Notes from the President...
As I write this, I am recovering from a day of hauling and stacking hay. I seem to collect more goats every year, which means more hay to buy, haul, and stack. But I am pleased to say that I have gotten all my hay in early this year, which is a relief. Last year was the worst winter here since 1983, and it was a pain scrounging for hay in February and March, and trying to haul it in the snow and ice. This fall I’m more prepared.

NAPgA Ballot – By now you should have all received your latest NAPgA ballot. I encourage everyone to please vote! My thanks to Jan Privratsky for taking care of this year’s election. Our calendar project was very popular and successful this year. By the time this gets to you, we should have all the calendars sold. Be thinking about next year’s calendar, and start working on those photos! We need photos that are high resolution, around 3000 x 2000 pixels. These look the best when blown up to the large calendar size. The calendars are cheaper to print when you do them early in the year, and we will let you know when and where to submit your photos. Start digging through those scrapbooks and computer albums. My thanks to Sabine from Germany who put together this year’s calendar (Incidentally, I think she did a world-class job and the calendar is a valuable addition to our group. Thanks Sabine!!! NAPgA Ed).

Larry is continually working on our website at [napga.org]. Please don’t forget to keep your membership data up to date, such as addresses etc. You can update this yourself when you log in.

We had quite a bit of discussion on the National Parks this last board meeting. Although packgoats are on the list of approved packstock, they are still banned in nearly all National Parks. Because they are on the approved list, they can be allowed, but only at each individual Park’s discretion.

We need members to contact and work with their local Park to get packgoat access, especially in backcountry areas where there is little user conflict and where horses may already be allowed. We kicked around some ideas, including offering to do trail work with our packgoats, and joining up with some of the horse groups, who have more clout than we do. Jim Bennett (goatpower@centurytel.net) is our Land Use chairperson, please contact him for information or ideas on how to increase packgoat access in National Parks.

Carpe Diem!
Jan Huffaker
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Goatstock 2008!
Now’s the time to start planning for Goatstock 2008. So far the only possible site that has been submitted is the Uintas in NE Utah, for late June.

If anyone has an alternate location they would like to submit, please do so now. We need to get the location and date nailed down as soon as possible.
Carpe Diem!
Jan Huffaker
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NAPgA Newsletter Delivery
(Please read the information below, and follow the directions for letting us know how you will receive the NL. If you do not take action on the website, we will assume that you are willing to get it in a PDF. Thanks, Larry)

In the past our newsletters have not been out very often, but I have been pressing our board very hard for a up-to-date newsletter on a frequent basis. Since it will be coming out more often, how we get it to you becomes more of an issue. And as our membership grows, snail mail becomes more expensive all the time. We will still snail mail it to you if that is your desire, but we would like to post it in a PDF format to the website and have you download and print it if possible. As Jan says, if you get it by snail mail, it is black & white, the PDF is color!

How to indicate your desire: Every time you log in to the website, you are first taken to the page with your personal information. Down a ways on the page is a box labeled “PDF Newsletter.” If there is a check mark in this box, it means that we will not send you a snail mail copy of the newsletter. If you want a mailed copy, you need to uncheck this box. Be sure and click on “Submit” at the bottom of the page to save any changes.

Larry Robinson
Treasurer, NAPgA
Idaho City, Idaho.
napga@hisurf.net
Proposed NAPgA Bylaw Change

Here is my wording for the proposed bylaw change, allowing the Treasurer to be an appointed position.

Under Article IV, Administration, Section 2, Officers, currently reads:
The Officers, also known at the Executive Committee, shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Board, at its discretion and by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Members voting, may appoint Honorary Officers to serve the Organization from time to time.

Additional language -- The position of Treasurer may be filled by either an elected Board member, or by the appointment of a general NAPgA member. If the Board chooses to appoint a Treasurer, the appointment must be approved by a 2/3 majority of the Board and renewed annually. An appointed Treasurer shall serve at the pleasure of the Board and the appointment may be terminated at any time by a 2/3 vote of the Board.

Carpe Diem!
Jan Huffaker
http://www.huffakerfarms.com

NAPgA Update:

Treasury -- we have a current balance of $3,418.92. As of the meeting date we had 98 memberships and two honorary memberships (Since the meeting, we have added 2-3 new members, and paid $512.05 for a shipment of new hats. Also, we have sold all but three of the NAPgA calendars. NAPgA Ed.).

Website -- Larry wants to add some more capabilities to the website, mainly to the membership roster so members can search by state etc. He will get an estimate of the cost and get back with the board before any work is done.

