

SPRING  
2016



# Romney Ramblings

Newsletter of the American  
Romney Breeders Association

## Inside this Issue:

Culling Lambs	2
From the Desk of ...	4
Director's Reports	5
Romneys in the land down under	6-7
All American Jr Show	8
Fiber Tour	8
Calendar of events	9
Member Obituaries	10
What is NSIP	12

American Romney  
Breeders  
Association  
website:  
<http://americanromney.org/>



## President's Message

by Chris Posbergh

This year is progressing much faster than I expected! I hope everyone's lambing seasons went well, are going smoothly, or will go well. From everyone I have talked to so far, it has been a fairly good year for most members.

As a reminder, the amnesty period is still running until June 30<sup>th</sup>. All registrations are \$6. If you have fallen behind on paperwork for some of your ewes, I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to get up-to-date without all the late fees.

ARBA Board of Director elections are coming up shortly. Make sure you are up-to-date on your dues in order to

vote. Consider running for the board if you would like to become more involved with the association. Contact JoAnn Mast, our secretary, or myself, if you are interested in running for the board. Once ballots are mailed, make sure to vote to have your voice heard.

I look forward to seeing you all at the various fairs, festivals, and shows this year. Be sure to check the website and Facebook page for upcoming events and ARBA related announcements.

As always, if anyone has questions, comments, or just wants to talk sheep, please feel free to contact me.

CHRIS

# Culling lambs begins early

by JoAnn Mast

As lambs begin to arrive, the checklist is prepared and notes are made on each delivery. Not all lambs meet the needs of the owners, so decisions start early on which lambs and ewes to retain, and which ones enter the meat line up.

The culling process differs from farm to farm, but we have been following this line of decision making for quite a few years. It has helped develop a uniform flock, but not necessarily a flock that meets the needs of everyone. Individual management is a

much bigger factor than several of the items included in this article.

When lambs are born, mouth structure is checked and noted if there is anything that shows a short or long lower jaw. This will usually not improve with age, but a re-check should be done prior to a final decision. A sound mouth has the teeth directly under the upper pad, not in front or behind. (top photo)

Ear shape and placement is also checked. If ears are thin and long, or appear a bit high on the head, they do not meet the standard. Black spots on the ears do not re-



sult in culling, and the brown pigment on the tips of the ears is also not a concern. (brown pigment – center photo)

While checking the mouth, nose pigmentation is also noted. A black nose is the goal, and anything less than that usually does not make the retention group. Eyes are also checked, and any level of endotropion, one or both eyes, gets an injection and makes the cull list.

(lower photo – lower lid is injected with penicillin to form a bubble that pops the eyelid and lashes outward).

Legs are checked, especially at the joints, for any sign of swelling or deformity. Twisted or crooked legs can occur and can be detect-

ed early on. Hoofs are checked for color and structure.

We need black hooves and hooves that are symmetrical in size and shape. Light

colored or striped hooves are not always a direct route to the meat line, but they may earn a sale without registration certificates.

Wool is then examined for consistency from front to rear. You can see quite a bit on a newborn. Unless your flock is really consistent, there will be differences in lock formation and length of fiber when the lambs hit the ground. Our preference is defined locks, and enough length to help protect lambs that are born outside with rain or hail bouncing off their backs. That feature is more for commercial ranchers with flocks that lamb on the hillsides along the coast, but it also is good for us. Consistency can be checked at this time, and notes made if there is a great difference from front to rear. The other notes pertain to any colored fiber on white lambs, and the color patterns on natural colored lambs. Colored fiber on white lambs gets them to the meat line, unless it might be a ewe lamb that is a high scorer on all other criteria. A black spot on the leg, usually in the hair, may also keep a lamb out of the meat line.

*Continued on page 3*



*continued from page 2*

Additional checks are for general health, not always for culling. Make sure there is no umbilical hernia and that there is an anus under the tail. Not common, but both need attention. Lamb weight at birth is also important to us. Lambs under 12 pounds at birth are not meeting our average need. Lambs weighing 14-17 pounds is our goal, regardless of twin or single. Triplets need to be in the 12-15 pound range. Genetics seem to be the most important factor in lamb birth weight, but good nutrition from conception to delivery is also critical.

As we have been watching and culling baby lambs, there seems to be a tendency in traits. Smaller wool locks, end-tropion and light colored hooves tend to appear together, but there may be one of a set of twins or triplets that have the traits, and other lambs will have none.

