

# YABA News – summer 09

Melina Hawkins

## Big Sky Fiber Fest - Hamilton, MT



LOTS of folks stopped to touch the soft rovings, scarves, etc. and ask questions about YABA and alpacas. Nine YABA member farms sent products to display & sell in the YABA booth. Socks were the main sales item ... practical purchases in a tight economy. The Fiber Fest gave Gail, Tina, & Melina a great opportunity to network with other alpaca owners as well as the chance to participate in some educational presentations.

Our booth looked great; we had lots of variety and color. The handmade wall hanging from Montana Suri Alpacas received numerous ohhs & ahhs and was a wonderful eye-catcher. Thanks, Richard & Shelley Peters!

Even though the sales were not what we hoped, YABA's exposure as well as the opportunity to introduce more folks to alpacas and their products made the experience worthwhile.

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Diane (Going to the Sun Fiber Mill) discusses sorting fiber:



## Mill visits



Becky McEuen gave Gail, Tina, and Melina an informative tour of the **Big Sky Quality Wool Mill** in Broadus, MT.

YABA members also visited the **Sage Ridge Mill** in Clearmont, WY which is owned by Linda Atkinson.



## Professional Montana Shearer

The alpaca community has a new option for shearing. **Marty Hofmann** not only makes the alpacas look terrific, he is incredibly fast; his fees are reasonable, and he is respectful of the owner's wishes. Marty provides all of his own equipment and brings an experienced assistant who is excellent at handling alpacas.

Marty's shearing demonstrates that he understands alpacas' anatomy and behavior. I was surprised to see that the assistant had a back pocket full of tube socks in anticipation of spitters!

Marty can be reached at 406-654-2775 or email [margin@mtintouch.net](mailto:margin@mtintouch.net) Contact him for 2010 scheduling.

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## Ahead of the Curve Daycare visitors

Thirty children visited Broadview Alpacas in June to learn about alpacas, their fleece, and spinning. Each child went home with a drop spindle and alpaca stories to share. Feeding chopped apples and carrots was a big hit.



"Their LIPS are soooo soft!"



"Do you girls have APPLES?"

*Who doesn't love this time of year? The alpacas are sheared, we have bags of fleece to skirt, some of the crias are on the ground, and orgling is in the air.*



*Enjoy the rest of summer!*