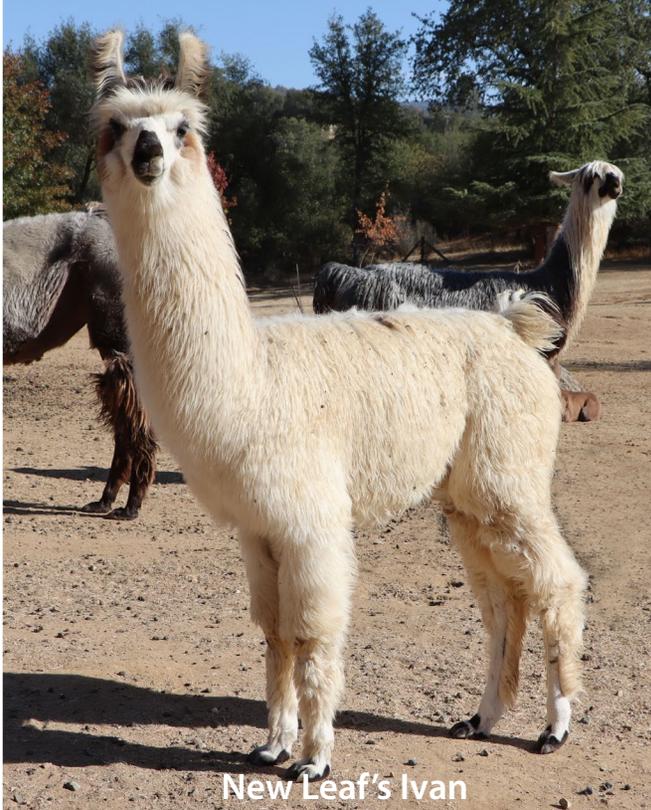
GNLC 2020 at Great Northern Ranch, Photo by Steve Rolfig

Sarah McGovern has quietly built one of the best breeding herds in the country. Her herdsire lineup is outstanding and is only getting better. LUA Color Me Happy joined the group, and yearlings New Leaf's Cosmos and GNLC 2020 will be making their mark soon enough. The female herd is equally strong, with outstanding foundation dams like Mona Liza, Peruvians from Wayne Rankin, and her Inca Legend daughters. The future of the New Leaf female group is also looking bright, with daughters of Raphael, Second Edition, and Full Tilt entering the breeding program. Sarah certainly has an eye for breeding and selection, and we look forward to seeing what she produces at New Leaf Llama Farm in the future.