Ram lambs that meet the checklist are also DNA tested at codon 171. All QQ rams are castrated, RR rams are retained for marketing as breeding rams, and QR ram lambs are offered for sale, but not usually kept until yearlings.

Notes on ewes focus



more on the ability to produce and raise lambs. Since our ewe flock is predominately from our own replacement ewe lambs, there has already been initial culling at birth and throughout their first 18 months of growth. Ability to breed during the first or second cycle with the ram is needed. Delivery of a set of healthy twin lambs, having a sound udder with plenty of colostrum

and milk, mothering and attention to lambs, and the desire to keep lambs with her when heading out to graze all earn points for retention. Ewes with limited milk at delivery, lack of milk production as lambs are growing, or early weaning of lambs by the ewe are reasons to receive negative comments. Each year there are special considerations given to some cases. A first time lambing ewe, with a small single lamb and only a small amount of milk, might be given a second chance if she has

strong mothering tendencies and the lamb meets all criteria except birth weight. An aged ewe, that decides triplets at ten years is a good idea, may be given more credit for her delivery of three healthy lambs than for having enough milk to feed them all. Each case is checked and culling is impacted by the age of the ewes and the number of replacements raised.

**Contact Information  
For American  
Romney Breeders  
Association**

**Chris Posbergh, President**  
381 Burnt Mill Road  
Somerville, NJ 08876  
908-310-8548  
president@americanromney.org

**Randy Thompson, Vice President**  
4004 50th St. Ct. E.  
Tacoma, WA 98443  
253-926-8150  
vp@americanromney.org

**JoAnn Mast, Secretary/Treasurer**  
58221 Lee Valley Road  
Coquille, OR 97423  
541-572-3094  
secretary@americanromney.org

**Charlene Carlisle Director At Large**  
510 Centerton Road  
Moorestown, NJ 08057  
856-866-1747  
c.carlisle@littlehoovesromneys.com

**Anne McIntyre-Lahner Director At Large**  
2577 Boston Post Road  
Guilford, CT 06437  
203-458-3070  
olympiafarm@att.net

**Scott Culver Director At Large**  
3455 N.E. Granger Road  
Corvallis, OR 97330  
541-231-3398  
scott.culver@oregonstate.edu

**Associated Sheep Registries**  
PO Box 231  
305 Lincoln  
Wamego, KS 66547



Find us on Facebook at  
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/American-Romney-Breeders-Association/104644142899461>

## Romney Ramblings

The Romney Ramblings is the newsletter of the American Romney Breeders Association. The purpose of the Ramblings is to provide sheep industry news, highlight the efforts of ARBA, announce events and activities, provide an outlet for promotion of your sheep and wool products and recognize the accomplishments of the membership.

### Advertising in the Ramblings

#### Prices: color or black & white

Full Page	\$100
1/2 Page	\$75
1/3 Page	\$60
1/4 Page	\$35
Card Ad	\$20

Classified Ads—45 cents per word.

Above rates are based on camera ready copy, sized to fit the space purchased for the ad. Ads prepared by the editor will be charged at \$15 per hour, with a minimum fee of \$15.

Send all advertising information and news to: Cindy Peterson  
54656 Brady Road  
Myrtle Point, OR 97458  
(541) 572-5930  
romneyeditor@gmail.com

## Deadlines for Article Submissions & Advertising

Romney Ramblings is published in the spring, summer and fall. Deadlines for submissions of articles and advertising is the 15th of the month of publication—March 15, June 15 and September 15 (subject to change). Articles may be emailed or mailed to the editor—contact information above. Photo submissions of Romney events, awards and sales are encouraged; publication is subject to available space and quality of image.

## From the Secretary's Desk

by JoAnn Mast

Memberships, advertising, upcoming events and making plans for our flock of sheep have consumed most of the late winter and early spring days. I imagine that is true for many of you as well. As we now watch lambs grow and market breeding stock, another year is off and running.

ARBA is making progress in acquiring new members, supporting youth activities, registering sheep under the amnesty project, sponsoring regional shows and participating in several purebred sales. As you read through the Ramblings, find out what is happening in your district and throughout the country.

The article in this issue, provided by Anne McIntyre Lahner, does a nice job of highlighting breed traits that set the Romney apart from other breeds. Take time to view the fleece, noting the lustrous locks and the defined crimp. These traits are ones which make the Romney wool marketable and appreciated by many.

