

# Application for ABR Board of Directors 2010

**Name:** Barbara Ziek

**Farm Name:** Wild Hair Alpacas

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ABR Farm Member YES X NO \_\_\_\_\_ Became member in 2000

AOBA Farm Member YES X NO \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that being an ABR Board of Directors member requires that I attend regular board meetings and devote eight (8) hours or more per week carrying out the duties of my position. **Initial BBZ**

I am interested in being considered as a candidate for the following open position in 2010

Director – Fiber (2 year term) X

**Please respond to the following questions and submit to the Chair of the Nominating Committee no later than August 25, 2009.**

When did you purchase your first alpacas? 2000 # in current herd 56 Huacaya- 56

Have you every held office or served as BOD member in a corporation? No

How would you describe your organizational skills & follow-through?

I see the big picture first, then work back through the details, and up again to the big picture when I organize something. This has been effective for me: I created, organized and taught a program for 50 intellectually gifted children in Monroe, New York. I convinced the principal to let me implement the program as a volunteer. The next year the successful program was continued as a paid position. During thirty years of teaching in gifted programs, then on a 7<sup>th</sup> grade middle school team with over 120 students, I had to organize new lesson plans each day. Some students needed individual plans most days. New lessons had to be implemented daily, each student's work had to be evaluated every day so that the next lesson could be planned for that child and taught in the following class. Obviously, good organizational skills and follow-through were essential on a daily basis, especially in classes with diverse learners who needed individual lesson plans on a consistent basis.

What Committee leadership or Board roles have you held in ABR [Required for President by By-Laws]?

I have not held Committee leadership or Board roles in ABR.

What are the three (3) most important issues that you feel ABR should address in the next 2 years?

I see fiber, fiber, and fiber as the three most important issues facing ABR in the next two years. ABR can more actively promote alpaca fiber and can take a greater role in educating its membership about fiber and fiber markets.

1. **FIBER. We need to get the word out to the public that alpaca fiber is an extraordinary product and actually get alpaca fiber into the hands of these potential customers. In other words, ABR needs to very actively promote alpaca fiber.**

- A. ABR should work to expand its current fiber customer base. A possible way to accomplish this would be for ABR to create a series events in which we reach out to potential customers by ABR inviting them to participate in using alpaca fiber. For instance, we could sponsor a weaving exhibit where the weavings are created from alpaca or alpaca blends. This could be combined with a weekend of weaving classes. Email notices of these weekends would be sent to members of all the weaving and fiber arts guilds in the Rocky Mountain region along with a list of our members who sell alpaca fiber to those who wish to participate.

- B. ABR should take the lead in developing fiber customers in new areas. ABR can set up meetings to explore new possibilities for using alpaca fiber with professionals in areas such as textiles for interior design or green products such as insulation.
  - C. ABR should work to win new fiber customers among the public. Advertising for all ABR events such as GWAS and Fall Fest should **strongly** emphasize fiber activities as well as animals. ABR events currently have fleece shows, fiber arts demonstrations, exhibits, competitions, and sales such as the Holiday Bazaar. We need to make sure all of these events are included in our shows. Perhaps there is a way to increase our fiber presence at the Denver Stock Show and the Estes Park Wool Market. At GWAS and Fall Fest, we can increase the emphasis on and public interest in fiber with, for instance, a fashion show of items created in alpaca by students at CSU or textiles for the home created by interior design professionals. These fashions should be displayed at the entrance door for the public to see as they enter the show. There should be opportunities at all our events for members of the public to get their hands into alpaca fiber and try skirting, spinning, knitting, felting.
  - D. We should reach out to textile, fashion and interior design colleges and include instructors and students in an ongoing series of collaborations and contests involving alpaca fiber. This will encourage new people in the textile professions to use alpaca.
  - E. ABR should consider joining TACTILE, an organization that “promotes fiber arts with fashion and flair.” The 16 fiber organizations and 300 individuals that are members of TACTILE are our potential customers. TACTILE offers fiber arts classes, exhibition opportunities and meeting space that ABR members can take advantage of to promote alpaca fiber, learn about fiber arts and make connections. Perhaps our own members could teach classes there using alpaca fiber.
1. **FIBER. We need to get more alpaca product out on the market and it must be of a consistent, high quality. To accomplish this, ABR can help its membership become more knowledgeable about fiber.**
- A. More alpaca breeders need to learn to sort and grade alpaca fiber so that fiber gets out the door shortly after shearing and is made into consistently high quality products. Sorting and grading classes could be offered through the auspices of ABR in a variety of locations in our region.
  - B. We have a large number of alpaca farms in our region. At this point in time, it may be appropriate for ABR to explore the idea of a region wide fiber collection system such as that done in Arizona. Then, following that example, we might want to produce ABR branded yarn – Rocky Mountain Alpaca Yarn – offering substantial amounts of consistent, high quality yarn, including specialty yarns. Some yarn stores carry alpaca; others are reluctant to because they aren’t sure they can get what they need when they need it. Region wide collection system of graded and sorted fiber and the production of branded yarn would make it possible for yarn stores to order large amounts of locally produced alpaca yarn, confident they can order more of the same kind and quality.
  - C. ABR should have a meeting devoted to educating its membership about the possible markets that exist now for fiber. These would include AFNCA, NEAFP, private mills that buy fiber, and small companies that buy fiber for blankets or quilt batting, to name a few. This would be especially useful for new breeders.
  - C. Even as we breed for fiber fineness and longevity of fine fiber over an animal’s life, we need to promote all grades of alpaca fiber. At the ABR fiber meeting a session could be devoted to discussing and showing products made from the coarser grades of alpaca fiber. This would raise awareness of ABR members about the uses of this kind of fiber. It will help us promote coarser fiber as the high quality product it is when used for appropriate products and could even help us in marketing older and coarser animals.

3. **FIBER. It would be helpful for alpaca breeders to be able to go a central online location to locate herd sires with the specific fiber characteristics that we are trying to breed into our individual herds.** This would include histogram statistics, color, density, longevity of fiber characteristics in the life of an individual herd sire, Silky or Vicuna style fleeces (Snowmass definitions), prepotency of a given herd sire with certain characteristics. ABR could build such a location on its website.

What particular skill sets would you bring to the ABR BOD?

I thrive on new challenges, think outside of the box and love to learn new things, have good communication skills, a good sense of humor and can manage stress in difficult situations. I listen to people. I’m a problem solver.

