



**Confessions of New Alpaca Owners or better said;  
"Who would have thought."**

**By: Sheila Scroggins on behalf of all the new alpaca owners who had to start from scratch just like you.**

**My husband Dave and I started a new alpaca business just like you. We were three months into the business and all I can say is what did people do before the internet. Thank goodness for the internet. Thank goodness for the internet. Of course, it was a recession, right, we couldn't start with two alpacas like everyone else. No, no, we started with 10 alpacas and two llama. You know the thinking, why start with two when you can get 10 for the same price. Sounds good, right? Who thinks like this? Someone with no knowledge about alpacas? I hope you enjoy my look into the past with humor and I hope you can say to yourself, thank God I am not there anymore too!**

**Oh**, who would have thought a new language would be required. "Culling", "Cush", and of course when you are around someone who knows the business, you certainly don't want to look so dumb as to ask, "What the heck does that mean." So, off I go to the Northwest Alpaca glossary of terms in my computer favorites listing. A favorites list, by the way, that in three months is totally out of control. And, were not even past the sex terms.

Husband Dave: "Hey Sheila, I read that alpacas are induced ovulators, what does induced ovulation mean?" Wow, I know that one from my long forgotten obstetrical nursing courses. Sheila: "Dave, don't you know that, it means she can get pregnant any time." Hearing my own words, I think to myself, oh my god, that could be really scary. I have an epiphany, recognizing this little tidbit of information is probably the very first thing a new alpaca owner with 10 alpaca should know. Oh, and by the way, it is also pretty important to learn that alpacas can breed llamas too. Almost went there by mistake.

**Oh**, who would have thought you could be risking life and limb. Darn, [catching an alpaca 101](#), was not in the Alpaca Nation library. Now what do we do? Not a pretty site when a two hundred and forty pound

old man is running across the pasture, alpaca wins.

Dave: "Oh, I hope the neighbors aren't watching this." Dave: "I think we might be too old for this." Sheila: "It's a bit late for that isn't it David?" Dave: "I don't know if I can do this." Sheila thinking, oh God what have I gotten into, I should have listened to the kids.

**Oh**, who would have thought I could miss with a syringe. Hey, I'm a nurse practitioner. I can give a shot to anything. Didn't really realize alpacas were moving, leaping, and spiting targets. A running alpaca with a syringe sticking out their neck is not a pretty site.

Sheila: "David why didn't you tie up that dam alpaca. Catch that dam alpaca David before the needle breaks off and we have to call Dr. Skillman." Dave: "I thought you knew how to do this." Sheila: "Don't go there Dave." Dave: "Hey, you're the expert here!" Sheila: "Damn those alpacas."

**Oh**, who would have thought that if you put a herdsire and dam together nothing would happen.

Sheila: "Ok, what do we do now David?" Dave: "Go look it up on the internet." Off to the internet I go. Sheila: "Ok, it sounds like we may need to put another herdsire into the pen with the two." Wow, that worked, newbie alpaca then won't let the old man get to his girl and suddenly we have a slam dunk, rocket fire, deal done. Dave: "Did they actually breed?" Sheila "I think so." Dave: "Well did you see anything?" Sheila: "Hell I don't know, this is your dam business." Sheila: "That went well, *thanks* to me."

**Oh**, who would have thought that if you leave a crack in the fence that a berserk herdsire escapes into the female pen. Rodeo on. Thank goodness Dave is a retired narcotic detective with exceptional take down skills. Just like taking down a methamphetamine freak on PCP. No problem.

Sheila: "Did they breed?" Dave: "Hell I don't know, how long does it take anyway?" Dave: "They were only down for a couple of minutes; they can't do it that fast can they?" Sheila: "I don't think so." Dave: "Me either." Sheila: "Can't be." Dave: "It has to take longer than that." Sheila: "Yea, no way they could have bred." Off to the internet, guess what, nothing on the favorites for that one.

**Oh**, who would have thought how great it is that Alpacas poop in one spot, what they don't tell you is they poop and pee fifty times a day apiece in one spot.

Sheila: "Did you scoop the poop today David?" David: "Did you?" Sheila: "I did it yesterday." Dave: "Yea, but I mowed the pasture." Sheila "Yea, but I worked on the

website." Dave: "Yea, but I paid all the bills." Sheila: "Damn those alpacas." Yes we keep score. I know it is foolish, but we can't help ourselves.



,who would have thought the recession would be a such good thing. Buying 10 alpacas for 25 cents on the dollar, wow. Silly me, that was of course the proverbial drop in the alpaca money bucket.

Sheila: "You bought what?" Dave: "A new tractor." Sheila: "What?" Dave: "but Sheila, we can write it off." Need I say more!

Oh, who would have thought a little camel with big round eyes could cause two worldly people to fall in love.

Dave: "How are we ever going to sell her?" Sheila: "David, we can't keep them all."

Dave: "But how will we pick which ones?" Sheila: "Damn those Alpacas." Who would have thought!