Newsletter -- We intend to put out the newsletter on a more regular basis, and for now we have made the decision to do it every other month. So for the rest of 2007 we will do one the end of October and the end of December. We need more members to help out and submit items for the newsletter. Also, we will poll the members to see who wants the newsletter snail mailed and who wants to get it via the website. Snail mail is handy for many people, but more costly for NAPgA and it comes in black and white. Via the website it is in color and much less costly for NAPgA, but the members have to access it and print it out themselves. We will let people choose which method they prefer.

Land Use -- Jim posted a letter from Dr. Drew concerning his thoughts on the Canadian Dall Sheep study. This is copied later in this newsletter. We are still working on National Park access. Charlie tried to get into Yosemite and was rudely denied. The Evergreen club is working on access into Olympic NP. Charlie said that Great Basin had told her earlier that her goats would be allowed; she will follow up on that. We all need to work on our local National Parks. It was suggested that we offer to do trail work with our packgoats.

Rendezvous -- for 2008, so far only Clay Zimmerman has offered the Uintas in NE Utah as a site for 2008, probably in late June. We will ask once more, and if no one else has an alternate site, then we will give Clay the go-ahead for Utah.

Fairs -- We have been approached a couple of times to sponsor prizes for county or state fairs. Washington State sent us a letter, and we didn’t sponsor anything this year, but will work on a policy for 2008. Jan Privratsky will contact Washington and tell them to ask again next year.

Carpe Diem!
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NAPgA's Comments to the National Park Service
by Jim Bennett

The North American Packgoat Association (NAPgA) would like to submit the following comments to the National Park Service in regards to the proposed changes listed in the draft of the 2006 management policies.

NAPgA seeks to further the pursuit of goat packing by sharing the knowledge, ideas, and experiences of its members, by promoting the use of packgoats to the public as a means of low-impact wilderness transportation and recreation, by serving as an advisory group on local and national land use issues, and to engage in other activities related to educating the public about goatpacking.

NAPgA would like to share its approval and delight in regards to section 8.2.2.7 of the NPS 2006 draft management policies. Under the rules, goats are being specifically listed as NPS approved packstock. Section 8.2.2.7 states “Equine species such as horses, mules, donkeys, burros, and other types of animals (including Llamas, Alpacas, Goats, oxen, dogs and reindeer) may be employed when it is an appropriate use to support backcountry support of people and materials....”

NAPgA is very enthusiastic to see goats listed among approved packstock in the 2006 Draft Management Policies. Approval of these policies would be a benefit for the many goatpackers across the country but would potentially also benefit the lands of the National Park Service System.

Goats have long been acknowledged as extremely “low impact” pack stock. Their unique hoof structure, relative light weight, unobtrusive droppings (often indistinguishable from deer), light-on-the-land foraging habits (goats love to eat noxious weeds), and quiet, cooperative personalities have made them increasingly popular on public lands where historical use of traditional packstock has resulted in undesirable impacts. Packgoats are already in use by the US Forest Service and BLM in support of trail maintenance, load hauling in environmentally sensitive

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areas, search and rescue efforts, and wilderness ranger programs. The approved use of this uniquely low-impact pack animal would further the work of the National Park System to protect the outstanding natural resources under the service’s management.

NAPgA thanks you for your time and consideration in this matter.

We hope that in the near future that goat packers across the country will be able to enjoy the breathtaking views and scenic trails of the National Parks with our favorite “beasts of burden”. Additionally, should the Park Service staff be interested in learning more about the utility and low impact nature of the packgoat, our members are always happy to provide a demonstration!

Respectfully
Jim Bennett
North American Packgoat Association

Jan Huffaker on CAE
(Recently we had quite a thread in the Packgoat Yahoo! group on CAE, and I thought this response from Jan was worth publication. NAPgA Ed).

Unfortunately, I’ve had some experience with CAE. Here are my thoughts, recognizing that all may not agree with my approach.

First of all, kudos to you for getting your animals tested at WADDL. Many people don’t test at all, and some labs don’t do good tests. I bought into some CAE problems many years ago partly due to my own and my vet’s ignorance, made worse by some false negative tests from the Colorado State University lab, which uses the AGID test. WADDL uses the ELISA test which is much more accurate. Plus, they are more familiar with goats, so I always send my tests there. It doesn’t cost too much, and you can draw your own blood if you want. Fortunately my vet only charges a few dollars a head for the blood draws, so I let him do it.

