

# American Black Welsh Mountain Sheep Association Newsletter

Paonia, Colorado

December 2005

## Board and Officer Nominations

The following have been nominated or have indicated that they would like to continue in their positions:

**Nominee for President.** - Suzanne Correira (nominated by Tom Wyman)

**Vice Pres.** - S. Stevens Sands (would like to continue)

**Sec/Treas.** - Oogie McGuire (would like to continue)

### Board of Directors

To Continue as **Board Member:** Claudia Pettis (nominated by S. Correira)

To Continue as **Board Member:** Jerry Jones: (indicated desire to serve)

ONE **Board Position:** OPEN - would like to see Canadian member nominated

Mr. Tom Wyman, our first ever (and as far as most of us are concerned our *ONLY*) President, has decided this is the year he should retire as ABWMSA President, but will (as past-president) continue on as a Board Member. He has nominated Suzanne Correira as President and she indicates she will serve in that capacity if elected, but knows that following such a president as Tom Wyman is an impossible feat.

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## The Royal Welsh Show

Sioe Frenhinol Cymru 2005  
by Rosa Sands

We were among the 200,000 or so visitors at the one hundred and first Royal Welsh Show this July, we being Tom Wyman, President of the American Black Welsh Mountain Sheep Association, Steve Sands, Vice President, and wives Anne and Rosa. *(Ed. Note: Robin Morse, board member, and her family also attended the show. Some of the pictures here are hers)*

After piling into our Hertz SUV in London on July 18th, we set off on the M4 and eventually made our way to Wales, crossing the Severn in a veritable blanket of fog and mist. Tom and Steve's nose for sheep proved as strong as ever since our stop for a pub lunch turned out to be across the road from the Abergavenny Sheep Market where a large number of Charollais and Mule sheep were being auctioned. We even noticed a few Black Welsh Mountain sheep stuffed into one of the crowded and noisy pens.



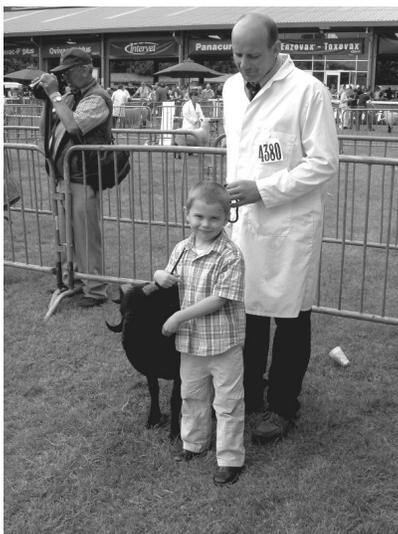
Tom Wyman at Royal Welsh Show

The Royal Welsh Show has been in its permanent location in Builth Wells, a market town dating from Norman times, since 1963 and is the premier attraction in Wales. Sponsored by the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society, the Show features a variety of events ranging from carriage driving to sheep dog trials. The showground boasts a covered grandstand for 3,000 and multiple show rings for the exhibition of pedigree livestock,

including the largest exhibition of sheep breeds in the world. As Tom noted, there were on view 27 different pure bred breeds of sheep in a variety of sizes, colors and shapes, all serving different purposes.

At the nearby Lake Country House Hotel where we were comfortably ensconced, Tom fortuitously struck up a conversation with Idwal Symonds, a former chairman of the Show. Mr. Symonds very kindly led us to the Show in the morning via a purported shortcut -a one lane "road" with steep banks on either side-and invited us for lunch at the ITV Pavilion. After crossing the six arched stone bridge over the Wye River, we arrived at our destination, all agreeing that our shortcut had perhaps not been so short after all and certainly not worth the risk of meeting another vehicle head on.

Upon reaching the showground by shuttle bus, we, of course, consulted our map and headed for the sheep rings. Numerous breeds were being judged at the time: Ryeland, Bluefaced Leicester, Beltex, and North Country Cheviot, to name but a few. This is a good opportunity to quote Tom's reaction to the Black Welsh Mountain sheep seen in Wales as compared to their counterparts in the States. In Steve and Tom's opinion, the Black Welsh both in their stalls and being judged on line, about 10 at a time, were not on average significantly different from ours in the U.S. except for the horns which we thought were considerably more delicate. Perhaps those that were exhibited were slightly smaller than ours, but it was difficult to tell because they were clipped and groomed impeccably.



