



VAOBA Newsletter

A Virginia Owners and Breeders Quarterly Periodical

Volume 4 Number 12 August 2008

From The President

Dear VAOBA Members,

VAOBA Officers 2008-2009

President

Keli Harold
Eagle Cove Farm Alpacas
president09@vaoba.info

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Director at Large

Les Fuller
Poplar Hill Alpacas
director11@vaoba.info

It is an honor and a privilege to serve as your president for the 2008-09 year. I am excited about the year ahead and the challenge of leading the association with so many remarkable events coming up in the alpaca industry. While it seems that we have faced a dismal economy lately, the outlook for alpaca owners looks bright with regard to fiber production, tax incentives, sales and alpaca fashion. Many events will be happening in the next year which feature some and/or all of these, and VAOBA is doing its part at these events to promote Virginia's Alpaca Industry.

I am fortunate to work with a remarkable Board of Directors: President-Elect, Ken Crews; Secretary, Joanna Maas; Treasurer, Fred Obenchain; Past President, Sue Ives; and Directors at Large, Les Fuller and Judy Howe. Also working for the Virginia Alpaca Industry are your Committee Chairs: Education, Patty Fuller; Fiber, Merian Burkett Ownby and Susan Schmidtke; Membership, Hank Boyd; Show, Sue Ives; and Newsletter and 4-H, Ray and Teresa Tubbs.

I would like to thank those who have helped last year with their leadership, experience and knowledge; Past-President Linda Polak and Immediate Past-President Sue Ives. These two ladies, and Glenda Hertless (VAOBA's first president), have carried the brunt of work since VAOBA began, and saying "Thank You" seems hardly enough.

Your Board of Directors and Committee Chairs and Committee members have already been hard at work holding regular meetings and conference calls, and also attending events throughout the Commonwealth to ensure the success of Virginia's Alpaca Industry. You can help them! Their contact information is available in the newsletter and on the website, www.vaoba.info. Please don't hesitate to contact a VAOBA Director or Committee Chair and let them know you want to lend a hand.

What are your VAOBA leaders working on? Below are some of the highlights affecting Virginia's Alpaca Industry in the upcoming year:

National Alpaca Farm Days, Sept. 27-28 *A proclamation has been submitted to Governor Tim Kaine to have Saturday, September 27th declared Virginia Alpaca Farm Day. Please check your emails and the website for updates*

Virginia State Fair, Sept. 25-Oct. 5 *Not ready to host an open farm? How about hosting an Open House at the State Fair of Virginia? There will be seminars and other fun events themed around National Alpaca Farm Days! For more information, please contact Teri Phipps at 840-556-2526 or fireweed@boone.net.*

VAOBA Halter & Fleece Expo at Virginia Horse Center in Lexington, October 18-19 *Don't wait to register your alpacas for this show as classes are filling up fast! The hotels are, too! See more information in the newsletter from your Show Coordinator, Judy Howe, and on the website, www.vaobaexpo.com.*

New Statewide 4-H Alpaca Program *Ray and Teresa Tubbs, leading by setting the example, have a 4H Alpaca program in place and are ready to help you set one up at your farm! Contact them for assistance.*

Continued on p. 3

Committee Chairs 2008-2009

Education Committee

Patty Fuller
Poplar Hill Alpacas
alpacas@poplarhill.com

Fiber Committee

Merian Burkett Ownby
Lagniappe Farm Alpacas
merianb@hughes.net

Susan Schmidtke
The Alpaca Garden
tag@thealpacagarden.com

Marketing Committee

Keli Harold
Eagle Cove Farm Alpacas
president09@vaoba.info

Membership Committee

Hank Boyd
All About Alpacas
allaboutalpacas@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editors

Ray and Teresa Tubbs
Evening Skies Alpaca Farm
rtubbs@hughes.net

Show Committee

Judy Howe
Wildwood Alpacas
director09@vaoba.info

Website Quick Reference

VAOBA:
www.vaoba.info

VAOBA EXPO:
www.vaobaexpo.com

UPCOMING DEADLINES & IMPORTANT DATES

VAOBA EXPO

** Additional information located at www.vaobaexpo.com (and elsewhere in this newsletter)

September 15: Regular Halter & Fleece Show Registration deadline
Fiber Arts and Skein Entries due

September 17-18: Hotel Blocks released

September 20: Earliest date for Certificate of Veterinary Inspection

September 25: Late Halter & Fleece Show Registration
Last Day for Substitutions for Entries
Advertising Materials due

September 27: National Alpaca Farm Day

September 30: Farm Story & Media List due

October 10: VAOBA Farm Store Contracts due
Photo Contest Entries due



NATIONAL ALPACA FARM DAY

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2008

Share Alpacas
With Your Community

Rally the family, engage your creativity, and host an open house at your farm:

- * Host Kids Activities
- * Sell Alpaca Products
- * Conduct a prize drawing
- * Show off your alpacas
- * Join with another farm... or more....