When submitting paperwork for processing, please remember that memberships and funds for ARBA

sponsored events come to the secretary/treasurer and forms for registrations and transfers go directly to Associated Registries in Wamego, Kansas. Be sure to complete a work order and payment for your paperwork going to Kansas.

Plan now for attending the regional shows to be held during the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival and the Linn County Fair in Oregon. The annual meeting will be held in November during NAILE, so plan now for a trip to Louisville.

Elections are coming soon. Watch for your ballot to arrive around June 1 and be sure to send it in for the support of your candidates. Results will be announced by August 1 and new officers will start their work on the board during the annual meeting.

Continue to use the ARBA website as a means of sharing information, posting pictures and keeping up on what is happening that impacts you and your sheep. If you have events that you want listed on the calendar, please forward the details to me and I will get them on the website.

## From the Editor's Desk

by Cindy Peterson

In the last issue I shared that I had set off on a new adventure as a second grade teacher. And what an adventure it has been! With just 10 weeks left in the school year, I'm just now feeling like I have my feet under me and have actually said, "I can do this!"

Having worked around kids all my life, I knew, for the most part, what I was getting myself into. But I didn't realize how time consuming, and all-consuming, the job

would be. If you ever hear someone say teachers are over-paid, suggest they go hang out with one for a day. It's the most exhausting—and rewarding—job I've ever had!

If you're someone who supports schools, do you know about DonorsChoose? It's a website that connects teachers with individuals and corporations who want to donate money for projects/materials that directly impact kids. You can

*Continued on page 7*

# Rambling Roads — Notes from District Directors

## District 1

The Big E is looking for prize sponsors for the 2016 Romney white and natural colored shows. Contact Deb Hopkins at [cdcdorset@cox.net](mailto:cdcdorset@cox.net) if you would like to sponsor a class. The association sponsors Premier Breeder. I am sponsoring both white and black Breeder's Flock winners. It looks like Smiling Sheep sponsors Best Head, and Olympia Farm is sponsoring Best Fleece. With separate shows for white and colored, there are many more from which to choose!

The Northeast Youth Show is set for the weekend of July 15-17 at the Eastern States Exposition grounds. If you go to their website (NESWGA), it is not too late to get your farm name on the T Shirt that is worn by all of the youth. It is an inexpensive advertisement for a good cause. There is always a wonderful Romney show; worth the trip to see so many interested youth!

We are holding a District 1 meeting on May 14, 5p.m., at the Deerfield Fairgrounds, Deerfield, NH. This will be a chance for District 1 folks (New England and NY) to come to the NH Sheep and Wool Festival that is held at the Deerfield Fairgrounds that weekend, AND meet as a group—a 2 for 1 opportunity! If you are interested, please contact me for more information. I will be emailing all District 1 members for which I have an email addresses. Please send me your email if you have not been receiving any correspondence from me. Through email, I will ask for agenda items

and send an agenda as the meeting date approaches. It will be nice to get together and discuss ways we can work together to make Romneys the best they can be.

Looking forward to seeing all of those prize sponsors listed in the Big E book, Romney farms listed on the youth T-shirts, and, most of all, seeing all of you in May!  
*Katherine Moore*

*District 1 Regional Director*

*603-659-3516*

*[birchbranchsheep@gmail.com](mailto:birchbranchsheep@gmail.com)*

## District 2

Spring Bleatings! I hope everyone is enjoying the sound of lambs and ewes calling for one another, and the sight of the lambs playing in the greening fields. This is my favorite time of the year as lambing comes to a close and show season begins.

We had a fairly small lamb crop this year with three rams and

three ewes, all natural colored, out of our colored ram. We did lose one of the ram lambs at birth. As sad as it was, I got to do my first gross necropsy on a lamb, and discovered it never walked, nursed, or even took a full breath, but there were no signs of dystocia such as bruising of the rib cage. I don't know exactly why he died, but I was happy to rule out freezing or starving to death. It put my mind at ease that he didn't suffer. I went to the biennial Maryland Lambing & Kidding School back in December and learned how to do the necropsy, among many other things. I highly recommend this one day workshop; next one will be in 2017.

