

# YABA Newsletter

## March 2010

Dear YABA members,

Following is the first newsletter for 2010. We plan to post newsletters each quarter, but will also periodically send you news and tips about marketing and caring for your alpacas as well as keeping you posted on events and newsworthy items. Your ideas, suggestions, pictures and input are also greatly appreciated. Please forward any contributions of information or writing to us at [jsold@hotmail.com](mailto:jsold@hotmail.com).

### New Logo and Banners



Our new logo is now posted on our home page and is available to be included with your promotional material and on your own website.

Our VP, Dennis Dueñas, has done an excellent job in creating the new design.

Please proudly post the logo on your website, business cards, brochures and anywhere you can. Pdfs are available from Dennis ([dennis@nrmapacas.com](mailto:dennis@nrmapacas.com))

Two banners bearing the new logo have been purchased and are available to all members on a first come first served

basis for events. To reserve a banner please contact either Steve Jesse ([prez@yabasite.org](mailto:prez@yabasite.org)) or Gail Andren ([sec@yabasite.org](mailto:sec@yabasite.org)).

### YABA Member Farm Profile: WOLF DEN RANCH ALPACAS, Salmon, Idaho

Beginning with this issue of the newsletter, we will be highlighting various member farms. If you would like to be highlighted on the website, please drop me an email and attach some pictures.

Our thanks to Carol and Tom Yerden for answering our questions.



From their website: In the heart of Central Idaho, located along the Salmon "River of No Return", and adjacent to the largest wilderness area in the lower 48 states, Wolf Den Ranch Alpacas(WDR)is an idyllic setting for an alpaca ranch. A few miles from the western town of Salmon WDR offers the opportunity to view outstanding alpacas. Our customers will also enjoy whitewater rafting on the famous Middle Fork of the Salmon River, steelhead & salmon fishing, hiking and an abundance of outdoor recreational activities.

Our goal is to enable our customers to be successful in all

aspects of the alpaca business. This involves more than just superior genetics. WDR provides a supportive, personal relationship with each of our customers and an ongoing commitment to their ultimate success. At WDR we have a "pool" of exceptional herd sires and dams that provide the unique ability to apply selective breeding techniques aimed at improving our fleece characteristics. This requires us to "breed in" those traits we seek to highlight and improve upon those that require enhancement.

We encourage you to give us a call and/or arrange a visit. The beauty of the area is reflected in the excellence of our herd. A visit to WDR is a worthwhile experience you will not soon forget.

Farm Name: [Wolf Den Ranch Alpacas](#)

Location: [Salmon, Idaho](#)

Owners: [Carol & Tom Yerden](#)

Number of alpacas owned: [50 Alpacas, 100 PacoVicunas](#)

Number of acres: [25 In Idaho](#)

Years of ownership: [16](#)

What did you do before owning alpacas? [Management Consulting](#)

What made you decide to start raising alpacas? [Tax Benefits & Lifestyle](#)

How many alpacas did you start with? [3](#)

Are alpacas your sole source of income? [No](#)

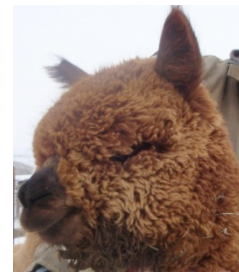
What services and/or products does your farm provide?  
[Breeding \(Stud\) services, Sale of alpacas and PV's, alpaca finished products, barding, training, consulting](#)

What do you find most challenging about alpaca ownership?  
[Marketing/Sales](#)

What do you find most rewarding? [Lifestyle & Meeting great people](#)

What advice do you have for newcomers? [Start small with the best alpacas available](#)

Anything else you'd like to share with your fellow YABA members? [We offer significant discounts for all YABA members for both purchases and stud services](#)



## **2010 National Alpaca Farm Days - Sept. 25 & 26**

Save the date! Committee members Deb Hill and Debbie Jesse are preparing some useful guidelines for making the most of National Alpaca Farm Day. We welcome any input or suggestions you wish to share with your fellow members.

## **YABA Membership Committee Report**

Greetings to all YABA members from your Membership Committee! Our membership currently consists of 24 farms, primarily in Montana & Wyoming. Our webmaster has artfully created a locator map on YABA's website so members can easily find a fellow member. It also places into stark reality the geographic issues we must address to remain a cohesive organization representing alpaca owners spread over such a large catchment area! To that end, your Membership Committee is actively pursuing a campaign to contact all alpaca owners in our tri-state region to encourage them to consider joining YABA. Contacts are being made both through personal phone contact as well as mass e-mailings, (in an effort to keep costs minimal). The benefits of membership are being highlighted to alpaca owners as well as short & long term goals of YABA, such as upcoming annual events and local participation at seasonal fiber & craft events. It is our goal to obtain and sustain a consistent increase in membership annually to enable YABA to become and remain a respected AOBA affiliate that provides valuable benefits to its membership.

-- Steve, Gail and Vicki

## **Events Committee Report**

The YABA BOD is diligently working on a site selection for our first annual event. We are in the final stages of gathering information from numerous fairgrounds & event centers across MT & WY. We're hoping to have a site selected within the next 2 weeks. YABA would like to have our first event in either late May or August to accommodate the majority of the membership. Location is critical due to our vast catchment area so the selection process is being discussed in great depth so as to make it as accessible as possible for our members. Details of the content of the event haven't been formalized to date, but ideas of a "mock" show, educational speaker(s), socializing, auctions, (animals and end-products), as well as vendor/farm displays are all being entertained. Once a location & date are chosen by your Board, we'll need to mobilize the Events Committee as well as any members who'd like to volunteer their services in organizing this event to assure its success. Stay tuned for upcoming details soon!

