

Membership Meeting Minutes
May 2, 2004
Ground Round, Augusta, ME

Old Business

Lunch started at 11:00 am. Then the meeting was called to order at 11:40 am with a Round Robin of introductions by all members present.

1. Copies of the Treasurer's Reports and minutes from the previous meeting had been distributed to tables before the start of the meeting for membership review. Both were accepted by the membership through raised hand vote.
Committee Reports

2. Education Committee: Bonnie Callery reminded members of the Neonatal clinic on 5/22-5/23 with Dr. LaRue Johnson at Maple Hill Farm in Hallowell. Three Maine vets will be attending the seminar as well. They will receive CEU credits for their attendance towards their re-licensing requirements.

Bonnie announced the schedule of speakers through the end of the year as follows:

June: Wells Vet to discuss ultrasound

August: Becky Smith to discuss alpaca training

November: Martha Butcher's accountant to discuss tax considerations

3. Vet Committee: The Vet Committee will be responsible for drafting a letter to FAME outlining the need for and requesting efforts towards recruiting more large animal vets into the state of Maine. Work should begin before the next membership meeting.

4. Fiber Frolic Committee: Nancy Williams explained the two raffles which MAA will hold at the Fiber Frolic, one for a Jotul Stove and another for alpaca fleeces. Tickets have been printed and are available – red for the stove and yellow for fleece. Please sign some out and sell them to friends and neighbors, etc. Several fleeces as well as 5 lbs. free fiber processing were offered during the meeting. If you have a fleece you'd like to donate and/or want a group of raffle tickets, please contact Nancy at nancy@newaim.com. Members should be aware that purchase of these tickets does not constitute a charitable donation.

Nancy presented the banner she had made for the Maine Alpaca Association for \$34.00. She asked for volunteers at the table during the Frolic.

In conjunction to the Frolic discussion it was mentioned that MAA should be a presence at next year's NEAF.

5. Website Committee: Suggestions were made to provide links from the website to the raffles with a picture of the stove if available. The donor of the stove and fleeces should also be announced and thanked on the website.

The website links to our various farms. Members can set up links to the MAA website.

New Business

1. Mission Statement: Dawn Brooker read a short draft mission statement for members to consider and requested that everyone add, delete, etc. and come prepared to the next meeting with their own versions of the statement to discuss (see statement below). A brief discussion included suggestions to include references to fiber processors and sustainable agriculture.

”To provide support for the alpaca owners, breeders and enthusiasts of Maine through education, camaraderie and cooperative marketing efforts. To educate the public about alpacas, their fiber and the many advantages of raising alpacas in Maine.”

2. Northern Maine Alpaca Association When members asked what the NMAA was, Dawn provided a brief synopsis based on their website, then expressed the Board’s hopes that alpaca members throughout the state will join together in MAA. Meetings had been scheduled in Augusta specifically to provide a better central location for all members to attend. Judi, who belongs to both groups, offered her observation that there was no animosity toward MAA, just an unsure feeling about their specific needs being met in what seemed more like an organization with a southern orientation. Members suggested sending specific invitations to alpaca owners in the northern part of the state to join and participate in our meetings and educational/marketing events. Other suggestions included 1) changing meeting sights during the year so that some are in Augusta and some in Bangor, 2) developing cooperative marketing efforts encouraging prospective customers northward, and having the Board contact NMAA to discuss their interests and concerns and how we might address them. We asked Judi to extend our hearty desire to include them into MAA with the conviction to work toward the good of all members, north, south, east, and west.

3. Marketing Committee: A Marketing Committee was formed including:
Skip Taylor, Gay DeHart, Judi Howard, Claudia Raessler, and Al Maloney

An open brainstorming of possible ideas/strategies included the following ideas:

- a. The committee needs feedback regarding what’s been done in the state so far
- b. Website marketing ideas like Herdsire of the Month and/or a Featured Female; two new animals each month for \$50 each to bring in revenue to be chosen by lottery – need to develop strategies to get people to the website and from the website to individual farms. One shopping site for all farms on the website

- c. Focus on Open Farm Day as a statewide event
- d. Develop a MAA brochure to be distributed by individual farms to customers and at events
- e. Bill Green's Maine show on alpacas
- f. Advertising in Wild Fiber magazine and tourist publications like Summertime
- g. Advertising as a cooperative among members – majority indicated through hand raise their interest in paying extra for group advertising
- h. Determine the focus of marketing efforts – education, sales, products?
- i. Determine the “image” of the association, the hook, and, as part of that, the MAA logo and slogan development; “One Maine, One Voice” was proposed
- j. Fiber Mills should send descriptive paragraph to be included in event publications such as NEAF; could advertise as “The Maine Mills”; also send information to Maine FiberArts. Mills and product outlets should be an integral part of the marketing plans.

The committee proposed to meet to develop a strategy and time table for developing a marketing plan. Some instrument would be develop ! to gather ideas and needs from the membership.

4. Miscellaneous:

- a. Cindy Mingle will be purchasing Stevens green fence panels and would like anyone interested in some to contact her via e-mail. A larger order would provide a better price break for those involved. 5X9 panels cost about \$50. Cindy recommended that touch up paint be included in your orders.
- b. It was suggested that MAA donate some article like an alpaca sweater to the PBS auction next year.
- c. MAA should set up information tables at events such as NECC and state fairs.
- d. The Maine FiberArts Guide Book entitled “State of Fiber” is being circulated. As an organization we should find ways to incorporate and support that theme in public venues.
- e. A general meeting, membership or education, regarding marketing was requested to outline the basics concerning how to make ads and brochures, what is a Press kit, and what else should be done/made.

Meeting adjourned at 1:20.

Following this meeting was a presentation by Barbara Perkins, DVM, from Turner regarding vitamin and mineral needs as well as medications, vaccinations, and other medical concerns. She has given permission to have her discussion typed up and available to members once she has reviewed it and made any needed corrections and/or clarifications. This will constitute the beginning of an information library as requested by the membership, the formation and functioning of which will be discussed at a future meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Anita Cooper

Choice View Farm

553 River Road

Dresden, ME 04342

Tel: 207-737-2362

Fax: 207-737-4602

E-mail: acooper@gwi.net