In other news, Districts 2 and 6 are busy planning the ARBA Regional Romney Show that will be held at the Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival May 7-8. It will be a fun-filled weekend with sheep

*Continued on page 9*

## Thompson Romneys

Randy & Elaine Thompson  
4004 50th St. Ct. E., Tacoma, WA 98443  
253.926.8150 / [Randy@bpfarms.com](mailto:Randy@bpfarms.com)

- ARBA Registered
- White & Natural Colored Romneys
- Classic Romney Lines & Looks
- Fleece, Carded Wool & Yarn
- Breeding Stock
- Good Temperament



**Thompson Romneys**

# Romneys in the land down under



**By Anne McIntyre-Lahner**

Thirty-three years ago, I spent time in Australia. There I learned to knit, fell in love with fiber, and became obsessed with learning how to spin. I didn't realize it at the time, but that was the first big step for me in becoming a shepherd.

Over the years I progressed from being a knitter to learning to spin, to becoming a shepherd. When I was researching breeds, I learned about Romneys and became hooked. Finding out that the Romney was a popular breed in Australia served to strengthen my decision to raise them.

Last October I was lucky enough to visit Australia again. I knew my trip would not be complete without visiting the Romneys that inspired me to become a shepherd. So, I reached out to the Australian Romney Association, and met Gavin Wall, President of the Association. Gavin

met me at the airport and took me to visit his flock at Tintern School in Ringwood East, Victoria, and the flock of his friends, Anne and David Harrison at Ellenbank Romney Stud in Garfield, Victoria.

Gavin was very generous with his time, and extremely knowledgeable about Romneys, fleece and fiber, and sheep in general. It was an amazing day, and I learned a lot. In addition to being the



President of the Australian Romney Association, the Australian Stud Sheep Breeders Association, and teaching young shepherds, Gavin also teaches his students about agriculture in general, and about raising and showing Rom-

neys. He also teaches spinners about wool and other fibers. He taught me the difference between kemp and gare (coarse, medullated fibers in the fleece) and how some of the features on the Romney head relate to traits in the sheep's body.

Anne and David were lovely people. They put on a great lunch spread for us, after which we shared

stories about our beloved breed and the differences and similarities in our experiences raising and showing them in different hemispheres. Their seasons are opposite ours, so I was able to visit lots

***Continued from page 7***

**Continued from page 6**

of lambs in the pasture. An interesting note is they show their sheep in full fleece.

After lunch we visited their barns and pastures to see the sheep. The sheep in both flocks were as nice

as any Romneys I have seen: beautiful, wide and open faces with solid black points and short fuzzy ears, long lustrous fleeces, and big capacious bodies.

Photos on these pages show Gavin and his champion ram, Tintern Elmo; Anne



leading in her ewes and lambs; and a picture of Gavin, Anne, and David. My visit with them and their Romneys was the highlight of my trip, and I hope to be able to repay their hospi-

tality one day. Until then, I'll continue to learn about Romneys down under on the Australian Romney Association's website, an interesting read. Visit it at [www.australianromneyassociation.com](http://www.australianromneyassociation.com)

**Editor's Note**

**Continued from page 4**

search for projects in your area, or in your area of interest, that you might contribute to. Find out more by visiting [www.donorschoose.org](http://www.donorschoose.org)

# southern Oregon Romneys



**See these genetics at the Great Lakes Sale in Wooster, Ohio.**

JoAnn Mast & Kathleen Zappelli  
58221 Lee Valley Road, Coquille, OR 97423  
541-572-3094 (home) 541-290-2103 (cell) [soromney@wildblue.net](mailto:soromney@wildblue.net) [OR southernoregonromneysonline.com](http://southernoregonromneysonline.com)

## JOIN ARBA

Annual dues members are \$20/year for adults (\$25 after 1/31) and \$10/year for Junior members.

For an application form, contact Secretary JoAnn Mast at [soromney@wildblue.net](mailto:soromney@wildblue.net)

Make checks payable to ARBA. Mail to: ARBA, 58221 Lee Valley Road, Coquille, OR 97423

# All-American Junior Show set for July 1-3

The 2016 All-American Junior Sheep Show is set for July 1-3 at the Michigan State University Livestock Pavilion, East Lansing, MI. The All-American is the premier junior breeding sheep show in the country. The breeds participating this year are: Polled and Horned Dorsets, Dorset Advantage, Hampshires, Southdowns, Border Leicesters, Cheviots, Cotswolds, Shropshires, Oxfords, Montadales, Romneys, Shetlands, Lincolns, Natural Coloreds, Tunis, Dorpers, Columbias and Corriedales. Several meat breeds will feature slick shorn classes, and several wool breeds will be highlighted. Judges will be Mike Bishop, Rio, WI; Gary Saylor, Belle Center, OH; and Lacie Hoffman, Zell, SD. The National Junior Southdown Show and National Junior Tunis Show will be held in conjunction with the All American.

