NAPgA 2006 Rendezvous
On Slopes of Mt. Hood, Government Camp, Oregon
July 28-30, 2006

Carolyn says in spite of the sand here, most hiking will be done in the trees!

Event: The Annual NAPgA Rendezvous will be held on the slopes of Mt. Hood in northwestern Oregon, July 28-30. Come early, and stay late! It is near Portland, with easy access from Interstate 5 and/or Interstate-84, via I-205 to Highway 26.

Goats naturally are welcome (goats usually outnumber the people).

We will be hiking the White River Glacier basin, an area with breathtaking views. Also, all kinds of other activities including the local ski resort that offers horseback riding, and a chair lift to the top of the lift (I doubt that goats are welcome on that one, ;-))

We will be hiking many, many goat-friendly trails and will be near Timberline Lodge, which has a huge restaurant!

This is Alice’s and my Wilderness Volunteer Patrol district so they are delighted to have us. They understand goats and goat packing.

LNT Principles will be explained and we ask that you abide by them. USFS in this area follows the 12 heartbeat rule -- in the Wilderness Areas only. White river canyon and many available hikes will not be in Wilderness.

Schedule: (Times still to be set):
Note: People will be arriving on Wednesday evening and leaving as late as Monday. Feel free to stay for this whole time (or longer) if you want.

Friday: Volunteer project, Jim Bennet is charge, you must have Forest Pass.

6PM Potluck. After dinner -- Packgoat conformation -- Either Charlie Goggin, or Carolyn Eddy

Saturday: Hoof trimming -- Becki Reibesehl -- 9AM, also available for consultations at any time.

from the President

President’s Report

First of all, welcome to our new board member, Charlie Goggin! Charlie lives near Ely, Nevada with her husband, two daughters, and a slew of critters. She will be filling out Jo Christensen’s term and serving as secretary. Jo C. is off fighting fires, working full-time, and raising Bridger -- my thanks to her for the time she has devoted to NAPgA, and my thanks to Charlie for stepping up and filling in when Jo could no longer serve.

Mark your calendars, Goatstock 2006 is fast approaching. This year’s rendezvous will be held in the shadow of Mt. Hood, Oregon, July 28-30th. There will be education on Leave No Trace (LNT), and Carolyn will be setting up a model LNT campsite. Details are posted on the website at www.napga.org. Please contact Carolyn at scpg@peoplepc.com if you are planning to attend. This is a time to get together, meet old friends and make new ones, and learn more about packgoats. My thanks to Carolyn and her packgoat club members for all their hard work and planning.

The new website is almost ready to be rolled out. The board has seen a rough draft, there are some things to be fixed and polished up yet. And after it is rolled out it will still be a work in progress for a while as we add content. The goal is to have a very comprehensive and educational website that will be much more interactive. There will be an interactive discussion forum, a calendar that members can list their events on, classified ads, an area for photos, general educational stuff about packgoats, sections on stuff of current importance like disease/bighorn, CAE, public land use, newsletters, brochures, NAIS and whatever else comes along. There is a section for links to other educational websites and member websites, equipment dealers etc. Most will be open to the general public, but there will also be areas for members only, which will have some stuff more specific to NAPgA. As I said much of it is still a rough draft right now, but we have big plans. We had a professional set it up and Larry Robinson will be doing training to learn how to keep it up.

NAIS -- National Animal Identification System. Jim said that a state vet will be at his Evergreen Club Rendy to speak about NAIS and answer questions. Carolyn is serving on the goat working group board and has been forwarding communications to the group. The consensus among the NAPgA board is that the best way to deal with NAIS is to contact legislators, try and cut off funding, and keep the pressure on. Also try and work with your state legislators and state vets and influence the policy making. The state vets the board members have talked with all say they want input.
**Hike:** White River Canyon. Go as far as you want, come back when tired. Multi-Use trail. 1/2 hour drive to site. Must have Forest Pass.

**Sunday:** Hiking.
If you have other seminars you would like to see or give, let us know and we will fit you in, or try to find someone who will do it.

**Date:** July 28-30, 2005

**Site:** The old Government Camp airstrip. There is a paved road pretty much to the site. This site will be easy access for tenting, RV’s and campers.

**Contacts:** Carolyn Eddy, ecpg@peoplepc.com

**Reservations:** If you plan to attend, please let Alice and Carolyn know so they can prepare for the attendees.

**Cost:** The suggested donation is $15 per person, and/or $20 per family.

**Application/Notification Form:** [On the back of this newsletter.](#)

**Forest Parking Pass:** You must have a forest parking pass to park at trailheads in the Mt Hood. The Chevron Station in Government Camp has them, also the Thriftway store in Wemme coming from the West, and C’J’S Store, coming from the East.

