

## Calpaca General Membership Meeting Minutes

November 8, 2014

Heart & Soul Spinnery

**Call to Order** at 10:35 am by Laurie Findlay, outgoing President.

Thanks given to Karen Ball and Russell Ratti, our hosts at Heart & Soul Spinnery, who addressed “housekeeping” items.

### **Introduction of the new Calpaca BOD:**

Karen Ball—President

Lisa Beatty—Vice President (excused, having become a grandmother 12 hours earlier)

Karen Kelly—Treasurer (second term)

Sandy Wallace—Secretary

Steve Aitchison—Member at Large

Meeting turned over to Karen Ball, new President.

**Minutes of Previous Meeting:** Move to approve (Dave Scroggins), Seconded (Karen Kelly), approved by membership

**Treasurer’s Report:** Karen Kelly passed out reports. As of 10/31/14 we have \$5975.95 in General Account, \$19,750.05 in Gold Country Gathering account (much of which will be reimbursed to General Account), \$3665.82 in Calpaca Connection Account, \$8,365.93 in California Classic Account, and \$20,335.07 in the “Maximizer”(Savings) Account. There is \$10,771.06 in the account restricted to the UC Davis Symposium, giving us \$58,092.82 unrestricted funds.

With regards to our 2014 Budget, the major discrepancy is found in income from renewals as expected, because that income comes in from October thru December. Not included in the accounting was \$1250 in renewals in November, plus all renewals at today’s meeting. Also, the accounting of 10/31 does not show the net income from GCG, which is approx. \$2,000.00.

Additionally, we paid for a 3-year renewal of our Web address with Go Daddy, we have greatly diminished bank fees and website expenses, and we have come in on target on publishing expenses.

It was mentioned that with the AlpacaMania and GCG fleece shows, we are the 4rth largest Suri Fleece show in the country, with 32 Suri Fleeces and 89 total fleeces in GCG.

**Membership Report:** Pam Brady reported that we have 107 members (10 are associate members). We had 14 renewals for 2015 before the meeting began. Members should place their orders with Pam or Karen Kelly for the “complimentary” Calpaca Tshirt with renewal. Several new members were in attendance: Sherri Echols from Chico (planning a farm in Kentucky); Ed (Henn?) and Norman Rose of Hennrose Alpacas in Hollister; and Sue and Henry Serano of Heart of Gold Alpacas in Auburn.

Laurie Findlay announced that we have 76 farms listed on our Calpaca website with OpenHerd. She recommended that all members go to the website ([www.calpaca.org](http://www.calpaca.org)) for a “walkabout”, to review all the information that is offered. It was mentioned that the website provides a great link for potential breeders who are not members. To add events to the Website, please contact the President. At present, the fall Connection is posted on the website and the winter Connection will be posted when it is published.

The Annual Directory is published on the Website and the “hard copy” comes out each year in March. To be included in the hard copy Directory, membership dues must be in by early March. Also, *please contact Pam Brady via the website or direct email with any updates in your contact information—eg, email address, etc, so that the website and Directory are accurate.*

Laurie Findlay also reported that we have 150 Calpaca members on FaceBook –she and Karen Ball are the FaceBook administrators. Google analytics show that from August 9-Nov. 6, 2014 we had 3648 “hits” on the website, 62% were “return visits”, the average session was 3 minutes. The majority were from the US, but we also had “hits” from Brazil (97) and India (25).

Glenn Waddell talked about his success with the “Buy Nevada First” program in Reno, where he sells and displays his fiber products. He reiterated that he is “having a blast!”. He has also been pleased with sales of fiber to the Alpaca Blanket Project, who offer free shipping for >500 lbs of fleece.

There was some discussion of the many Chinese visitors to alpaca farms in the past few years. Susan Crane, whose son is a linguist fluent in Mandarin, spoke of the positive connotations of the term for “alpaca” for the Chinese (despite the direct Mandarin translation, which is profane at best). It would be possible to translate a brochure of information to Mandarin, if desired. There was also mention of inquiries from China for purchase and importation of alpacas, although Dave Scroggins researched the matter and found that the obstacles are considerable at this point. A warning was also given to avoid being “scammed” into writing a letter that could potentially be used improperly to allow overseas visitors to come to the US.

