

Annual Meeting Minutes October 24th 2009

Start time 6:07 pm

We began by introducing the board and then Cindy reported the election results. Board members were all present:

Sue Caston	Patchwork Meadows
Steve McCarthy	Spruce Ridge Farm
Dick McCoy	Foxrun Farms Alpacas
Cindy Cuykendall	Song Meadows Alpacas
Ann Merriwether	Nyala Farm Alpacas
Barb Rossi	Bel Canto Farm
Sue Zelazny	Andes Dandies, LLC

Ann Merriwether and Sue Zelazny were re-elected.

Membership Report.

We have 245 members (last year at this time we had 249) so we are holding. We raised membership but only for folks that did not re-new in a timely fashion so our member fee remains \$50. We also changed our member fee to being due all at the same time as opposed to a rolling option. This has made member paperwork less of a hassle.

Treasurer's Report

Sue Zelazny presented the budget and there was a motion by Glen Finbow to accept it. Steve Cole seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The board met for a budget meeting this past month and tried to formulate a plan to keep doing all the great things the Empire Association does (including the annual educational symposium) given these tight times.

The Extravaganza made money this year thanks to our wonderful sponsors. Since we do have the revenue from the Extravaganza we will keep to our educational commitment and have the fleece show and symposium but we are going to scale it back a bit.

We are trying to keep an eye on costs but still hold with our mission to educate alpaca breeders and enthusiasts in NY. To that end we are:

- Keeping an eye costs

- Planning on having the symposium but looking for new ways to help with funding it.

 - We plan on having a herdsire auction to benefit the symposium

 - We won't be able to do the free vet sessions this year.

Next year for the Extravaganza we probably will not be able to take credit cards to help reduce the very large fee.

We may put the Newsletter out only in electronic form. The members present were enthusiastic about this option with one dissenter.

Marketing

Barb Rossi summarized our marketing efforts. The marketing committee took a long hard look at our past marketing efforts; we are cutting back on magazine ads and trying to make sure that advertising is going to the right audience for us. We are looking into a full-page ad in the farm and ranch guide for our members. We have begun using constant contact for sending e-mail to our leads. We had a card drawing to get leads at Empire Farm Days and got a number of good leads that way. We had a welcome booth at the Extravaganza. The marketing committee also looked at Empire's image. They are also looking at the website to make it easier to use and navigate. They are very open to suggestions.

Miscellaneous:

Cindy expressed a big thank-you from all of us to Steve McCarthy for doing a superb job as President. Steve will be on the board this year but not as president.

End time 6:43