New Leaf's Jasmine



New Leaf's Ivan



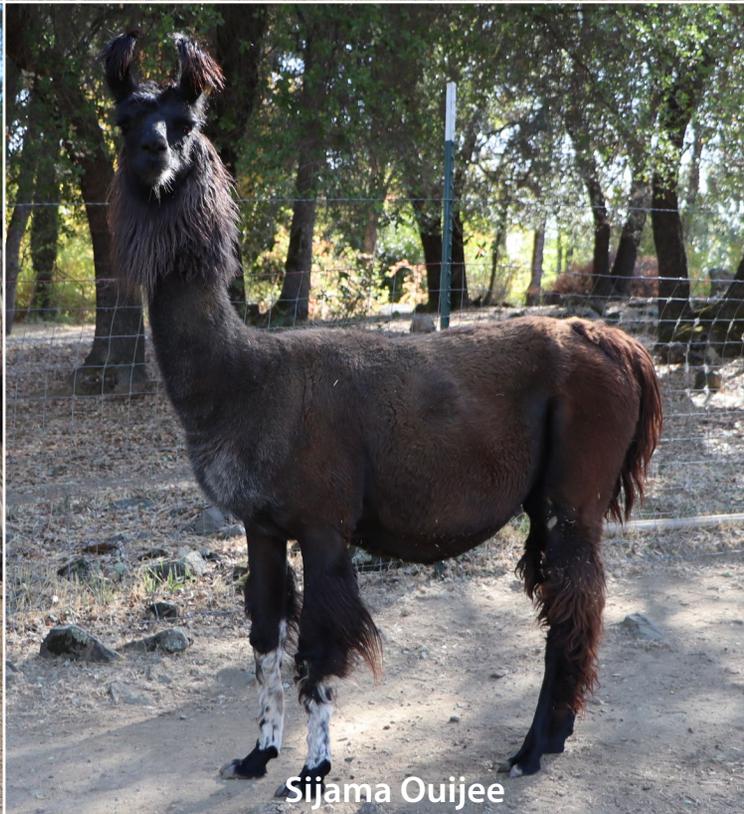
New Leaf's Nora and Friend



Niwa



New Leaf's Tiramisu



Sijama Oujjee



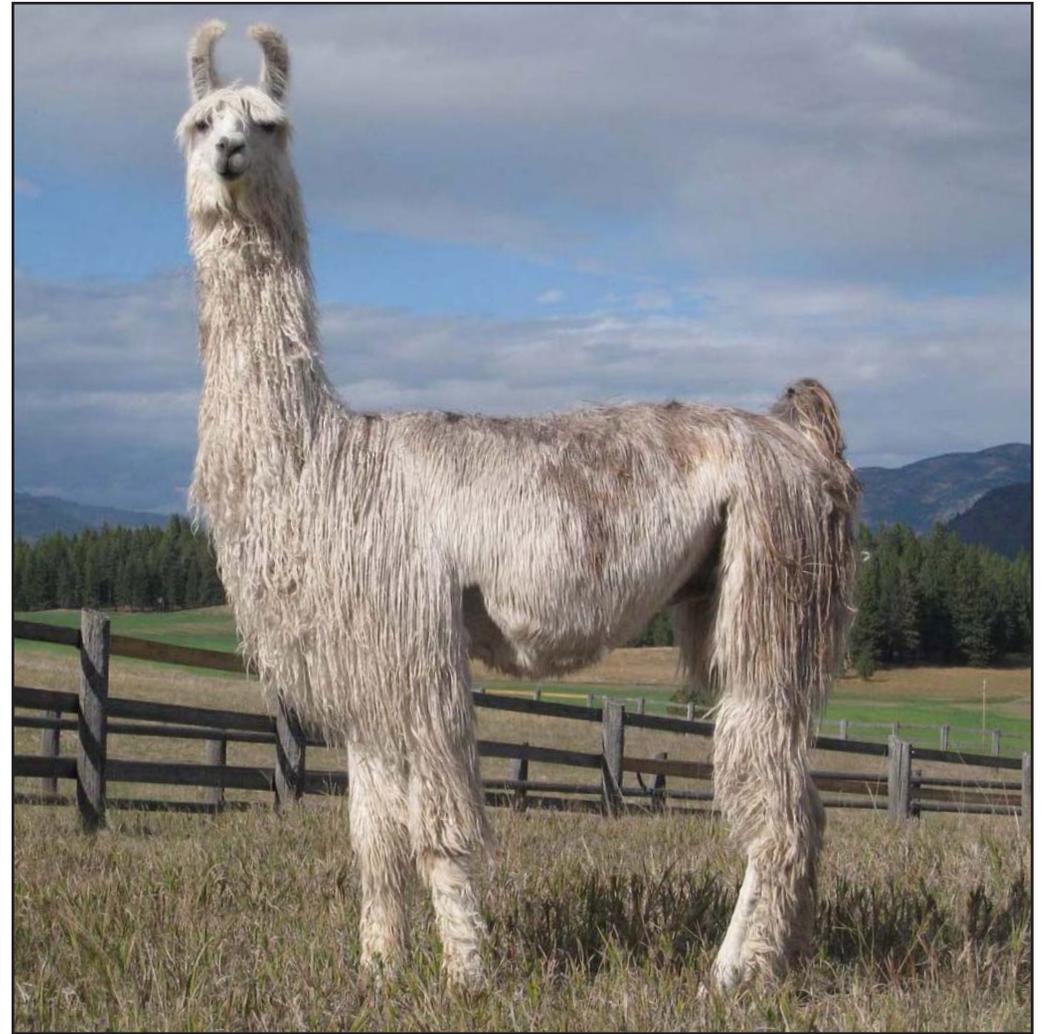
Nastaza's Raphael

GNLC 2020

Our sincere appreciation to Steve and Sue Roling for breeding this magnificent animal and sharing him with us. He is truly a testament to your vision for your program.



Kyle & Jerrika Mumford
Volcano View Ranch | Ridgefield, WA



Sarah McGovern
New Leaf Llamas | Oregon House, CA

REDWOODS IN THE MEADOW FARM

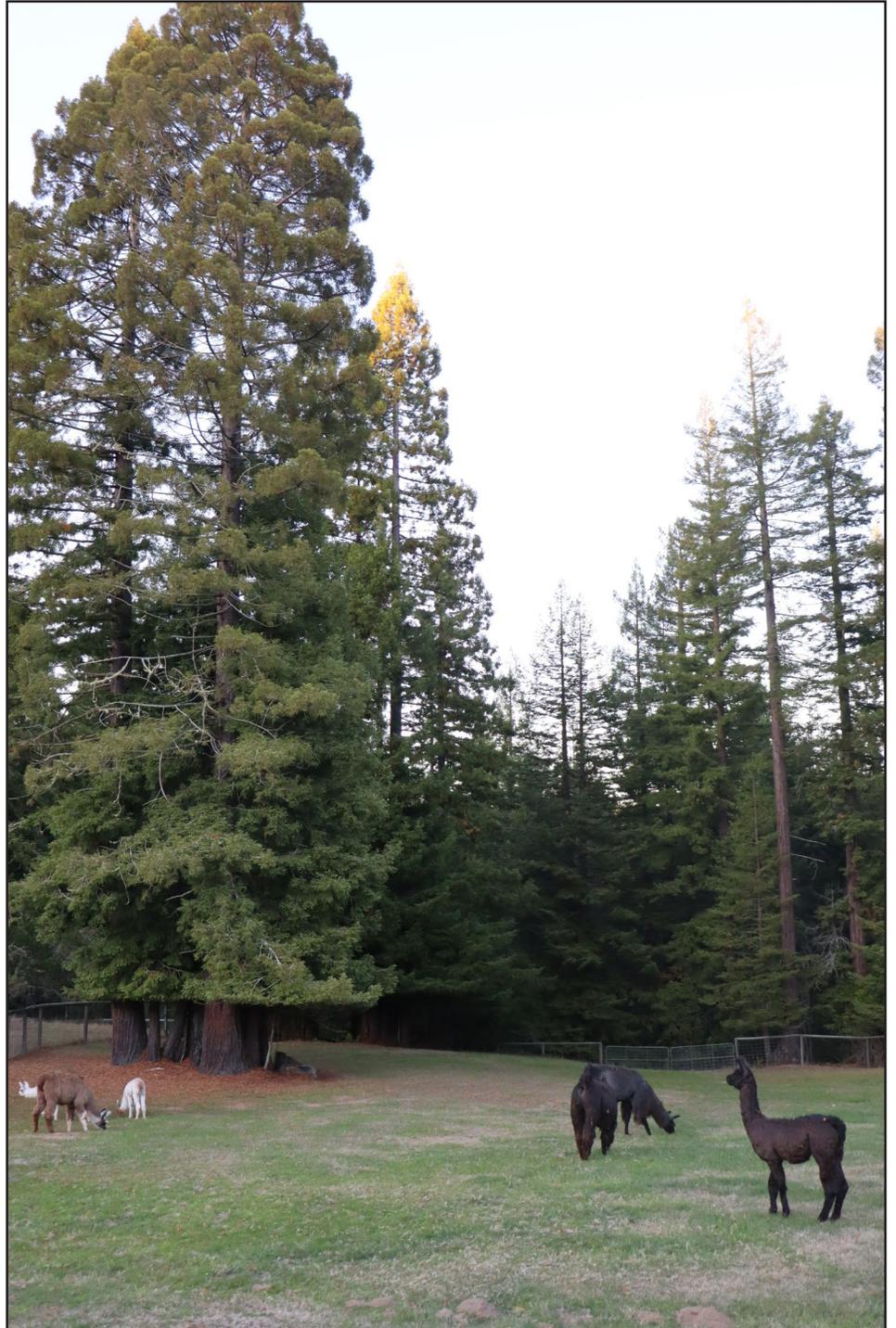


A FARM TOUR WITH
JERRY AND PAT THOMAS
BY KYLE MUMFORD

Redwoods in the Meadow Farm is located in Albion, California, just a few minutes from the Pacific Ocean in Northern California. It is owned by Jerry and Pat Thomas and as their farm name suggests, their beautiful property features a healthy dose of towering redwood trees. When we visited the Thomases farm we had just left the Avenue of the Giants, where we went for long hikes and experienced the magic of the Redwood forests. Redwoods in the Meadow farm has a similar feel, with the added benefit of having lovely llamas roam the enchanting scenery with you.