Or ... with the State!

“Host an open house” at the Virginia State Fair:

- * Reserve space for a farm display and up to 3 alpacas at the State Fair on Saturday, September 27 from 9am – 8:30pm. (Set up September 26 at 8pm.)
- * Prizes and ribbons available for the top three displays
- * Sell your farm products
- * Farm Display space \$50; bring corral panels or rent them for \$50
- * Contact Terri Phipps to check on available space (804-556-2526, fireweed@boone.net)

... From the President ...

VAOBA Halter & Fleece Expo at Virginia Horse Center in Lexington, October 17-18, 2009 *You read it correctly, the dates for VAOBA's 2009 show are set at the Virginia Horse Center! Go ahead, make your hotel reservations now and avoid the last minute rush!*

2009 International Year of Natural Fibres *The United Nations General Assembly declared 2009 the International Year of Natural Fibres to raise awareness of natural fibres, to promote efficiency and sustainability of the natural fibres, and to foster an effective international partnership among the various natural fibres industries. For more information, visit the website, http://www.fao.org/es/esc/en/15/320/highlight_322.html.*

World Alpaca Conference in conjunction with AOBA Nationals in Cleveland, Ohio, June 3-7, 2009 *Please watch for updated information from AOBA about this exciting event!*

Official Virginia Alpaca Fiber Product Label *Presented by your amazing Fiber Committee at the Annual Meeting as a way to distinguish Virginia's high-quality, luxurious alpaca fiber products.*

Disaster Preparedness *VAOBA has joined VASART (Virginia State Animal Response Team, a member of the national SART organization) and will be working with the team on disaster preparedness and emergency response.*

New Marketing Program for the Expo *Tholen Associates has been hired by VAOBA to help with its statewide marketing campaign for the VAOBA Halter & Fleece Expo. You will find a "Farm Story Template" on the VAOBA website that is for your use to promote your farm at the show. If you have any questions, please call me at 540-854-5580.*

Annual Meeting Summary

VAOBA was fortunate to have the Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association's newly elected president of the Board of Directors, David Barboza, as its guest speaker at the Annual Meeting in July! David spoke to VAOBA's members about the future of AOBA, 4H alpaca programs, integrating with other livestock groups and what it means to be a member of AOBA.

Committee Chairs provided reports from their respective committees. Please read through the newsletter for committee information.

The results of the 2008-09 elections were announced and new officers were welcomed.

As you well know, the work ahead of us is great, but VAOBA has the drive and the manpower to carry out its mission. I am proud of what has been accomplished and I look forward to the challenges that lie ahead. I thank you for your faith and trust in me to lead Virginia's Alpaca Industry.

Respectfully,
Keli Harold



The 2008 VAOBA EXPO



Is right around the corner!

October 17-19, 2008
Virginia Horse Center, Lexington, VA

- ◆ Level IV Huacaya and Suri halter, performance classes
 - ◆ Level III fleece show
 - ◆ Fiber Arts/Skeins and Spin Off Competition
- ◆ VAOBA Store
- ◆ Free Seminars
- ◆ Vendors
- ◆ Silent Auction
- ◆ Photo Contest
- ◆ Guest Speakers, including the new AOBA President
- ◆ Networking Opportunities

Don't miss out !! Online registration is now available.
Deadlines and other details are available at www.vaobaexpo.com and elsewhere in this newsletter.



Calling All Handcrafters

Highlight What You've Made...

