

# American Black Welsh Sheep Association Newsletter

Summer/Fall 2009

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### NEXT ISSUE

will be around year end or  
beginning of new year. Please  
participate by sending photos  
and articles. Share your wealth  
of knowledge!



### First day of school

*"She followed him to  
school one day, which was  
against the rule..."*

*Ok, only on my little piece  
of the planet does my son  
have a farm escort to the  
bus. Our bottle baby is  
now a dog! (above)*

*She used to go down to the  
bus stop with us last year...  
she was VERY upset today!  
(right)*

*Photos by ?*



# 2009 Wool Grower of the Year

Eugenie (Oogie) McGuire of Desert Weyr Paonia, CO USA is the recipient of the Colorado Wool Grower of the Year Award.

An excerpt from an up coming article: "Oogie continues to work with her chosen breed to develop new uses, improve performance and use them to educate consumers. For her years of diligent effort, her optimism for the future of the sheep industry, and extraordinary efforts to market high-quality food and fiber, the Colorado Wool Growers Association is proud to honor Eugenie McGuire as our 2009 Wool Grower of the Year."

The award sets an unprecedented standard. The Colorado Wool Growers Association is part of the major industry group for sheep producers in Colorado. They have

never before given this award to anything but a range flock or feedlot person. Oogie is the first farm flock, first rare breed, and probably the first woman recipient. Congratulations Oogie!



Photo by Paula Andersen

Ken and Eugenie McGuire

## Smithsonian engages Black Welsh Mountain Sheep community

This summer, at the annual July Folk Life Festival on the Washington, D.C. National Mall, the Smithsonian sponsored a section on Welsh crafts and world-renowned Welsh artisans. An artist from Wales requested raw wool for spinning upon her arrival in Washington. She requested Black Welsh wool, as she knew from years of experience that it is a superior fiber for myriad spinning projects. As well, wool local to Wales was critical for meeting the Smithsonian's interpretative goals at the Folk Life Festival.

A Smithsonian curator contacted the Black Welsh Mountain Sheep Association, which recommended wool from Shepherds Mr. M.G. Jones, President of the Association, and Mr. Steve Sands, Vice-President. Jones and Sands, of Glen Rock, Pennsylvania and Glyndon,

Maryland respectively, were chosen as both are in close proximity to the nation's capital.

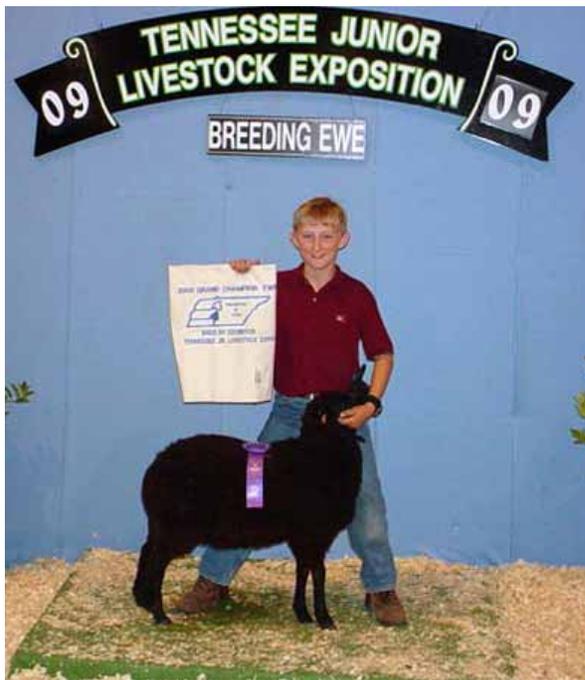
The website for the FolkLife Festival, has some super photos/videos - <http://www.festival.si.edu/2009/wales/index.aspx>

submitted by Kendra Jones Mabon

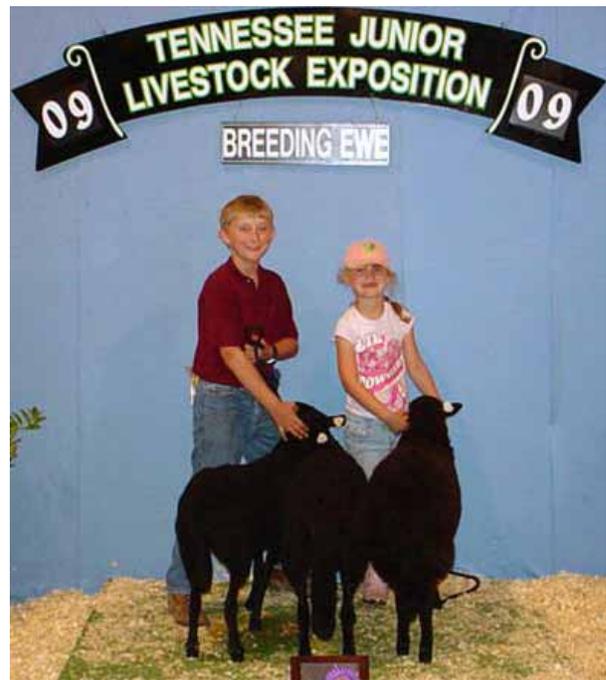
## Non-profit Status Application

Our application for a 501c(3) charitable non-profit was denied but we have applied under a 501 c(5) agricultural organization and that is still in the works.