Their home was custom built from timber harvested on their property. The backyard is a well kept pasture, where the llamas can walk right up to the windows. "We built this place to be in the pasture with the llamas," Jerry said. The Thomases were encouraged to move to Albion by their good friends and fellow Albion residents, John and Kathy Hughes. The Hughes Llama Ranch was famous for it's full Chileans, including Don Juan Quixote and Senor Wenses. Jerry and Pat followed in their footsteps and also emphasized Chilean lines for many years.

Jerry told us that their interest in llamas started because they took frequent camping trips with their family and other families. "The kids carried a little but the majority went to the dads and moms. At the end of one trip someone suggested that we should get a llama to carry all our gear and everyone was on board." Pat joked that everyone had a few drinks when they thought adding a llama to their camping trips was a good idea.

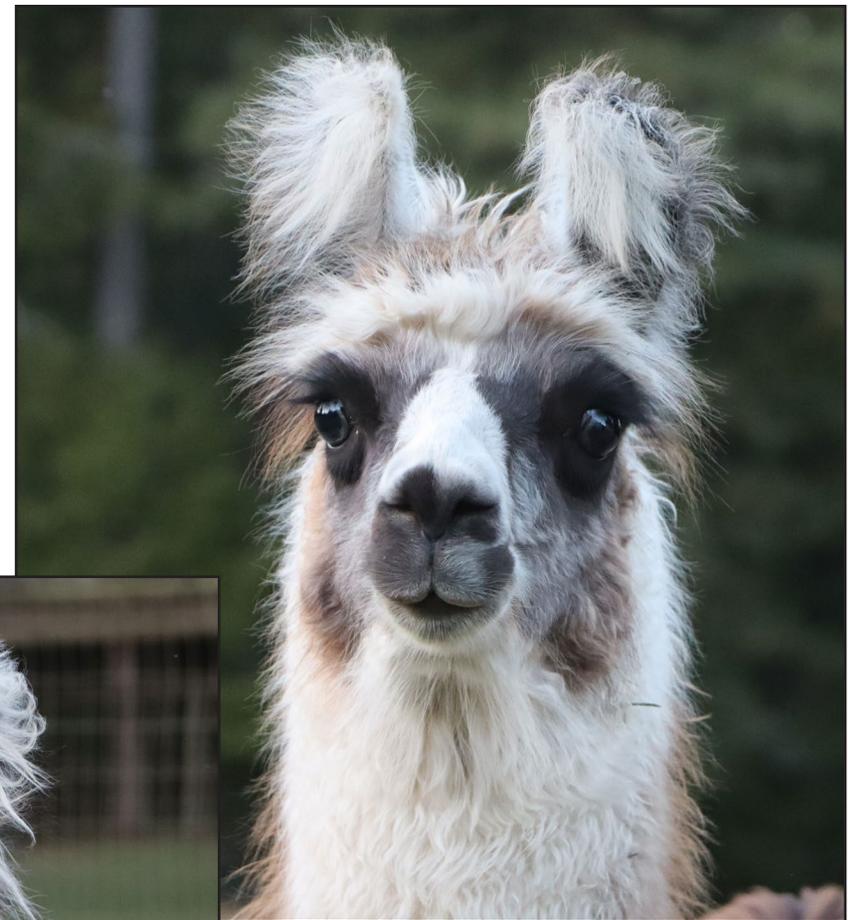




When Pat wasn't dazzling us with her encyclopedic knowledge of various professional and collegiate sports she was happy to talk llamas. "They are such a versatile animal," she said. "They are easy on trails. They provide fleece. And though we'd never use them for this, they can provide food. And they are quiet and lovely to watch and be around." Jerry and Pat built up their Chilean herd by making purchases from Kay Patterson, the Tillmans, their friends the Hughes, and other respected breeders over the years.

The Thomases have reduced their herd size in recent years. At the time of our visit they had three breeding females with crias at side, a few retired females, and a small group of females who they board for another llama owner. The Chilean lineage is less of a focus than it once was for the Thomases, though Jerry expressed a desire to help preserve some of the pure Chilean genetics. To that end he has leased a pair of Chilean males from Nina Pederson, including SSRMT Chilean Frosted O's, who has sired some excellent crias for them in his late teens.

One of their Frosted O's crias is RML Pinta Arianna, the Thomases only female cria in 2021. She is a striking silky female, who goes back four generations on her dam side to a Chilean import, Chilena Pinta Chica, who they purchased at the Burgess dispersal.