The VAOBA Fiber Committee has something exciting in store for you at this year's VAOBA Fall Expo. We would like to invite any and all alpaca fiber enthusiasts to submit their work for the VAOBA Expo's Fiber Works Exhibit. We are looking for handmade items from Virginia alpaca fiber. Anything from simple to sophisticated can be displayed. The intent is to educate on the versatility of alpaca fiber by showing what can be made from it. We would like to show a photo of the alpaca, a handful of raw fiber from the alpaca, and the item. This is NOT a competition, simply a display. The fiber artist will be recognized as part of their item display. We would like to have these items on display at the fiber committee table and at some point during the show there will be a very informal "Fiber-Fashion show" and cat walk to amplify the visibility of the submissions. You don't even have to walk with it yourself; we can find someone to do that for you. Either way, it will be fun!

Your item does not have to be a wearable. A blanket can be as easily draped on a shoulder like a shawl. Maybe you make dog sweaters. Put it onto a stuffed toy. Do you make baby sets? Those can be modeled on a doll.

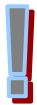
Here is your opportunity to share your hand working skills. We also need volunteers to help with this project and to model the items.



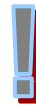
and Show Others How ...

Fiber demonstrations will also be in full swing during the VAOBA Expo. We appreciate all of our current volunteers and encourage all membership to contact us willing to demonstrate any fiber work talent they have. We have enjoyed the bounty of experience coming from our local fiber guild and hope to echo the various means of working with fiber during the VAOBA show. No one needs to be an expert - although experts are highly welcome! - just willing to pull up a chair and share what you know.

Please contact Merian at merianb@hughes.net or Susan at tag@thealpacagarden.com for further information on submitting handcrafted items, volunteering or conducting a fiber demonstration.



Expo HOTEL ALERT



Some folks calling to reserve hotel rooms in Lexington are finding them to be full. This is not the case. When you call the hotel, please use the code listed on the website that identifies our block of rooms. Telling them you are going to the VAOBA alpaca show or Expo doesn't give the hotel staff adequate information. The code is 'ABS' and you need to use that code when booking. There should be about 50 rooms left at this point that are blocked for our event. You can also book rooms using the Virginia Horse Center Reservation Service.



Volunteering at YOUR Show!

It's less than two months away and it's OUR show, the VAOBA Expo, and we're expecting it to be a grand success at its new venue. As Expo Coordinator, I know that many hands make light work, and many hands have been working on the success of this show for some time now. But no matter how much work has been done so far, it's the help of our dedicated volunteers on the actual weekend of the show that will make or break this experience for us all.

We have received many offers of help and our new volunteer coordinator will contact each of you before the show begins to schedule a time with details about responsibilities. But the need for more volunteers still exists.

How do you volunteer? You can sign up to do so with the online registration, or you can always call or email me or our volunteer coordinator, Debra McLeish. Our contact info is:

Debra McLeish, Volunteer Coordinator drmc32@aol.com 276-494-6798

Judy Howe, Expo Coordinator Wildwoodpacas@yahoo.com 540-604-4914

VAOBA FARM STORE

It is time to get ready to sell your products at the VAOBA Farm Store at our 3rd Annual Alpaca Expo. This is a fantastic no-cost opportunity for members to get retail exposure at a venue that was well-attended last year. Folks came just to purchase what we produce. The word is out! Alpaca is in demand and they are lining up to get it! Don't miss out on your chance to participate.

We will be doing things differently from the way they were done last year. This year our store will be divided into 10x10 spaces. You may reserve the whole space or you may need only a table. Tables can be provided if you need them. You will set up your own space. We will still have a central checkout. All imported goods will be in a separate "IMPORT SHOP". We want to really emphasize what we produce here in the USA but we don't want to prohibit anyone from being able to sell items that are good income producers for them. The import shop will not be divided into 10x10 spaces and you will need to mark your items clearly with the price and your farm name. All items will be merchandised together in the Import Shop.

It is a requirement to sign up if you want a space in the store. The form (VAOBA Farm Store Contract) is located on the VAOBA Expo website. All forms will need to be received by Catie by October 10th. We will be unable to accommodate anyone who didn't sign up in advance, as all the spaces will be pre-assigned! If you wish to have more than a 10x10 space, extra space will be given out on a first-come-first-served basis after October 10th. Indicate on the form if you would like additional space. In addition, each vendor will need to donate an hour of time to help out in the store.