See more on this matter in the report from the Board of Directors (last page).



*Dillon Jones with his champion ewe in Other Breeds- Bred by Exhibitor*



*Dillon's champion flock of 3 in the same category with help from his sister, Breanna.*

## Promoting Wool Qualities of BWM Sheep

Over the past couple of years, the Jones family of Narrow Gate Farm in Tennessee has promoted the wool qualities of Black Welsh Mountain Sheep in a number of venues. In sheep shows at fairs, the Black Welsh are typically entered in the Other Wool Breeds Class. A major success came for Dillon Jones at the Tennessee Valley Fair in Knoxville. He was named Premier Exhibitor in Other Wool Breeds with his Black Welsh Mountain Sheep, competing against many larger breed sheep such as Columbia and Lincoln.

As judges become more familiar with the breed, they are more able to judge the Black Welsh based upon its own breed standards rather than judging them against other breeds. Efforts are made to talk with judges after the shows to further introduce the breed and answer any questions they might have.

Fleece shows have been another avenue for promoting the high quality of wool produced by the Black Welsh. Dreama Jones received two first place awards for fleeces in the Tennessee Junior Livestock Exposition Sheep Show.

Fleeces have also been exhibited at several fairs including the Tennessee State Fair. The Joneses have entered fleeces at this event in Nashville for

the past four years.

The Tennessee State Fair Catalog now officially lists Black Welsh Mountain Sheep as its own breed class in the Fleece Show. Black Welsh Mountain Sheep have given the Jones family an opportunity to exhibit a unique breed of sheep, demonstrate the high quality of wool produced, and gain recognition for their work with the flock.

*Danny Jones - Narrow Gate Farm*



*Photo (above) is his stall in the barn with the Black Welsh banner. Thanks again for sending the banner. We had several conversations with folks about our Black Welsh Mountain Sheep.*

# Registry Reports and Requirements

## Lambing Reports

We need all birth notifications of all lambs produced dead or alive, registered or not so that we can report accurate population data to the American Livestock Breed Conservancy.

You should be thinking about getting those 2009 lambing reports ready, if you have not done so yet. If you've NOT gotten your 2008 reports in, well, you are VERY late. These reports are due in the year of the birth of the lambs. Again, the association is REQUIRED by both the bylaws and Federal requirements, to record and keep records of ALL births of ALL member flocks – both live births and still borns. There is a birth notification form available, which you need to record FULL date of birth, Birth Type (single/twin/triplet), Sire and Dam Reg. # and Name. Birth Weight and other information is optional. There is NO charge to Birth Notify (it's required). You may birth notify and register at the same time, or register Birth Notified lambs after evaluation for registration purposes.

## How to fill out the Annual Return Form

Birth notifications are done on the Excel Spreadsheet for record keeping. We are tracking stats on fertility and fecundity so need to know the parents, dates and tag numbers of all lambs, not just total numbers. Spread sheets can be sent electronically to be recorded at the registry. Should you want to register lambs at a later date it is easily done.

1. **Verify registration number.** All BN (Birth Notified) animals are not currently registered. If you wish to fully register them then please include the registration fees when you return your form and note which animals are to be registered. Fees are \$10 for ewes and \$5 for rams.
2. **Verify name.** Add a name or individual number for new registrations. The breeder's prefix will automatically be added to all sheep names.

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*Photo: Danny, Dana, Dillon, Breanna, and Penny Jones with a class of Black Welsh ram lambs at a county fair.*



3. **Verify the birth date.** We require complete dates including day, month and year.

4. **Verify Federal tag number.** If you do not yet have a Federal premises ID number you must contact your Federal veterinarian and get one assigned to you. That number must then be provided on this form. No sheep will be transferred or marked sold without a valid Federal ID. This is a Federal requirement. Sheep who do not yet have an individual Federal tag will show just your premises ID as the Federal tag. The Federal Tag field in this form should be in the following format: Premises ID number/individual animal number (tag number)/which ear/ color of tag e.g. CODL01/282/R/O

5. **Verify Farm Tag number.** A farm tag is required unless you are using Federal tags as your farm tag. We strongly urge all breeders to double tag all sheep to prevent loss of identity.