If you have never attended an All-American Junior Show, you should mark your calendars now as this is much more than just a sheep show. Activities are planned for the whole family, including lamb camp for young sheep owners, a 3-on-3 basketball tourney for exhibitors, a sheep skill-a-thon competition, and a sheep judging contest. Also on the agenda are a team showmanship competition, wool show, promotional contests for exhibitors, a PowerPoint presentation category, an adult photography category, a college scholarship program for older exhibitors, and much more. Food highlights include free pizza and barbecue dinners for exhibitors and their families, and free show morning breakfasts. In Michigan, a highlight will be the cherry and apple pie ice cream social.

Saturday evening of the show an Adult Showmanship Challenge will be conducted to raise funds for the participating breeds' Junior Associations. This will include individual and team showmanship divisions for adults. Nominations and buyouts will take place all day Saturday with the actual classes taking place that night. Come join in on the fun and raise money for your breed's junior association! If your breed does not have a separate junior association, then the money will go towards the AAJS Scholarship program.

The pie and ice cream social at the Michigan All American will be sponsored by the MSU Animal Science Dept., Michigan Cherry Institute, and Grand Traverse Pie Co.; the Morning Exhibitor Breakfasts

*Continued on page 11*

## Washington County Fiber Tour later this month

The 24th Annual Washington County (New York) Fiber Tour will be held the last full weekend of April, April 23-24. One of the longest running events of its type in the United States, the 2016 Fiber Tour will showcase 13 farms including a dairy sheep farm, several alpaca farms and a large commercial yarn mill. On the tour, participants will enjoy seeing several breeds of sheep, alpacas, cashmere and angora goats and angora rabbits. Three farms on the tour will feature Romney sheep.

Fiber Tour members promote the textile arts with demonstrations and workshops, such as sheep shearing, hand spinning, dyeing, clipping fiber from Angora rabbits, felt making, wool carding, and blending fibers from different species. Hand spinners and livestock breeders can also learn how to choose fleeces and live animals for their fiber quality.

Members raise excellent quality breeding stock, which regularly win prizes throughout the Northeast-

ern and Mid-Atlantic states. In addition to animals and fiber, various tour members also feature cuts of lamb, delicious cheeses, and foods to sample.

The event hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. For more information visit <http://washingtoncountyfibertour.org>

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(307) 742-9072

[Tanya@eagletalonent.com](mailto:Tanya@eagletalonent.com)



## Calendar of Events

### APRIL 2016

- 23-24: 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Washington County Fiber Tour, New York. <http://washingtoncountyfibertour.org>  
 30: Connecticut Sheep, Wool & Fiber Festival. Vernon/Rockville, CT. [www.ctsheep.com](http://www.ctsheep.com)

### MAY 2016

- 7-8: Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival, West Friendship, MD. [www.sheepandwool.org](http://www.sheepandwool.org), 410-531-3647  
 14-15: New Hampshire Sheep & Wool Festival, Deerfield, NH. [www.nhswga.com](http://www.nhswga.com)  
 14-15: Shepherd's Harvest Sheep & Wool Festival, Washington County Fairgrounds. Lake Elmo,  
 20-22: North East Livestock Expo, Windsor, Maine. [www.northeastlivestockexpo.com/](http://www.northeastlivestockexpo.com/)  
 21: Rhode Island Wool & Fiber Festival. Bristol, RI. [www.coggeshallfarm.org/sheep&fiber.html](http://www.coggeshallfarm.org/sheep&fiber.html)  
 MN. <http://shepherdsharvestfestival.org/sponsors/vendor-information/>  
 21-22: Kentucky Sheep & Fiber Festival. Masterson Station Park, Lexington, KY. [www.kentuckysheepandfiber.com](http://www.kentuckysheepandfiber.com)  
 28-29: Great Lakes Fiber Show, Wooster, OH.