In my opinion (and this is where others may disagree) I don’t think that a positive CAE test is necessarily a death sentence for goats, especially wethers. The vast majority of CAE is passed in the colostrum from mother to kid. I haven’t read the latest updates, but past reading showed that lateral transmission from carrier goats to other goats was almost nil. The majority of goats that carry CAE show no symptoms. So there’s a good probability that a CAE positive goat can lead a healthy life without infecting other goats, especially a wether that will never produce colostrum. However it seems that CAE is fairly easily transmitted via colostrum, so if you breed your doe you stand a good chance of infecting kids.

CAE affects the membranes; kids that get the encephalitis form (brain membranes) usually die young. In some goats it affects the joints, causing arthritis. In many goats it affects the membranes of the lungs. Your doe may have CAE problems in the winter when stressed, and in her it may show in the lungs. I had one CAE positive doe die of pneumonia. In many does it affects the udder, causing the udder to get hard. A doe with a CAE udder will produce small amounts of normal milk (not clotted milk like mastitis). The disease may not manifest itself until the goat is an adult, which is why you don’t want to buy a CAE positive wether. Your wether may be fine as a kid, in fact he may be fine his whole life, but there’s a chance he may come down with arthritis as an adult. You don’t want to spend the time and money on a wether just to have him become arthritic and worthless as a packer just when he’s hitting his prime.

I have three CAE positive wethers; one was home-bred years ago (because of the false negative tests), two were acquired locally from others. Because it seems that CAE is kind of prevalent in my area, and few people test around here, I no longer purchase goats locally but only get goats from breeders who test regularly. These three wethers have never shown symptoms, and they are wonderful packgoats. They live with my other four negative wethers, and after living together several years they have never transmitted the disease to the negative wethers. They live together, eat together, butt heads, etc but my positives stay positive and my negatives stay negative.

However I make it a point to keep my wethers penned separately from my breeding herd, which is tested annually and is totally negative, and has been for several years. I test my herd in December, before kidding season, and by then my spring-born doelings are old enough for a reliable test result. Because young kid’s immune systems are in a state of flux, most people don’t recommend testing kids until they are at least nine months old. Any CAE positive does would be immediately culled for slaughter; however because I have culled my herd in the past and only bought negative replacements, I haven’t had to send a doe to slaughter for many years. But I still test, and always test purchased animals. I try to buy from trustworthy sellers, but even then I test, just in case. And a reputable seller won’t be offended by this.

Some people don’t test, but try to prevent transmission by pulling kids at birth, then only feeding heat-treated colostrum and pasteurized milk. This will work only if you can absolutely guarantee to be present at every birth and prevent the kids from ever suckling their mom. I work
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 page, 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).”

2006 Wild Sheep & Goat Risk Assessment

In 2006 there was a risk assessment study done in Canada concerning Dall sheep and possible contact with domestic sheep, goats, and llamas. The study was a review of previous research. The study is over 100 pages in length; if anyone wants a copy, let me know at huffaker@rmi.net and I will send you the file. Below are some of my thoughts on the study, and also a followup letter recently sent to NAPgA by Dr. Drew.

The study was done to test the risk of 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 I am often gone when the kids are born, and I don’t have the time or energy to pasteurize all my milk, plus sometimes I like the kids to be dam raised. So I prefer to test routinely and maintain a negative breeding herd instead of going this route.

I am surprised at how many people don’t test their goats, even their breeding goats, but assume that because the seller said they have a CAE prevention program, that their goats are automatically negative. Since many goats never show symptoms, it’s quite easy for a dairy to have a few positive does floating around in their herd. If they miss one birth, or maybe don’t heat treat or pasteurize their milk quite properly one day, or maybe a kid gets in with mom and starts suckling, and bam! you’ve got the cycle starting all over again.

Just my opinion here, but I don’t think that the biting and hair pulling is going to be a problem. CAE just isn’t transmitted by casual contact. If you breed her, you will have to be absolutely sure that the kids or other goats don’t come in contact with raw colostrum or milk, which would mean isolating her while she’s lactating. And most breeders don’t want a positive doe breeding with their buck, because there is a slight probability of sexual transmission. So breeding her responsibly is difficult. If you want to keep her, I would suggest maybe getting her spayed to prevent further breeding, then keeping her as a pet or packer. If you are at all worried about lateral transmission, then she should be culled for slaughter.

