



SURI

Network News

a publication of The Suri Network

FROM THE PRESIDENT

This issue of *Suri Network News* is primarily dedicated to reporting on the Suri Network's first Summer Symposium. With nearly 100 Suri breeders present, the Suri Network hosted the 2005 Suri Summer Symposium in Estes Park, Colorado. The weekend was a huge success beginning with the welcoming reception Friday evening which included live local entertainment by Beat 36.



Saturday morning after the general session membership meeting, the day's events unfolded with Dr. David Anderson from Ohio State University. Dr. Anderson lectured on three separate and important health issues that greatly impact our Suri industry; West Nile Virus, Biosecurity, and New Diseases in Camelids. On Sunday, Dr. David Ames, Professor of Animal Science at CSU, discussed the development and implementation of a Suri Breed Standard. Andy Tillman shared the most current results of his Scanning Electron Microscopy Study which revealed the uniqueness of Suri alpaca fiber. Dr. Amanda Thompson from Univ. of Alabama provided the group a preview of fiber research that had been conducted at Ohio State University.

Mary Lou Clingan moderated a Panel Discussion of four fiber processors. The mills who participated were Haneke Enterprises, Inc., Kathy Haneke; Stonehedge Fiber Mill Services, Debbie McDermott; Georgia Mountain Fiber, Michael Lipinski; and Taos Valley Wool Mill, Robert Donnelly. The panel entertained questions from the conference attendees. This dynamic session provided a great deal of information about the steps involved in the processing of Suri fiber from the time of shearing to the production of end products.

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

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Chairwoman: Cynthia Fronk

Co-chairwoman: Nancy Walker

Board liaison: Jim Barker

The membership committee met on August 20, 2005, at the Suri Summer Symposium in Estes Park, CO. The goal of this committee is to identify prospective members, help recruit and retain members through support, tangible benefits, and improved breeder relationships. The committee will be working with the Marketing committee and Ken and Marsha Hobert, the Suri Network business managers, to find ways to recruit new Suri members.

Benefits being looked at for Suri Network members include pop-up banners (at very competitive prices) similar to our Suri Network banner for use at shows/fairs etc. and Suri Network (as well as your own farm) logo items through specialized vendors. Other benefits in conjunction with AOBA are also being looked at.

As an incentive to you as a member, the Suri Network Board of Trustees approved the Membership Benefit Committee's recommendation for a Gift Membership Benefit. Here is how it works: **Existing Suri Network members are encouraged to buy a Gift Membership for new breeders. For each Gift Membership an existing member buys, that existing member will receive a 10% reduction on their next membership dues renewal.** The Suri Network office will send the new member a card recognizing you gift membership and send you a thank you recognition for the gift membership. A great way to implement this benefit is when a farm buys a Suri Alpaca from you. The Suri Network office will administer the records and answer any questions you may have.

The membership committee is always looking for additional breeders to work on our committee. Please email the Suri Network office if you are interested. We are looking for great photos of Suri Alpacas (without farm ID) to use in upcoming literature. Send that great photo of your favorite Suri to the office.

Finally, the membership committee wishes to thank the Summer Symposium organizers for providing such incredible value for the fees paid.

— RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING

submitted by Bruce Van Natta

The SN Research Committee met at the recent Summer Symposium in Estes Park to define a mission statement and delineate the goals and methodology for the initial phase of the North American Suri Alpaca Fiber Characteristics Study. This meeting was the culmination of a great deal of previous work by the Research Committee led by Dr. Toni Cotton.

The SN Research Committee members who have been involved in the preliminary work on this project include: Mary Lou Clingan, Anne Hayes, Claudia Raessler, Bill Vonderhaar, Laurel Shouplin, Kay Ryschon, Carolyn Geise, Andy Tillman, Jacqueline Cristini and Bruce Van Natta.

Additional SN members attending the Summer Symposium sessions were: Sandy Fisher, Anne Fisher, Jane Reed, Tim Timmerman, Patty Kuntz, Linda Berry Walker, Lynn Mulherin, Tammy Hill, Steve Knoblock and Gini Barker. Dr. Amanda Thompson from Auburn University, who has done research on alpaca fiber, graciously agreed to oversee our project and was in attendance throughout the committee discussions.

The mission statement developed for the Research Committee is:

“The Suri Network Research Committee will seek to identify, fund and conduct research projects that will delineate the unique characteristics of suri fiber, to allow the North American Suri industry to be competitive in the world market.”