What can you sell? All fiber products: Raw fleece, rovings, yarn, kits, hand-mades, (scarves, hats, mittens, throws, sweaters, whatever). Some spinners came last year looking for fleece and rovings and we didn't have a lot. We had lots of knitters from two knitting guilds show up last year, and even though we had beautiful, natural colored alpaca yarns, some were looking for other colors (Go figure!). Hand dyers, get busy! Do you sell fiber equipment like looms and spinning wheels? Maybe you handcraft wood drop-spindles, knitting needles or shawl pins. Jewelry? All would be welcome. If you think you don't have enough to fill a booth consider partnering with another farm. If you have questions about your ability to fill a booth, PLEASE call Catie. There are ways to showcase smaller displays. If you need help merchandising your space, Catie will be glad to assist you.

Lets set the industry standard for alpaca show farm stores! We have much to sell and a waiting world that wants it, so sign up now! We also could use additional helpers so if you could give some additional time to help out, it would be greatly appreciated. Contact Catie Dutcher if you have any questions.

Catie Dutcher, 14566 Nina Ct, Waterford, VA 20197, Catie@butterlyhill.net, 703-475-2978

VAOBA Expo Silent Auction

It's time once again to ask for your generous donations to the VAOBA Alpaca Expo Silent Auction. How can you help make this year's silent auction a success? You can donate an item or volunteer your time to help with the auction!

Here's a few ideas of items to donate: heated water buckets, tack, books, handmade items, basket of yarn, cria coats, gift certificates, wine basket, services, cria kit, alpaca clothing, and anything else you can think of! Consider donating a breeding to your award winning herdsire.

Go to www.VAOBAExpo.com and click the "forms" link on your left. Scroll down to the "Auction Donation Form" or the "Breeding Auction Form". Click on the form, print, and fill it out with your donation information. Email it or send it to the address listed at the bottom of the form. To volunteer simply call one of the contacts listed below. Pat yourself on the back for doing your part in making the 2008 VAOBA Alpaca Expo Silent Auction a success!

For more information about donating or volunteering for the silent auction please contact Dawn Dolpp at 804-365-7949, Dawn@MadaVemiAlpacas.com or Terrie Reynolds at 304-856-1502, info@BearGardenFarms.com.

Virginia's Finest Alpaca Fiber!

We are so very excited to announce the unveiling of our own Virginia Alpaca Fiber label! This label provides a fantastic opportunity to market VA alpaca fiber and VA alpaca fiber products which both promotes our state alpaca fiber industry and sends a message to our state agriculture department that we are serious in our alpaca farming endeavors. The VAOBA website will have usage rights and guidelines to allow all VAOBA members access and use of the official VA Alpaca Fiber label. Celebrate this high potential marketing tool by using it! Our membership has repeatedly asked for assistance in promoting their alpaca fiber and we feel strongly that this new label will come to be recognized as a label for superior quality alpaca fiber and workmanship.

VAOBA Fiber Committee
Merian Burkett Ownby, Susan Schmidtke

Calling All Authors and Advertisers!

VAOBA members are welcome to submit articles and 'inserts' for the quarterly VAOBA newsletter to share experiences as alpaca owners, advertise an event, herdsire, etc. All content is reviewed by the VAOBA President prior to publication. Deadlines for newsletter submissions for 2008-2009 are planned as follows: 31 October 2008, 31 January 2009, 30 April 2009, and 31 July 2009 so that the newsletter can be mailed by the middle of the following month.

The cost for inserts is \$40 per page (single or double sided). Articles or other notices may be submitted to the newsletter editors electronically at rtubbs@hughes.net. Inserts must be submitted in hard copy (140 copies) to the VAOBA President for inclusion in the newsletter following printing. Questions may be directed to the VAOBA President at president09@vaoba.info or the newsletter editors.



Market Your Farm for the VAOBA EXPO



Here's the "easy button" you've been looking for! Check out the Farm Story Template located on the Expo website. Complete the form, enter the names of local newspapers and radio stations, and let Tholen Associates do the rest! Help spread word of the EXPO throughout Virginia and let your community know your farm will be there!

Show Check-In and Compliance Checking

By Judy Howe (VAOBA Expo Coordinator)

Ahh, another show season is about to begin and a smooth show check-in process can surely get the show off to a great start, or leave a bad taste in your mouth depending on how it goes. We're aiming for the GREAT START approach. We were very lucky this month to have a full day of training (offered free to all VAOBA members) on compliance checking from Connie Alexander. Her expertise comes from 5 years of experience running the AOBA show division. We learned the ins and outs of properly determining color as well as fleece length according to the current AOBA rule book. This is what you should expect at the VAOBA Expo on Friday, October 17th.

