



# SURI

## Network News

a publication of The Suri Network

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Dick Walker

As I write this the thermometer outside my office reads 5 degrees, the ground is blanketed with a layer of snow and my skis tempt me to go play. In my garden the crocus and tulips are bravely challenging the elements. At the ranch the weanlings are missing their mothers, bonding with their herdmates and bewildered by the halter and lead. It's hard to believe that spring is just around the corner and with it the 2006 show season. Yet it must be true as the groundhog has put in a brief appearance, the Superbowl is history and even Cupid has come and gone.

Here at the Suri Network we are very excited about what is in store for 2006!

In a few weeks you will receive your copy of the much anticipated 1<sup>st</sup> edition of PurelySuri™ Herdsire. I'm confident that you will be impressed by the quality of this new publication. Many breeders use the PurelySuri™ magazine as a marketing piece to help promote their farms and the Suri industry. We encourage you to send a copy home with anyone who visits your ranch. You can look forward to special pricing making this an affordable marketing opportunity for your breeding program. Planning has already started for PurelySuri™ 2006 with an anticipated publication date of August 2006 to be available at the Summer Symposium.



"From the President" - Cont. on Pg. 4

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

by Cindy Fronk

You've seen "Him" on Suri Network brochures and on the gorgeous Suri Network "banner stands"... Now "He" will be available to you at special discounted SN pricing for **your** own farm or show display. *More information on "Him" follows in this issue of Suri Network News.*

Of course, I'm talking about the "bigger than life" sized elegant white suri with the lustrous flowing locks who is featured on the Suri Network 34 inch, full-color, "pop-up" banner. Through our SN group purchasing power, we can now offer these high quality "one-sided" banner stands to our SN members for only \$495 each! (Retail is over \$600.) If you are interested in a "two-sided" banner stand, the cost would be only \$550! Individual farm and logo "artwork & design time" will be billed at \$61 per hour. Light packages are available at \$137/\$274 for single/double. Shipping costs will be added to each order at \$40/\$50 for single/double. You could save hundreds of dollars per farm depending on how many banner stands you order!

Stacy Saunders, at Skyline Displays, will be our personal Suri Network contact... Call her at 1-800-899-4787 or email her at [stacys@skyline-heartland.com](mailto:stacys@skyline-heartland.com) with your questions and orders! Skyline graphic designers are available to assist you with the 34 inch banner format or contact Stacy for the graphic design specifications to use your existing design work. For every order placed, our organization will receive "credit" toward a Suri Network graphic banner. Be sure to mention that you are a Suri Network member to get this discounted price! This offer is limited to Suri Network members only.

To chat about your possible order, or to ask basic questions, please feel free to call Cynthia Fronk at 970-635-2322 or email [cfronk@qwest.net](mailto:cfronk@qwest.net).

"Membership Benefits" - Cont. on Pg. 4

# SURI NETWORK FIBER STUDY

by *Bruce Van Natta*

The Research Committee is very excited about the upcoming shearing season, as this will mark the start of Phase I of our Study of the North American Suri Alpaca Fiber Characteristics. Thanks to the generous contributions of the owners and purchasers at November's Herdsire Auction and the generous contribution of Ray and Maria Rodriguez for the Bronze Suri sculpture, the project will be off to a sound financial start.

Phase I will involve data and specimen collection of medical history, skin biopsies, fleece samples, photographs, shear weight, nutritional information and blood samples on 100 animals in their second fleece with between 10-13 months of re-growth. Phase II will involve the implementation of a variety of studies on the collected samples to include: electron microscopy (both scanning and transmission), measurement of tensile strength, fiber analysis (both OFDA and Yocum-McColl), processing of skin biopsies for density and secondary/primary follicle ratios, measurement of luster (pending discovery of satisfactory methodology), mineral and amino acid analysis and possibly blood chemistries. All of these analyses won't necessarily be done on every fleece, pending statistical significance and financial consider-

ations. Phase III of the study will entail the analysis portion—"crunching the data". The potential for future analysis or comparison will exist as the individual samples and fleeces will be retained. All of the data collected will be available to the membership though a link on the SN website. All data is anonymous as it pertains to individual animals and contributing farms.