After much review and discussion, the Research Committee defined the goal of the initial study as collecting data at the 2006 shearing to permit current and future studies of suri fleece characteristics. The methodology will involve the enlistment of 100 animals, 50 white and 50 colored, at the time of the 2006 shearing in their second fleece, with at least 10 months growth and not more than 13 months re-growth. The animals will be anonymously submitted and assigned a research number. A donation from the enrolling farm will be requested to offset expenses. In return the farm will be provided with all the data and test results on their animals as the

study/data collection progresses.

A print or high resolution digital photo in full or second fleece should accompany the fleece samples. Sex, height at the withers and weight of the animal will be recorded by the owner. A lock classification will be made by SN and high resolution (>6 megabyte) digital photos of individual locks will be taken. Color will be assessed using a hand held spectrophotometer. Both Yokum-McColl and OFDA 2000 fiber analyses will be performed. Staple length will be measured with the OFDA 2000. Shear weight will be recorded by the owner.

Fleece samples from three specific areas will be taken from the mid hip, barrel, and shoulder. Samples should be equal in width to the electric shearing head, identified and placed in a zip lock bag. The fiber sample from the barrel must be taken from the same location as the skin biopsy. An additional 3 ounce sample (which is equivalent to three widths of the shearing head) from the blanket will be collected for future amino acid and chemical analysis. A punch skin biopsy will be taken from the mid barrel and placed in formalin for future use. The scientific measurements and tests that we would like to perform on the fiber samples taken include Scanning and Transmission Electron Microscopy, the determination of the tensile strength of Suri fiber and the primary and secondary hair follicle ratios from the skin biopsies taken at the time of sampling. If a technologically sound means of measuring luster is found this too may be included.

The amount of testing performed on the submitted samples will depend fully on the funding available for the project at hand.

It is the hope of the Research Committee that this data will serve as a benchmark for suri alpaca fleece of the North American herd at this point in time. We hope to be able to analyze the data obtained in an ongoing fashion and draw conclusions as to possible interrelationships of the various characteristics. Future studies will be explored as well as the utilization of outside funding sources such as the USDA and others. The committee is very excited about carrying out this important project in a professional and scientifically valid fashion. It is hoped that the information gained will be of great use and benefit to all the membership of Suri Network.



Suri Network Board of Trustees:

Dick Walker, *President* (alpacas@supersuris.com)
Miriam Donaldson, *Vice President* (alpacajack@aol.com)
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SHOW COMMITTEE

Chair: Gary Truitt; info@wtralpacas.com

Co-Chair: Lynn Mulherin; lynn@kettlehillsfarm.com

SN Board Liaisons: Miriam Donaldson, Jim Barker

The Suri Network Show Committee met in the afternoon of August 20th in Estes Park, Colorado at the first annual Suri Summer Symposium. Approximately 18 members agreed that the **Mission or Purpose of this committee is to have a unified and stronger voice within the AOBA Show Division on Suri specific issues regarding policy and show rules.** Also discussed was the significance of working in concert with the AOBA Show Division and assisting in the educational process of Suri Breeders and Judges alike. The Suri Network is fortunate to have as members Dick Walker, (member of the AOBA Show Rules Committee) and Bill Pearce (member of the AOBA Judges Training and Certification Committee).

An open, lively, and interactive discussion was held concerning such issues as grooming, environmental differences between the East and the West, length of Suri fiber on various age groups of full fleece Suris, and lock types. It was noted the AOBA Show Division Handbook only recognizes one type of lock, yet the Judges and the Suri Network recognize five different lock types. Andy Tillman gave a very positive report about his experience representing Suri Breeders at a recent Judge's Training Clinic held in Colorado. This committee hopes that this experience will lead to more opportunities for Suri Breeders to assist in the training and teaching of our judges. The committee came up with questions for the SN annual survey to be presented to Suri Breeders so that this committee can present ideas from all Suri Breeders to our membership and eventually to AOBA itself. Many members of this committee will be involved in our Suri Fleece Symposium on November 11th at the Ohio Alpaca Breeders Show in Columbus, Ohio.

MARKETING COMMITTEE

Chair: Becca Black, Vice Chair: Gregory Kuntz

Mike Murphy: Board liaison

Committee members: Denise Sowles, Michael Alpert, Diane Soloman, Stacy Wilkins, Brad Sprouse, Jim Hulbert, John and Peggy Curtis.