**Health Certificates for Goats:** Health certificates are required for Out-of-State goats. Check with your local vet about the necessity of a health cert for Oregon. Oregon does not check at the border or anywhere else.

**Hay:** Local hay will be available, but all hay needs to stay in vehicles or hay bags and tarped and be fed from there and pellets need to be fed if feeding outside vehicles. There is no water at the site so bring your own. I will have limited drinking water for human consumption Oregon does not have a weedfree certification classed hay, so we can’t guarantee anything that isn’t pelletized.

**Event Patches:** $7.00 (Special Order Only. Available on the App Form).

**Driving directions** to the 2005 Rendezvous: The location is just south of Government Camp

**Directions from east or west:**
The location is just south of Government Camp. From Hiway 26 or Hiway 35 coming West turn left, or coming east turn right onto Trillium Lake Road, about 2 mile from Gov’t Camp. Look for Snow Bunny play area on left across from the Trillium Lake Road.

Go 2 miles on Trillium Lake Rd, road will curve right. This is the Airstrip cutoff Road. (Small brown FS sign.) Look for signs to the Airstrip, and to the NAPgA rendezvous with the banner hung up right around there. When you see the Packgoat Signs stay left around the perimeter of the airfield, or if you have a trailer, stay right and go all the way around to the right, you will come to the end of the oval and then go left. We will be near the Northwest Corner of the Area.

**Directions from North:**
If you are coming from I-84 in the Gorge, turn south onto Hiway 35 at Hood River, and when you hit the junction onto Hiway 26 go right and just follow the signs toward Government Camp, watch for SnoBunny Play Area (about

**Big Horn Sheep & Packgoats**
The issue of Bighorn Sheep and Packgoats has a great deal of interest to me. In the Yakima, Washington area where I live we have a decent population of Bighorn Sheep in three major areas in the foothills.

The largest group resides in the Yakima Canyon area between Yakima and Ellensburg and the second largest band lives in the Clemons Mt. area just west of Naches. I can see the summer range on Clemons from my backyard, about 7 miles away as a Crow flies, and the winter feeding station is about 15 minutes from my home. As of Thursday the Game Department is feeding 128 Bighorns at this feeding station. I state all this only to set up my concern. In the spring I do some hiking in the Yakima Canyon but a great deal of time hiking in Sheep areas on Clemons Mt. I have already made the decision to not hike my goats in these sheep areas but these will be an attempt in the future to introduce Bighorns into some of the higher elevations. I am new to Packgoats but I am not new to hiking and woodsman ship. I feel it is my responsibility to stay away from the known Bighorn areas with my goats. I in no way shape or form wish to be responsible for any kind of problems between us as packers and Bighorn sheep. I can not remember the details but a few years back the Mt. Clemons herds had a die off and the treatment had to do with inoculating the surviving members of the heard. Since then new blood had been introduced and the herd is healthy again. I am concerned that with an expanding range and new population introductions my hiking opportunities will shrink. I realize this sounds somewhat selfish but I am putting a lot of time into my new goats and I want to be able to use them in the areas I like to hike. I sent in my application to NPGA this last week so I can help do my part for goat packing. I will be visiting the local office of the game department and the forest service this winter to get acquainted and get a feel for their side.

Hank and Willie wanted me to wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for them.

**Dennis McMillin, Trecker51, Yakima, WA**

Trailheads in Washington and parts of Oregon are now posted by the Forest Service and F&W with signs warning of bighorns in the area and asking for caution when passing through. They also recommend the same behaviors that Dr. Foreyt recommended back in the 90’s when the subject first came up. I’ve had some input on making these recommendations available for their use, by sending research info by Dr’s Ward and Drew and also our packgoats having done volunteer work around the Mt Hood, giving the FS a chance to see goats in action.

These managers have taken what I see as a sane position on the interface between the two species.

**Carolyn Eddy**

“Sweet Goat Mama”

www.goattracksmagazine.com
Everyone needs to get educated about NAIS- here is the official website:

To the right is a link to "Non-commercial producer guidance" which is a 12-page pdf document discussing small, non-commercial livestock owners. Although this document stresses that NAIS is voluntary, it is the board’s consensus that these things turn into mandatory programs, so everyone needs to learn about NAIS.

Public Land Use -- Jim Bennett has been communicating with the National Park Service as they write their updated management plan. Things are looking positive for packgoats. Their draft document includes packgoats on the list of approved packstock; although it’s up to individual parks whether to allow packstock or not. It’s a step in the right direction of possibly allowing packgoats in some areas where other packstock are allowed. Previously packgoats have been pretty much banned in all National Parks. The new policies should be finalized around August.

