



# HIDDEN GEM NEWS

May 2010

An informational newsletter published by Hidden Gem Ranch

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- Interesting items

Have you seen alpacas in the news or on television? Check out these links

A commercial with alpacas.

<http://tinyurl.com/23omeg>  
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An interview covering an alpaca farm in South Carolina.

<http://tinyurl.com/2clw7x6>

A surfing alpaca!

<http://tinyurl.com/ye6r3ny>

Interview on the Today show.

<http://tinyurl.com/2c8kqhr>

## Summer heat



Shearing the alpacas is the first thing to do in preparation for the summer's heat. The next most important item is to provide plenty of cool water. Automatic waterers are great, but if you don't have any, make sure that you change the water regularly. You can also keep the water cool by using 2 liter plastic bottles that have been partially filled with water and frozen. You must provide shade from the sun. Use of fans is another option. We don't have a barn, but use carports for shade. We also extend our pastures into the trees which also provide evaporative cooling. On hot days we turn on the fans and have "kiddie pools" and/or hose down the animal's bellies on a regular basis. Heat stress can kill alpacas or make them infertile. Keep your alpacas cool!

## Breeding

Springtime is known for births and exciting new crias, and then comes re-breeding. With a gestation period of 11.5 months, the breedings you do this year will result in crias born near the same time next year. Spring breeding is preferred for a variety of reasons. Some of these are less stress on the female, ample grazing pastures, and longer gestation period (those bred in the fall usually have an 11 month gestation period). Crias born in the spring also benefit by having plenty of fresh grass to graze on and don't have to deal with the colder weather approaching as those born in the fall. We try not to breed in the summer or winter as the temperature extremes add stress to both the mother and baby. Our spring breeding times are April thru May. We evaluate each animal for their qualities and genetics when selecting

## Upcoming activities

National Alpaca Farm Days  
September 25 & 26

## Next issue

Summertime

males to use for breeding.

## 2010 Crias

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, we were waiting on our first crias of the year. Rodie finally gave birth on April 11 to a light brown female that Brian has named Romeo's Sweetheart. See her in the featured section.

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## Happening at the Ranch

We participated in our local Tractor Supply Company's spring kick off and are getting ready for the summer. We have 2 girls due very soon and can't wait to see what last year's teased males from Ohio will produce. We have moved our summer pastures and are getting ready for the summer's heat.

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## Featured alpaca(s)

This month we decided to feature "families" of alpacas. This way you can see and compare the results of our breedings. We are featuring Romeo with the 2 females (Bella & Rodie) that we have bred him to with their 2 daughters (Juliet and Sweetheart). Romeo has improved upon the females. Check them out on our website for more information.

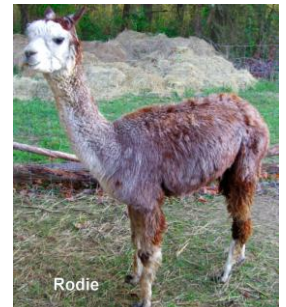


Romeo won several 1<sup>st</sup> in fleece spinoff and 2<sup>nd</sup> in halter.

Bella took 3<sup>rd</sup> in halter



Rodie



## Contact Us

[www.hiddengemranch.com](http://www.hiddengemranch.com)

Juliet has taken 2<sup>nd</sup> in  
halter.



Romeo's



Sweetheart

Dennis & Melissa McFail  
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[WWW.HIDDENGEMRANCH.COM](http://WWW.HIDDENGEMRANCH.COM)

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