

# THE ALPACA RESEARCH FOUNDATION CELEBRATES INDEPENDENCE DAY

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February 22, 2003, marked a milestone for the Alpaca Research Foundation (ARF). On that date, at the ARI Midwinter Membership Planning Forum in Las Vegas, Nevada, the Alpaca Registry Inc. (ARI) board announced that, by mutual agreement of the ARI and ARF boards, ARF had become an independent entity, effective 20 February 2003.

## A Brief History of ARF

For those of you who are new to the industry, some explanation and a brief history lesson are in order. ARF was established in December 1997 by the ARI board of directors, who saw a need for basic, peer-reviewed research to ensure the future of the alpaca industry in North America. The mission of ARF is “to encourage and support scientific research which benefits the North American alpaca industry, primarily in the areas of alpaca health and husbandry, genetics, and fiber.”

The declared intent of the ARI directors who created ARF, and of the then-AOBA directors, was for ARF to be an autonomous entity that was answerable and responsive to the alpaca community. ARI’s intention was to provide protection for ARF from political and financial considerations during its fledgling period while the ARF board set in

place its research goals and policies and procedures for attracting, evaluating, and monitoring high quality research proposals from all over the world.

## We’re Independent, But Certainly Not Alone

ARF has grown steadily since 1997 and is now fully operational. ARF has become a very well recognized and respected foundation that funds peer-reviewed research for the benefit of the alpaca. Last year, ARF received 15 research proposals for funding totaling \$238,227 from universities across the country. Currently, ARF is funding six projects and jointly funding two others with Morris Animal Foundation for a total of \$153,700. To find out more about these ongoing projects, just log on to the ARF website. It contains a wealth of information about ongoing ARF projects and activities and can be accessed at [www.alpacaresearchfoundation.org](http://www.alpacaresearchfoundation.org).

If you prefer your science in smaller bites, the Investigator Profile Program may be for you. The Investigator Profile Program, which recruits non-scientists to write lay articles about ARF-funded projects for *Alpacas Magazine*, has been enormously successful in giving alpaca owners an opportunity to find out more about research by

reading articles in language they can understand. We greatly appreciate the enthusiasm of the alpaca owners and breeders who have volunteered to write these articles, Rebecca Meluch, Ingrid Wood, and Walt Schiel. As ARF developed, it expanded on the close ties previously established with AOBA and Morris Animal Foundation (MAF).

MAF is the largest private funding agency for research that benefits companion animals and wildlife in the world. ARF’s relationship with MAF has flourished largely through the efforts of Allan Dewald and Pat Long, who serve as MAF trustees on behalf of the alpaca community. They also serve in other capacities within MAF. These efforts have resulted in making available additional funding for alpaca research through the establishment of the llama/alpaca division of MAF in June of 1999. ARF and MAF also jointly fund projects of importance to alpaca owners and breeders.

## Thank You For Your Support

Funding for ARF originally came from a percentage of excess revenue generated from the \$500 surcharge on imported alpacas for the several year period prior to the closure of the registry in 1998. AOBA has also supported ARF from its inception with generous



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ARF's relationship with MAF has flourished largely through the efforts of Allan Dewald (left) and Pat Long (right) who serve as MAF trustees on behalf of the alpaca community.



In 2001, ARF named Deb Hill head of its Development Committee.

grants. When the registry was closed to non-pedigreed alpacas, it became necessary for ARF to broaden its base of support from the alpaca industry. This led to inclusion of a check off on AOBA and ARI renewal forms for donations to ARF. In 2002 and 2003, AOBA has matched donations to ARF on AOBA membership renewals up to \$10,000. In 2002, AOBA provided an additional \$10,000 grant to ARF. We are very grateful for the continuing support that AOBA and ARI provide to ARF.

In order to further broaden its base of financial support, ARF formed a Development Committee in 2001 headed by Deb Hill. The other members are Jennifer Orr, Dave Kirilenko, Peter Canning, and Ruthanne McCaslin. The purpose of the Development Committee is to create a strategic plan for fundraising efforts to support approved peer-reviewed ARF research projects.

The Development Committee has worked hard to reach its goals. Among its many achievements is the organization of the Super Stud Raffle at the AOBA Summer National Conference.

For the upcoming 2003 stud raffle, we would like to thank Diane and Michael Beaver of Alpaca Ventures for donating the stud service for Cantano of Peru. We also would like to express deep appreciation to Bill, Mary, and Char Pearce, Five Star Alpacas, for donating the stud service of Peruvian Augusto. Breedings to these two phenomenal studs will be raffled off at the 2003 AOBA conference in Louisville for the benefit of ARF.

This year, through the efforts of the Development Committee, Les and Jenny Foshay (Champlain Valley Alpacas), Ernie Kellogg (Double O Good Alpacas), and the partnership of Anthony Stachowski and Phil Mizrahie have all generously donated all or a portion of the proceeds from the auction of an alpaca to ARF research. We are grateful to the donors and to Linda Berry Walker, Star Events, and the AOBA Marketing Committee for providing the venues for auctioning donated alpacas for ARF.

In 2002, the Development Committee prepared and sent an Annual Giving letter to all ARI members. Letters have also been sent requesting

donations from pharmaceutical companies who are manufacturing some of the drugs we use off-label to treat our alpacas. On behalf of the ARF board of directors, I would like to thank the Development Committee for all their hard work for the benefit of ARF-funded research.

A new project for ARF which we hope will further broaden our contact with the alpaca community is the Affiliate Liaison Program. This Program is just getting under way. Each affiliate will have an ARF board member, who lives in the area served by the affiliate or in a nearby state, assigned as a liaison to the affiliate. The purpose of the program is to keep affiliates informed about new research developments and to provide a conduit by which research needs or concerns on the affiliate level may be transmitted to the ARF board.

The future is bright for an independent Alpaca Research Foundation due in large part to the vision of its founders and to the broad and enthusiastic support we have received from you, the members of the alpaca community. Thank You.

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