Will Workman and Son with BWM Ram

Tom and Steve went in search of Will Workman, a breeder from Brecon who

attended the meeting of the ABWMSA that Tom had hosted at Wye Heights Plantation (also located on a Wye River) last year. He was finally located among the sheep pens and proceeded to demonstrate the finer points of ram confirmation to us.

We also met and enjoyed our conversation with Gareth Davies, editor of the Black Welsh Mountain Sheep Breeders' Association Flock Book. While Anne and I happily shopped in the Crafts Center, Tom and Steve went to the trade stands adjacent to the sheep rings and investigated the possibility of introducing fresh bloodlines into the U.S. through artificial insemination, a project to be continued.

From our ITV vantage point overlooking the main ring, we could see that the showground was surrounded by a panorama of unspoiled hills and woodland with sheep grazing on the hillsides. After a welcome lunch of shrimp, chicken, and tomato sandwiches, we were treated to an unobstructed view of the International Pony Club Competition in the ring below. This featured relay teams from Wales, Sweden, England, France, Italy, Ireland, and Scotland with the Welsh team appropriately emerging as the victor.



Hunt Relay Team at Royal Welsh

This event was followed by three incredible performances by the Royal Andalusian School of Equestrian Art. The ornately costumed riders and both black and white Andalusian stallions demonstrated the skill, agility and elegance of world class dressage.

Led by Anne, the group then decided to see some horses at closer range and, acquiring blue wrist bands, went into the stable area where there were indeed horses and ponies in abundance. Some of the stalls were covered by tarps, no doubt put there to shield the occupants from onlookers such as we. Spotting our bus parking lot nearby, we boldly exited through the horse ring where a class was in progress, and so ended our first day at the Royal Welsh Show.

Idwal Symonds later in the evening at our hotel advised us that Thursday was usually the most popular day of the Show, and this indeed proved to be true. The parking lots were jammed, and to avoid a half hour wait for a shuttle bus, we walked to the showground in the rain.



Ram Line Up from the Rear

Sheep judging was in progress when we arrived, the judges in dark suits and bowlers and the handlers in white coats. Since Will Workman could not be found, we watched several classes on our own and later inspected Black Welsh Mountain sheep in their immaculate pens. Most were sleeping contentedly, having eaten heartily from their designer feed bags.

Sporting our red International Visitor ribbons, we then proceeded to the International Pavilion where lunch was provided for all overseas visitors. When asking for information, I was told I did not need to produce my red ribbon since they could tell from talking to me that I certainly came from somewhere else.

After leaving the comfort of the International Pavilion, we again accepted Idwal Symond's generous hospitality at the ITV Pavilion. Thus we had a splendid view of the running of the Welsh Cob stallions in the main ring, a spectacle that provided quite a workout for the horses and handlers alike. Then it was time for ITV to tape a retrospective of the Show so we and the others on the ITV balcony were moved aside so that the commentators could make some final remarks about the Show with the main ring in the background. The blue jean clad male announcer and his blond female companion in pink pronounced the Show a huge success—at least five times before they were satisfied with their performance.

Our last view of the Royal Welsh Show as we were leaving the showground was of more dressage, this time performed by massive

yellow machines, JCB C3Xs operated in unison to the refrain of "blue eyed girl."

The next morning we bade good-bye to Idwal Symonds, to the Lake Country House Hotel, and to Wales and set out for Yorkshire, confident that we would encounter more sheep on our journey. We did, only not as many, and the breeds were for the most part unknown. We knew, however, that our own Black Welsh Mountain sheep would be there to welcome us home!

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## U.S. BWM Show News

By Danny Jones

The Jones family of Lenoir City, Tennessee has just completed a busy show season in which we exhibited our Black Welsh Mountain Sheep at a number of expos and fairs. It was an exciting season of learning for our family and of introduction for the Black Welsh breed to Tennessee.

Our Black Welsh journey began a few years ago when we first saw them on the internet. Intending to only start with two or three, we made the big leap and purchased the entire flock of 17 registered Black Welsh sheep from Ed and Iris Lutkewich, then of Windy Hills Farm in Dunnegan, Missouri.