Canadian Dall Sheep Risk Assessment --
I’ve read through most of the Canadian risk assessment study concerning domestic sheep, goats, and llamas vs. bighorn, Dall sheep and mountain goats. Here are a few thoughts:

The study was done to assess the risk to wild sheep and goats in the Northwest Territory. This area is very remote and has very limited road access. Currently there is no agriculture there at all, the wildlife there have never been near domestic sheep, goats, or llamas. There is hunting allowed and so there are some horse outfitters, and there is also subsistence hunting by indigenous people. The climate is changing and there is talk of introducing some farming to the area, as well as oil and gas exploration, which will affect the wildlife. The risk assessment was funded by various environmental and other groups, and basically what they did is compile all the information they could find on other people’s previous research and combine it into one paper, with summaries and recommendations.

It reviews a variety of pathogens and parasites. Studies by Dr. Foreyt and Dr. Ward are quoted (which we have copies of), as well as a 2002 study by V. Coggins which I haven’t seen. It also references personal communications with V. Coggins. Many other studies are referenced, the vast majority concerning sheep. It is clear in the conclusion that the authors want to be very proactive, and prevent costly die-offs before they occur, rather than dealing with it afterward. Because of the lack of previous contact between domestic stock and wildlife, the concern is that the native sheep will not have any immunity to domestic pathogens. The authors admit that there is little specific research, and that they are making a lot of broad assumptions. In their discussion at the end they say that the “great number of unknowns should have precluded the continuation of the assessment”. In other words, by the Canadian government’s own standards, there isn’t enough data to support a risk assessment. But they worked with what they could find.

Both Drs. Foreyt and Ward have made a distinction between herd goats and packgoats, but this report doesn’t. I am concerned that both Foreyt and Ward are misrepresented somewhat in some parts of this risk assessment. For example on page 29, in the pasteurella section, it says “In other jurisdictions it has been repeatedly recommended that all contact between domestic sheep/goats and wild sheep be avoided (Bunch et. al. 1999, Foreyt et. al. 1994, Ministry of Environment 2000, Onderka et. al. 1988).” While it’s true that Dr. Foreyt tells us to avoid direct nose-to-nose contact, he and Dr. Ward wrote a letter to the Idaho wildlife people saying that packgoats pose little risk to bighorn sheep so long as they don’t come into direct contact. This isn’t mentioned.

On the next page, “In studies looking at natural and experimental transmission of Pasteurella Mannheimia from domestic sheep and goats to wild sheep, exposure resulted in severely pneumonic bighorn sheep, with most of the experimentally-infected bighorn sheep dying within 48 hours. At no time during the contact do domestic sheep show clinical signs of pneumonia (Foreyt 1988, Foreyt et. al. 1994, Foreyt and Jessup 1982). Unfortunately, in natural settings, bighorn sheep and domestic sheep and goats will co-mingle if given the chance, particularly during the rut, increasing the chances for transmission of Pasteurella Mannheimia (Onderka et. al. 1988, Ward et. al. 1997).”

In Foreyt’s study, although the sheep readily transmitted the disease, the goats DID NOT, even when the tonsils of a positive goat were swabbed and transferred to the bighorn. The goat was the only animal that didn’t give pneumonia to the bighorn. But this paragraph represents that bighorn were dead within 48 hours of exposure to goats, which just isn’t true.

It’s implications like this that make me suspicious of the whole report. It concentrates on the bad, but ignores any evidence or recommendations given by these biologists to the contrary. As an environmentalist I understand and applaud the desire to be proactive and protective of these sheep, but writing like this bothers me, where things seemed deliberately skewed to support one viewpoint.

Page 2, in bold print -- “We strongly advise that domestic goats NOT be used as pack animals, and that domestic sheep and goats not be pastured anywhere in the vicinity of Dall’s sheep or mountain goat ranges within the NWT. This recommendation is consistent with the practical experience and recommendations of bighorn sheep managers and biologists throughout Canada and the United States.” This makes it sound like packgoats are banned throughout the US, which isn’t true. They are banned in some areas, mainly around endangered desert bighorn, but certainly not everywhere, and not every biologist thinks a goat is a walking time bomb.

Personally, I appreciate the efforts to protect a group of wild sheep that have never been exposed to domestic livestock. This is a population of Dall sheep that probably should not be exposed to domestic sheep or goats.