Above: RML Pinta Arianna, daughter of Frosted O's

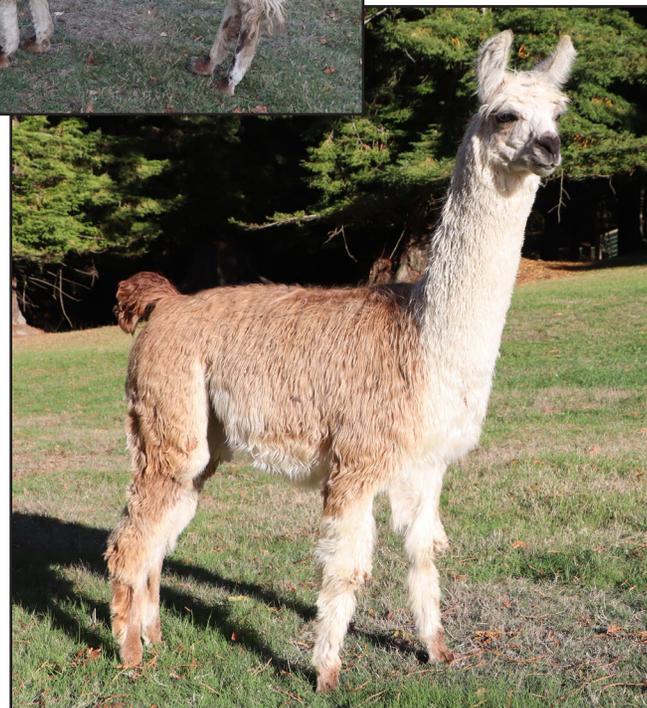
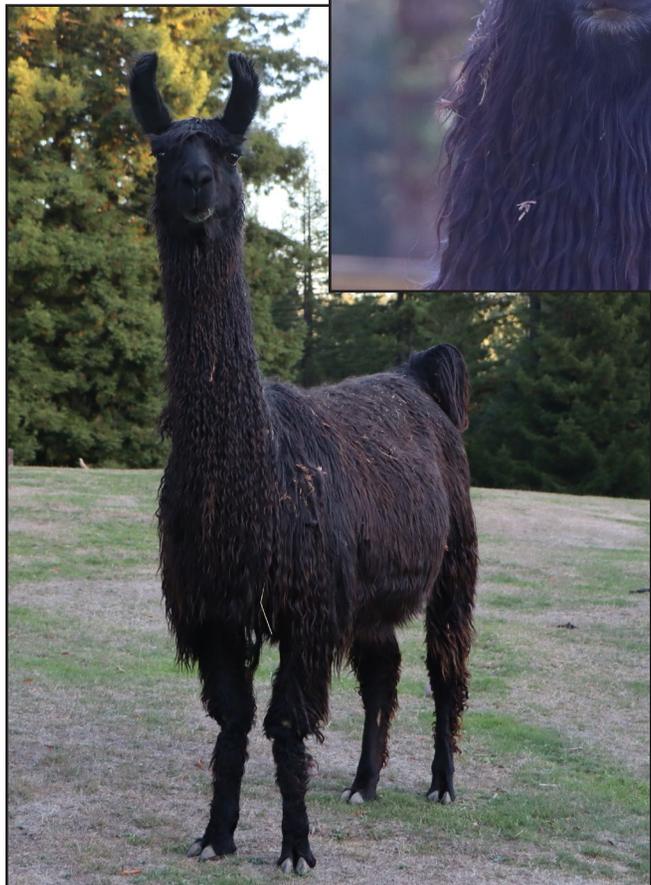
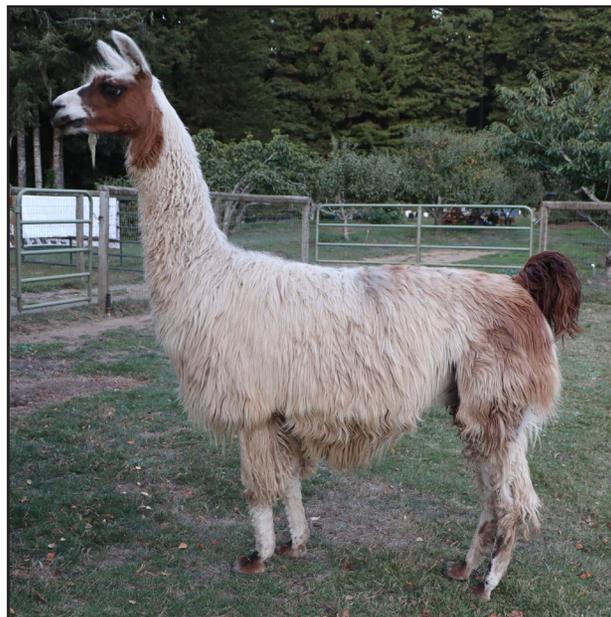


Left: SSRMT Chilean Frosted O's Full Chilean male leased from Nina Pederson



RML Pinta Arianna

Jerry and Pat had two breeding males of their own at the time of our visit. Chilean Baracuda was bred by the Burgess-
es and was first used as a sire by Woodsedge Farms. He had one cria in 2021, a look-a-like male named RML Bonito. Their
other breeding male is Stage Stop Ice Storm, a dark suri male with perfect banana ears. Ice Storm is a sire to one of their
foundation females, RML Magdalena, who inherited her sire's ears.



Top Left: Stage Stop Ice Man
Far Left: RML Magdalena
Top Right: Chilean Baracuda
Far Right: RML Bonito

The stud barn at Redwoods in the Meadow Farm is one of the best designed areas for male llamas that I have come across. The males are located near the females, but the females are out of sight. The driveway sits between the male pastures and the large female barn, and the female pastures are mostly hidden by the barn. The male barn has four stalls, one in each corner of the barn, and a pathway large enough to drive a small tractor or Gator through. The stalls have solid walls toward the other males, and a gate facing toward the pathway. Each of the stud runs has a breezeway separating it from the next male with several trees planted to add to the separation. I was very impressed with the design, it seems to keep the peace and be very functional.



The stud barn will have a new occupant in 2022. A few weeks after our visit Jerry and Pat were able to acquire CTF Renegade's Vigilante from the Rolfings and Tallmons. During our visit Jerry expressed a desire to add a new male if the right opportunity came along and it is clear that he found an outstanding option in Vigilante.

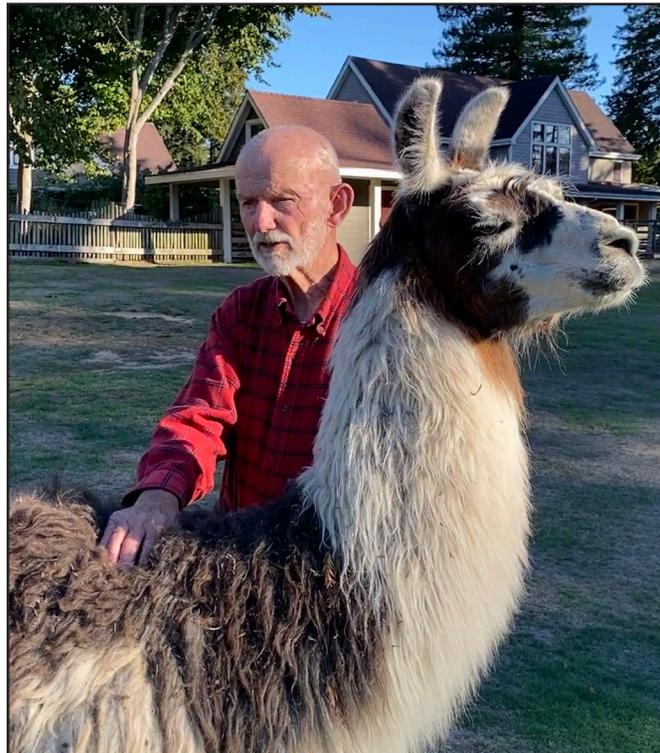
Our visit to Redwoods in the Meadow Farm was brief, but enjoyable. Jerry and Pat are warm, welcoming hosts, and walking their immaculately kept grounds was a memorable experience.

When we discussed his breeding program Jerry gave a very humble answer, "You asked me what my breeding goals are, and to be honest, I'll be darned if I know. We just love llamas. We have to have a few of them around. It's a lifestyle. We love this property, and the llamas are a big part of it." With Vigilante joining the herd, and a great group of females, the RML program should be producing some excellent llamas in the coming years.