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

- 28-29: Massachusetts Sheep & Woolcraft Fair. Cumington Fairgrounds, Cumington, MA. [www.masheepwool.org](http://www.masheepwool.org)

### JUNE 2016

- 2-4: Nugget All-American Show & Sale, Reno, NV. <http://nuggetallamerican.com> 317-340-6392  
 4-5: Maine Fiber Frolic. Windsor Fairgrounds, Windsor, Maine. [www.fiberfrolic.com](http://www.fiberfrolic.com)  
 14: University of Kentucky Eweprofit School, Midway, KY. 859-257-2717  
 24-26: Black Sheep Gathering, Lane, County Fairgrounds, Eugene, OR  
[www.blacksheepgathering.org](http://www.blacksheepgathering.org)

### JULY 2016

- July 1-3: All American Junior Show, East Lansing, MA. [www.countrylovin.com](http://www.countrylovin.com)  
 14-17: North East Youth Sheep Show, West Springfield, MA. [www.nesheep.org](http://www.nesheep.org)

*Submit events for publication in the Ramblings to: Romney editor, 54656 Brady Rd., Myrtle Point, OR 97458 or [romneyeditor@gmail.com](mailto:romneyeditor@gmail.com)*

## Rambling Roads

### *Continued from page 5*

shows, contests, workshops, and a casual dinner on Saturday for all of the Romney breeders to gather together, followed by the sheep sale in the evening. I can't wait to see old friends and hopefully make a few new ones!

I would love to hear about all of the Romney activities happening in our district. Please call or email me with ideas, upcoming events, show and sale results, questions, or just to chat about sheep.

*Allison Seyfert*

*District 2 Regional Director*

*410-804-0492*

*[mistyrosefarm@rocketmail.com](mailto:mistyrosefarm@rocketmail.com)*

### District 4

We will be holding our Regional Romney Show at the Linn County Fair in Albany, Oregon. The fair will be held July 12-16. Romney

breeders from throughout the region are encouraged to attend and participate.

The Oregon Romney Breeders Association promoted Romneys by having a display at the OSU Small Farms Conference held at Oregon State University campus in February, and the conference was well attended. The Willamette Valley Ram and Ewe Sale will be held August 6th at the Scio Lamb Barn in Scio, OR. Romneys are always well represented at this sale.

I hope everyone's lambing season has gone well!

*Karen Nichols*

*District 4 Regional Director*

*541-990-0577*

*[Kswannichols@gmail.com](mailto:Kswannichols@gmail.com)*

### District 6

Happy Spring, everyone! District 6 and District 2 are busy planning the ARBA Regional Romney Show that will be held at the Maryland

Sheep & Wool Festival May 7-8. We plan to have a casual dinner in the early afternoon Saturday, on the festival grounds. Dinner will be held at 4 p.m. to ensure that everyone can make it to the sheep sale by 6 p.m. The dinner is open to ARBA members, and show participants who will be attending. It will be a great time to see and visit old and new friends!

Here is a list of events happening this Spring in District 6:

1. DWF Fiber Fest—Dallas Fort Worth, TX, April 1-3 ([dfwfiberfest.org](http://dfwfiberfest.org))
2. Powhatan Festival of Fiber—Powhatan, VA, April 30, ([powhatanfestivaloffiber.org](http://powhatanfestivaloffiber.org))
3. Kentucky Sheep and Fiber Festival—Lexington, KY, May 21-22, ([kentuckysheepandfiber.com](http://kentuckysheepandfiber.com))
4. Middle Tennessee Fiber Festival—Dickson, TN, May 27-28,

*Continued on page 11*

**OBITUARIES****SUSAN STEWART**

On March 17, 2016, a beloved shepherd and friend, Susan Stewart passed away. For twelve years she was well known in the Romney community as part of the Anchorage Farm team, and before that could be seen fitting and showing with Moosehill Farm.

Susan became involved with the sheep industry when she first met Graeme Stewart over 20 years ago. Those who met Susan found a person who always put others first, gave above and beyond to children, smiled through the toughest of pains, took beautiful photographs, and had an uncanny ability to make each person feel important, no matter how "good" their sheep were!

Many were unaware that Sue bravely battled cancer for almost 20 years, because she refused to let cancer determine who she was. At the 2015 New York Sheep and Wool Festival, despite incredible pain, Sue continued to do what she loved - capture many wonderful candid moments on her camera as everyone laughed with her and enjoyed what she, and we, love the most - our sheep and the friends that they bring. Through Sue's pictures, and our memories, we will hold on to her and to those we love the most.

Husband Graeme shared: Sue loved being around the sheep community, especially the kids. She always smiled when one would run up to her and call her Sue-Sue. 'They are the future of the sheep industry,' she would tell people. Sue's beloved dogs Briar and Nash comforted her through many difficult times. Her horse, Jubilee, was also there for her.