CAE is not transmitted to people, so it’s safe to eat the meat and drink the milk. In fact, because CAE is sort of like HIV, and many people in other countries drink CAE positive milk, there was some research to see if drinking CAE milk could prevent HIV. But I don’t think anything came of the research.

Carpe Diem!

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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. 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.

NAPgA board member Jim Bennett asked Dr. Drew for his thoughts on this study, and here is Dr. Drew's reply:

I have reviewed the NWT Risk Assessment on the potential for disease from domestic livestock to negatively impact Dall sheep. I have also talked with the authors of the Risk Assessment about there conclusions. In general, from a wildlife management perspective, I agree with the assessment of a potential negative impact. However, as you and the authors noted, there is very limited disease data from Dall sheep with which to estimate risk. Using BHS as a surrogate species may or may not be suitable but at least there is some information on potential consequences of domestic livestock and BHS interactions.

Overall, I think both wildlife managers and livestock owners have to acknowledge that there is a risk for wildlife populations like Dall sheep from domestic livestock. But it must also be acknowledged that domestic livestock only constitute one of many possible risk factors, many of which we do not understand with respect to the potential for disease in wild sheep populations. To be on the safe side, especially for species like Dall sheep with essentially no known contact with domestic livestock and little reported disease problems, it may well be prudent to try to eliminate contact with domestic livestock.

On the other hand, given a general lack of data on Dall sheep disease, it is difficult to forecast what if any diseases are of importance to this species. The general assumption in the wildlife management world is that Dall sheep are likely to be similar to BHS in their diseases and their responses to disease agents. If this assumption is correct, disease could be a major factor in Dall sheep populations and management of disease in these populations would be very difficult.

From the standpoint of access to areas for domestic livestock in Dall sheep habitat, it is critical to look at the livestock from the same perspective. We know that domestic livestock, in this case, goats, can and do carry some diseases of concern for BHS, and presumably, Dall sheep. Given that, it would be very important to have some disease data from the goats (serology, oro-pharyngeal swabs, fecals) as well as health history including vaccination and deworming agents, to make sure that the goats are as clean as possible and pose the least risk potential. Some careful thought into possible travel corridors and protocols for handling goats in Dall sheep habitat would also be essential.

So, in conclusion, given the lack of information on disease in Dall sheep, and the problems that that puts into a Risk Assessment, it is prudent to be cautious in approaching the problem. No one wants to jeopardize any Dall sheep populations, so we may have to accept limited data and wait for further refinements and analysis on the Risk Assessment.

Mark Drew, DVM, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Idaho State Department of Agriculture.

Carpe Diem!

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I thought this was too good not to print... Ed.

Beginnings... & Goat Addictions

I started out in the early 1990’s with packgoats, after several knee surgeries the doctor sat me down and said You Can’t Keep Backpacking. Well, quitting my backcountry trips just wasn’t an option. My best friend Vicky was working as a wildlife biologist, and sometime in the 80’s she had visited me on my farm, talking to me about some guy she met in Wyoming (John M., of course, although Vicky didn’t know his name at the time) who had these packgoats. After my doctor’s ultimatum, I remembered the conversation with Vicky and decided to give packgoats a try. I didn’t like camping with horses, and at the time llamas were about $1,000 each. I figured if the goats didn’t work out, I could take them to the sale barn.

So I set out to find some goats to pack with. This is before books, before the Internet, before Goat Tracks. I live in cattle country, I didn’t know anyone that had goats. I figured a wether would be the best, but at that time (this was before meat goats were popular) male kids were either knocked in the head at birth or butchered early on. The few goats in my area were scrubs, I couldn’t find anything nice. Finally I went to the sale barn and bought two yearling does for the whopping sum of $25 total for the pair. Ethyl was a LaMancha, Lucy was a Togg. Lucy turned out to be a total idiot and didn’t last long, but Ethyl was a good packer, very smart and agile. Thus started my love affair with LaManchas. I didn’t know any gear makers, so I set out to make my own gear. I made kind of a soft saddle type thing with homemade panniers. The panniers were okay, not great. I don’t have an industrial type sewing machine that can handle the heavy thread, so I had trouble keeping the panners in one piece.

But they must have worked pretty well, because I have a lot of pictures over a few years with those old blue panniers in them. I still use them to haul stuff, but not for goatpacking.

After a year or two of messing around, I was in REI one day looking for maps, and stumbled across this book called The Packgoat. I latched onto it like a tick on a dog. Wow, an actual BOOK about why I was trying to do! Through the book I contacted John M. and bought two Wind River saddles. I thought I was pretty cool, now I had real saddles to work with. I didn’t buy any panniers because I couldn’t afford them. Therefore I continued to use my homemade blue ones.

