

Hello! We hope this newsletter finds you enjoying a bit of warmer spring weather. As we update you on the current happenings at ABR, we would like to use this as an introduction to your current Board of Directors. You will see some familiar names and some new ones. We want you to know that all of us are working hard to make sure this organization continues to serve the needs of its members. We're glad you're here!

paca parade

Quarterly Insights from the Alpaca Breeders of the Rockies

Message from the President

Welcome to the first quarter ABR Newsletter. As your new president I am thrilled to have the newsletter as another source of communications with our members that will provide timely updates on what we (ABR members and your board of directors) have accomplished, what we are doing, and what we are planning. In these pages you will find information on ABR's financial state, what each board member is doing or overseeing, and plans for the future.

Please join me for our first quarter member meeting at the Castle Rock library on March 26th starting at 1PM. We need you for a roundtable discussion on the future of ABR. The membership meeting is free and there will be no food or beverages served, so bring something if you want it.

Remember to sign up for the upcoming Great Western Alpaca Show. It's April 28 – April 30 this year. Even if you do not plan to show animals it is a fun time and volunteers are always needed. It's a chance to catch up with other alpaca owners and see hundreds of animals you love. *Peter Ziek*

ABR Quarterly Tylopod

Kandi Gunning, Director of Education

“Which animal species can live in extremes of both heat and cold from -20 degrees F to 120 degrees F?”

Today, I figured I would start the education portion of our newsletter with a one question quiz to warm things up. Now that we are warmed up, you can relax.

Note: New for 2023 Shows: The required plastic bag SKU#S-10920 must be used to hold the fleece

“*Cud for Thought*”

¹Veterinary Medical Associations around the United States have launched campaigns against illegal practice of veterinary medicine. An unlicensed person must be under the direct or indirect supervision of a veterinarian. Some examples of practice of veterinary medicine by an unlicensed person could include physical rehabilitation, anesthesia free teeth cleaning, teeth trimming and oral health maintenance, chiropractic medicine, acupuncture, pregnancy checking, and much more. It does not matter if the person you are referring to has years of experience, has taken a course or is somehow “certified”.

Practicing medicine on animals is restricted to VETERINARIANS. Remember, there are no provisions that allow referral by a veterinarian to anyone other than another licensed veterinarian. As an animal owner it is our responsibility to stop illegal practice and advocate for animals. Unlicensed persons are:

Endangering the health of animals

Offering their services to the unsuspecting public

Providing services in unregulated conveniences and breaking the law

¹ Avma.org (Oct 2019); C.R.S., 4 CCR727-1

This quarter I am providing information on scheduled and upcoming Educational classes:

25 MARCH 2023

CSU Neonatal Class- Dr. S. Balch, DVM (see ABR website)

15 APRIL

Dundee Farm- Color Compliance; Ring Steward; Gate Keeper (see ABR website)

JUNE 2023 (pending)

Dundee Farm-Showmanship Class

25 JUNE (pending)

Nutrition Issues and Recommendation

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2024 (pending)

Small Ruminant Conference

25 SEPTEMBER (pending)

Q & A Session-where Farms/Ranches bring questions for the Veterinarian

Creating a Brand

Jennifer Hack, Director of Marketing

What is a Brand?

The most elemental component of a marketing effort is a brand. Your brand is the story that you tell about your farm, the values that you communicate, and the sense that customers or clients have of your business. Ask yourself: "When someone thinks of my farm, what comes to mind?" The answer defines your current brand: your brand is what your customers think of your farm business. If your current brand does not align with your self-perception, your values, or your goals, then it is not as strong a brand as it could be. Public perception should align with your vision of your business.

Solidify your values and vision

Step 1: Think about your business and why you run the farm that you do. What about your farm is most exciting to you? What values drive your decision-making the most? What makes you unique? Write down what comes to mind.

Step 2: Write down your "elevator speech," the 20-second spiel you would give if you have only an elevator ride to introduce

yourself and your business to someone new. Think carefully about the core identity that you want to communicate; this shouldn't be just a laundry list of what your produce.

Identifying your audience

Step 1: Begin by identifying your core customers. These are the top ten customers who, if you work to understand and target them better, will help you refine your brand identity.

Think about the people who want to come to see your alpaca, the people who call to ask when you will have more socks available, or the people who respond to any communications you release.

Step 2: Talk to your core customers one-on-one about what they like about your farm. Why do they choose to purchase your products/animals? These customers have identified something that appeals to them in your existing self-presentation, so they can offer great insight into your strengths and into any areas that your current brand may not align with your goals.