She loved photography, as was evidenced by the

number of pictures she took at all the shows. She had a knack for getting it just right. Going to the shows and sales will be very difficult, but she wouldn't want me to do anything else. Sue always thought of others before herself. I'm sure she will be looking down and smiling. She would want people to remember her smile, laughter and the good times.

A favorite poem of Sue's comes to mind:

**A Sheep Farmer's Prayer**

Heaven won't be so lonely, if what I hope is true.

If a little lamb of God is there,

or some old friendly ewe.

In those celestial pastures,

beside still waters deep,

May the eternal future find me,

with a little bunch of sheep.

In lieu of flowers, the family is accepting donations towards medical expenses. Condolences and memorial contributions may be sent to Graeme Stewart, 8 Mynderse St, Saugerties, NY 12477

**JOHN KAMENICKY**

John Kamenicky passed away October 10, 2015, at the age of 86. An active member of ARBA for many years, John was a resident of Vale, OR. He was a U.S. Marine veteran, having served in the Korean Conflict. He was married to Nancy.

Burial was held at the Corinth Cemetery.

Source: <http://orobits.tributes.com/obituary/show/Johnnie-Robert-Kamenicky-102956613>

**Howard publishes *I Am a Shepherd***

ARBA member Margaret Howard recently published a new book titled *I Am A Shepherd*.

This tome includes an updated version of common color patterns, including new patterns just recognized; pricing and cash management for new shepherds and their flocks; how-to information on improving your flock using a multi-trait evaluation system; heritability values for desired traits; and usage of average fiber diameter (AFD) values to improve your income.

Designed to help both the experienced and inexperienced shepherd, the useful and interesting topics are woven together with testimonies from Howard's own experiences.

*I Am A Shepherd* may be found online at Amazon.com or by contacting Howard at [tawandafarms53@gmail.com](mailto:tawandafarms53@gmail.com)

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**Continued from page 8**

sponsored by the Michigan Sheep Breeders, Jiffy Mix & Pioneer Sugar; and a Saturday night BBQ sponsored by MSU Vet Clinic, Willowcreek Farm Dorpers & Wolverine Packing. The Friday night pizza party will be sponsored by Carbon Bio-Green Energy. Tractor Supply will be providing prizes for the ever popular exhibitor thank-you booth and the American Lamb Board will be donating some of the thank-you notes. A big thank you to all of the sponsors. Without their assistance this show would not be possible!

Our Michigan host committee is being organized by Karen Scovill and Judy Moore. A big thank-you also goes to all of the Michigan sheep families involved in the local planning committee. Several local sheep breeders and youth supporters have stepped up to the plate to organize events and volunteer to help out. It is thanks to all of you that this show will be a special All American for our junior sheep exhibitors and their fami-

lies.

Camping is available at the Michigan State Livestock Pavilion grounds, across the parking lot, at \$20 per night for electric, water sources to fill tanks, and two dump stations. Room blocks have been reserved at the following area hotels: Fairfield Inn-East, 2335 Woodlake Dr., Okemos, MI 48864, Phone:517-347-1000, \$91 per night, plus taxes; Candlewood Suites, 3545 Forest Rd., Lansing,

MI 48910, Phone:517-351-8181, \$89 per night, plus tax; and Holiday Inn Express, 2209 University Park Dr., Okemos, MI 48864, Phone: 517-349-8700, \$109 per night, plus tax.

Entries close May 25, 2016. There will be a higher entry fee for any late entries submitted after the deadline date, and post entries at the show. Visit [www.allamericanjuniorshow.com](http://www.allamericanjuniorshow.com) for entry details and further information.

**Rambling Roads, Continued from page 8**

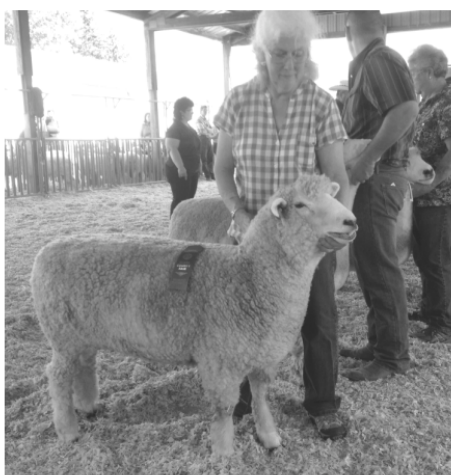
([tnfiberfestival.com](http://tnfiberfestival.com))

As we all think ahead, here is a note from Jane Caulfield: *Since this is the season for shearing, it is also the time to plan which fleeces to enter into shows! The Tennessee State Fair in September has a Fleece Show with ram and ewe classes for both white and natural colored Romneys. A breeder may enter two fleeces in each category. There are also classes for Handspinning Fleeces and Ready to Spin Fiber.*

*The fair website will give details about all classes and how to enter. If a breeder would like to sell any fleeces that they have entered, there is an auction on the last night of the show!*

As always, feel free to email me, or Allison Seyfert, if you have any questions. Enjoy watching your lambs run, jump and play!