Check in starts at 12:00 noon and goes till 8:00 pm. You will proceed to the show office in your vehicles, or get in line if there is a back up. The show vets will come to your trailer with booties to check microchips, do a visual check of your alpacas and collect CVIs. You will then proceed to the show office and will receive your stalling assignment. The barn manager, with assistance from 4-H volunteers will assist you in finding your stalls and the 4-H volunteers may be available to assist you in unloading your trailers. Please arrive no later than 8:00 pm.

Once your trailer is unloaded and parked, you may proceed with bringing your animals to the coliseum for compliance checking and to receive your show packet. All animals will be checked in the ring with the lighting that will be used in the show. There should be up to four compliance teams working to get you processed quickly. At station 1 you will tell the staff person your farm name and receive your list of entries. Station 2 will be one of up to four compliance teams which will consist of 3 individuals trained to check your animals. Each animal will be fleece length and color checked. Any questions about color and fiber length will be resolved at the time of check-in. Please check your animal's color with the current ARI Color Chart and the 2008 AOBA Show Division Handbook color definitions before filling out the class entry form. Please review the 2008 AOBA Show Division Handbook for color definitions, as these color definitions will take precedence. New ARI color charts that are used for both Huacaya and Suri have been purchased and will be the only color charts used. Upon final checking of your show string, you will proceed to station 3 (show superintendent) where you hand in your signed entry list with any changes that may need to be made due to fleece length or color check results. If needed, the show superintendent will immediately make changes to the entry database, change the class and make sure your animal's number in the show packet is updated with the correct class. We're looking to make this show a great experience for you and your animals. See you in October!

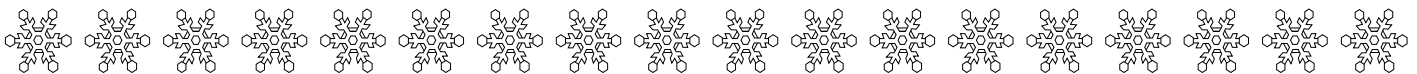
4-H & VAOBA - A Great Partnership



The 4-H program has traditionally provided a way for America's youth to develop leadership and other life skills through working with livestock. With more 4-H Alpaca Clubs beginning to form in the state of Virginia, the 4-H clubs will be partnering with VAOBA this year to provide opportunities for the 4-Hers at the Expo. On Friday, they will assist show participants with locating their assigned stalls and participate in a competition where they will be delivering presentations they've prepared on alpaca-related topics. On Saturday and Sunday, they will tend a booth dedicated to sharing information about 4-H programs in the state of Virginia, assisting with other aspects of the show, and participating in the VAOBA youth competitions.

The partnership between 4-H and VAOBA this year has also created an opportunity to partner with the Veterinary School at Virginia Tech. Veterinary students will attend the Expo on Friday to serve as judges for the presentation competition and will take advantage of opportunities to observe healthy alpacas present at the Expo.

Contact Ray Tubbs (540-775-4053, rtubbs@hughes.net) if you have 4-Hers who would like to participate in these opportunities or would be willing to let the veterinary students observe your alpacas. If you're interested in starting a 4-H club and would like more information, be sure to attend Ray's presentation on "Starting a 4-H Alpaca Club" at the Expo. See you there!



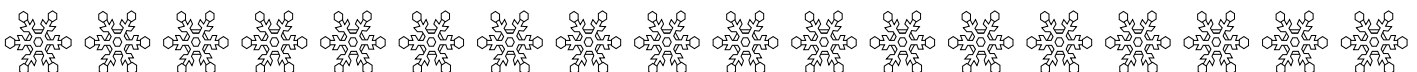
Donations needed for Student Design Competition

Schools were contacted for the Student Design Competition. One of the first responses was from VA Tech from Dr Jihyun Kim. She is planning on including the competition in her Fashion Design curriculum this fall in a group project that might have around 50 students.

AOBA is limited in what they can send her for yarns and roving. AOBA will be sending out the standard sample kit which has 50 yard samples of 8 colors of yarn, 1 oz bags of 5 colors of roving and 4' X 4" fabric samples. But it sounds like she'll need much more than that...plus this is a good opportunity for VAOBA interaction with VA Tech.