(Cont Pg 4, Col 1)
But my concern is that this report is based on very broad assumptions with limited factual support, and that it is not objective. It is obviously written to support one viewpoint and avoids reference to data that support a different view. I am concerned that it will be accepted as gospel truth and passed around to other agencies in Canada and the US.

Dr. Ward has worked with this, Jim Bennett agreed to contact him and show him the assessment and get his reaction to it. If anyone would like a copy of the Canadian assessment or some of the research done by Drs. Ward, Drew, and Foreyt, let me know. My e-mail is jhuffaker@rmi.net.

Nominations -- Two positions are up this year, Jo C’s (being filled in by Charlie) and Rodney York’s. Jo C. isn’t running and Rodney is term limited, so he can’t run. I will be chairing this committee; I need two other members to help me out (per bylaws). So I am now accepting volunteers to help with this, and also accepting nominations for office. If you are interested in running, please contact me. I will have a list of nominees by the end of August, for an October election.

More from Jan

Leave No Trace – It Isn’t Optional!

While we are out camping and hiking with our packgoat buddies, we must give consideration to the environment we are hiking in, and the people who will be visiting the area after us. We often talk about Leave No Trace (LNT).

Leave No Trace is a national and international program designed to assist outdoor enthusiasts with their decisions about how to reduce their impacts when they hike, camp, picnic, snowshoe, run, bike, hunt, paddle, ride horses, fish, ski or climb. The program strives to educate all those who enjoy the outdoors about the nature of their recreational impacts as well as techniques to prevent and minimize such impacts. Leave No Trace is best understood as an educational and ethical program, not as a set of rules and regulations.

There are seven Leave No Trace principles.

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you’ll visit. Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies. Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use. Visit in small groups. Split larger parties into groups of 4-6. Repackage food to minimize waste. Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.

2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow. Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams. Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.

In popular areas:
Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites. Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy. Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.

In pristine areas:
Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails. Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

3. Dispose of Waste Properly
Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter. Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished. Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products. To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

4. Leave What You Find
Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts. Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them. Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species. Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.

Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires. Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand. Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.

6. Respect Wildlife
Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them. Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.

Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely. Control pets at all times, or leave them at home. Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors
Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience. Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail. Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock. Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors. Let nature’s sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.

Carolyn Eddy will be teaching Leave No Trace at the rendezvous in Oregon, and showing goatpackers how to adapt these ethics for packgoats. The website www.lnt
has loads of useful information. Although there isn’t a booklet specifically for goats, there is a good one for llamas which gives lots of tips useful for packgoats. It can be found at their website. Click on the Training tab at the top, then scroll down to Resources for Training, then scroll down to Leave No Trace Information for Llama Packing.

Carpe Diem!
Jan Huffaker
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and from Carolyn on LNT

What I want to stress is that knowledge is power, much more so than rules. If you know why it’s sometimes a good idea, and sometimes not, to highline, you will be more likely to pick the right choice when the time comes. If you have all the tools for LNT you will be more likely to pick the correct one. Demanding that a certain behavior be followed is more likely to cause a backlash when the “grownups” aren’t watching. The Cascade Club has always used State Park facilities and USFS land and we have an excellent working relationship with both. We also have club insurance. The Mt Hood people are eager to have us as they know I will put on a show and do some good at the same time. Some of them are going to try to join us for the potluck both nights.

Think Tools, Not Rules!!!
The one family that brings sheep have as far as I know, always contacted event planners and asked if their sheep (singular) was welcome. They have never shown up at one of our events without asking first. Also, that sheep is an old wether, their only sheep, and not likely to spread scrapie. This family will not be attending the Rendy as they will be moving right then so this whole matter is a non-starter. BTW, sheep are more of a traditional pack animal than goats are, if you do your research in Asian packing.

I am not in favor of one isolated incident causing NAPgA to have to vote to demand highlining. Although the incident was pretty bad, it was isolated, and I do believe that the manner in which it was resolved and the lengths to which the club went to resolve it showed that we are committed to take our place in packstock. After all, had it been a horse group, there would be no demands to legislate. I was onsite when the ranger first got there on Monday and by the time it got to Larry a day or two later the tune had changed for the better.

Carolyn Eddy
“Sweet Goat Mama”
www.goattracksmagazine.com

I think that the whole point of training and allowing various types of control at group events is so that people will learn to adjust their behaviors based on education and not rules. And if my talk last year and the talk I’m giving this year don’t educate people in many types of goat camping, they’re just not listening.

The USFS on Mt Hood is very comfortable with allowing various methods of control and they hope that any horse, hiker, climber group, will spend time training their people to assess situations so that they will do the appropriate behavior when alone.