The marketing committee is closely tied to every other committee within the Suri Network...much of what we do is a result of or on behalf of the other committees and most importantly, each member. We had an excellent opportunity at the Summer Symposium to learn and to explore opportunities for all suri owners. **We developed an initial mission statement: "To ethically educate the public about suri alpacas and the Suri Network; promoting the advantages of suri ownership and membership in the Suri Network."**

During the committee breakout session, those present had a very fruitful discussion on various marketing ideas. Basically we determined it best we push the value of the rare suri and the alpaca lifestyle. We discussed various options for: advertising, education, funding and the website. Ideas and improvements to the website are ongoing.

The announcement was made of the first annual PurelySuri™ Herdsire edition. This committee is excited about what this will mean to all of us as suri breeders! The decision has also been made by the board to make Purely Suri an annual publication; PurelySuri™ will now produce two quality publications each year! These, in addition to the Suri Network News, will be a great asset to each of us. This also means we will have a constant need for articles and ideas regarding these publications. If you or someone you know believe you can contribute in this endeavor, please let Mike Murphy know.

The board decided in a brief meeting after the symposium to purchase five new Suri Network banners. Each board member will have one to take to events and set up to promote Suri Network. This will allow us to advertise at many shows around the country without having to secure a separate booth and the manpower to staff it. Suri Network is YOUR affiliate, it is our job to make this journey successful for EVERYONE!

PURELYSURI™ HERDSIRE EDITION

Information and ad reservation forms have been mailed for the first annual PurelySuri™ Herdsire edition. This edition is a great way for you to market your Suri herdsire and progeny. Two PurelySuri™ editions will now be published each year.

Advertising reservation and payment is due at the Suri Network office no later than November 1, 2005. Prepared advertising material will be due by November 15, 2005. Advertisers will be notified where to mail their advertisement.

The Suri Network Board is excited about the edition of this publication for the Suri Network and its members. The edition will include many articles relevant to this type of publication.

With two PurelySuri™ editions now published each year, certain rules pertain to premium space advertisers. Please review them carefully on the reservation form.

If you have not received information on advertising in this publication or if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the Suri Network office.

BREED STANDARDS COMMITTEE

by Dick Walker, Board Liaison

The Breed Standards Committee meeting at the Estes Park Suri Symposium was a resounding success. This was the Suri Network's first meeting on Suri Breed Standards. Attending were nearly 100 breeders, veterinarians, judges and several AOBA board members. There were two one and one half hour sessions both moderated by SN President, Dick Walker.

The conference opened with spirited discussions on the purpose of having a Suri Breed Standard, the role of the SN in establishing a standard, and the value that a breed standard will bring to the Suri industry. Dr David Ames, professor and Department Head of Animal Sciences at Colorado State University, addressed the conference regarding the importance of developing a standard. Dr Ames stated that development of a standard would put the Suri alpaca industry on the fast track to even greater success than we have now.

The SN Breed Standards Committee established the following Purpose and Goals.

Purpose: To develop a document that delineates specific Suri characteristics and traits with regards to Phenotype, Conformation, and Fleece.

Goals:

1) Utilize a broad based, breeder derived, consensus building process incorporating input from all interested stake holders. The first step of this process was taken at our Summer Symposium held in Estes Park.

2) Be as inclusive as possible of a wide variety of suri characteristics while still developing a standard that will provide a solid platform for the future enhancement of the North American Suri.

3) Provide criteria that owners can utilize to add value to their suris as well as enhancing the value of their fleece.

4) Incorporate scientific data, when available, regarding health, fiber production, genetics, heritability, etc. Also to provide a foundation for the future scientific investigation of fiber characteristics, fiber production, reproduction, and other animal husbandry issues.

5) Eventually to provide education, training, selection tools necessary for herd improvement.

6) Provide a basis for judge's training and thereby facilitate more objective consistent evaluation of Suri alpacas and their fleece by AOBA judges.

7) Recognizing that breed standards are dynamic and should be subject to periodic review, an orderly mechanism for future review and amendment must be established.

At the Summer Symposium we addressed the following major components of a Suri Breed Standard.

- 1) The Phenotype of the Suri Alpaca
- 2) The Suri Head
- 3) The Suri Body
- 4) The Suri Legs and Movement
- 5) The Suri External Genitalia
- 6) The Suri Fiber

A paragraph describing each component was written with group consensus. Related positive and negative traits were discussed and listed. Implications for show ring assessments were discussed.

This is a work in progress. The SN Breed Standards Committee will be reviewing the input from this conference, soliciting further input from member and non-member Suri breeders as well as from other stake holders. A draft version of the Suri Breed Standard will eventually be made available to all members and other interested parties for review and comment.