We're trying NOT to supply them with SA (imported yarns), and trying to only give them natural colors in 100% alpaca. That's the only stipulation. Please do what you can to help supply the school with alpaca samples. This is so very important to our industry.

For additional information, contact Merian (VAOBA Fiber Committee) at 540-661-3537 or by email merian@lagniappe-farm.com.



A Fiber Works Expo

To put me in charge of something comes with the understanding that there is an ever present 5-year old who lives within me just waiting for a chance to express herself. How does that affect the VAOBA Alpaca Expo coming in October? I am officially on the fiber committee, which automatically has me participating with the fiber aspect of the Expo. Much administration is needed to properly run the show aspect and I gratefully, I mean gracefully, defer to my fiber committee cohort Merian on all accounts of rules and regulations. No, I much prefer the more loosely translatable stuff. Hence I am in charge of what I refer to as the Fiber Works Exhibit.

Ok, so imagine this: an area designated to showing off a magnificent mélange of fantastical fiber creations all derived from alpaca fiber with the sole intent to showcase '*Possibilities*'. No rules, no ribbons, just a gathering of works from novice to advanced to offer both the public as well as alpaca owners a spectrum of what is possible when alpaca fiber is an option. Beautiful! How inspiring might that be? Not only does it help to get the creative forces jiving for those alpaca owners who have used every excuse in the book as to why they have not, can not, do not know how to use the alpaca fiber they have harvested (for years) it may invoke the creative spirit in new folks. And isn't that what we all want? New interest in alpaca fiber and the many uses of. I am sure some folks have no need to further utilize the alpaca fiber they shear as they sell out of raw and processed fiber each year but I am quite confident there are those who have become unintended collectors. All the more reason to participate by contributing to the Fiber Works to help inspire or by stopping by the exhibit to be inspired.

Contributing is easy! Any alpaca fiber item that has been handcrafted is what we want to show along with 2 things: 1) a sandwich size bag of fiber from the alpaca who grew the fiber. Raw would be great because the idea is for folks to see and feel the origin of the end result. That can be a real eye-opener. And 2) a photo of the alpaca who grew the fiber. We are NOT critiquing. Histograms are not a part of the display. The photo is to help people make the connection between the animal and the end product. As in, "I have one of those. Perhaps I can use that fleece..." Or "I might need to get one of those so that I can make this item..." For info on how, where & when to send alpaca stuff, email me at tag@thealpacagarden.com . What fun!

Susan Schmidtke of The Alpaca Garden (540) 854-6907

VAOBA Fiber Works Exhibit Entry Form (due 10/04/08)

Name of person submitting item: _____

Farm name: _____

Contact info: _____

Item description: _____

Process (knitted, wet felted, dry felted, crochet, woven etc):

% of alpaca fiber: _____ Other fiber: _____

% of other fiber : _____ Other: _____

Name of alpaca: _____

Age: _____ Color: _____

Circle: Male Female **Circle:** Breeder Non-Breeder

Remember to:

~ Included a photo of alpaca with entry.

~ Include sandwich sized bag-full of raw fiber used to make item.

___ I would love to model my item :) ___ Not a chance! ___ N/A

Send form to:

Susan Schmidtke 26501 Stonesiffer Ln, Unionville, VA 22567 Mail form, photo and fiber to above address by 10/04. Items can be mailed or hand delivered to above address. Items submitted at the Expo must be received by Friday 10/17 at 9:00 am



Virginia Alpaca Owners & Breeders Association
Membership Application

_____ I would like to become a VAOBA Farm Member with full voting rights to all matters of the organization and full benefits and privileges. I realize I must currently reside in the state of Virginia and own alpacas to become a member at this level.

One Farm Membership per Farm
Dues: \$100.00 ~ Membership Year 7/1/08 – 6/30/09

_____ I would like to become a VAOBA Associate Member. As such I have no voting rights but am entitled to take part in all membership meetings and all VAOBA sponsored activities. I may or may not live in the state of Virginia.

Dues: \$75.00 ~ Membership Year 7/1/08 – 6/30/09

Name: _____

Farm Name: _____

Address: _____

Street

City

VA County

State

Zip

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____ Web Site: _____

Are you currently a member of AOBA? _____ Yes _____ No

Please make check payable to VAOBA and send with this application to:
Hank Boyd, Membership Chair
18295 Hewlett Road
Beaverdam, VA 23015