That said, I do think that we who are more aware of different methods of management need to speak up immediately when something is not done about the problems inherent in group camping with goats. This will come with education and confidence. I also plan to teach how to speak from “the authority of the resource”, a great way to open a conversation to change behavior without playing “packgoat police”.

No one likes to listen to the “packgoat police” making rules and people tend to roll their eyes behind the rulemaker’s backs (which is what happens now, like it or not) and taking every opportunity to break the rules, justifying that they are going to do it “their way” anyway. “Authority of the resource” is a great way to get cooperation without confrontation.

I have been trying to get an LNT stock person to talk at one of these for the last couple of years but no luck. One of the trails we work on has 150 people per day on summer weekends and is also a well used horse trail. Alice and I have both been trained in basic LNT and have spent the last 5 or 6 years teaching it on the trail. In that time we have seen a great deal of improvement in stock management on the trails. All this stuff has a ripple effect: teach one, they will teach two, or in the case of a boy scout group, they will teach several. Teaching people the different types of problems based on locations, amounts and types of foliage, trail use density and numbers of goats will allow people to have the tools needed to make good decisions when alone.

So again, let’s work to educate, not make rules that will often set campers up to resent NAPgA with no improvement in the actual behaviors. I would certainly support the rule that all NAPgA gatherings be required to offer an LNT training program based on the area’s plants and soils!

Carolyn Eddy
“Sweet Goat Mama”
www.goattracksmagazine.com

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Look, when ya gotta eat, ya gotta get up there!
and a Potpourri of Subjects

On the trail again!

And Here He Comes.... Faster than a Speeding Ticketbook

Yes, your local rent-a-ranger is coming to a forest near you. More poorly trained than a volunteer, faster with a ticket book, and all the security guard wanabees are drooling.

We had been told about 2 years ago that this was coming. In fact we were asked in a poll how many of us would continue volunteering after outsourcing. What’s the point, work for a private company for free? I think not.

Also, there are huge ramifications about the rent-a-ranger’s actual abilities to enforce the law, which around here at least is going to mean some major lawsuits and constitutional law challenges.

Carolyn Eddy
“Sweet Goat Mama”
www.goattracksmagazine.com

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Forest Service Eyes Outsourcing Two-Thirds Of Workforce

Thousands of Ranger, Biologist, Smoke-Jumper Jobs Out to Bid

WASHINGTON - February 27 - The U.S. Forest Service is studying how to contract out more than two-thirds of its total workforce by 2009, according to agency planning documents released today by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER). Coming on the heels of Bush administration plans to sell off 300,000 acres of Forest Service land, the agency is also looking to potentially privatize large portions of its environmental, law enforcement, fire-fighting and research operations.

Under the agency plans, 21,350 full-time jobs will soon be under review for possible replacement by private sector firms. The Forest Service has a total of 31,625 full-time jobs, according to Office of Personnel Management figures for FY 2003:

a. During the current fiscal year, 500 fire-fighting jobs in the aviation program, including the famed smoke-jumpers, will be examined for outplacement to interested contractors;

b. In FY 2007, approximately half of the agency’s law enforcement agents and rangers (600 positions), the jobs of all of its geologists (500 jobs) and 1,100 biologists who prepare environmental studies on the impacts of timber sales, oil and gas leasing and other actions on national forest lands may be put out to bid;

c. In FY 2008, the agency’s entire network of scientists and other researchers (2,000 slots) and 3,000 foresters and range conservation staff positions will be reviewed for outsourcing potential. “The Forest Service appears to be having an internal fire sale, with the heart of our national forests put out for bid on eBay,” stated Jeff Ruch, PEER Executive Director. “We may soon see the Weyerhaeuser National Forest patrolled by rent-a-rangers, overseen by private consultants.”

In 2003, an outsourcing plan of similar scope, designed to meet Bush administration outsourcing quotas prior to the 2004 election, was halted by Congressional action. Then, as now, one of the major concerns was the added cost to the Forest Service to conduct the studies and stage the competitions. In its latest proposed budget, the Bush administration is cutting back Forest Service operating funds without providing any new funds to pay for this broad undertaking. In 2003, the Forest Service spent an estimated $360 million on studies but produced no identifiable savings.

Large scale outsourcing also has a dampening impact on sagging employee morale, already depressed by shrinking budgets. To make matters more contentious, the Forest Service is advancing its plan without consulting the unions representing affected employees.

“For decades, this agency has invoked the phrase ‘Forest Service family’ to connote a cohesive, close-knit organization, but this plan puts whole branches of the family on the auction block,” Ruch added, noting that effective contract management has not been one of the strong suits of the federal government. “This whole misguided effort is an example of mindless management by slogan lacking in any analysis as to how to make the Forest Service actually run better or more efficiently.”

