Membership Committee (MemberCom) MINUTES

Committee Members: Jim Beck (absent)
Ruth Anne Goss
Michelle Kutzler
Bonnie Potter, Chair
Guest: Debi Garvin, ILR Secretary

Meeting: **Conference Call – Wednesday, February 8, 2017**
7 PM Eastern Time/4 PM Pacific Time

1.0 Meeting Opening

1.1 AOA News of Importance: Potter briefly discussed current activities including the formation of the Election Committee, the status of the Shining Star Award, the upcoming National Halter Show, the National Fleece Conference and the status of development of the Breed Standard for Huacaya and Suri alpacas.

2.0 Unfinished Business

2.1 ILR Camelid Companion Certification (CCC). Debi Garvin, ILR Secretary, joined us to discuss the program and the information that she emailed in advance of the meeting. They started the program because many camelid owners want to do something with their animals, but they do not want the expense of showing and/or they don't want to compete against each other. Also, sometimes people purchase an animal and find out after the fact that it is difficult to handle. Certification could be a good marketing tool. The Level 1 skills are basic handling skills such as haltering, leading and loading. Participant must demonstrate each skill 3 times with 2 different certifiers. They designed the program to be inexpensive and simple with minimal paperwork. No cost to get certified and only cost to member is obtaining the certificate from ILR. Must be an ILR member to participate and animals must be registered or listed with ILR to be certified. Much of the program is based on the honor system and they have kept expenses, such as obstacles, to a minimum. It is still a fledgling program but the goal is to provide an additional forum for organizational participation, especially for beginners/youth. The membership committee requested that Debi discuss with the ILR Board the possibility of AOA adopting and/or partnering with them on the CCC program. She agreed to discuss it at their meeting which occurs later today.

2.2 Continued Brainstorming Ideas to Increase Value of Membership. The committee members reviewed the benefits associated with Registry Level membership. There is great value in receiving Alpacas Magazine and many current members, especially the Alpaca Owners, do not realize that for $15 they have access to the digital magazine because the benefit *"Access to Digital Alpacas Magazine"* is way down on the list of benefits given to potential members. Once someone becomes a Registry member, *Access to Alpacas Magazine online* is noted as 5th on the list of items you are provided with your membership, thus some Registry members are not aware of this benefit. It was suggested that if more members realize they receive the digital Alpacas Magazine as a benefit, they will be more likely to renew. If Alpacas Magazine readership goes up, more members may want to advertise in the magazine. The committee members all agreed to recommend that the AOA staff focus more attention on the access to Alpacas Magazine as a benefit of Registry membership, and that information on where/how to access the magazine be given more emphasis in the information given to members when they renew/become a Registry member.

There was a discussion about the vast amount of information available on alpacainfo.com under "Learn About Alpacas"/AlpacaAcademy. All of the information is available to the public. Categories of information include: About Alpacas, Alpaca Fiber, Alpaca Registry, Alpaca Research, Alpaca Shows, Alpacas As A Business, Care & Health, Disaster Preparedness, Embryo Transfer, EPDs, Farm Management, Genetics & Breeding and Marketing. Most categories have general information followed by links to articles relevant to the category. It was agreed that general information is helpful to people considering alpaca ownership, but more detailed information should be a benefit available only to those paying dues. Kutzler made a motion to recommend to the AOA Board to change the access to allow the public/non-dues paying members access only to the general information in each category, and to restrict access to the articles listed under each category to those who pay dues to become Registry or Association members. Ruth seconded the motion. Motion carried 3 to 0 (Beck absent).

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3.0 Approval of Minutes

3.1 No action was taken on the minutes of 1/11/17 meeting.

4.0 Meeting Wrap

4.1 Review Action Items: Potter reviewed action items.

4.2 Next Meeting Date: Second Wednesday, March 8, 2017 at 4 PM Pacific/7 PM Eastern.

3.3 Adjournment: meeting adjourned at 5:03 PM Pacific Time.

Minutes submitted by Bonnie Potter.