## **Fiber Committee Report**

- The Fiber Committee meeting is set for March 14, 2010
- A YABA vendor booth is established for the MAWS conference for June 3-6, 2010
- The Committee welcomes new committee members: Jan Sapp and Linda Atkinson
- YABA members who are also AFCNA members who wish to contribute fleece should contact Gail Andren who has volunteered to be the collection station for the YABA area.
- Arrowhead Alpacas is waiting for a new machine that will needle felt. They will offer this service to the membership after they familiarize themselves with it. It can felt, possibly make cloth, design on felt and much more...

-- Gail, Jan and Linda

## Marketing Committee Report

The Marketing Committee has been busy sending out marketing tips, working on a new design for the website and looking for ways to help us all do a better job of marketing our furry friends and their products.. We sent out a survey to members to determine their needs and concerns about marketing. Based on the survey, we are looking into providing a workshop this summer dealing with marketing and/or website development.

If you haven't already gotten their mailings, you should check out the North American Alpaca Federation site. They are a non-profit free organization dedicated to helping alpaca owners market and learn about their livestock. They provide some excellent tutorials and tools on their website: <http://www.naalpaca.org/naaftoolkit.htm>.

-- Jeremy Soldevilla, Dennis Dueñas, Deb Hill, Debbie Jessie and Jim Young

## Education Committee Report

The Education Committee has notified membership of the learning modules being put together by NAAF. The Education Committee would like to try to get something educational out to the membership on a quarterly basis, be it fiber, husbandry, health, pastures, show, etc.. If anyone in the membership has a question they would like answered, a suggestion for a topic, or information to share please contact one of the members of the committee below:

Kirk Lentz, Alpine Vista Suri Alpacas LLC, [captainkirk2@jklentz.net](mailto:captainkirk2@jklentz.net)

Carol Yerden, Wolf Den Alpacas, [wdralpacos@aol.com](mailto:wdralpacos@aol.com)

Cheryl Tenold, Yumedono Alpacas, [cheryl@yumedono.com](mailto:cheryl@yumedono.com)

## Best Ways to Sell an Alpaca

By Deb Hill, Cloud Dancer Alpacas

Over the years, the market for alpacas has had its ups and downs, but surely the past two years have been the most difficult.

When times are good, almost anyone can sell an alpaca. With their cute little fuzzy faces, they almost sell themselves. But when times are tough, it takes a bit more work to accomplish your goals. Sometimes the best advice is to go back to the basics, and start at the beginning.

Let's look at the very first, and key, step to making alpaca sales.

**The #1 best way to sell alpacas is to bring potential buyers to your farm.** There they will see the entire alpaca lifestyle, and have personal interactions with you and the alpacas. Nothing is harder to resist than a crowd of alpacas, unless it is the happy people who raise them!

Your job, then, is to create reasons for people to visit your farm. The more opportunities to visit that you offer, the better chance there is for one of your customers to fall in love with your alpacas.

To increase farm visitation, host regular events at your farm. Schedule one of the following events at least every quarter:

- Herd Management Day
- Shearing Festival
- 'Meet the Crias' Party
- Fiber Work Day
- Open Ranch Day
- Fiber Arts Classes
- Other Alpaca-related Classes
- Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, etc. Alpaca Store Sale
- Ranch Anniversary Celebration
- End of the Recession Festival
- National Visit an Alpaca Farm Day Open House

Once you have your calendar set for the entire year, you need to market your events. Here are some ideas for getting your event information out to the public:

- List your events on as many calendars as you can find. Affiliate websites, your own website, your newspaper's website, the Chamber of Commerce website, your church...almost all have calendars of events.
- Send invitations at least a month in advance for each event. Email is a very cost-effective way to notify lots of people. For smaller mailing lists, direct mail works well.
- Send press releases to local and regional newspapers. To learn how to write a press release, click here:

[Press Release Example](#)

- Send PSA's (public service announcements) to local TV and radio stations.
- Put flyers in places where people gather: the post office, the feed store, the library, the grocery store, etc.
- If you have accounts with social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, post about your event there.
- Write about your event in your blog.
- Watch for promotions offered through on-line companies for printing business cards. You can get hundreds of cards for a very small investment these days at sites such as Vista Print. Use one side for your business contact information and print your calendar of events on the other. Hand these cards out to anyone you meet throughout the year.

It can often take some months before an interested visitor decides they are ready to become an alpaca owner. The better they get to know you and the more they get to know your alpacas, the better chance there is that they will decide they cannot live without one of your alpacas in their lives. By providing opportunities for return visits, you open the doors to more sales.

Deb Hill began raising alpacas in northern Arizona in 1996 when she first discovered these wonderful animals. With husband Don Sanfilippo she runs Cloud Dancer Alpacas, which they relocated to central Montana in 2009. Using experience gained from growing up on a farm combined with advanced degrees in the biological sciences and decades in small business and management, Deb has built a model of the small alpaca business with net profitability. She is now busy expanding their breeding operation in their new location. Deb teaches at alpaca events across the country and runs Alpaca University, an educational program for alpaca breeders. A big believer in supporting our industry, Deb has served on the AOBA Affiliate and Education Committees, the ARF Development Committee, and was elected to the ARI Board of Directors in 2007. She is also an active member of the YABA Marketing Committee. Deb can be reached at [clouddancer@infomagic.net](mailto:clouddancer@infomagic.net) or at (928) 853-6669.