MicroChipping

You might feel differently if they came up your road to destroy your animals because one out of the same original herd came down with a communicable disease. They destroyed every animal within 40 miles of an outbreak of hoof and mouth in Britain even if the animals in those herds had no symptoms or lab work to prove it. I would look for my babies too if they got lost but I don’t go for this ID program. The big producers are trying to keep small farmers and people who want to raise animals for their own milk, meat or fiber out of business. Sound paranoid? Montsano is one of the companies pushing this. All the government needs is to say your animal is sick to destroy everything on your place. This is to make our food supply safe? The only cases of food borne illnesses I hear of
come from large producers not small ones. Another point. How much money is this going to cost the taxpayer to hire inspectors? They will never see most farms but they will be on the payroll and have an office and a secretary and a veterinarian on staff, etc. You think the cost of microchipping is high? Wait till it's a "program". The government is you and me and we pay one way or the other. If they make the farmer, hobbyist, pet owner pay we will pay for the program and pay for the micro-chipping too.

Norman and Susie Stretton
Nightsong Farms
Dry Creek, LA

GoatPacking Workshop

Steve Sunday, lead wilderness ranger for Pike and San Isabel National Forests, finally got in touch with me the other day. We are planning a goatpacking workshop for his wilderness rangers the first weekend of August at a location of his choice (don't know where yet). Steve is very excited about this, as am I. I'm also inviting any local goatpackers who want to attend, help out, or just listen in. If you would like to come, please let me know.

Because these guys are new to goats, and I also have some new goatpackers getting started here in Colorado, I would like to have some literature to hand out. So if any of you equipment dealers would like to send me a few catalogs, I would be happy to hand them out. If I had a few catalogs from each vendor, everyone could see the variety of equipment available, and the forest service people could see that we are well established and that there are people making a business out of this. So Butthead, Northwest, Owyhee, Wind River, Eagle Creek and anyone else who wants to advertise, please send me stuff. My mailing address is:

PO Box 532, Akron, CO 80720

I don’t know how many people will be attending; I will ask Steve. I will have some packgoat brochures of course, and will bring a variety of goats and equipment. We will be on our best Leave No Trace behavior, since the only worry Steve’s boss had was; “will the goats eat everything in sight?”

Carpe Diem!
Jan Huffaker
jhuffaker1@mindspring.com

And an Interesting Twist on Hiking in Our Times

Dennis you bring up an excellent point, a point I was talking about with some friends just yesterday. The point is the “two legged predators” some of you who live in Western Washington know that our part of the State is the “Methamphetamine capital of the US” these characters set up these meth labs all over, it used to be an urban problem, but within the last few years these turkeys started showing up in the woods in greater numbers, with their meth labs, and let me tell you, these folks are some pretty unsavory characters.

I have heard many stories of folks in confrontational situations, with some of these guys out in the wilderness and were very happy to have been carrying their trusty side arm. You read in the newspaper constantly where the forest service and such are finding these out in the woods more and more. There was even this guy last year up in the backcountry above Issaquah, WA, who had taken 30 gallon drums, cut them in half, filled them with topsoil, and had hoisted them up into the treetops, 40 - 60 feet or so, and was growing marijuana in these things, in the tree tops, and it was quite a huge operation, a police helicopter just happened over and discovered these things growing in the tops of fir trees. I returned home one year from a hunting trip, only to find out that in an are we hunt health and John M.’s input plus Alaska and the NWT, provided considerable valuable information. For the most part I don't believe that there are many rogue goatpackers that would defy any restrictions placed on us to prevent contact with bighorns so guidelines suggested by NAPgA will be followed. What I personally fear is the emotional responses from hunters and horse packers such as occurred here in Idaho ten years ago during the Hell's canyon die-off. Even though there aren't any bighorns in the SNRA, much rhetoric recommended that goats not be permitted in the SNRA. John M. is the most important source of unbiased information we have.

I was amazed to read of the Park Service allowing goats, it is a big step forward and requires that all of us be on our best behavior. I am referring to an encounter in the past where a goat packer became hostile because of a confrontation with another trail user group, don't recall the details. If the trail is extremely narrow, I will back up to a spot where I can allow the others to pass. While most goatpackers may prefer the convenience of an established campground, I always find a place well away from the trail and people to make my camp. I do it for the enjoyment of the evening alone with my goats as well as not having to worry about my goats straying into a tent. Perhaps goatpackers should be encouraged to do likewise when permitted to camp off trail.”

Carpe Diem!
Jan Huffaker
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And Kudos from Geo Bogdan...