As the SN forges ahead in this process it is gratifying to know that we have the support of the AOBA board. According to Steve Hull and Anthony Stachowski who were both present at our conference, AOBA is looking to their affiliates to take the lead on this issue. We are and will continue to be in the lead. Representing over one-half of all Suri breeders who own in excess of 70% of all suris we feel strongly that we are doing the right thing for our membership as well as the industry as a whole.

To present the Suri Network's progress on a Suri Breed Standard President, Dick Walker, will be attending the upcoming AOBA / Northeast Alpaca Regional Type Conference on December 10th in Springfield Mass.



"From the President" - Cont. from Pg. 1

The weekend provided and encouraged participation of all attendees in committee working sessions. Those committees are Breed Standards, Dick Walker liaison; Research, Toni Cotton liaison; Membership Benefits, Jim Barker liaison; Suri Show, Miriam Donaldson liaison; Marketing, Mike Murphy liaison; and Education, Toni Cotton liaison. The open committee sessions generated energy and enthusiasm which was evident by all attendees throughout the weekend.

With the support of Ken and Marsha Hobert, business managers of the Suri Network, the weekend was flawless, well organized, and enjoyed by all. We are delighted to announce that our second Suri Summer Symposium will be held the weekend of August 18-20, 2006 in beautiful Estes Park and will include our annual Suri Network Membership Meeting. Please refer to www.surinetwork.org for current news and updates on future events.

Reminder, the Suri Network is hosting a Suri Fleece Symposium on Friday, November 11, 2005 in Columbus, Ohio in conjunction with the OABA Fall Alpacafest. The Suri Network is still in need of additional Suri fleeces for this event. Information on this event has just been mailed to you or please contact the office for information.

Dick Walker
Dick Walker, President

SURI NETWORK SUMMER SYMPOSIUM PHOTOS



SN Board of Trustees:
Mike Murphy, Toni
Cotton, Jim Barker, Miriam
Donaldson & Dick Walker



Theilma Weresh and Ray & Maria Rodriguez,
highest bidders for 2005 Suri bronze



Theilma Weresh &
Maria Rodriguez



Marketing Cmte. Meeting



Welcoming
Social



Mike Murphy &
Andy Tillman

Mary Lou Clingan & Fiber Processors
Michael Lipinski, Kathy Haneke,
Debbie McDermott & Robert Donnelly



Maria Rodriguez with
Dr. David Ames Steve & Rose Ann Knoblock



Dr. David Anderson



Jude Anderson, Anthony Stachowski & Mary Reed





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A LADY WHO'S 80-SOMETHING!

by Toni Cotton

The Suri Network was so pleased to have Thelma Weresh attend the Saturday evening social event held in Estes Park at the Summer Symposium.



Thelma is the artist who created the extraordinary bronze Suri which is on the front and back cover of the 3rd edition of the Purely Suri magazine. Thelma added special energy to the evening providing one-on-one conversation with attendees, sharing stories of her fun-filled past and her passion for life.

Thelma was born on a homestead in southeastern Colorado; she has witnessed the better part of 20th century American history and recorded much of its daily life through her art. Thelma taught art in the Nebraska public schools and founded the art department at Boys Town. Over the years, Thelma explored many media. In her 70's she discovered the richness and satisfaction of bronze sculpture. Thelma's sculptures are as diverse as her life experiences-in fact; they are her experiences and the people who have been special in her life. If you would like to view Thelma's artwork, visit her website: wereshsculpture.com

NEWS FROM THE OFFICE

by Ken & Marsha Hobert

PURELYSURI™ MAGAZINE

Current and Back Issues for Sale at special prices for Suri Network members.

2005 Current issue of Purely Suri:

1 copy:	\$6.00 plus S&H
2 – 5 copies:	\$5.00 each plus S&H
6 or more copies:	\$4.00 each plus S&H

2003 issue of Purely Suri

All Copies:	\$2.00 each plus S&H
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2001 issue of Purely Suri

All Copies	\$1.50 each plus S&H
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These issues can be a great marketing tool for you to give to prospective Suri Alpaca breeders. Order your supply now by contacting the Suri Network Office at: PO Box 1984, Estes Park, CO 80517; Phone 970-586-5876; fax 970-586-6685; or email SuriAssociation@aol.com.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Suri Network is now 402! Thank you to all who have supported the Suri Network and with your help we look forward to increasing the membership in the future.

We are here to serve you so please do not hesitate to give us a call if you would like to place an order or have any questions!