

# Application for ABR Board of Directors 2012

**Name:** Barbara Ziek

**Farm Name:** Wild Hair Alpacas

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ABR Farm Member YES  NO \_\_\_\_\_ Became member in 2000  
AOBA Farm Member YES  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)  \_\_\_\_\_

When did you purchase your first alpacas? 2000 # in current herd 87 Huacaya- 87

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 develop an idea or 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 served as ABR Fiber Director since 2010.

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

1. FIBER 2. FIBER 3. FIBER ABR must continue to increase promotion of alpaca fiber, expand its fiber education role and help members find and even develop fiber markets.
1. **FIBER. ABR needs to very actively promote alpaca fiber. We need to get the word out to the public and textile professionals that alpaca fiber is an extraordinary product and actually get alpaca fiber into the hands of these potential customers.**
- A. ABR should work to expand the current alpaca fiber customer base. One way to accomplish this would be for ABR to continue to create a series of events in which we reach out to potential customers by ABR inviting them to participate in using alpaca fiber. In the last two years, for instance, we invited feltmakers

across the country to create felted objects from alpaca for the Denver Alpaca Fiber Symposium and last year we had the Paca to Product that spanned GWAS and Nationals in which fiber artists created products from alpaca. We need to continue sponsoring such events. We should offer Sheep to Shawl type contests and fashion shows at GWAS and Fall Fest. We could also provide events independent of alpaca shows – at TACtile, for instance. Such an event could involve 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. We can work with Rocky Mountain region colleges and universities to include alpaca in their textile design classes and offer fashion and home décor shows at GWAS and Fall Fest.
- 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 all these fiber activities as well as animal events. 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. ABR needs to work with TACtile in promoting alpaca fiber through fiber events.
- 2. **FIBER. ABR must offer its membership a series of educational opportunities ranging from alpaca fiber characteristics, the importance of grading fiber, grade-appropriate fiber products, and fiber blending, to types of alpaca fiber and fiber arts skills.**
  - 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 should be offered through the auspices of ABR in a variety of locations in our region.
  - B. A nuts and bolts class about the types of yarn, appropriate grades of fiber for different kinds of yarn and fiber blending should be offered.
  - C. On its website, ABR should list sorting and grading classes and fiber arts classes that are offered by other organizations and instructors throughout the Rocky Mountain Region.
  - D. ABR should offer three Fiber Arts Workshop weekends each year, in various parts of our region. Each weekend's classes should include a variety of fiber crafts and expertise levels.
  - E. We need to promote all grades of alpaca fiber even as we breed for fiber fineness and longevity of fine fiber over an animal's life, Currently, alpaca products are displayed at Quarterly meetings. We need to include innovative grade appropriate products of ALL grades in **each** of these displays. This would raise awareness of ABR members about the uses of this kind of fiber. It will help us promote stronger (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.
  - F. A workshop about various types or styles of alpaca fiber would be a useful breeding tool. A helpful follow up for that workshop would be 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.

**3. FIBER. Alpaca breeders and owners need to sell their fiber. ABR must help its membership in that endeavor.**

- A. Important fiber topics for ABR Quarterly Meetings include:
1. An overview of markets that exist **now** for fiber. These would include AFNCA, NEAFP, private mills that buy fiber, online opportunities and small companies that buy fiber for blankets or quilt batting, to name a few. This would be especially useful for new breeders.
  2. Product pricing issues
  3. Finding the best venue for your products.
- B. It is time for ABR to explore the idea of a region wide fiber collection system such as that done in Arizona as awareness of alpaca fiber grows and new alpaca product businesses develop,. Then, following the Arizona example, we may want to produce Rocky Mountain branded 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. A 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 take its Product Booth to more venues, including the Pagosa Springs Fiber Festival in southern Colorado, the Palisade Peach Festival on the Western Slope and Scott's Bluff Valley Fiber Arts Fair in Nebraska,

In order for this fiber activity to take place, it is necessary to have a strong group of volunteers. To build a strong group of volunteers, I propose that

- A. The Fiber Committee meet on a certain date each month by conference call.
- B. Fiber Committee members offer informal fiber meetings each month to meet to work on projects while they discuss fiber issues
- C. Fiber Committee members and other volunteers who lead ABR Fiber Projects should be recognized by ABR. Such recognition could involve a variety of ABR discounts, mention of volunteers' names and farms in the 'Paca Parade, on the inside front cover of show books, or on a prominently displayed poster at the entrance to shows.

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

I thrive on new challenges, think outside of the box, love to learn, 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.