From: jhuffaker1@mindspring.com
Date: March 19, 2006
This is part of an e-mail I recently received from George Bogdan, thought I’d pass it along to you guys since you are the ones responsible.....))

“”I want to compliment you on the most recent 14 page issue. While you weren't responsible for writing it, you probably had a lot to do with it.
We are faced with real problems regarding bighorn
And a Fun Comment from the Recent Thread Concerning Heat. Whether to Pack it or Not!
Companionship... many of us goatpackers have a companion of one type or another.
Companionship could be a first aid kit, an emergency blanket, a bottle of Jim Beam, a side arm, a special person, a cell phone, a spare goat, a knife, a whistle.
What does it take for a person to feel comfortable and secure on the trail?
Is it always the bear or the cat we worry about? Or could it be that Rottweiler or pit bull, or a human with ill intentions. If it is a sidearm you choose, make sure you have knowledge and attitude to use it properly.
I flunked this test once with a grizzly bear staring at me and my son at 40 yards in Alaska. I had a handgun, rifle and pepper spray...my thoughts were, do I take a picture or leave. I left. It followed.
We were able to put a clearing and distance between us, and the griz left us alone.
Back at camp I pulled out my other companion, Jim Beam, and pondered as to why did I not take a picture, or why did I not raise a weapon for that possible charge.
I have had a mountain cat stalk to within yards of my back, only to run when I turned. I have stalked within yards of a black bear. I find the animals to be fairly shy. Or maybe it’s that I have not showered.
I do bring a companion when on the trail. No, I don’t always need it, but then it is not everyday I use the spare tire under my truck bed. But it is nice to have it with if I need it.
Joe Goatpacker
From the Goat Pen

Dances with Goats -- The Story of Coffee
Without goats, civilization as we know it would not exist! According to the legend, the Ethiopian goat herder Kaldi discovered coffee. One day he noticed that the goats had more energy after having eaten the red berries from a shrub nearby. Kaldi decided to try some berries himself, and felt so upbeat that he began to dance with his goats.
A monk in a nearby monastery heard about the berries. After having tried them and liked the effect, he decided to boil the berries and make a beverage for the monks, in order for them to stay awake during the long prayers and services. This became a popular beverage, which spread from monastery to monastery.
Coffee were later brought with traders over to the Arabian peninsula. It was known to prevent sleep, and got the name qahwa, which means just that. Many Muslims, who would not drink wine, liked the stimulating effects of coffee, and sometimes called it Arabian Wine. Coffee is mentioned in historical writings as early as the 10th century, when two Arabian philosophers mention it.
During the 13th century they began to roast parts of the coffee plant. First the shell of the coffee bean, later the whole bean. Another hundred years went by and they began to grind the beans, to make something somewhat close to today’s coffee.
Coffee became a popular European beverage during the 17th century, and Captain John Smith, founder of James-town, Virginia, introduced the New World to coffee. Some resources say it was introduced in Canada before that.
Janet & Phil Lamberson
Well, there ya go! Next time you’re enjoying that latte, thank a goat!!!
Kim So Cal at 4300 ft.

April Showers Bring Morels Sooner Than Flowers
With the coming of Spring, and the back and forth of warm days and cool rain showers, there’s another harbinger of Spring that isn’t as well known. No, the frowned upon dandelion, or the pesky dog tick population that bloom and boom this time of year. Not even the tiny, delicate Violet. It’s the ever edible, highly desired genus: Morchella... aka the morel mushroom.
Morels, sometimes called Dry Land Fish by Appalachian folk are a bit funky looking with their sea sponge looking surface, and hollow cone shaped head on a thick, hollow stem. But don’t let looks fool you! Morels come in different colors according to species but are generally referred to as Yellows, Greys, and Blacks. Morels range in size from thimble size to bigger than a dinner plate... the bigger the better! The largest are the most prized and taste doesn’t diminish with size. There’s nothing like a plate of butter sautéed morels, or for the gourmet touch of morels in a meat sauce complimenting any pasta dish such as Chicken Alfredo.
Here’s a little known, yet fascinating fact you might want to bring up around the next water cooler meeting: to pick a mushroom is much like picking an apple. Okaaaay... Like picking an apple off of a tree large enough to cover hundreds of acres, be thousands of years old, AND considered one of the largest organisms known to humankind. When mushrooms pop up above ground it’s called a “fruiting”. Hence mushrooms are just like the tip of an iceberg so to speak. Some morel ignorant folk complain when morel hunters don’t leave a bit of stem in the ground, but they don’t realize that the “Mother plant” is never pulled up out of the ground only her “offspring”. Hmmm, maybe it’s more pleasant to say “fruit”? It is considered good, ecologically conservative behavior though, to take the salt water you’ve soaked your harvested mushrooms in, and pour it back...
onto good ol’ Mother Earth’s surface... preferably in a spot you’d like to see morels popping up at in the near future! Why? Because it will be full of mushroom “seeds”, better called spores. If you find a mushroom, you can lay it upon a black piece of construction paper overnight. The next day when you pick up the mushroom, you’ll notice that the black paper holds a while sprinkled-like outline of the mushroom. Those are the spores. This is a fun plant reproduction project for older school children.