Step 3: Once you have a sense of what drives your core customers and what they think about

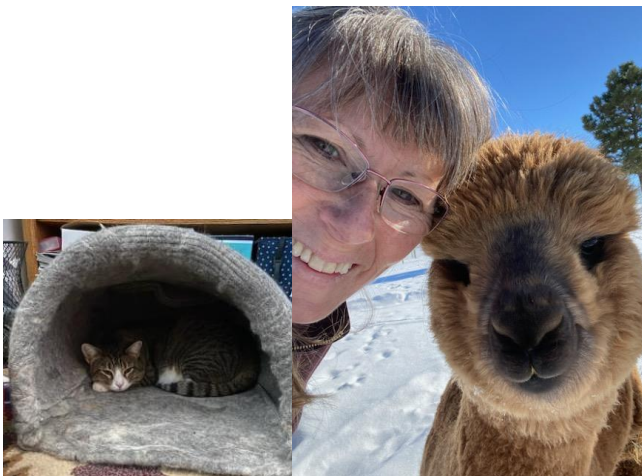
your farm, it's time to identify your target audience. This is the larger group of people whose attention you want to catch through your branding. Identifying the people you want to reach and beginning to strategize about how to reach them is how you begin to develop a marketing strategy.

Look at the big picture

Now that you know how you want to be perceived and how well you're conveying that message to your core customers, take a step back to begin thinking about how your brand will fit into the marketplace. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What are your customers buying? What are the most popular products/animals?
- Who are your competitors? What other businesses are attracting your target customers?
- What are you offering customers? Think broadly about this question: not only the particular product or animals you sell, any additional benefits you offer, such as mentorship, knitting tips, great deals, classes, etc.

Meet fiber artist Heather Marley in this edition of PacaParade



ABR's 2023 Budget was approved in December 2022 by the Board of Directors. The budget projects an overall net income of \$8K at the end of the year if revenues and expenditures perform as anticipated. The current financial position as of 2/17/23 shows a loss due to the deposits paid for the GWAS facility. As farms register for GWAS and pay registrations, this loss will continue to decrease. The Board continues to seek ways to increase revenues and decrease costs.

	Approved Budget	Actuals to Date
Income	\$221,825	\$62,420
Expense	\$213,127	\$72,849
Profit/Loss	\$8,698	\$-10,429

2023 Budget Execution

Debbie Cochran, Treasurer

Volunteers Needed

Carolyn Woods, Director of Programs

Volunteers

It is said over and over- Volunteers make our organization great. This is very true of the volunteers of ABR. I wanted to Thank all of those folks who volunteered last year at all of our shows - GWAS/RMAS, Fall Fest Fleece Show and Fall Fest Halter show. Your time is valuable and we very much appreciate you choosing to help at the shows. We really would not be successful without you.

As GWAS/RMAS 2023 approaches, we hope to see you back, and we would love to see some new faces also!

GWAS/RMAS 2023-
Coming Soon! April 27-30 at the National Western Complex.
Registration is open!
We look forward to seeing you there.

You can still sign up for sponsorships, volunteering and vendor booths.
Contact:

Hillary Devin - Sponsorships - hillary@shambalahalpaca.com
Stephanie Harvey - Volunteering - harveygirl29@gmail.com
Cindy Grigg- Vendor Booth - abr@alpacabreeders.org

Q: Did you know?

A: New members get a free year of membership

This means that if you sell an alpaca to a new owner, they can sign up for free the first year. This is a huge resource to new owners and could be the key to keeping those new owners in the industry.

As I speak with alpaca owners at different events, times sometimes I hear that the benefits of ABR are primarily for people who show. Yes, we do offer a lot of resources for people who are interesting in the show system. But we also offer a lot for anyone who owns or is considering owning alpacas. Last year we offered classes that covered neonatal care, nutrition, fleece skirting, wet felting, needle felting, weaving, and much more.

Camelids are a whole new animal to many people, and to be able to take advantage of the support system inherent in ABR is highly important to the health and wellbeing of the animals and the future of the industry. We also, as farms, tend to be spread out, making it a bit harder to find those needed resources on our own.

Our goal at ABR is to offer the resources needed by ALL members. Please let us know what classes and programs you would like to see in the future.