The Farm Tag field in this form should be in the following format: Which ear/color of tag/individual animal number (tag number)

e.g. L/W/36

Colors for both Federal and farm tags are abbreviated as follows:

A Aqua	GL Gold	P Pink
B Blue	GY Grey	R Red
BK Black	L Lavender	S Silver
BR Brown	M Metal	SA Salmon
BS Brass	MI Mint	T Tattoo
G Green	O Orange	W White
		Y Yellow

If you use another color please include the name and we will assign an abbreviation.

If the animal has lost a tag document the state of the ear e.g. L/SPLIT or R/HOLE as appropriate.

#### 6. **Verify the animal is still in your flock.**

For animals that have been sold we require the full name and address of the buyer and full date of the sale. This is required even if the animal was sold for meat or through an auction. If the

Current North American Black Welsh Mountain sheep population consists of

Registered rams 354

Registered ewes 1001

Birth Notified rams 123

Birth Notified ewes 63

animal was sold for meat note that so it can also be marked dead. If the animal was sold for breeding we also need the Federal flock premises ID number for the new buyer. These are Federal requirements and will be enforced. If the animal has died we need to know why. (predation, age etc.)

#### 7. **Keep a copy of these forms for 5 years.**

Return the original to the Secretary.

This action, combined with the proper completion of the yearly lambing report fulfills all the current requirements for the US Federal Mandatory Sheep Scrapie Eradication program. We will be enforcing these rules for all members.

**Canadian members:** We use your provincial individual animal ID as the Federal ID. Use the same colors etc. as above.

Our goal is to minimize the recordkeeping required but maintain compliance with Federal requirements. Your cooperation is appreciated. The most common reason I reject reports is due to lack of complete address of buyers and lack of complete dates. It takes a lot of time for me to track down breeders to correct or complete this data. I'd really appreciate it if you'd make sure that data are complete when you send in the form.

I just got a bunch of lamb reports and have approximately 98 lambs to birth notify that I haven't done yet. A lot of the birth notified rams will be reported as dead at the next annual report. They are typically what people butcher.

Thanks,

*Oogie McGuire Secretary/Treasurer*

# BREEDING SEASON

"Ewes yearly by twinning  
Rich masters do make.  
The lambs of such twinning  
For breeders go take."

*A Old English Adage*

## EWES

- Examine the udders of all ewes prior to mating and discard ewes with defective udders, abnormally

large teat or blocked teats, because even if the ewes do produce a healthy lamb, the chances of the lamb's survival are reduced.

- Cull ewes that have failed to rear lambs to market in two successive mating seasons.

- Flush the ewes by increasing their plan of nutrition before introducing the rams. Check the condition of the ewes by feeling over their loin.

- Use a vasectomized ram (teaser ram) in the flock before introducing the rams.

- Ensure that the mating season is long enough to give all ewes at least two chances of mating - six weeks is desirable.

## RAMS

There are several factors which are responsible for poor quality semen and hence affect male reproduction.

- High atmospheric temperature, such as experienced in hot summers. Optimum fertility, therefore, can not be expected if mating takes place during or shortly after very hot weather.\* (Some producers get around the problem of hot weather by barning their rams during the day, and turning them out at night to breed).

- Fevers caused by abscesses or infected wounds, conditions such as foot rot and foot abscess and even severe exercise in hot months can reduce fertility. The semen soon returns to normal except in severe cases where it takes some time for the ram to regain his fertility.



- Deficient nutrition, especially a deficiency of Vitamin A affects the quality of semen. Vitamin A, normally derived from green feed is necessary for optimum fertility. Rams deprived of Vitamin A are likely to become sterile within three months.

- Diseases and abnormalities of the reproductive organs will affect the semen and cause temporary or permanent sterility.

*From Alberta Sheepman's Manual  
Alberta Agriculture*

## Avoiding ram injuries

If you're worried that your expensive new ram might be pushed around by the rest of the ram flock, take a few days to let them get acquainted with one another.

Put the new ram and the ram flock on either side of a good strong fence, so they can sniff (but not get at) each other. Leave them there for a day or two - or until the flock starts to ignore the new ram - then put them all together in an extremely small pen. If the area is small enough, nobody will be able to get up enough speed to damage anybody else.

At the end of the day, you can let them all run together. By this time, you can be reasonably confident that no bones will be broken.

*Sheep Canada  
Special Breeding Issue 1976*

# Selective Breeding

One has only to notice the differences between breeds of sheep to appreciate that selection can be effective in changing or improving a trait over a period of time. There are limitations, however, as to how fast this change can occur and whether the change will occur at all.

1. The trait must be distinct enough that favourable animals can be indentified with reasonable accuracy.
2. The selection standard must be applied, without exception, to every animal saved for breeding.
3. The selection must be continuous or there will be a rapid regression toward the average.
4. Only one or two traits may be effectively selected for at one time, or progress will be very slow.
5. Only select for economically important traits. It is very tempting to concentrate on some trait which has short-term popular appeal. The error is not that such a trait, if altered, would be harmful, but that the possibility of selecting for another economically more important one is lost.