There are over 14 species of this delectable fungus, but the best known is the Morchella deliciosa. Newbies beware! There are false morels that to the untrained eye look very very similar, and they are poisonous. It’s not that hard to correctly identify a morel compared to other mushroom species. Do your own research before heading out into the woods by being able to identify the edible types. There are field guide books available and the internet provides numerous websites that share information on identifying morels from false morels. Also, some sites have regional features where hunters post information daily on what they are finding out in the woods, so you might locate where morels are popping up in your own “back forty”. One favorite site is www.morl.com. Others point out safe ‘shroom hunting guidelines like this site: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mushroom_hunting#Safety_rules.

For Southern Ohio, the date to head into the woods to search for morels is not a date set in concrete. Determining factors seem to be rain and warmth and even then it’s more of a gut instinct for the seasoned morel hunter. The hobby of ‘Shrooming which is slang for mushrooming, coincides with other talisman’s of this time of year. Veteran ‘shroomers look for the beginning growth of Mayapples, Trilliums, and not yet unfurled ferns commonly called fiddleheads. Still that alone is not the end of the criteria for a successful morel hunt. Folklore and truth bear out that morels are most generally found under certain tree’s such as the Tulip Poplar, Ash, Elm and especially under Apple trees and on old orchard land. Individual hunters have their opinions and may be hesitant to divulge their “honey holes” or sweet spots where morels pop up by the loads. “Shrooming is rather like ‘Sangin’...it’s understood that good locations are kept a secret: you don’t ask, and you probably won’t tell either.

The art of hunting for morels can be nearly addicting. Hunting for mushrooms even has it’s own terminology. While the casual mushroom hunter calls it ‘Shrooming, the sport or hobby of searching for mushrooms is properly called a foray. There are guided forays available, held by mushroom experts, during this time of year, who can show newbies the tricks and help them figure out the best spots to look. More net surfing revealed that Ohio has a Mushroom Society! Here is their website: http://www.ohiomushroom.org. Anyone interested might want to call the contact numbers listed on that site.

One common-sense fact for going mushroom hunting is: wear sturdy footwear... hiking boots are a good idea as they help prevent twisted ankles and achy hips or knees due to non supportive street-wear (ever try to climb a southeastern Ohio hollow in clogs or flip-flops? DON’T! ) Also wear clothing that will allow you to brush against thorny undergrowth without injury... plan ahead as you will most likely be outside for a few hours! Don’t let that dissuade you however, the rewards of a determined morel hunter far outweigh the cons of stooping over for periods of time, digging thru the leaf cover for an afternoon. No successful morel hunter can be called a couch potato...more often than not, morel hunting is work indeed. Still there’s a great sense of pride in bringing home a pillowcase, or five gallon bucket full of gourmet delights. Some hunters gather morels to sell to chefs who eagerly await the morel season, and pay top dollar for good quality morels. Just remember the hikers rule for the woods; Leave No Trace... i.e. leave the woods a better place than how you found it. Don’t be a litterbug! In fact, pick up any trash you might find and dispose of it properly.

It’s simply amazing what wonderful secretive treats the woods hold in store for those who are able to, or care to take the time to learn of it’s delightfully delicious harvest. I often wonder just what our society has lost in knowledge even as we tout what great knowledge we have with the introduction of electronics, and the “www.” into our homes. It’s my opinion, and not an original thought by any means, but maybe our national obsession with “stress” would diminish a bit if people could head out of doors and enjoy their natural surroundings: the singing birds, the new spring flowers as they unfold and push aside Autumn’s leafy “crazy quilt”, and of course the incredible edibles that can be found only for the learning. Meigs Countians certainly are blessed to have an abundance of natural beauty all around them! Take advantage of these idyllic temperatures and you’ll find that it’s so calming and much more enjoyable exercise than a treadmill going nowhere fast. You just might bring home the makings of a gourmet dinner.

-- Wendy Hannum
Secret Creek Farm
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Long Bottom, Ohio
4/12/06