Betsy McPherson  
District 6 Regional Director  
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[betsymcp711@gmail.com](mailto:betsymcp711@gmail.com)



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**2015 National Romney Show**  
Grand Champion Ewe

# What is NSIP and how does it work?

By Chris Posbergh

Some of you may be asking what does NSIP stand for, and why is everyone talking about it?

NSIP stands for the National Sheep Improvement Program. NSIP is a non-profit group of purebred sheep producers of various breeds that utilize EBVs for selection. NSIP was formed in 1987 to implement performance recording and evaluation systems among the sheep industry to boost production (Wilson & Morrical 1991). The objective of NSIP is to provide genetic evaluation information to the producers by converting performance records into easy to use tools.

Now you may be asking what are EBVs? Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) are an estimate of an animal's genetic merit for specific traits being measured. EBVs are routinely used in the swine and cattle industries to illicit faster genetic gain. For example, the dairy industry has utilized performance recording to select for increased milk yield for over 50 years and has doubled the amount of milk produced per cow (VanRaden 2004). EBVs can be calculated for a variety of traits such as birth weight, weaning weight, average fiber diameter, fecal egg counts, and more.

EBVs are calculated using many different sources of information as opposed to only what you see on the scale readout. These sources include the individual's own performance, a common environment among individuals, adjustment factors for fixed

effects such as rearing type, heritability of the trait, relatives' performances, and genetics correlations among traits. All of this information is incorporated into the breeding models using matrix algebra and multivariate statistics. That's a lot of information and math to get an EBV! Yes, it is, but this EBV is a better estimate of the animal's genetic merit than its visual performance alone. This requires a lot of computing power, and time, that an individual breeder may find intimidating to do on their own. This is where NSIP comes in. For a fee, you can submit your raw data to NSIP and EBVs are calculated for you.

A breeder can then use these EBVs, instead of raw measures, to make their selection decisions. EBVs are written as a deviation from the population mean. That means, an EBV that is positive means the sheep has a higher genetic value for that trait than one with a negative EBV. One benefit of NSIP is that flocks that share genetics can use these EBVs to compare individuals born across flocks. A ram buyer can then compare individuals born across flocks objectively and make the best purchase for his/her breeding program.

These EBVs can also be combined into selection indexes, catered toward specific goals, that provide the most efficient way to improve multiple traits at once. These indexes weight individual traits to make the most efficient improvement and increase the breeder's profit. For example, there is a terminal sire index fo-

cusing on weaning weights and loin eye muscle depth, while a maternal index emphasizes maternal weaning weight and number of lambs born. These indexes can be specifically catered towards a specific goal common to a group of producers.

While NSIP will not replace the selection you already have in place for breed character, it will be beneficial for the breeder who wishes to increase weaning weights or fleece weights faster than using individual records. NSIP is another tool for breeders to use to improve their stock in an efficient manner towards their breeding objectives.

You can go to [nsip.org](http://nsip.org) or email the program director, Rusty Burgett, at [info@nsip.org](mailto:info@nsip.org) to learn more about the program.

References:

VanRaden P.M., Invited Review: Selection on Net Merit to Improve Lifetime Profit, *Journal of Dairy Science*, Volume 87, Issue 10, October 2004, Pages 3125-3131

Wilson D.E., Morrical D.G., The National Sheep Improvement Program: a review, *Journal of Animal Science*, Volume 69, Issue 9, 1991, Pages 3872-3881.

## Romney Items Available on Website

### Flock Record Book:

Provides general sheep information and space to record lambs born and raised for 1 or several years. Price: \$3, postpaid



### ARBA Logo Decals:

good for indoor/outdoor use to promote the association and you as a member and breeder of registered Romney sheep. 4½-inch decal - \$3, 6-inch decal - \$4, postpaid. White or black lettering.

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