Our first exhibition was at the twelfth annual **Rare Breed, Livestock, Miniature & Pet Expo** held May 20-22 in Lebanon, Tennessee. Here several hundred people saw Black Welsh Mountain Sheep for the first time. It was an enjoyable weekend where we were able to interact and answer questions from attendees and to visit with a number of other breeders of rare livestock. This is also where we first learned that wood shavings and black wool are not a good mix.



Drema and Gr.Champion "Iris Gail"

The next event for our family was the **Tennessee Junior Livestock Exposition Sheep Show**. This exposition, which is for students in 4-H or FFA, had approximately 300 exhibitors who showed more than 1,000 sheep. There are shows at the county, area, and state levels. Only our oldest daughter, Drema, was eligible to show at this event. Our younger children, Dillon, Dana, and Breanna helped with training, feeding, and grooming.

The Tennessee expo generally has only standard breeds of sheep, but we felt that there was room for the Black Welsh Mountain Sheep as well. We actually had enough sheep that we were given our own breed show at the county and area levels. Drema's yearling, Iris Gail, won Grand Champion Ewe for the Black Welsh breed at the East Tennessee Area Show.

At the state show we were placed in the category of Other Meat Breeds. The judge evaluated the breeding ewes based upon their breed standard. Drema's yearling, Phoebe, won her class for Junior Yearlings and was named Reserve Grand Champion, Other Meat Breeds for the Tennessee state show, placing above several larger sheep.

The judge was familiar with the Black Welsh Mountain Sheep breed and stated that this yearling was a good representation of the breed. Also at the state show, Drema won a first place award for her Black Welsh in the Fleece Show.



Reserve Gr.Champion "Phoebe"

After the state show we competed in a number of county and regional fairs including the **Tennessee Valley Fair** and the **Warren County Fair**, both of which have over 100,000 attendees annually. All of our children were able to compete at the fairs. We had mixed results as far as competition.

At some shows we were given a Black Welsh class in which we obviously did well. At most shows though we were placed in an "other breeds-meat" or an "other breeds-wool" category.

Since the Black Welsh are marketed as a dual purpose breed, we felt quite justified in choosing either category based upon the level of competition. Many of the judges at these shows evaluated the sheep as if they were all the same breed. Since the Black Welsh were usually one of the smaller breeds, we were placed lower in those competitions. However we did place above larger breeds on several occasions.

Having sheep that are well-fed, groomed, and properly exhibited helped our Black Welsh Mountain Sheep to place higher in many classes. We had several class winners as well as some overall Grand Champions for our ewe, ram, and flock entries.

In addition to the shows, we also presented our Black Welsh in talks or events at school, church, a nursing home, and farm picnics. Throughout the year we had many rewarding experiences and occasions to share and talk about the sheep. There was a great deal of curiosity and admiration of these animals. Most all of the people we encountered had never seen a Black Welsh Mountain Sheep. We were always glad to share our knowledge of the breed, but readily admit that we still have much to learn ourselves. We look forward to an even bigger year next year and continuing to grow along with the Black Welsh Mountain Sheep in Tennessee.

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## **REMEMBER – RENEW your Membership NOW.**

Only members can vote for Officers and Board Members. Only members can register all those new lambies that will be coming in the spring time. Only Members get this great (and sometimes late) Newsletter just chock full of Black Welsh News and Pictures.

# Educate the Consumer on Cooking and Buying Mutton and Lamb

By Oogie McGuire

## Cooking methods matter

Grass finished meats are lean, and often require different methods. A hot searing followed by lower heat for cooking is good for most steaks and chops. Roasts are usually dry and often do best with sauces or at least some liquid to cook properly. Overdone, it can be leathery. We eat meat medium to well-done, and getting that from grass finished animals without turning it into cardboard is a challenge. There is a new cookbook out "The Grass-Fed Gourmet Cookbook," by Shannon Hayes that is a great introduction on how to properly cook grass-finished meats, aimed toward the cook who is used to grain-fattened animals. I now sell these at the Farmers' Market as a way to get the consumer to prepare our meat properly for best results.

All of our meat is processed and frozen. I know to either set the meat out to thaw a day or so in advance or I have developed recipes that do not require the meat to be thawed before cooking starts. Unfortunately many modern consumers do not have this knowledge and many will often try to defrost meat in the microwave. Microwave defrosting toughens meat to a horrible extent. Even re-heating meat in the microwave can be a problem although I do it all the time.