Top Right: CTF Renegade's Vigilante at Great Northern Ranch, photo by Steve Rolfing

Left: Jerry Thomas and Tillman's Pop Tart, a 20 year old Papa Noel granddaughter that was purchased at a Celebrity sale



Right: The Thomas' Bermese-doodle puppy





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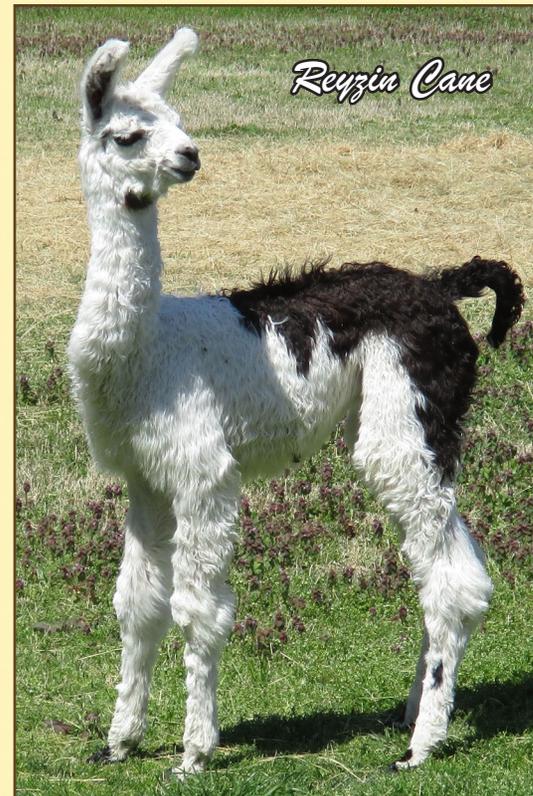
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by sire Easy Dan It*

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HOLR VIGILANTE'S ARMANI
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RED RYDER RANCH

A llama with a white face and neck and a dark brown body stands in a field. The background features several large trees and rolling hills under a blue sky with light clouds. The llama is looking towards the camera.

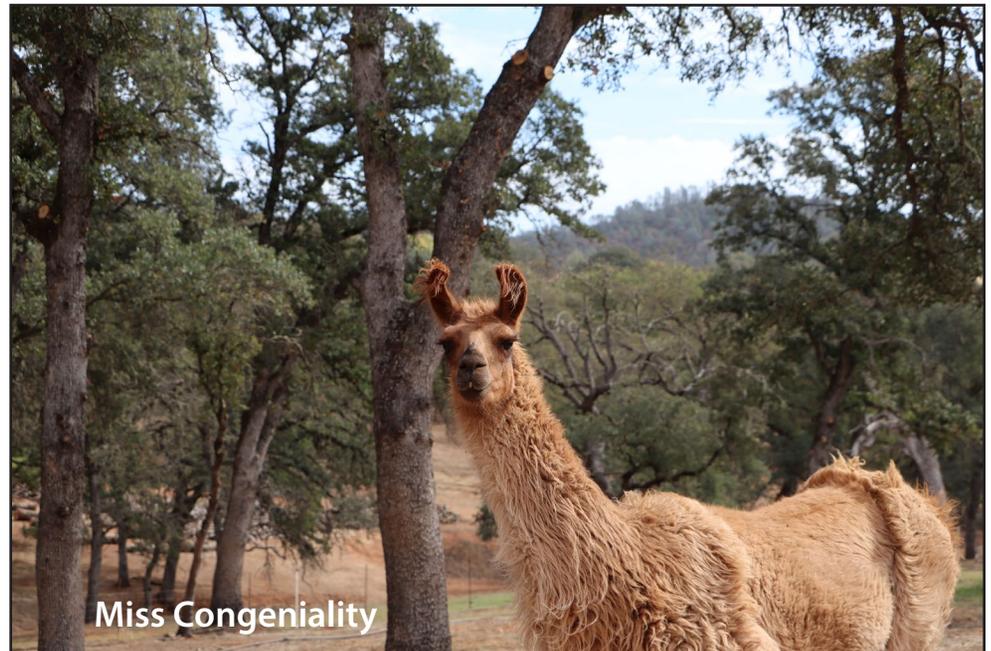
A FARM TOUR WITH
JEFF AND TAMMY SMITH

The final stop on our California tour was to visit Jeff and Tammy Smith of Browns Valley, CA. They are newcomers to the llama industry, but are very enthusiastic. They have built their herd, and their farm infrastructure quickly over the past couple of years. We enjoyed seeing their progress on both fronts and talking about their goals for the future during our visit.

Jeff is a contractor by profession and has used his skills to build a beautiful “barndominium” that the Smiths live in part time. He has also installed miles of gorgeous split rail fence. They plan to build a new home on their farm in the near future, and talked us through their designs during our visit.



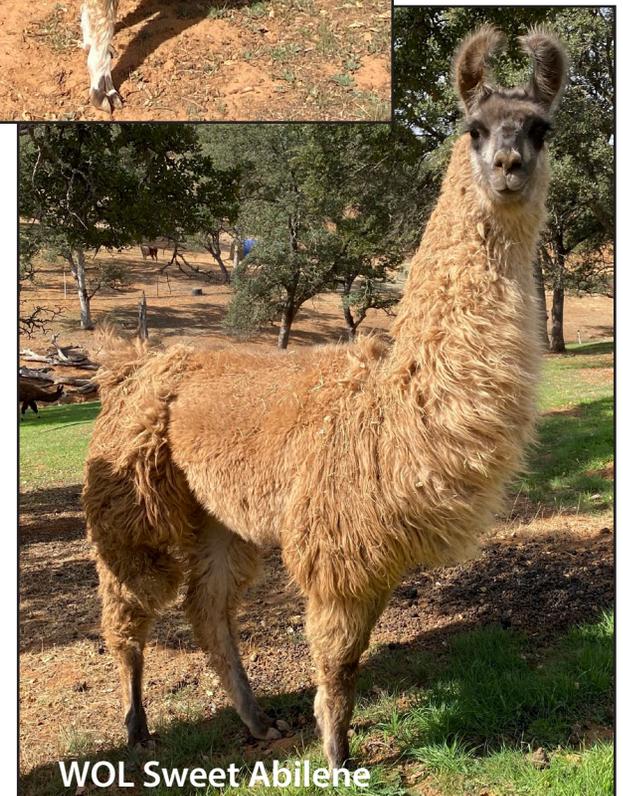
Patriot



Miss Congeniality

The Smiths purchased their first llamas a few years ago from Justin Timm as guards for their Barbados Black Belly sheep. They mentioned that Justin was a fabulous first contact for them in the llama industry. Tammy told us, "Justin has been instrumental in helping us build our herd through his extensive knowledge of bloodlines and his willingness to share his expertise. He has also become a good friend."