A number of potential benefits for the SN membership will be derived from this study. First of all, we will increase dramatically the knowledge base regarding suri fiber with this ground-breaking study. Suris are so rare in the rest of the world, including Australia, that no significant research effort has been undertaken regarding their fiber. The information discovered will undoubtedly enable breeders to make more educated breeding decisions to improve desirable characteristics in individual animals. For example, the hypothesis that increased density is always correlated with increased fineness but not vice-versa can be tested with the data from this study. Additionally, if we find a means to measure luster (still a big if), the technology employed could possibly be transferred to the show ring, to provide an objective assessment of this characteristic.

Unquestionably, knowledge is power, and the knowledge gained from this landmark study is sure to benefit Suri Network members, indeed the worldwide Suri herd, for years to come.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES NOMINATIONS

It may seem early, but it is that time of year again. Candidates are being considered for nomination to run for the Suri Network Board of Trustees. The following current Board members' term shall expire on August 18, 2006, the date of the Suri Network Annual Meeting: Dick Walker, Toni Cotton and Miriam Donaldson. All of these Board members are eligible to be nominated again for one more consecutive two year term. A total of 6 candidates shall be nominated for this year's election.

If you know of a Suri Network member that you would like have considered for nomination or if you would like to be considered, please email Miriam Donaldson at [alpacajack@aol.com](mailto:alpacajack@aol.com) no later than March 31, 2006.

Nominations by petition must be received by May 30, 2006. See the Suri Network By-Laws in the front of your membership directory or go to [www.surinetwork.org](http://www.surinetwork.org).

Election ballots will be mailed to all eligible Suri Network members in June, 2006.



Suri Network Board of Trustees:

Dick Walker, *President* ([alpacas@supersuris.com](mailto:alpacas@supersuris.com))

Miriam Donaldson, *Vice President* ([alpacajack@aol.com](mailto:alpacajack@aol.com))

Toni Cotton, *Treasurer* ([bestbrd@bright.net](mailto:bestbrd@bright.net))

Jim Barker, *Secretary* ([jim@sweetsuri.com](mailto:jim@sweetsuri.com))

Mike Murphy, *Member at Large* ([suris@helloearth.us](mailto:suris@helloearth.us))

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## MARKETING COMMITTEE

by Mike Murphy

Committee members: Becca Black (Chairman), Denise Sowles, Greg Kurtz, Michael Alpert, Brad & Jandy Sprouse, Diane Soloman, Jim Hulbert, John and Peggy Curtis, Stacy Wilkins. Michael Murphy, board liaison.

Most of our time and efforts in the last few months have gone into the first edition of the PURELYSURI™ Herdsire which is on its way to the printer! This year is a milestone in the Suri Network as 2006 marks a big change; one quality publication every two years has been our publication schedule, we now will put out two quality publications every year. We intend these two issues each year to be a benefit to each of us for shopping, marketing and education. We will be continually searching for topics which are current and specific to Suris. Soon our efforts will begin on the Summer Edition of PURELYSURI™ which will have its initial

release at the Summer Symposium in Estes Park. Our next projects which are currently under development are a leads program and marketing via our website. While no details are ready to be released, be assured we are trying to work on programs which will be effective and equitable for all breeders. While business is good, this is no time to “rest on our laurels” and become complacent. We always welcome input; ideas for Purely Suri articles, marketing ideas, website ideas, etc. Please forward your comments and thoughts to Michael Murphy or Becca Black. The alpaca business has enjoyed tremendous growth; Suri Network has grown even more. AOBA statistics show roughly 30% of available farms belong to their respective affiliate. With just over 800 farms owning at least one Suri, we have over 500 member farms...over 60%! Our goal is to hit 600 member farms for a 75% membership. Suri breeders are passionate about their Suris and together we can make it better for all!



The Suri Network is trademarking the wonderful white suri as shown here and used in several of our publications. This is where **we need YOUR help!** We would like you, our membership, to **help name this Suri.** Please send your name choices to the Suri Network office at PO Box 1984, Estes Park, CO 80517 or email SuriAssociation@aol.com.

The Marketing Committee will narrow the list down to no more than 6 names and you will be able to vote for your favorite.

The deadline for submission of names is March 30th. The winner of the most popular name will receive 100 new Suri Network fliers and a write-up in Suri Network News!

In case you missed it last year, the Suri Network is again auctioning the limited edition traveling “Suri Bronze” at the 2006 Futurity Show and Sale, April 21-24 in Louisville, Kentucky.

The highest bidder will be able to display the bronze at their farm for one year and be spotlighted in a two-page Farm Profile in the next Purely Suri Magazine. All proceeds from this event are used by the Suri Network to promote our suri industry.

