

OABA Quarterly Meeting
Held at Swisher Creek Farm
October 3, 2009

Present: Joe Osborn, Pres., Laura Lee, V.P., Rick Johnson, Treas., Jana Lee-Harris, Director at Large, Bill Goebel, Director at Large, Marilyn Wentworth, Sec'y., Nora Custer-Haberbusch, Director at Large, Nancy Medland, Joyce Blackmore, Bob Rodgers, Judy Kilbury, Nancy Lee, Jack Lee, Earl Klay, John and Peggy Curtis, Bob Ebling, Louise Goebel, Brian Turner, Cindy Mergo, Pete Klein, Judy Klein, Laurel Shoumlin, Mary Jane Andersen, Paul Doran, Laura Lee, Ann Amash

1. The OABA Board of Directors introduced themselves. Rick Johnson is our new Treasurer.
2. Jana Lee-Harris read a very heartfelt letter by Bill Goebel asking everyone to help preserve AlpacaFest by participating as much as possible in the show and apologizing for the confusion about the show being cancelled and then reinstated.
3. Joe Osborne spoke to the group to urge them to participate. He has been personally calling people but they have a lot of reasons (mostly financial because of the bad economy) why they didn't plan to attend or participate. We are way behind the numbers we need to make the show not "break the bank".
4. Laura Lee reviewed the Agenda which explained all that has happened. She urged everyone to bring their friends into the organization, participate in the show, and help get sponsorships. She also told of cost cutting measures like no free photos, no free stalls for sponsors, no gifts for sponsors. Also we will have a raffle for free hersire breeding to Peruvian Juxtaposition for all \$100 sponsors. A Brainstorm Session followed:
 - A. We will combine sponsors for Grand Sponsorships if necessary
 - B. Addition of the live alpaca auction as well as the herdsire auction.
 - C. Create a calling tree to tell OABA members to help. A sign up sheet was passed around to do this, and we encourage people to ask those they call to call 5 others.
 1. Phone Tree: Nancy Medland - Union County,
Jana Lee-Harris - Licking County,
Nora Custer-Haberbusch - Summit, Portage, Stark,
Columbiana,
Joyce Blackmore - Franklin,
Bob Rodgers - Richland,
Judy Kilbury - Marion,
Nancy Lee - Fairfield,
Peggy Curtis - Knox,
Brian Turner - Lorain, Erie Huron, Medina,
Mary Jane Anderson - Coshocton
Laurel Shoumlin - Clark, Greene, Montgomery
Pete Klein - Franklin

Cindy Mergo – Ross County
Louise Goebel – wherever needed
Joe Osborn - will call sponsors who haven't yet signed up
& AOBA

- D. Let people share stalls, ½ and 1/3
- E. Jack Harris asked about budget, we need \$160,000. Discussion followed on how OABA BoD is saving money. More examples: no meet and greet, not using Cox Catering if possible, small show book, no fleece show, only spin-off, skein and fiber arts, re-use leftover ribbons, use volunteers wherever possible. The Expo Center is a Union run facility, won't budge on costs.
- F. Nancy Lee asked about marketing. A discussion followed about email blasts, getting non members to attend and shop even if they aren't showing, asking AOBA to help with promo , Ask Dept of Agriculture to help with fund (none available), utilize the Forum on Alpaca Nation, etc. We are in a tough time.
- G. Sign up sheet for people willing to trailer other peoples alpacas.
1. Marilyn Wentworth – Athens
 2. Rick Johnson – Franklin/Licking
 3. Brian Turner – Lorain
- H. Volunteer to show other people's animals
1. Brian Turner
- I. Earl Klay said people may not be able to afford hotels. A sign up list went around for people who would offer free housing:
1. Jana Lee-Haris – Gentle Meadows Alpaca Farm in Pataskala
1 room/2 people
 2. Jack and Nancy Lee - Gentle Meadows Alpaca Farm in Columbus
1 room/2 people
 3. Joyce Blackmore – Blackmore Vale Farm in New Albany
1 room/2 people
 4. Rick Johnson – Happy Tails in Blacklick
1 room/2 people
 5. Pete and Judy Klein – Swisher Creek Farm
1 room/2 people in Blacklick
 6. Jack and Cindy Mergo – Cameo rose Alpacas in Kingston (1 hr drive)
1 room/2 people
- J. Find a Suri Hersire for the raffle, maybe Joe Osborn's?
- K. What about finding a lower price venue? BoD is looking at that for next time.
- L. Do a big membership drive – 900 alpaca farms in Ohio, 22% of all US alpacas
1. Kathy Klay is kicking off this big membership drive at AlpacaFest,
 2. It will be featured on the back cover of the AlpacaFest showbook

M. Use Community Calendars everywhere to get free publicity. Everyone was encouraged to contact all local newspapers, magazines, radio, etc. to get the word out.

N. Use hotels farther out of town rather than next to Expo Center. Cheaper ones are on Morse, Stringtown, and Gender Roads. Some are as low as \$48.

5. Discussion about What Does OABA Do For Me?

A. Maybe we could offer first year memberships at ½ price.

B. Everyone has access to the membership list.

C. OABA markets Ohio alpacas.

D. Upcoming OABA Magazine – Bill Goebel

1. Solves many issues by being the vehicle for educational articles written by subject matter experts, including the membership directory, offering a space for feedback with Letters to the Editor, utilizing regular columnists, etc.

2. It will be online and printed hard copy. Online will feature live links to each members website! It will be available nationally.

3. It will appear quarterly with all new members listed in the new editions.

4. Nora Custer-Haberbusch and Laurel Shoumlin signed up to help Bill

5. Cost is estimated at \$1030 for 20 pages, \$4000 for 4 issues a year

6. We will check on cheaper prices.

7. Marketing Committee could sell ads; Ohioans to Ohioans, farms, equipment dealers, barn builders, hay growers, TSC, etc. We need to sell at least \$1039 worth of ads to get started.

8. 60 edu/40ads

6. Suggestion was made to have people pay \$25/quarter if joining in last quarter of the year. We should have revolving dues or join anytime so it isn't a hardship to pay in January

7. Committees on the current OABA website – Jana said each board member is a liaison to the different committees.

A. OABA store – Jody Hezoucky

B. Fiber Committee – needs to form. Possible members signed up at SOABC meeting: Louise Goebel, Dorea Tomlinson, Sheila Johnson, Cindy Mergo, Jody Hezoucky, Marilyn Wentworth liaison. Maybe Dorea will be the chair.

Jana will organize a phone conference the week of 10-12-09. They need to build public awareness, educate, and build a network for Ohio fleece.

8. OABA Member Survey – Bill Goebel

A. Bill wants all OABA members to complete this and send it back. It gives OABA feedback on hot topics, trends, and much more about Ohio alpaca farms

- B. Gives economic impact data to approach legislators, business, etc. for support.
 - C. It will give feedback to farms on how others are operating their farms
 - D. It will be anonymous
 - E. Distribution – link to pdf file of survey will be online – people can print a hard copy and mail in with no return address.
 - F. Members can make copies to distribute to other farms who are not members.
8. Issue 2 in the upcoming Ohio elections – Joe Osborn
- A. \$120 million for this campaign by vegetarians to try to stop animal farming
 - B. Concern about these people ruining our agricultural businesses.
 - C. They have a fake company, “Humane Society of the United States” to trick people into donating money.
 - D. Agriculture is Ohio’s largest business; it could ruin the state’s economy
 - E. Joe urged everyone to tell others about this and to vote YES on Issue 2.

Meeting Adjourned.

Following the meeting a seminar was presented by Drs. Lakritz & Hinds from OSU.