Their female herd features several promising young females, including a GNLC Inspirato daughter who had recently arrived from Spokane, WA. They also have a daughter of Raphael, New Leaf's Odette, purchased from Sarah McGovern. The Smiths live a short distance from Sarah and they visit her farm regularly. They have purchased several llamas from her and have bred to her males.





GC's Inca Legend

One of the animals the Smiths bought from Sarah is the renowned GC's Inca Legend. Sadly, a few months after our visit, Inca passed away. The Smiths bred several females to Inca in 2021, and are looking forward to seeing the legend continue to the next generation.

Another of the Smiths herdsires is MSF Rizzo, a GNLC Crocket son purchased from Mark and Susan Smith of Indiana. Below, Rizzo leans in to get an acorn; a highly desirable treat for Northern California llamas.



MSF Rizzo





GC's Inca Legend

The Smiths had several crias in 2021, including a beautiful female that had been born the day before and was exploring the world in her adorable little coat. They had a promising young male who had been purchased at the side of his dam, Nuttin But Honey. He is a dilute appaloosa with beautiful suri fiber and great ears. With great looking youngsters like this, a beautiful farm that is still in development, and an expanding herd, we look forward to visiting the Smiths again in the coming years.



Above: River (newborn female)

Left: El Vincitore

Right: Rondo's Nuttin Better



Put Some Pride in Your Herd



KVF Timone's Pride

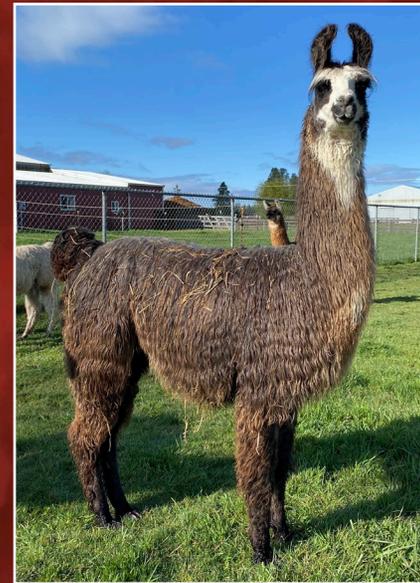
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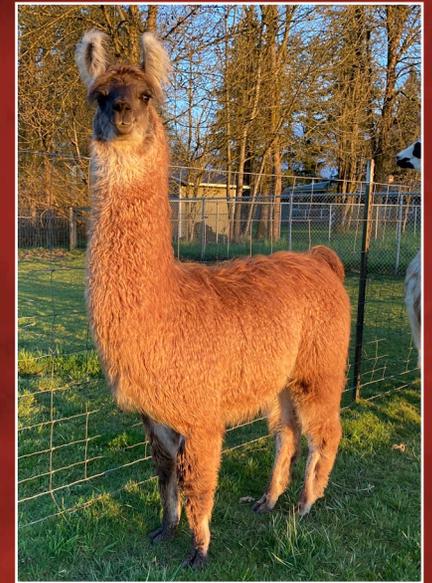
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Sirsha MVVR