When selling pieces to a naive consumer mention that microwave cooking can be a problem. I offer other solutions: use the microwave to defrost just long enough to open the package and break apart the steaks, chops or whatever, then broil or grill like normal. Putting frozen meat on a very hot grill, or a hot broiler works very well. The meat thaws and cooks and it doesn't take that much longer than cooking thawed meat. For stir fry dishes where you need to slice the meat, thaw in a pan of warm water just enough to cut the meat and then cook like normal. Roasts that are going to be long slow moist cooked or braised can be browned while frozen in a small amount of oil, then the cooking liquid added and put in the oven for final cooking.

## Sample then Sell

We are fighting a problem with the term mutton, but legally we have to call most of our meat mutton. My tactic has been to sample out freebie pieces that are unlabeled, \*then\* tell them it was mutton. I've done this in a small way with frozen pieces. Our market has a grill, offering prepared foods made from the vendor's ingredients so this Monday I will be using it to grill samples for people to try.

## Using the Whole Animal is a Challenge

The bane of any direct meat marketer is that people want certain cuts but not others. You must teach the consumer how to use a whole animal if you sell it that way. If you start selling pieces, you must have a plan for how to use up the parts that don't sell. The commercial meat market has a place for all the spare parts in the processed food industry. As a direct marketer you must either develop your own processed foods or come up with other ways to get consumers to buy the less desirable cuts. This problem is even worse for folks selling direct to restaurants. You may need to price your product so that you can trash (or donate to a food pantry) the parts that do not sell.

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## Second Annual ABWMSA General Convention

It's official. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Convention of the ABWMSA will be held in Paonia, Colorado the last weekend in August, 2006.

More information will be coming, but we can confirm that the Bross Hotel B&B will be our host hotel. Start planning and saving travel time!

Bross Hotel  
Bed and Breakfast  
312 Onarga Street ~ PO Box 85  
Paonia, Colorado 81428  
970-527-6776 ~ or ~ Fax: 970-527-7737  
email: [brosshotel@paonia.com](mailto:brosshotel@paonia.com)  
website: [www.paonia-inn.com](http://www.paonia-inn.com)

## Sheep Industry Leader School

The Sheep Industry Leadership School will be held in Greeley, CO July 9-12, 2006. Attendance is limited, and you must fillout an application and indicate why you want to go. The cost is \$100 which includes all meals and lodging. If anyone is interested in applying I have the forms here, drop me an e-mail and I'll send them to you. All applications must be in by May 1, 2006.

## 2006 U.K. Ram Names

For anyone with UK registered stock who plans to register their lambs the letter for ram names for 2005 is F and for 2006 it's H. All registered rams born in 2006 must have a name starting with H to be registered in the UK.

The US association does not yet require specific letters for specific years but if you dual register your sheep you should comply with the UK restrictions.

## Reminder 2 - IF You Sell Sheep - KNOW your BUYERS! By Suzanne Correira

Well, okay, Suzanne is AGAIN saying "SELLER Beware!" (You'd think I would've learned by this time, but Nooooooooo.) The latest reminder: think SERIOUSLY about a contract with terms of sale *clearly* set out, INCLUDING a statement as to when the animals are to be picked up, and if not, make sure that there is some provision for boarding the buyer's animals. Always get a deposit and make sure the buyer knows that if they default on the sales contract (unless there are some REALLY extenuating circumstances) that some if not all of the deposit will be forfeit.

To make a long story short - My entire breeding season for 06 lambs has been delayed because a buyer failed again, and again, and again, and AGAIN to pick up his sheep - coming up with a more interesting excuse each time. This went on at least eight weeks plus. His sheep were taking up breeding pen space. I am now looking at June 1 lambs (if I'm lucky), and that ought to be interesting in Texas!

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### Association Financial data

|                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Donations Received    | 1,151.00 |
| Dues Received         | 580.00   |
| Register Ewes         | 980.00   |
| Register Rams         | 130.00   |
| Transfer Fees         | 280.00   |
| Total Reg/Trans.Fees  | 1,390.00 |
| <u>Total Inflows</u>  | 3,121.00 |
| Ads                   | 889.80   |
| Miscellaneous         | -70.00   |
| Newsletter: Postage   | 18.23    |
| Printing              | 250.77   |
| Total Newsletter      | 269.00   |
| Office                | 536.28   |
| <u>Total Outflows</u> | 1,625.08 |
| Overall Total         | 1,495.92 |

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