I messed around packing with Ethyl and a couple of other scrub wethers I scrounged up. I figured out that the only way I was going to get some decent pack wethers was if I bred them myself. Boer goats were a novelty then; I found Willy, a half Boer half Ober buckling, bred him to Ethyl and one or two other does I had scraped up. Bought Willy by the pound, paid $80 for him. I later castrated him and used him for packing. He didn’t like packing, but he sure had lots of personality.

One year I saw a new person with a lot of goat kids running around in their yard. I called them up and asked if I could buy some kids to raise as pack wethers. They said sure. When I stopped by, he said “I have something else to show you that you might be interested in”. Then he showed me Roger and Rudy, two large adult Alpine cross wethers. It was love at first sight! They were four-year-old experienced packers that originated from NW Colorado, and this guy was boarding them. I had to pay $300 each for them, but they were worth every penny! I finally had some real pack goats!

Roger and Rudy packed with me for years. Rudy eventually was put down, but I still have Roger. He’s around 14 years old now, not packing any more but enjoying the retired life here. He’s still doing well and keeping in good flesh, I figure he deserves a nice quiet retirement. When he gets to where he’s doing badly, he’ll be put down and I’ll miss him sorely. We’ve been on lots of trips together, lots of good memories there. Roger was a fantastic packer, big, smart, agile, everything you want in a packgoat. Not overly friendly though. Joe Cool.

During this time my best friend Vicky got married and had two boys. Being the independent type, she wasn’t going to let a little thing like pregnancy and babies keep her from the backcountry. For a birthday present one year I made her a promise that I would keep enough packgoats around for us to do extended family trips. And I’ve kept that promise. We’ve goatpacked with babies, toddlers, and now junior high boys. Roger and Rudy served as saddle goats when the boys were toddlers. We do an annual trip of at least a week long every summer. For those of you who have seen pictures of my packgoat string in the 2008 Napga calendar, Vicky took those pictures.

During this time I was contacted about subscribing to a new magazine, all about goatpacking. This was my first inkling that there were other people besides John M. doing this. I’ve got every issue of Goat Tracks ever published, from day one. Through Goat Tracks I learned about the Internet packgoat list, which I eventually joined. I have learned TONS of stuff from people on this list. When NAPgA was formed, George Bogdan tapped me and asked me to run for office, which I did. I served first as secretary, and now as president. While I was secretary of NAPgA, I had made many Internet packgoat friends but still had only met one other goatpacker in person. So we decided the first official NAPgA rendezvous should be hosted by Colorado in 2003. That’s where I finally got to meet many of my internet friends in person, and it was the first time I got to see other peoples packgoats and gear in action.

Today I’ve got 15 goats all together, and that’s with doing some serious culling of my doe herd this spring. Right now I’ve got six pack wethers, plus the retired Roger. One two-year-old Sable Saanen buck, five adult does, and two doelings. After this breeding season my buck will be castrated and used for packing next year. Six or seven packgoats is enough for me and Vicky’s family to do extended backcountry trips. It’s about all I care to handle on a trip. And all I care to feed during the winter! My doe herd is a pretty nice bunch, I culled this spring and only kept the very best. The two doelings are especially nice. The pack wethers are a mixed bunch-- one purebred Alpine, a pure LaMancha, the others are various mixtures of LaMancha, Saanen, Boer, Alpine, and Cocoa has about 8 breeds in him. I have a purebred LaMancha doe, a pure Sable doe, the others are mixtures of Saanen, LaMancha, Alpine, Boer.

With the breeding herd I had a surplus of milk, so in 1999 I started making and selling goat’s milk soap. My first craft show I had only met one other goatpacker in person. So we decided the first official NAPgA rendezvous should be hosted by Colorado in 2003. That’s where I finally got to meet many of my internet friends in person, and it was the first time I got to see other peoples packgoats and gear in action.

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With the breeding herd I had a surplus of milk, so in 1999 I started making and selling goat’s milk soap. My first craft show I had three kinds of soap, now I've got over 40! So like the goats, that has multiplied as well.

It’s been an interesting run with the goats. We’ve had years where the girls had nothing but doelings, weathered learning curves with CAE and goat polio, made some mistakes and had a lot of fun along the way. I’ve raised a variety of critters, but now I can’t imagine a life without goats.

Carpe Diem!
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