In sheep production, the most important traits are: number of lambs weaned per ewe, growth rate of the lamb, and weight of fleece.\* (producers substitute "carcus quality" for "weight of fleece" if that is their goal).

*Part of an article by C.M. Williams  
University of Saskatchewan  
Sheep Canada 1976*



*A photo from Rosalie Power in Canada of their 2 ewes, Testudine Ginny and Testudine Petunia.*

# Breeder Spotlight

## Val Fiddler Saskatchewan Canada

This past winter as I hurried to put tarps over the sheeps' hay, I fell of the ladder and broke my leg. During my recuperation, a friend sent me a copy of Wild Fibers (fall 08). I read with great interest the articles about Black Welsh Mountain Sheep and Oogie McGuire at Desert Weyr. Another article featured knitting their lovely wool. I never imagined I would see Black Welsh. And little did I know there was a flock an hour from me, and I would be their new owner!



*Val with ram twins Newland Wicklow & Wenlock .*

The truck delivered them a month before lambing. Spring days arrived and so did the little black lambs. I was a little too eager to help, although there were a few twins (photo-) with mixed up legs that needed some help in the birth process. Six ram lambs and seven ewe lambs were born to the eleven ewes.

Summer was hot and dry, so grass was scarce. It's been a challenge to make new paddocks. Thanks to the little Black Welsh I haven't had to get the lawn mower out - they aren't choosy and eat it all!

I am enjoying them very much and am eager to have time this winter do more spinning, knitting and weaving with their lovely wool.

You can see some photos of the Newland flock at my website [www.OurBlackWelshSheep.com](http://www.OurBlackWelshSheep.com)

*Val Fiddler - Newland Ranch  
Southwest Saskatchewan, Canada*

# 2009 Events

**November 13-15**

## **CRUCIAL CUISINE ALBC CONFERENCE**

Houston, TX

<http://albc-usa.org/Conference%202009/conf2009.html>

**November 21-28**

## **CANADIAN WESTERN AGRIBITION**

Regina, Saskatchewan

<http://www.agribition.com/>

# From The Board Of Directors

No major board issues other than the IRS non-profit issue. We had made several arguments about why we should be a charitable organization that were not accepted. It was always a long shot to get that but it positioned us to get a federal non-profit status as an agricultural organization. I expect to hear back from the IRS within the next couple of weeks.

## **TREASURERS REPORT**

Current bank balance \$4281.34

## **WANTED**

We need volunteers for Board of Directors. Please contact the me if you are interested.

*Oogie McGuire*

*Secretary-Treasurer*



*4-H Fleece Show: Dreama Jones with some of her prize-winning Black Welsh fleeces.*

## **Current Board of ABWMA**

**President**—Jerry Jones, Rockbridge Farm, 717-235-5097 [rock-bridge@cyberia.com](mailto:rock-bridge@cyberia.com)

**Vice President**—VACANT

**Secretary-Treasurer**—Oogie McGuire, Desert Weyr, 970-527-3573, [oogiem@desertweyr.com](mailto:oogiem@desertweyr.com)

**Immediate Past President**—Suzanne Corriera, Fire Ant Ranch, 512-281-4496, [Suzanne@fireantranch.com](mailto:Suzanne@fireantranch.com)

## **Board Members**

Claudia Pettis

Kendra Jones Mabon

Becky Bemus

*Non—board*

**Newsletter Editor**—Andrea Minicozzi, a rare breed, [andrea@arare-breed.net](mailto:andrea@arare-breed.net)

**Interim Editor**—Val Fiddler  
[bvranch@sasktel.net](mailto:bvranch@sasktel.net)

## **LAMB & BARLEY CASSEROLE**

*Barley is a natural convenience food with texture and flavour. Combined with lamb, flavoured with orange and rosemary, it makes a true gourmet party dish yet costs little and is quickly prepared.*

2-3 lbs lamb shoulder  
2 Tbsp butter or cooking oil  
2 onions, chopped  
1 cup pearl barley  
2 unpeeled oranges, thinly sliced  
1/4 tsp rosemary, or fresh sprig  
juice of 1/2 lemon  
3 cups stock of choice, or 3 cups of water  
salt and pepper to taste

Cut the lamb into individual pieces (two to three cups of diced leftover lamb can replace the fresh). Brown it with the onion in butter or oil. Place in a casserole and add the rest of the ingredients. Cover and cook at 300F for 1 1/2 hours. Remove from oven, let stand 20 minutes before serving. Serves 6.

*From the cookbook "Cooking Lamb for Sheer Pleasure" by Jean Benoit, 1974*