Robin Robison, Director of Communications/Membership

*Greetings from the
Secretary!* Mark Choiniere

The Alpaca Breeders of the Rockies (ABR) Secretary publishes the ABR Board of Directors (BOD) monthly meeting minutes to inform the membership of ongoing processes and decisions. Each month there is an ABR BOD Meeting at which the previous months minutes are approved for publishing/posting to the ABR website. The minutes detail the meeting proceedings, which typically include ABR financial data, upcoming events such as shows, educational opportunities and classes, old and new business, as well as Director reports on their areas.

For those who do not avail themselves of this resource, you are missing out on important information discussed and voted upon by your elected representatives that often explains why the ABR BOD made specific decisions driven by things like cost, opportunity and sustainability of the organization.

The minutes are available on the ABR website. A good place to start would be the 15 December 2022 ABR BOD Emergency Budget Meeting Minutes where the BOD approved the FY2023 budget.

If you have questions, concerns, ideas or comments please contact: Mark Choiniere, ABR Secretary, 540-229-1706.
mchirp12@gmail.com, or
hello@dustyroadalpacas.com.



Rug by fiber artist Heather Marley

Fiber Artist Spotlight Heather Marley

Heather Marley's enthusiasm for fiber arts and love for alpacas is contagious. She is the kind of person who is always ready to share knowledge or lend a hand. Heather who lives in Franktown, Colorado, works full time as a Project Manager for a Department of Defense company. Heather teaches weaving classes and has a 60" needle felting loom that she rents time on, along with processing fiber. She can be reached at angelscrossingalpacas@yahoo.com, or 760-877-1491
Stephanie Harvey, Fiber Director

Q: What fiber arts are you involved in?

A: Wet and needle-felting, weaving, spinning, knitting, crochet, dying.

Q: What products do you make?

A: Primarily rugs, shawls, scarves, placemats, mug rugs, and tea towels (weaving); hats, rugs, tote bags/purses, scarves, ponchos, cat caves and beds, liners for alpaca coats and dryer balls (wet and needle felting).

Q: How long have you been involved in fiber arts?

A: Knitting and crocheting since I was a kid. Got really and truly, heavily involved in weaving and felting in 2015 (after the kids had all finished college).

Q: How long have you raised alpacas?

A: Three years ago this month!

Q: What is your favorite fiber art?

A: Weaving—I love weaving—it's very therapeutic to get a rhythm going and play music—it's very cool.

Q: What fiber other than alpaca do you love?

A: I like working with silk because it combines with alpaca fiber and makes a really nice product.

Q: What are your favorite uses for all the different grades of fiber (1-6)?

A: For the coarser grades: rugs, cat caves, liners, slippers, dog coats, mittens.
For the finer grades: anything next to skin, shawls, hats, scarves.

Q: Recommended mills?

A: Right now, I'm testing out some mills—still waiting to get product back from MM Fiber, Willow Creek, Colorado Wool Factory and Zeilinger Wool Company. I've had lovely yarn back from the Fleece Factory and Crooked Fence.

Q: Advice for someone new to fiber arts or wanting to advance their skills?

A: Work with someone who is passionate and experienced with fiber to learn hands-on. YouTube can't replace in-person learning. Sitting with someone and learning directly from them is priceless.

Q: What is your bestselling product?

A: Dryer balls and shawls. I get a lot of custom orders for the shawls.

Q: How do you market your products/where do you sell your products?

A: Right now, word of mouth and going to local craft sales and events. I'm getting a website up soon and starting to offer wholesale products (through word of mouth). Word of mouth has been my best marketing tool so far.

Q: Do you have a favorite animal from your herd?

A: I don't have just one favorite, but Pharaoh and Jasper are up there. Pharaoh is my alpaca with eyesight issues, and it is a pleasure to work with him, watching him blossom. He has such a sweet personality and has learned to trust my voice. He's a really great PR animal—will be the first to halter and walk with strangers (Pharaoh will be 3 in July). Jasper is my 8 month old who has just has a really fun, curious personality. I also have to put my first ever cria, Aspen, on the list. He was born on Mother's Day in 2020.

Q: What do you love most about working with alpaca fiber (and do you work exclusively with Huacaya, Suri, or both)?

A: Its luxurious and SO versatile. You can make such a variety of products with alpaca! People who are sensitive to wool and can't wear it can wear alpaca AND it comes from the cutest animal on the planet! So far exclusively with Huacaya but interested in starting to work with Suri. My plan is to start working with Suri this year.

If you would like to be featured in a future issue or know someone who would, contact Stephanie Harvey at harveygirl29@gmail.com