Sire: GNLC Switchfoot
Dam: ME Spomada



Olympia MVVR

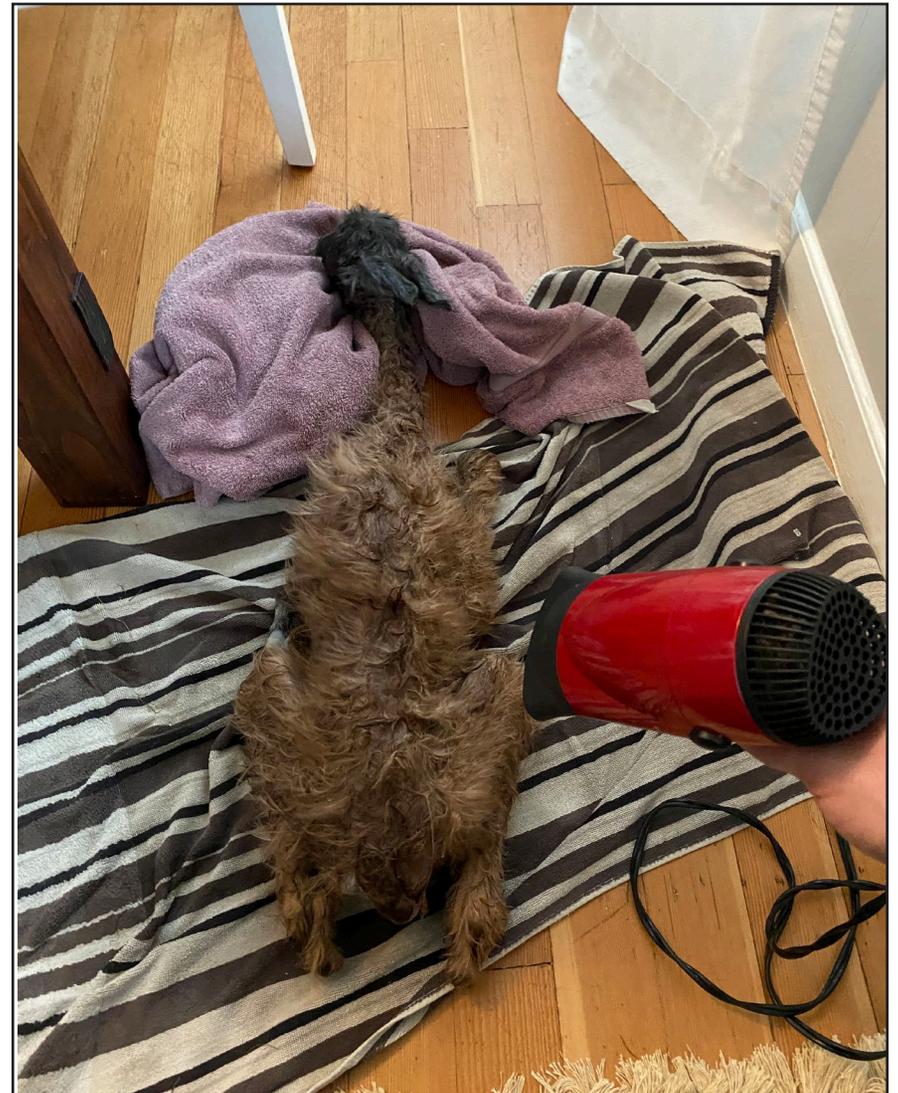
Sire: SRLL Tyg
Dam: Ophelia MVVR

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Warming a Hypothermic Cria

An old expression I was told during my sheep raising days is, "You don't have a dead lamb until you have a warm dead lamb." Meaning that even if you find a cold, lifeless lamb on a frosty morning, don't give up until you have tried to warm it. Any experienced sheep breeder you talk to will have stories of miraculous recoveries for lambs like this. Raising llamas, we are lucky that, the majority of the time, mothers deliver problem-free crias that are up, dry, and nursing within a matter of hours. However, on occasion, circumstances come together that cause a new cria to get dangerously low body temperatures.

On a cold, rainy morning in 2020, I found myself with one of these situations. I came out for my morning check of the llamas and found that a cria had been born prematurely during the night. The mom had looked fine the night before, and I had no expectation that a cria would be born soon. The cria was tiny, laying limp on the ground without movement. I picked her up and found that she was still alive, but barely. When I put my fingers in her mouth it was ice cold. I immediately took her inside next to the heater and took her temperature. It was too low to register on my thermometer. I started by putting a hairdryer on her while I researched more things to try to get her temperature up.



In my early research I went to www.shagbarkridge.com/info/warm. This farm site has great information on llama care. We started by using their recommendation of placing the cria up to the neck in a large garbage bag, and then submerging them in warm water in the bathtub. I would really only recommend this solution if the cria is so cold that they aren't moving their legs or squirming. We saw some improvement using this method and I would consider using it again, but when I pulled her out and checked her temperature again, it still didn't register. (It is worth noting here that if you have a cria that was unlucky enough to be born in the mud, you are best served getting the mud cleaned off in the tub. They are already wet, and the mud can insulate them from your attempts at warming.)

While I was holding her in the bathtub, I came up with my next idea. I placed her back in front of the heater, and I soaked a towel in hot water, folded it, and placed it inside a garbage bag. I then placed the garbage bag on top of her and a blanket on top of everything to hold the heat in. I periodically moved her legs for her to help stimulate blood flow and body heat.

I tried another tip from Shagbark Ridge, but it didn't work well for me. It involved taking a large cardboard box, cutting a small hole to place a hairdryer in, and a somewhat larger hole to put the crias head and neck in. It didn't seem effective to me and with this little weak cria I didn't have time to mess around perfecting it. I abandoned the idea quickly, but others may find it effective as Shagbark Ridge does. Visit the link at the top of the page for photos.



The final strategy I used was to put two blankets in the dryer. I would place one of the blankets on the cria, with her sitting on top of towels, with a large blanket that remained in place at all times and helped hold in the heat. Meanwhile, the other blanket was in the dryer. Every few minutes I would swap them out, so she constantly had a warm blanket on her. I imagine an electric blanket would work similarly well, for those who have one handy.

Finally, we had a temperature reading of 92.5, significantly lower than the expected temperature of 99 to 101 degrees. Soon after she started to lift her head, and eventually took some milk from a bottle. Because it took a long while before we got a temperature reading I can't say whether the warm blankets from the dryer made the biggest difference, or if it was the cumulative effect of all of the interventions I tried.

In the late afternoon we were able to re-introduce her to her mom, though she was still too weak to nurse on her own. We started to see a temperature loss again as the sun went down, so for the first time we had a cria spend the night in our house.

We hope that you never find yourself in a situation like this, but if you do remember: You don't have a dead cria until you have a warm, dead cria. Trying strategies like the ones in this article can help you work miracles.



AGGRESSION: Let's talk!

By Marty McGee Bennett

I am working on a talk on aggression for my upcoming virtual conference and have been thinking about the issue a great deal. My approach to the subject has evolved over time. After the third time of taking Dr. Susan Friedman course on behavior Living and Learning with Animals I am getting more clarity. There is no doubt behavior that physically endangers humans (I am deliberately defining aggression so that we all understand what the word means as I use it) in any animal is a problem. I think we can all agree no one wants to create animals that are dangerous to be around. I just did the math and conservatively I have fielded 3-5 thousand questions about this issue in the last 30 years or so— clearly there is work to be done.

The key to preventing the formation of dangerous behaviors or changing them is understanding how behavior works. Once a llama or alpaca uses a dangerous behavior a few times to solve a problem, successfully eliminating the dangerous behavior is a matter of arranging the animal's life so that there is no need for the behavior. The obvious conclusion is that prevention is much easier.

So what do I mean by understanding how behavior works? Barney is a 6 month old male camelid who runs up behind his caretaker, Norma, and knocks her down. Animals behave to get something of value. So the question then becomes, "What is valuable about knocking Norma down?" The origins of the behavior may stretch back to his first days of life but the question is still what is Barney gaining of value at 6 months old, by knocking Norma down. The most important influence



on behavior is current conditions. The first task is to guess (hypothesize) what it is that Barney is gaining of value. The second question is how to satisfy this requirement in a way that doesn't involve Norma ending up on the ground. If Barney only knocks Norma down when she is carrying hay or food the answer... close Barney into a stall put the hay out and open the stall door. This fix is what is called changing the antecedent arrangement.

If Barney leaves a perfectly good pile of hay to run across the field to knock Norma down, I might guess that Barney is behaving the way that Norma taught him to. Perhaps he was an only male growing up and turned to Norma for entertainment and when he was small she enjoyed his precocious behavior. As he got older and persisted with the same behaviors she began yelling and pushing him away. Perhaps Barney thinks that these interactions- yelling and pushing - are what Norma wants. After all, boy camelids engage in behavior that involves pushing, screaming, biting, and charging. Any person advising Norma should have questions about antecedents (conditions that set the stage for a behavior to happen) both distant and immediate. By definition, behaviors that persist and/or increase are being reinforced. The trick is to figure out what is reinforcing the behavior and to change that element of the relationship.

What I think is important for purposes of this short tip is to understand that using a label like "dominant" for example, "Barney is knocking Norma down because he wants to be dominant," to explain the reasons for this behavior is not only unfair but inaccurate. Using labels leads to fixes that don't have anything to do with the actual problem and almost always make the problem worse. Forcing animals to cush, tying an animal up for long periods of time, using a shock collar are all examples of methods that are both unfair, unethical, and unlikely to fix the problem.