Joyce Judy announced that the ACFNA fleece collection at Derwydd Alpacas would be closing in the next week or 2, although the Co-op will be collecting until December. Membership “perks” were mentioned.

**California Classic Show:** Karen Ball announced that the venue and halter judge (Sharon Loner) have been engaged. Kay Rodriguez will be the event manager, with Charlen Schmid as the “intern” event manager. RFPs for halter supervisor are coming in.

**Camelid Symposium:** Kristin Grimsrud, DVM and Bonnie Potter announced that the 10 year anniversary of the Symposium will be celebrated this year, with the meeting dedicated to the memory of Murray Fowler, DVM. The itinerary was described and fantastic speakers from the US and Australia are scheduled. There will be a Webinar available for the Vet Track, moderated by Dr. Dechant. Vets can get CVE hours for attending. We do need sponsorships to help finance the Symposium, and the membership is also asked to publicize the Symposium to others interested in Camelids. Calpaca members get a discount in registration fees. Dave Scroggins asked about a student discount for Vet Tech students.

**Report from AOA:** Bonnie Potter (President) and Tom Petersen (Board Member) discussed all the upcoming developments with AOA. The former AOBA and ARI websites are coming together nicely in the new AOA website to be unveiled in the next month or so. New, more cost-effective, membership options will be made available. One of the highly effective programs offered by AOA is the National Alpaca Farm Days registry, which advertised with Mother Earth (print and on-line), Google, FaceBook, etc.—with literally hundreds of thousands of “hits”.

AOA has a renewed focus on fiber products from members, with a new “Fiber/Fiber Products” Committee. There is also a new “Alternative Products” committee, investigating the potential for meat/hide/“compost” products from alpacas.

The new Alpacas magazine format won praise from the membership. Advertising prices in the magazine have become more economical, and it is anticipated that the magazine will come out 4 times a year instead of 3 times a year.

The AOA National Halter Show will be held in Grand Island, NE in March 2015, per the request of membership for a centrally-located show. In 2015 a separate AOA National Fleece Show will be held in Colorado in June, in order to accommodate a greater focus on fiber.

The Strategic Planning Process of AOA was discussed, with an appeal to interested “stakeholders” to actively participate. A survey will go out to all members and it is hoped that all will respond.

**Possible merger of AlpacaMania/GCG:** Karen Ball announced an investigational committee of Laurie Findlay, Kim Bisceglia, and Rick Shipley to investigate possible venues in Yreka, Redding, and Red Bluff, CA. A possible merger would address low attendance at both shows, which results in fewer championship classes. Important factors in deciding on a combined show include a venue on the I-5 corridor with easy access for volunteers, favorable features for vendors, and a generally comfortable “ambiance”. Important decisions about a combined show will need to be made by January, 2015, so membership can expect updates in the weeks to come.

Attendance numbers are negatively impacted by the cost of showing for breeders. However, show costs must be met either by stall/registration fees or sponsorships.

**Next Membership Meeting on Feb. 14, 2015,** hosted by Tom and Susan Petersen of Alpacas All Around in Loomis.

Dave and Sheila Scroggins talked about the mutual benefits of offering an internship in alpaca husbandry to Vet Tech Students at their local college. Glen Waddell will also be getting involved in a similar program.

Laurie Findlay thanked Pam and Rick Brady for handling the recent BOD election and membership renewals.

Outgoing President, Laurie Findlay was presented with a very lovely flower arrangement and our thanks for all she has done to promote and maintain our organization.

**The meeting was adjourned at 12 pm,** with an educational program on the Nunoa Project by Stephen Purdy, DVM to follow and then a tour of the Spinnery.

Sandra Wallace, Secretary