THANK YOU to **Ray & Maria Rodriguez** of **Leraso Farm Alpacas** for being the 2005 highest bidder in the amount of \$7,000!



## NEWS FROM THE OFFICE

### NEW SURI NETWORK FLIER!!

Enclosed is a complimentary copy of the NEW Suri Network flier. The cost of the flier remain the same as in the past; \$25.00 for 100 (plus S/H). The cost to mail 100 fliers priority mail is \$6.05. PLACE YOUR ORDER NOW by calling 970-586-5876 or email SuriAssociation@aol.com. A check or credit information must accompany your order.

### MEMBERSHIPS ARE NOW DUE!

If you have not yet renewed your membership in the Suri Network, they are now due in order to be included in the 2006 Membership Directory. Please call the office at 970-586-5876 to renew on the phone or visit [www.surinetwork.org](http://www.surinetwork.org) and download a membership form to fax or mail in with your check or credit card information.

Mark your calendars for August 18-20! Estes Park, CO is **the place** for Suri breeders to be that weekend at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Suri Network Summer Symposium and Annual Meeting. This will be an incredible event with a great line up of speakers and seminars. If you missed it last year, you certainly won't want to do that again. Many who attended in 2005 said it was the best alpaca seminar they had ever attended. Also at this event the SN will hold the final Suri Type Conference to wrap up the details of the Suri Breed Standard.

Now comes the really exciting part. In conjunction with the Summer Symposium the SN is holding the 1<sup>st</sup> ever **ALL SURI FLEECE SHOW**. This is huge and we really want

your support. Our goal is to have 300, yes I said 300, Suri fleeces in this show. That would set a record. Never before have that many Suri fleeces been gathered together for a show in North America! What better way to demonstrate to the alpaca industry that Suri breeders are serious about fiber! This will make a big statement and everyone in the Suri industry will benefit from your participation. Look forward to special benefits at the Summer Symposium for Fleece Show participants.

This will be a banner year for Suris and the Suri Network is dedicated to making sure that prediction comes true. We need your help so be sure to renew your membership for 2006 and if you know a Suri breeder who is not yet a member talk to them about the benefits of becoming one.

*Dick Walker*

## ● **UPDATE ON BREED STANDARDS**

*by Dick Walker, President*

There have now been three AOBA Affiliate breed standards conferences. At the SN conference we developed a 'stand alone' prototype Suri Breed Standard. I am pleased to report that at the two subsequent conferences in Springfield, MA and St Louis, MO, Suri breeders, both members and nonmembers, were well represented. The approach that was taken at both these conferences was for Suri breeders to sit down together, review, and then comment upon and make recommendations regarding the prototype Suri Breed Standard. This process is turning out to be a productive way to enable more Suri breeders to share their views on standards. The SN has been represented by a Board member at each of these conferences. The next scheduled type conference will be in Denver, sponsored by ABR, on February 25.

There will be a number of regional type conferences between now and next fall when this process will culminate in the development of a Suri Breed Standard. I strongly encourage all of you to attend one of these regional events. The SN will hold a second and final breed standards conference in Estes Park, CO in conjunction with our Summer Symposium and Annual Meeting. At this conference we will review recommendations from the regional conferences, results from the membership survey, and input presented at the conference to develop a final version of a Suri Breed Standard.

There were fewer than expected responses to the membership survey on breed standards in which you were asked to develop and rank positive and negative traits. Therefore we are redesigning the survey to make it easier for you to respond. This will be coming out very soon and will be available online through Survey Monkey. Instructions on how to access the survey will be sent to you as soon as

it is set up. If you do not have access to the internet and would like a hard copy please notify the office.

Keep the big picture in mind. We really need to focus on three issues:

- 1) A separate stand alone Suri Breed Standard as opposed to having an alpaca breed standard with the Suri representing simply a different fleece type. If you have questions regarding this position please read my article in PurelySuri™ Herdsire on the Suri as a separate breed.
- 2) When it comes to voting on a Suri Breed Standard only AOBA members who own Suris should be allowed to vote on the Suri Standard.
- 3) It should be clearly spelled out in the Standard as to when, how, and by whom this Standard can be amended in the future as this will be an important issue going forward.

Imagine the glorious "sea of SN banners" at this year's AOBA Nationals with the Suri Network graphics on one side and your own unique farm banner on the other side...What a dramatic show of support for our Suri alpaca passion! Stay tuned to Membership/Benefits updates for more exciting (and money savings) future offers!