In my opinion, a huge piece of the puzzle of dangerous behavior in camelids is getting humans to realize that they are the ones throwing down the gauntlet by using force to start with. Too often humans begin the relationship with camelids by chasing trapping and holding these animals to do just about everything. We begin

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by picking youngsters up to show them to visitors, take a photo, feel the fleece, or to weigh them; then it is the corner-grab-hold approach to catching and haltering, pulling steadily until they figure out how to follow on a lead, and physical restraint for toenails and herd health. We are just plain lucky that most llamas and alpacas don't decide to protect themselves from what must be perceived as an attack by fighting back. The ones that decide to protect themselves we label as dominant and difficult problem animals.

If you were walking down the street minding your own business and someone tried to steal your purse or wallet, it would hardly be accurate to call you dominant or difficult if you tried to protect yourself.



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DIY Grooming Conditioner

I think we have all found ourselves in the following situation: you're getting ready for a big show, catch your llama, grab your brush, and go to grab the bottle of your favorite grooming conditioner, only to suddenly remember that you ran out at the last show, or the bottle got knocked over and leaked out on the barn floor.

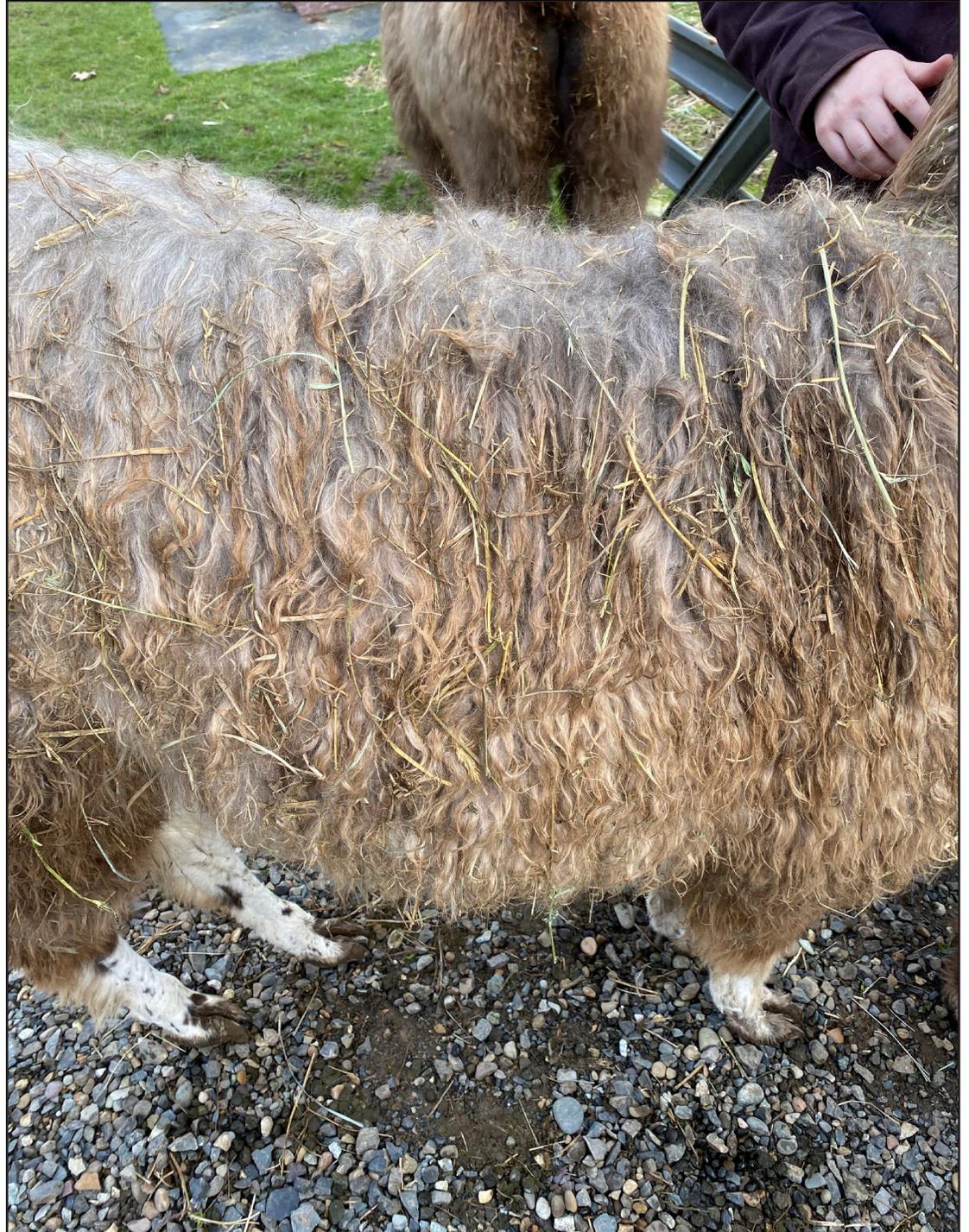
On a recent occasion like this, we turned to the internet and found that making your own grooming conditioner is simpler than you might have guessed. Obviously, the brand names will have their top secret formulations, and it may be completely true that they are superior to this home-made concoction. But in a bind we have found the following formula to be quite serviceable. Given that we are pretty frugal, I'm not sure if we'll ever go back. We have now used this mixture at several shows and found that it helps to get the tangles and foreign matter out of the fleece, and helps give the animal a nice shine for the show ring.

- 1 Cup Water
- 1/2 Cup Hair Conditioner
- 1 Tablespoon of Baby Oil (optional to give additional shine)



The picture on the right is one of our young show females last spring. As you can see, she has a bit of a penchant for rolling.

We mixed up the grooming conditioner, misted her a few times, and spent 10 minutes with a slicker brush. You will see the results of our efforts on the next page.



As you can see, the DIY grooming conditioner helps to remove vegetable matter, clean up tangles, and give the fleece that shiny, lay-flat look that we all like to see. All for the cost of a spray bottle and a bit of hair conditioner.



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THANK YOU TO JERRY & PAT THOMAS, SARAH MCGOVERN, JEFF & TAMMY SMITH, AND ANDY & CHERYL TILLMAN FOR SHARING YOUR FARMS AND YOUR STORIES WITH US.

NEXT ISSUE: HERDSIRE EDITION

SEPTEMBER 2022

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